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International impact of Catalonia independence efforts

Master's thesis

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Declaration

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Abstract

The master's thesis *International impact of Catalonia independence efforts* aims to analyze what is the international impact caused by Catalonia's efforts to separate from Spain. It does so by establishing theoretical framework of Conflict theory and internationalized conflicts. Within this framework, the Catalonia's case is examined. The thesis provides wide and extensive background on Catalan independence in order to understand how independence efforts in Catalonia emerged and evolved. The thesis also explains the means which are used by Catalan representatives in order to promote the independence internationally. Brief comparative examples of other regions within Europe are provided (with one notable mention outside of European continent) which seek for independence, as some of the features are common for all of them. Later on, the thesis features analytical part in which international impacts of Catalonia's strive for independence are examined. Those include e.g. effects on the European Union, other separatist regions, and more. Important explanation is offered about possible economic consequences with the usage of quantitative data. The thesis in its final stage applies conflict theory on Catalonia's case. It also uses all the before explained historical background. It concludes with assessment not only of the impacts, but also of possible future development.

Abstrakt

Diplomová práce *Mezinárodní dopady katalánských snah o nezávislost* si dává za cíl analyzovat, jaké jsou mezinárodní dopady způsobené katalánskými snahami oddělit se od Španělska. Postupuje k tomu ustanovením teoretického rámce Teorie konfliktů a internacionalizovaných konfliktů. V rámci tohoto rámce je zkoumán katalánský případ. Diplomová práce poskytuje široké a rozsáhlé pozadí o katalánské nezávislosti, aby bylo možno pochopit, jak se snahy o nezávislost v Katalánsku objevily a vyvíjely. Diplomová práce také vysvětluje prostředky, které katalánští představitelé používají, aby propagovali nezávislost mezinárodně. Jsou prezentovány stručné komparativní příklady dalších regionů v Evropě (s jednou významnou zmínkou mimo evropský kontinent), které hledí k nezávislosti, jelikož některé vlastnosti jsou pro ně společné. Dále diplomová práce obsahuje analytickou část, ve které jsou zkoumány mezinárodní dopady katalánského úsilí o nezávislost. Ty zahrnují např. dopady na Evropskou unii, ostatní separatistické regiony, a další. Je poskytnuto důležité vysvětlení ohledně možných ekonomických důsledků za použití kvantitativních dat. Práce ve své finální fázi aplikuje teorii konfliktů na případ Katalánska. Také používá veškeré předtím vysvětlené historické pozadí. Na závěr jsou zhodnoceny nejen dopady, ale také možný budoucí vývoj.

Keywords

Catalonia, independence, international relations, international impacts, the European Union, separatism, economy, politics, political science, conflict theory

Klíčová slova

Katalánsko, nezávislost, mezinárodní vztahy, mezinárodní dopady, Evropská Unie, separatismus, ekonomie, politika, politologie, teorie konfliktů

Title

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Název práce

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Introduction

Catalonia's striving for independence has been a prominent topic over the last few years. We could see more and more that this region in Spain tried to gain their independence not only by appealing at their home soil, but also by calling to the international community. In nowadays interdependent world, it is more important than ever to take notice of efforts like this one. This thesis (among other aims) will try to explain what kind of international impacts this specific case could have.

It is important to state that this thesis does not want to express arguments in favor or against separatism of Catalonia, it strictly aims to analyze international impact of these efforts and its possible outcomes. This thesis is fundamentally unbiased and provides information in analytical way. The research question which the thesis main attempts to answer is as follows: "*What is the international impact of Catalonia independence efforts?*" The main research question, as will be proven later in the thesis, covers a wide range of content. Furthermore, the thesis also aims to answer several additional questions, such as: "*Does Catalonia use any means of diplomacy?*" or "*Is there a possible solution to the conflict?*"

The thesis is separated into two larger parts. Each of them consists of two chapters. First two chapters are theoretical. The first one is aimed at setting the theoretical framework of the thesis with introduction of the conflict theory and concepts of conflict transformation and its resolution. In this chapter, arguably most important source is *Using Conflict Theory* by Otomar J. Bartos and Paul Ernest Wehr, which sets rich theoretical basis about Conflict Theory and its specific features which will later be applied specifically on Catalonia's case. Another used source will be an article *The Internationalization of Conflicts: Theoretical Background, Conceptualization, and Contemporary Middle-East Region* by Josef Kraus, which explains how conflicts become internationalized. And lastly, other three sources, namely *International Conflict Management* by Michael J. Butler, *Conflict Management and Resolution: An Introduction* by Ho-Won Jeong, and *Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding: Moving from Violence to Sustainable Peace* by Bruce W. Dayton and Louis Kriesberg deal with explanation of international conflict management.

The second chapter is focused on Catalonia and introduces the comprehensive background for understanding independence efforts within the region. It explains its origins, evolution of the status of autonomy, relationship with Spain, notable breaking

points in history, development of the independence moods and tools used by separatists, key actors of recent historical events in development of Catalonia's independence, current situation and also its representation in international relations. All this in order to understand possible international impact and to realize what the efforts arise from and why are they so strong. In order to do this, both academic and online sources will be used. The usage of online sources was necessary due to need for providing actual information about the topic, because it can change day by day. Some of these sources will be, for example, *Using street protests and national commemorations for nation-building purposes: the campaign for the independence of Catalonia (2012–2014)* and *The Power of Myths and Storytelling in Nation Building: The Campaign for the Independence of Catalonia from Spain (2012-2015)* by César García, *Catalonia since the Spanish Civil War: reconstructing the nation* by Andrew Dowling, *'Goodbye, Spain?': the question of independence for Catalonia* by Kathryn Crameri, or *Inter-Governmental Conflicts between Spain and Catalonia* by Jean-Baptiste Harguindéguy, Emilio Rodríguez-López and Almudena, Sánchez. Out of online sources, among others, *BBC* will be used. In the end of this chapter, substantial space will be provided to explain how Catalonia conducts its diplomacy, which channels and tools it uses and how they work.

The second larger part of the thesis also consists of two chapters. Chapter three focuses on international impacts of Catalonia independence efforts, it is therefore the beginning of empirical part. In this chapter, the role of the European Union is explained, as well as influence of Catalonia's efforts towards other separatist movements across Europe (with one mention outside of continent too). Movements mentioned in this chapter will be – Flanders in Belgium, Scotland in Great Britain, South Tyrol in Italy and Québec in Canada. Regarding the connection with the European Union, it will be explained how much can a possibility of membership influence voter's behavior and opinion towards independence. Moreover, possible economic impact of Catalonia's independence will be explained in detail (with usage of newest available numbers and data) as it is one of the main possible international effects. In this chapter, sources like *Catalonian independence & the EU* by Charles Scaliger, or *How do prospects of EU membership influence support for secession? A survey experiment in Catalonia and Scotland* by Diego Muro and Martijn C. Vlaskamp will be used.

The fourth chapter represents the culmination of the analytical purpose of the thesis. It finalizes its pursuit of identifying international impact of Catalonia independence

efforts, finding its possible solutions and predicting eventual scenarios. It does so by applying all aforementioned conceptual basis of conflict theory explained in the first chapter. All of these conclusions were formulated originally by the author of this thesis and had no basis in any other academic work, thus they represent a novel contribution to the ongoing academic debate on separatist conflicts.

1. Conflict theory as a conceptual basis for the analysis of political separatism

For analysis of Catalonia independence, a several points from conflict theory which are the most applicable on this case will be explained and presented.

Since 19th century, social conflict rises rapidly because of the growth of science, technology, nation-state, expanding populations and more (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 2). Conflict has many definitions. It is defined as a struggle for status by Park and Burges, or as a struggle for (apart from status) scarce resources and eminent social change by Mack and Snyder (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 12). The definition used by authors of the book is that conflict can have origins in goal incompatibility, hostility, or in both, and that it involves conflict behavior. Conflict is a situation in which actors use conflict behavior against each other in order to reach their goals which are incompatible, or to express their hostility (or both simultaneously) (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 13). Conflicts can be violent or non-violent, but overall, they can be referred to as “conflict action”. In order to determine if the goals of parties are in fact incompatible, few approaches can be used. Firstly, a question is raised if the both parties’ goals are logically impossible to be achieved simultaneously. Secondly, a question is raised if the two parties have incompatible payoffs (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 14).

Conflict behavior can be any behavior that supports party to pursue fulfilment of its goal which is not compatible with the goal of the opponent, or which declares its hostility against him or her (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 22). Conflict behavior can be highly coercive, which means for example doing harm to the opponent physically, or behavior fully cooperative, in which parties would search for an acceptable solution for both of them (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 28).

If the goals are incompatible, they can be encompassed in three ways – incompatible roles, values, and contested resources. If the resources are contested, it means that a party wants a part of the resources the other party owns, or that both opponents want the same unallocated resource (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 29).

These resources can be, for example, wealth, power (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 30), or prestige (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 31). Prestige has a close link with power, because the party that holds power has usually high respect, therefore prestige (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 32). When it comes to reasons why one party would like to have a contest, one reason stands above the others – injustice. The definition of injustice done by George Homans

implies that one party is treated unjustly in cases when it receives less reward than it should according to its contribution and investments in the group (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 33). Injustice can be found in the moment when concerned party compares what it received in the past and what it receives now. For example, if economic situation gets worse and possibly results to unemployment, social conflicts can rise. Another feeling of injustice can occur when party compares what it is receiving in comparison with what it was promised to receive (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 34).

Rebellion rises in situations when legitimacy of rulers is doubtful. According to Max Weber, one of the prominent theorists of Conflict Theory, three conditions are necessary in order to consider ruling to be legitimate (just). Firstly, charisma of leader, secondly, a type of power which he calls “traditional” requires leader to acquire power and control it according to the community customs. Thirdly, in nowadays society, a legitimate power is the one of bureaucratic type (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 35).

If parties have incompatible goals, it is usually manifested by their different roles in either institutions or organizations (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 37).

Another important theorist of Conflict Theory, Karl Marx, brought up a complex theory about social systems, in which he repeatedly speaks about social conflicts being tied to private ownership. He speaks about two groups of people, those who have the means of production and those who do not, therefore they work for the owners. Marx argues that these two groups are meant to clash, since their interests and goals are incompatible. Means of production can consist of many things, such as land, capital, information and so on (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 38).

According to Ralf Dahrendorf, Conflict Theory is more general in its true cause. Dahrendorf introduces vertical differentiation, which differs those who protect interest of the whole and the remaining group members who have their interests. He argues that this division is the real essence of the problem. This incompatibility can be between established goals of the organization and the goals which individuals, members of the organization have for themselves (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 39). Role incompatibility can also exist not only in vertical differentiation, but also in horizontal differentiation, in which specific tasks are assigned to different members of organization (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 48).

Incompatible values can develop if separated groups evolve different cultures. This incompatibility can happen several ways. For example, by separation (by groups or individuals) (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 41) or by personal and group identity (if actors feel

unappreciated by others, if they feel that they do not receive what they deserve, for this reasons, identity is created). Group identity in its current version came about as a result of several developments (i.e. industrialization, urbanization, technological progress, population growth, etc.) (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 43). This identity was unified through the set of values known as nationalism (an effort to achieve, sustain and eternalize the identity, power and welfare of nation). Additional incompatibilities can develop in the values of communities and system (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 44).

Two parties can have different values if they play different roles, if they have been separated from each other and if their groups vary in largeness and technological progress (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 49).

An important thing in conflict and its management is to determine how to set up the technique of conflict mapping. During the progress of conflict, it can generate confusion. Parties engage in many interactions that can suddenly change, they get unpredictable and the level of emotion rises. With the creation of conflict and its ongoing, the situation can get very costly, especially when rash decisions are being made because of lack of understanding towards the conflict. To undergo conflict mapping which would help to explain the confusion generated by the discussed conflict, few steps need to be followed. Firstly, context of conflict needs to be specified. Informations regarding the history of the conflict, its organizational and physical arrangements are supposed to be gathered. Secondly, it is necessary to identify Parties engaged in conflict. We distinguish parties in terms of how much they are involved in conflict and what is the importance of conflict result for them (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 67). Another step of mapping is determining separate causes from consequences. It follows by separating goals from interests (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 68) and it follows by understanding the conflict dynamics (i.e. escalation), searching for positive functions of conflict (i.e. consequence which produces positive payoff for one or both parties), and understanding the regulation potential (i.e. conflict-limiting elements, such as law) (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 69).

Creation of conflict groups and events that set up conflict action are necessary conditions for conflict to appear. According to Dahrendorf, conflict groups emerge under several conditions – if they have leaders who are willing to go into conflict, if they have conflict ideology, if they are free to organize conflict and if they have members who are able to communicate with each other (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 70).

The list of conflict causes is large. Apart from all the beforementioned, another cause is hostility influenced by specific grievances (i.e. feeling of unjustly treatment) and general feeling of frustration (i.e. free-floating hostility that can occur at any time, frustration appears when a party is prevented from reaching its goals) (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 73).

Another thing necessary for creation of a conflict group is a development of conflict culture, called ideology. It is created when members of the group share common goals, values, and they wish to set on the conflict (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 74).

Open conflicts can start differently, for example violently, moderately, they can be ignited suddenly or foster gradually (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 79).

In moderating conflict, we can use three approaches – firstly, preventing serious (and unnecessary) conflict in its origin, secondly, pushing conflict which is inevitable towards cooperation as it surfaces, and thirdly, moderating repressive conflict as it rises and escalates (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 148).

1.1 Internationalized conflicts

Conflict becomes internationalized when a decision to include international actors into the domestic conflict is done (at any stage, whether at the animosity stage or negotiation stage) (Kraus 2017: 25).

According to conflict transformation theory, the conflict overflow to the international level happens when a fragile government is not able to handle its internal problems (i.e. they can be of economic, social, political or ethnic nature) (Kraus 2017: 26).

Therefore, actors' decision of conflict internationalization can be influenced by both external and internal actors. They can either be hegemonic state or local conflict parties. Internationalization can take form of external actors (i.e. neighboring states, international organizations, non-governmental actors) who can decide to unilaterally participate, which shapes internationalization into the form of interventions. Another option is when conflicting parties make the decision and invite external actors themselves, according to Borda. Borda then explains that local parties can want to draw foreign parties to intervene in the conflict and make it internationalized in order to give international legitimacy to the conflict and to obtain material resources for fighting (Kraus 2017: 27). Weak state rulers look for international support so they could deal with their domestic conflicts (i.e. of political or economic nature), according to Barnett and Levy (Kraus 2017: 28).

1.2 International conflict management

Conflict management (usually done by a participation of third party) is any kind of pursuit for control or containment of present conflict between politically motivated actors who operate at the state or sub-state level (Butler 2009: 13-14).

The goal of conflict management is to lower the damage of the conflict to concerned parties. Important notion in the conflict management is the one of a discomposure of a third party which seeks to comprise the conflict's harmful and destabilizing effects to semi-involved or non-involved parties (so called horizontal escalation) and which also seeks to comprise the conflict's rise of violent goals and tools (so called vertical escalation). Furthermore, conflict management arises from the belief that the increase of tension or aggravation of the conflict is not inevitable. The ultimate goal of conflict management is to reject aggressor's victory and to reject and shut down the aggression's tool. When a third party tries to manage the conflict, it usually tries to do so by these four basic approaches – by threat-based approach (which includes the use and/or threat of force and other utilities to persuade other parties), by difference-based approach (which includes the use and/or threat of force and several tools of compulsive diplomacy to intimidate other parties), by adjudicatory (which includes legal, extra-legal, and normative institutions and ways to achieve legal equalization with other parties), or by accommodationist (which includes traditional and non-traditional diplomatic instruments to reach an agreement with other parties) (Butler 2009: 14).

Abovementioned approaches rest on states or state-based international organizations, and these approaches are aimed at settling disputes instead of bringing solutions to conflicts (Butler 2009: 23).

One of the most known examples of conflict management is definitely peacekeeping. Peacekeeping does not have one established definition, it is rather a mixture of various definitions. However, core of these definitions remains similar. Peacekeeping can be defined as a third-party state intervention which can include appointment of military troops, military observers or civilian police in the concerned country. Peacekeeping mission has a mandate which is specified in multilateral and peace agreements, or as specified by the UN's or regional organizations' resolutions. It is appointed with the aim to detach conflicted parties, to guard buffer zones, to oversee the security situation between conflicting parties, according to Heldt and Wallensteen (Butler 2009: 69-70).

Unlike the traditional military operations, peacekeeping missions do not aim for defeating opponents with the use of force, but they rather aim for maintaining neutral position towards conflictual parties. Their main focus is to secure strategic objectives in amount which is sufficient for their role as interposition force (Butler 2009: 70).

Important note is that peacekeeping missions require consent from the host state's government in order to even become part of the conflict (Butler 2009: 71).

Another form of conflict management that could be potentially used in Catalan case is mediation. Mediation can be used as a form of an intra-state conflict management, which usually occurs when the conflict is lengthy, conflicted parties are in a dead end, neither party is interested in escalation of the conflict and if both parties want to start a dialogue and they want to apply mediation. Mediator's intervention as defined by Wilkenfeld is an inevitable step to help involved parties to go beyond their arguments and mutual displeasure and lack of trust (Butler 2009: 119).

Mediation involves third parties and these parties come with their own goals into the conflict. These mediators' goals can require attention and they usually transform the predominant dynamic of the conflict by making its resolution the main aim of the mediator. Naturally, an implementation of mediator into the conflict can change it in both ways (either help the conflict solution or on the other hand further off complicate it) (Butler 2009: 120).

Mediation is basically ongoing instrument of negotiation, in which mediator should possess skills in communication and mediator should also be qualified for managing adversarial relationships so that the agreement could be reached. Mediator needs to be credible and empathetic (Jeong 2010: 175). Mediators can, if they are very active, guarantee realization of an agreement. They do so by offering their own resources (Jeong 2010: 177). Mediation is a process of formal meetings, in which setting up the basic rules is necessary in the first stage of negotiations. Later on, the proposal development stage follows, in which building of trust starts (Jeong 2010: 183). Afterwards, negotiations move towards an agreement in which options for settling the dispute needs to be found (to do so, substantive and procedural interests of parties need to be identified). When the stage for elaboration of proposals comes, mediators can remind to concerned parties the possible consequences of non-settlement, and also push them to be flexible (Jeong 2010: 184). The process of formulating operable options for settlement can be found on the minimally acceptable conditions of concerned parties (Jeong 2010: 185).

Lasting conflicts create deeply rooted feelings of fear and hatred, and also increased liability for winning (victory is important in justification of losses suffered because of the conflict). Because of that, finding a compromise with the enemy can often be a very problematic task (Dayton and Kriesberg 2009: 23).

During the conflict transformation, opponents use many different strategies, both internally and externally directed. Every conflict is unique and specific, which makes it impossible to establish the exact package of strategies which would maximize the various set of objectives which one or the other conflicting party wants to achieve. However, acknowledgment of different strategies and their possible responses can increase chances of evading further escalation of conflict or its destructiveness (Dayton and Kriesberg 2009: 27).

2. The Catalan independence movement and its origins

In the beginning, it is important to note that Catalonia was not a lonely case in Spain with the desire to separate. The most known case was the region of Basque country, with the infamously known terrorist group ETA fighting for their cause. ETA (Basque Homeland and Liberty in English, Euskadi Ta Askatasuna in Basque) used to be very dangerous and feared terrorist organization, which in pursue for gaining independence for their region conducted several attacks on Spanish officials. However, few years ago, violence as a mean of fighting was officially renounced (Scaliger 2017: 21). ETA itself was officially dissolved in 2018 (Jones 2018).

In order to understand how independence movement within one country can influence other state actors too, it is firstly necessary to explain the specifics of these efforts with focus on that one country, which in this case is Catalonia. It is crucial to determine what are the reasons behind these efforts, what the movement aims to achieve, by which means, and how it originated. In this chapter, stages of building the campaign for Catalonia's independence will be explained too.

2.1 History of Catalonia independence

Catalonia has its own language, cultural identity, and it includes the economically most productive areas of Spain. It is famous for its artists, architecture, coastline, cuisine and cities like Barcelona (Scaliger 2017: 20). All these factors contribute to the high tourism and incomes to the state treasury. The roots of nowadays Catalan nationalism corresponded with appearance of Catalan business class in the nineteenth century. Over the nineteenth century, nationalism arose across the whole Europe, however, Catalan national identity (what it means to be Catalan) came long before the nineteenth century and nationalism as an ideology (Dowling 2013: 9).

Because of many years without its own state and because of experienced oppression (both cultural and political), mostly under Franco's regime, national movement of Catalonia was defensive. Although, one sphere where Catalans mobilized themselves was economic area. Foundation of the Lliga Regionalista marked defense of Catalan industry and implementation of protectionist measures. The expansion of Catalan nationalism in the nineteenth century started with expansion of its cultural, historical and language features. It followed by generating activists who tried to promote national consciousness, and then it

followed by surge of the mass movement and its entering to democratic, liberal standards. All those stages therefore correlate with those established by theoretician Miroslav Hroch (Dowling 2013: 10).

The *Renaixença*, Catalan renaissance in culture, was a reaction to the Romantic movement. Romantic movement in Europe introduced phenomena of interest in the past of nations (both with and without state). In Catalonia, this period of time and this movement served as a mean how to renew its ties with the past. It looked to the times of Aragon-Catalonia Empire and praised its virtues such as Catalonia being a conquering power at that time, in possession of great economic strength thanks to Barcelona and its port. The Catalan language, folklore and other cultural aspects were also highlighted by Catalan intelligence (Dowling 2013: 11).

However, Catalan search for identity and independence suffered a hard blow when Franco took power. After defeat in the Spanish Civil War in 1939, Spanish nationalists started to enforce their will on Catalonia (Dowling 2013: 37-38).

Everything that could seem as politically or culturally distinctive from Spain was forbidden in Catalonia. It was believed by Francoists that suppression of these attributes would in time, erase Catalan nationalism. Even streets and institutions were renamed. The regime also tried to erase Catalan language, which was used by more than 80% of inhabitants (Dowling 2013: 38).

In an official statement by the regime, it was stressed that Catalan language can be used for private purposes without facing persecution. This was merely a symbolic gesture, though. Unfortunately, regime's repression was not limited only on bans of cultural symbols and language. A series of political executions took place as well (an incredibly high number – several thousands). One of the most known cases is the execution of the President of the Government of Catalonia, Lluís Companys (he was executed with contradiction to international law) (Dowling 2013: 39).

Needless to be mentioned, Catalonia was stripped of its autonomy status too. Many Catalans went into exile (Dowling 2013: 40).

Only after the end of Franco's regime, Catalonia could once again start their path towards independence and re-establishment of its own identity. During the existence of the Spanish Second Republic, there were made two different declarations of Catalonia's independence. Firstly, Macià, whose party won local elections in 1931, declared Catalonia a Free Republic. His goal was to become part of a Spanish confederation. That was not

accomplished though, and Macià had to accept other solution – autonomy for Catalonia instead of independence. In the year 1934, Lluís Companys, at that time President of Catalonia's Autonomous government, declared Catalonia to be a State within the Federal Republic of Spain. This situation led not to Catalonia's independence, but to Companys' imprisonment instead, and to the abruption of Catalonia's autonomy (and as mentioned above, eventually to his tragic death). During the time of Franco's dictatorship between years 1939-1975, Catalan nationalists were united against the regime, but otherwise politically fragmented. As a combination of resistance towards Franco's regime and pro-independence agenda, the National Front of Catalonia (Front Nacional de Catalunya) was formed. Nevertheless, it failed in unification of all Catalan separatists against Franco's regime (Cramerì 2014: 14).

In the early years of 1970s, Catalan separatists organized themselves around Socialist Party for National Liberation (Partit Socialista d'Alliberament Nacional). Around this time, a little number of separatists turned to armed resistance and initiated a violent activity that lasted until 1995 (but it needs to be said that it was minor activity). When Franco's regime was about to end, Catalan separatist groups still were not able to form any kind of long-lasting unity. After the year 1975 when new democratic period started, autonomy and federalism were the two main streams of Catalan movement (Cramerì 2014: 15).

Now let us go back to the very beginning and to a little recapitulation. After 17th September 1714, when King Philip V. conquered Barcelona, Bourbons tried to implement centralized and homogenous administration (according to French model) in Spain. They did so by introducing Nueva Planta Decree (adopted in 1716), which changed the tax structure and made Spanish the administrative language in country. On 5th March 1873, Catalan state was proclaimed by independentistis. After this proclamation, violence broke out on 7th March 1873. It was not until 6th April 1914 when some level of autonomy was granted to Catalonia (this happened under the presidency of Prat de la Riba). Four Catalan provinces united into the kind of regional government for the first time ever. Despite having a degree of authority over infrastructure, education, agriculture or healthcare, it did not hold any legislative authority. In the year 1931, a new statue for Catalonia was approved in a referendum (it was in a time of existence of the Spanish Republic) (Harguindéguy, Rodríguez-López and Sánchez 2017: 81), and it was also approved by the Spanish Parliament in the same year, big opposition regardless. However, all changed with

arrival of Franco's dictatorship. After that complicated period in Spanish history, self-government institutions were re-established, and a new statute was approved both in referendum (by 88% in favor) and in parliament too. Jordi Pujol became leader of the Catalans and bargained several improvements for Catalonia. However, this again was not meant to last long, because in 2003, statute was reformed to displeasure of Catalans. Even though it was approved by referendum and by both Catalan and Spanish parliament, it was challenged after it came into effect in 2006 by the Popular Party (PP). And on 28th June 2010, the Constitutional Court of Spain released a judgment that several articles of it were unconstitutional (especially those designating Catalans as nation and those proposing new regional financing model). This decision caused massive demonstrations, and after this, in July 2010, the Parliament of Catalonia suggested new tax arrangement, nevertheless, it was declined (Harguindéguy, Rodríguez-López and Sánchez 2017: 82).

In the year 2006, Catalonia was granted a status of nation by Spain. However, this, as already said, had been taken back by Spanish Constitutional Court in 2010, which argued that Catalans are nationality, but not a nation (Erickson 2017). In 2006, the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia extended Catalonia's powers of self-governance which were given to the region in 1979, but still, fourteen of its requests were vetoed by Spain's Constitutional Court, which certainly did not please Catalans and separatists use this as a proof that the statute failed to provide the level of independence the region was looking for (Nayler 2018).

In the pro-independence circles, arguments for unilateral step towards declaration are popular, however, it is seen as a last option due to international unwillingness to acknowledge its legitimacy. The focus of separatists is to press for a referendum in which they could express the will of Catalans (such as Scots could express themselves in their independence referendum). However, the legitimacy of a possible referendum has been questioned by Spain, since Spanish Constitution only recognizes Spain as a sovereign entity. This fact serves well to Spanish government, which blocks referendum or its attempts (Crameri 2014: 67).

The day that could be marked as a breaking point in terms of how Spanish public and politicians in Madrid thought about Catalan separatism was on 11th September 2012 (The National Day of Catalonia, so called Diada). On this day, streets in Barcelona filled with people demanding independence. Until then, Catalan separatism was not seen as a

majority phenomenon, however, this perception was changed after that day. This event was also widely reflected among both Spanish and international media (García 2016: 229).

What can be definitely marked as a success by Catalan separatist is the way how they are able to mobilize huge crowds. Not only in the streets, but also in elections (García 2016: 230). Political and economic factors such as corruption in Spanish politics and effects of the global financial crisis (which cause higher rate of unemployment), but also (and perhaps most importantly) limitation of autonomy statute gave a ground to make it possible for turning The National Day of Catalonia into an open organized protest.

Especially years 2012, 2013 and 2014 inserted separatism into Catalonia's political agenda, but also created an international awareness about the situation. In these street protests, the most visible flag among the people was Estelada (Catalan independence flag) (García 2016: 231).

Nowadays, people annually show their will to separate from Spain during the celebration of The National Day of Catalonia. In the last edition of this rally, around a million people went to streets of Barcelona to show their support for Catalonia's independence (BBC 2018).

Political organizations (i.e. Catalan government), sport organizations (i.e. Football Club Barcelona), cultural organizations (i.e. Omnim Cultural), media corporations (i.e. Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals), civic organizations (i.e. ANC) all act in a way that supports the separatism by using soft power methods and public diplomacy in order to attain possible international support (it will be explained later in this thesis in further detail). Catalan pro-independentists organize a lot of events to bring people together (of attractive and festive nature), where appeal on self-determination is being made (García 2016: 232).

Desire for separatism (or remembering sacrifices of those who fell for the country) can be expressed in many ways. One of the most visible (and hearable) manifestation of pro-independence spirit is at the Camp Nou, the football stadium of Football Club Barcelona. For example, during their football matches, supporters shout "independence, independence" in 17th minute and 14th second (that refers to the year 1714 during which the army of Philip V captured Barcelona) (García 2016: 233). Going back to The National Day of Catalonia celebrations, the one in 2014 was particularly important. During that edition, the main theme of rally was to support the "participation process" scheduled on 9th November of the same year (García 2016: 239).

This process was an unofficial consultation among Catalans which sought to find out how big is the support for separatism. Before this, proclaimed referendum for Catalan self-determination was deemed to be unconstitutional by the Spanish Constitutional Court. That is why this process was also merely symbolic. With this participation process, Catalonia's political representation wanted to demonstrate that Catalans have little power to influence their destiny, therefore lacking freedom to decide. However, Spanish constitution does not allow even this type of consultation, which means that it was officially illegal. In that consultation, two questions were asked. Firstly, "Do you want Catalonia to be a state?" For those with positive answer, there was a second question – "Do you want this state to be independent?" Voters turnout was around 37%, and 80.76% (approximately 1 876 753 people) of them voted in favor of both questions. However, this did not lead to any political change within the Spanish political system (García 2016: 241).

In the regional elections on 27th September 2015, almost half of the population in Catalonia voted for separatist parties. Two major pro-independent parties built a coalition with the aim to reach independence. In comparison with previous elections, this was a significant rise in numbers (for example, in 2012 elections, pro-independent parties obtained less than 25%). This growth of numbers was due to many factors which influenced the rise of support (and which were discussed above), such as economic crisis, limitations which were placed on the third statute of autonomy (in 2010) by the Spanish Constitutional Court. Definitely, The National Day of Catalonia protest in 2012 was also important in pulling pro-independence supporters together. The increase of pro-independence support was visible in numbers (between June and November 2012, pro-independence support went from 34% to 44.3%). Interestingly, the day after The National Day of Catalonia in 2012, the pro-independence support has experienced 50% increase (García 2018: 282).

One of the most used arguments in order to promote independence is the economic factor. Specifically, that Catalonia, as one of the wealthiest regions of Spain, pays too many taxes to the national treasury and does not receive enough of resources back. This argument was also oftenly reported in all of Catalonia's media, such as television, newspaper, or radio stations. It was also promoted by institutions, museums, publishers, associations, and many others (García 2018: 283). There are many stages in the development of the pro-independence arguments. First of them could be named as a "quest", a stage which involves a lot of action and in the case of Catalonia, it consists of

high mobilization of both political leaders and pro-independence supporters. Political leaders talk in radios, parliament, they talk to crowds in political meeting, etc. Supporters participate in big and organized street protests such as The National Day of Catalonia, they cheer for independence during football games at Camp Nou, the stadium of Football Club Barcelona, and more. Second stage could be named as an “escape”, which deals with a party that is confined against its will and wishes to leave. In this case, Catalonia is considered as the confined side, which was defeated by Spain and later had to resist all kinds of dictatorships and efforts to destroy its culture (García 2018: 288).

The third stage, referred to as “revenge”, is portrayed as an effort to gain independence, the peaceful way of reacting to so far grievance done by Spain. Because the Spanish Constitution and the Spanish Constitutional Court do not recognize the possibility of independence referendum, it serves as a proof for Catalan separatists that Spanish legal system is untrustworthy (García 2018: 289), and therefore Catalonia must make the action by itself, even if it needs to be done by violation of Spanish laws. The fourth stage, “transformation”, which in this case was argued as a mean how to solve Catalonia’s problems, such as high unemployment. It was also argued that Catalonia would a world superpower in sports (García 2018: 290).

Catalan media play a prominent role in campaigning for independence. All the beforementioned stages were mentioned in the Catalan media and implemented into their stories. Again, the better economic situation in the case of separation was mentioned (García 2018: 290).

On 1st October 2017, the referendum took place and three weeks after it, the Catalan independent republic was declared by the Catalan parliament. Therefore, several Catalan leaders either escaped Spain or were arrested. One of the biggest complaints of Catalans (and one of the biggest reasoning for their independence) is that they send too much money to less developed parts of Spain, and that Madrid controls taxes. Catalonia is a wealthy region with around 7.5 million inhabitants, who have their own parliament, flag, anthem and language (BBC 2019).

2.2 Current situation and key actors of 2017 referendum

On 1st October, in Catalonia, an independence referendum was held. The results were ruled out to be illegal by Spanish courts. After the referendum and Catalan declaration of independence from Spain, the Spanish Senate took role over the region. Spain invoked Article 155, for the first time in their history, which suspended Catalonia's autonomy in result. In a built up to the referendum, at that time Spanish prime minister Mariano Rajoy stated that the referendum will not happen, and he sent troops to seize ballot forms and to imprison pro-independence leaders. Websites which informed about the referendum were also shutted down. At the day of the referendum, police used rubber bullets to get control over the crowd, which in result caused injures to hundreds of people (Erickson 2017).

Catalan government stated that around 2.3. million people voted (out of eligible 6 million) and that around 90% voted in favor of independence. After the result, the independence was not declared right away. Carles Puigdemont, at that time the President of the Government of Catalonia, declared that Catalonia has a right to gain independence and offered further negotiations with national government in Madrid. Mariano Rajoy, however, showed little interest in that and his cabinet implemented Article 155 (which resulted in the national government to take over Catalonia's government, including Catalonia's finances and police). Meanwhile, Catalonia's political leaders decided to officially declare independence, and 70 members of Catalonia's Parliament voted in favor of it (while 10 voted against and 55 refused to participate) (Erickson 2017).

When it comes to position of the European Union, it could be characterized as non-interference. Right after the independence vote, Donald Tusk, the President of European Council said that nothing changes for the European Union and that Spain is their only partner. On the contrary, representatives of separatist movements in other countries backed Catalan efforts. For example, the First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon, offered quiet support for Catalan independence. In Belgium, speaker of Belgium's Flanders regional parliament, Jan Peumans stated that in Europe, there is already a dynamic towards independence (Erickson 2017).

A little over a year later, the situation in Catalonia still remained complicated. Both Pugidemont and Rajoy were no longer in power, but this fact itself has not changed much, because Spanish government imposes zero-tolerance policy in the case of Catalan separatism. Rajoy's conservative People's Party was replaced by Pedro Sánchez's Spanish Socialist Workers' Party after the successful no-confidence vote. After Sánchez took office,

he met with a new Catalan president, Joaquim Torra, but the meeting had no significant effect. Sánchez, unlike his predecessor, tried to express his openness to dialogue with Catalan separatists, but in fact, he is opposed to independence too. Unlike Rajoy though, Sánchez is at least willing to sit down with Catalan politicians. Sánchez stated that he is open to dialogue but only with the Spanish Constitution in hand (which means only one result – unity of Spain, since the constitution does not allow any other interpretation). Sánchez also criticized Catalonia's police force, the Mossos d'Esquadra for refraining from reaction against pro-independence protests. He also said that he would resolve this situation by sending national forces (which seems to contradict his previous statements about dialogue). On the other hand, newly elected Catalan president, Torra, seems even more determined towards Catalan independency than his predecessor (needed to say that he was nominated for the function by Puigdemont himself). In the article he wrote in 2012, Torra described those opposed to expressions of Catalan culture as “hyenas”, among other names. He also published several tweets against Spain (in years between 2011 and 2014) (Nayler 2018).

According to this, it can seem that he will not be willing to negotiate much as well. This statement came into practice in October 2018 when he tries to put pressure on Sánchez by stating that if there was no guaranteed mechanism for secession by November, pro-independence parties would decline to support Sánchez's minority government in Spanish parliament (and especially its proposed 2019 budget). However, this attempt was unsuccessful, because it was stated by the Spanish government that it does not accept ultimatums. Apart from that, at the domestic political scene, Torra has not yet succeeded at unification of Catalan pro-independence factions. Going back a little, ahead of The National Day of Catalonia in September 2017, Sánchez said that at some point, it might be possible to allow Catalonia to have a referendum of greater autonomy. Reaction from Torra on this was that he saw this proposal as interesting, however, he feels that he acts on behalf of those who voted in favor of independence in the 2017 referendum and that the only thing that can renew the mandate is the binding and internationally recognized referendum on self-determination. Torra declared that if imprisoned Catalan politicians were freed, he would consider referendum on greater autonomy instead of independence one. However, this did not happen as the politicians were about to face a trial in Madrid (Nayler 2018).

On the final day of the trial in Madrid, all twelve imprisoned separatist leaders provided defiant final statements regarding their accusations. The hearings took four months and the defendants claimed that they were victims of an injustice, and that charges against them are false. It is expected that it will take several months for verdict to be provided. Most of the imprisoned politicians are accused of rebellion (which according to the Spanish law includes a public violent uprising), which is being denied by them. The prisoners claim rebellion never took place and that the declaration of independence was supposed to implement the democratic will of Catalans, who voted for separation in a referendum (though unauthorized). During the court hearing, every defendant spoke for 15 minutes in order to provide final arguments to prosecutors. Beforementioned Oriol Junqueras stated that even though he may have made mistakes, he only showed his commitment to democracy and social harmony by his actions, because according to his words, “voting and defending the republic from a parliament cannot be a crime”. Jordi Sánchez, one of the previously discussed accused, argued that he was the victim of an injustice and that there are no ideas or principles that should be silenced (BBC 2019).

Apart from the main accusation being the rebellion against the Spanish state, defendants are also accused of misuse of public funds in order to organize a referendum, which was marked as illegal by Spain’s Constitutional Court. Another thing which is important to mention, and that is oftenly being stressed by both Catalan authorities and public, defendants said that the proceedings were political in nature, and that the violence was committed by police against voters during the referendum vote (BBC 2019).

In total, 12 representatives of the Catalan independence movement were brought it front of trial in Madrid. Most of them are accused of rebellion against Spain. In this section, some of the key actors of this movement will be presented and their role in the Catalan independence movement explained. First of mentioned is Oriol Junqueras, leader of the Republican Lefr of Catalonia party, and former Catalan vice-president. Before he joined the political scene, he was a history professor. Unlike Catalan president Carles Puigdemont, Junqueras did not escape the country. He explained this by stating that he did not flee because he felt responsibility towards his citizens (Jones 2019).

One of the most mentioned people who were accused of rebellion are two Jordis. They are the ones who have spent the longest period of time in pre-trial detention. One of them is Jordi Sánchez, a regional Member of Parliament and former president of Catalan National Assembly. Second of them, Jordi Cuixart, was the leader of the Òmnium Cultural

(all of hereby mentioned groups were explained in one of the previous chapters). They are accused of encouraging demonstrations against Spanish police, which were supposed to stop them from preventing the independence vote to take place. Amnesty International has expressed that the charges against Jordis are unjustified, and Amnesty's Europe director, Gauri van Gulik, said that even though their actions could have caused public order offence, they did not represent serious crime (i.e. rebellion, which they were accused of).

Lastly, the face of the Catalan independence movement, Carles Puigdemont, the President of Catalonia, has left Catalonia after he unilaterally declared Catalan independence. He has sought for asylum in Belgium. An international arrest warrant was issued for Puigdemont, who was in his office as President of Catalonia from January 2016 to October 2017 (when independence vote took place) (Jones 2019). Other politicians in the Madrid trial are: Joaquim Forn, former interior minister; Jordi Turull, former Catalan government spokesman; Raül Romeva, former external relations minister; Dolors Bassa, former labour minister; Josep Rull, former territorial minister; Carles Mundó, former justice minister; Meritxell Borràs, former governance minister; Santi Vila, former business minister (BBC 2019).

In the first half of 2019, another situation in Catalonia's independence effort which certainly has an international impact occurred. Former president of Catalonia Carles Puigdemont, who made a getaway from Spain after the 2017 referendum, together with Oriol Junqueras, his ex-deputy who is currently imprisoned, were elected to the European Parliament in this year's elections. Nevertheless, after the elections, a possibility for them to step into office was unclear due to their statutes. Puigdemont is currently living in self-exile in Belgium (while Spain tries to bring him in front of their courts) and Junqueras already finds himself in prison and is one of the accused in the ongoing trial in Spain concerning the 2017 referendum. In the European Parliament elections, the most voted in Catalonia was the Puigdemont's list for Europe. Junqueras' ERC party (the Catalan Republic left) was part of a coalition of another independence groups (such as in the Basque Country and Galicia) in a joint list for Europe. This coalition won three MEPs - Member of the European Parliament (5.8% of the vote) and Puigdemont's Free for Europe list won two seats (4.6% of the vote). The fulfillment of their election is problematic however, because under Spanish law, those who are elected into the European Parliament need to swear that they will abide by Spain's constitution. Without this promise they cannot be confirmed as MEPs by the national electoral board. This is naturally impossible for

Puigdemont who would be immediately arrested for rebellion upon his arrival to Spain. Despite that, Puigdemont claims that he will obtain immunity as soon as he is elected, which means he does not need to come to Spain in order to be confirmed as MEP. The situation of Junqueras is also complicated, because he could be sentenced for 25 years if he had been found guilty of rebellion, and in order to travel to the European Parliament, he would have to obtain permission from the Spanish Supreme Court (AFP/The Local 2019).

In reaction to these elections, Catalonia's minister for foreign affairs, Alfred Bosch, wrote in *The Guardian* that Catalonia has always been in favor of constructing the European project and that Catalans share the feeling that they are part of the European Union. They also actively participate in the European elections (in 2019, voters' turnout in the elections to the European Parliament was 13 points higher than the European average). He argues that everybody who wins in the elections should be granted access to their seats. However, he says that this did not happen in the case of elected Catalan politicians, who were denied access to the European Parliament. In his statement, this rejection of access does not correlate with a modern democracy. He argues that if they are denied of their electorate, the European Union will lose members who actively supported its cause and project, and it will also lose a chance to demonstrate that it is a space of freedom and democracy where fundamental rights are supported (Bosch 2019).

A little less than a month after their election, it was decided by Spanish election board that it is not possible to become MEPs for Carles Puigdemont, Oriol Junqueras and Antoni Comín, because they have not carried out a legal obligation to personally pledge compliance with the Constitution. The Central Electoral Board, which is the Spanish election oversight body, rejected Carles Puigdemont lawyer's appeal. Comín, who ran away together with Puigdemont and was elected to the European Parliament for the same party as Puigdemont, was also denied of taking a seat in the European Parliament. In the case of Oriol Junqueras, decision was again the same. He was rejected of possibility to claim his MEP seat as well. The Central Electoral Board will inform the European Parliament about their decision that none of the concerned politicians will obtain the official MEP credentials which means they will not be able to take part in the European Parliament convenes on 2nd July. The Board decided this way because the Spain's election legislation states that elected candidates must swear or promise to comply with the Constitution before the Central Electoral Board. This promise must come in horizon of five days after their election and if they fail to make this promise, their seats will be declared

empty. Also, all their privileges arising from their position will be suspended until they make the promise (Casqueiro and Díez 2019).

2.2 Catalan “embassies”

Before continuing into the following chapter of this thesis which applies all beforementioned information about Catalonia’s case and puts them into international perspective, it is good to mention one tool in the area of diplomacy that has been used by Catalan government for several years (before its closing by Spanish authorities).

Catalonia, even though it is not legally recognized country, exercised several ways of public diplomacy. Catalonia was trying to influence public opinion in foreign countries about the referendum held on the 1st October 2017, while Spain was strictly against it. This influencing was conducted through diplomatic channels, which appeared to be crucial for it. Public diplomacy of sub-state entity is dependent on legal framework which this sub-state entity has with its state (Gyimesi 2017).

The Catalan public diplomacy is legally based on the Law of Foreign Action and Relations with the European Union. This law was adopted in 2014 by the Catalan Parliament. However, it was ruled on 22nd December 2016 by Spanish Constitutional Court that this law is unconstitutional, because Spain has exclusive executive powers in the matter of international relations. After this ruling, the Law of Foreign Action was suspended for five months. In general, the whole Catalonia’s public diplomacy was ruled by court to be unconstitutional (Gyimesi 2017).

Public diplomacy does not have one specific, and generally established definition, however, public diplomacy usually aims to target foreign public opinion and influence it with government-sponsored programs. In the Catalan Law of Foreign Action, public diplomacy is defined as an action that affects and positively influences public opinion abroad, and its goals are, for example, to improve the image and prestige of Catalonia abroad. This includes diplomacy in economic, business, academic, cultural, and sport areas (Gyimesi 2017).

It can be clearly seen that the Catalan public diplomacy generates a conflict between the Spanish government and the autonomous Catalan government. Despite that, Catalonia keeps in practicing of an active public diplomacy in several beforementioned areas (Gyimesi 2017).

The Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia, usually called the “Diplocat”, is a main driving force of Catalonia’s public diplomacy. A public-private consortium represents a crucial means in Catalan diplomatic representation. It was founded in 2012 with the goal of explaining the Catalan situation in foreign countries and establishing

trustful relationships with citizens and institutions of foreign countries. Diplocat has a wide range of activities which include for example providing financial aid for civil society, scholarships for students, or organizing of conferences both in Catalonia and other countries. As mentioned before, Catalonia's public diplomacy covers several areas, and through Diplocat, it does so by regrouping institutions that represent Catalonia in those fields. To name a few, Government of Catalonia (public institution), General Council of the Official Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Catalonia (business association), FC Barcelona (worldwide known and famous sporting organization), University of Barcelona and the Pompeu Fabra University (academic institutions) (Gyimesi 2017).

Diplocat, however, is not the only institution that performs Catalonia's public diplomacy. Another important contributor to public diplomacy of Catalonia is the Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalonia's political institution that consists of the Government, the Parliament and the President of the Generalitat). Generalitat's role in Catalonia's public diplomacy is substantial, because Generalitat has founded and administers delegations of Catalonia, whose goal is to promote Catalonia in other countries and defend its interests. There used to be eight of these delegations – in New York (the only delegation located outside of Europe), London, Rome, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Lisbon and in Brussels (the most important delegation and the only one which still operates up to this date, as explained later). The delegation in Brussels (officially the delegation to the EU) actively operates on promoting cultural side of Catalonia (Gyimesi 2017).

Among other active parts of Catalonia's diplomacy, are Catalonia Trade & Investment Offices which target the economic area of diplomacy and have their seats in more than thirty cities around the world. These offices provide support for businesses to international companies which would like to invest in Catalonia (Gyimesi 2017).

The last important part of Catalonia's diplomacy is usage of Twitter (heavily popular tool in digital diplomacy). Majority of accounts that Catalan diplomatic institutions use, are in English so they could reach out to higher number of public. Their accounts heavily proclaimed referendum (Gyimesi 2017).

After the acceptance of article 155, Mariano Rajoy's government introduced several measures that affect Catalonia. One of these measures was concerning the Diplocat and Catalan "embassies". All the delegations Catalonia had, were closed, except the one in Brussels. Diplocat was also dismissed (The Diplomat 2017).

However, Diplocat was not closed for long. In July 2018, it was reactivated again. As stated before, Diplocat had an impact on internationalization of the independence case. Functioning of Diplocat was not seen positively between Spanish members of parliament, who blamed it from persuading foreign press into favoring the referendum and creating an international idea that put Spain in a bad light (ACN 2018b).

As can be seen from diplomacy conducted by Catalonia, it did not set up relations with governments of other countries, but tried to influence public meaning in foreign countries in order to favor, or at least understand Catalan case, and to present the situation Catalonia was in. It also aimed to promote Catalonia as a whole, in terms of culture and business, not only on political level.

3. International impact of the Catalan independence movement

In today's interdependent world, no issue like separatist movements can be strictly taken as the matter of concerned state only, since its impacts would be large on the European level, with the biggest effect on the European Union for sure. In this chapter, there will be briefly introduced another major and for our cause relevant separatist movements across the European Union's countries, Québec being the only exception on the list.

3.1 Precedent

One of the most significant impacts is definitely the possibility (in the case of success) that Catalan case can not only inspire other regions in neighboring or closely located states – South Tyrol in Italy, Scotland in the United Kingdom, Flanders in Belgium (however, Québec in Canada too), but also serve as a precedent, that such a thing is doable even without legal allowance of the state it seceded from. This can seem especially troublesome to the European Union's official and representatives of states which could look up to Catalan's potential achievement. The European Union wants further assimilation of states, not diversification. That could be one of the reasons why it decided not to intervene when the 2017 referendum and controversies surrounding it broke out.

In Spain itself, Catalonia is not the only region seeking for independence - Basque region has, or mostly had, the same appetite. This region has a long history of violence connected with ETA, a terrorist organization which aimed to gain independence for Basque region. They have oftenly attacked Spanish military and police. However, as already stated in the previous chapter, few years ago the Basque separatists declared no more violence would be conducted (Scaliger 2017: 21).

Outside of Spain's borders, in nearby Italy, in a year 2014 a non-binding referendum took place in Venice (and 90 percent of voters actually choose the option of separation). It was proclaimed to be against constitution, similarly as the referendum in Spain (Scaliger 2017: 21).

Let us now take a look into selected cases of separatism.

3.1.1 Flanders case

Flanders, Dutch speaking region in Belgium, has been actively seeking independence for a long time. It used to be part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but after Belgium gained independence in 1830, French speaking Belgians from the region of Wallonia started to suppress the Flemish culture and the usage of Dutch language.

In Flanders, exactly as in Catalonia, the separation question is largely discussed in economic terms too. Flanders is economically strongest region of Belgium (just as Catalonia is of Spain) and therefore they subsidize the Wallonia. Around 6% of GDP from Flanders is translocated to Wallonia. In Flanders, may favor the independence for the region or reunification with the Netherlands (Scaliger 2017: 21).

3.1.2 Scotland case

The case of Scotland and its race for independence could cover another master's thesis itself, however here, only few latest relevant news will be mentioned in order to illustrate how international impacts influence this separatist movement as well (which we can transfer and apply to our Catalan case). In 2014, Scotland held a referendum for independence, in which Scottish decided to stay in Great Britain (the result was 55% in favor of remaining and 45% in favor of separatism) (Cooper 2019). In the Brexit vote, Great Britain decided to leave the European Union. However, in this vote, Scotland voted by 62% in favor of remaining in the European Union. If the process comes to an end and Great Britain leaves the European Union, First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon would like to carry out another independence referendum before 2021. She said that the Brexit uncovered limits of Scottish influence in Great Britain and that if Scotland would need to leave the European Union, an independence referendum should be offered to Scotland (Cooper 2019). Sturgeon is the leader of the SNP (Scottish National Party) which supports her effort (Cooper 2019).

Another thing that might be interesting is the media coverage of Scotland independence case. Before the 2014 referendum, many articles talked about the positive aspects of independence, democracy, human rights and it also addressed positive reasons for independence. Main focus was aimed at democratic debate and activism of public and citizens (Levintova 2017: 1178). It was addressed as a victory of democratic process (Levintova 2017: 1179).

3.1.3 South Tyrol case

Another region that seeks for its self-determination and lies in the European Union is South Tyrol, which is located in Italy. Local authorities assess that out of population of 510 000, nearly 75% of inhabitants speak German. Many locals wish they were independent. Eva Klotz, a co-founder of the separatist party South Tyrolean Freedom (Süd-Tiroler Freiheit), conducted a survey concerning the referendum on South Tyrol's right to self-determination. Out of the 61 000 voters, 90% voted in favor of it. It could mean that in the future, South Tyrol could become fully independent or be re-annexed to Austria. She herself stated that her dream is the second option. South Tyrol used to be part of Austro-Hungarian Empire, but it was annexed to Italy in 1918. Even though Mussolini tried to make the area fully Italian by forbidding German and on the contrary, pushing for Italian language, locals resisted these efforts, sometimes even with the use of force. In South Tyrol, even ID cards of citizens differ from the other ones in Italy (they have a different color and are written in both Italian and German). Some of the cultural and traditional events are also celebrated differently. Marco Brunazzo from the department of sociology and social research at Trento University says that in South Tyrol, the identity issue has always been serious. For example, schools are divided according to mother tongue, which leads to integration problems, because children grow up in separated communities (Marchetti 2014).

Naturally, not everyone in South Tyrol is fond of separatism. Many families put their children into German school and later to Italian school, so they learn both languages and integrate in both communities. Interestingly, there is a public quota system put on a distribution of public jobs based on ethnic belonging. In practice, it means that if a school hires a German speaking teacher, the next hired one must be Italian speaking (Marchetti 2014).

Lastly, similar as Catalonia, South Tyrol is Italy's wealthiest region, with highest GDP per capita in country (based on Italy's National Statistics Office figures) (Marchetti 2014).

3.1.4 Québec case

We can find regions seeking separatism outside of Europe too. One of the most known examples is the one of Québec, a province in Canada. However, unlike in the case of Catalonia, Québec has experienced a referendum for independence, and not just once. Needed to be said, at both occasions, voters voted against the independence. The first referendum took place in 1980 and 59% voted in favor of remaining in Canada. In the second referendum in 1995, the result was extremely tight – a little over 50% voted in favor of remaining, while 49% voted in favor of separatism. The thing that hurted separatist goal was an economic concern – how would Québec do without being part of Canada? What it even be possible to trade with them, and if so, how?

However, Québec's economy is very strong. Today, Québec (if independent) would be the world's 44th largest economy, and it also responds to almost a fifth of Canadian's economy. Even though it might not be poor, it would get poorer because of ageing population and unemployment which is higher than average. Therefore, it benefits from the Canadian's federal government payments. Because of the separatist efforts, Québec has earned itself a large portion of autonomy. Québec's government controls a lot of taxation, immigration, education and cultural policies. Important to say is that in the year 1977, the Charter of the French Language (usually known as Bill 101) made French Québec's official language (thus making it mandatory for use in business and commerce). In case of Québec, it can be seen that devolution has moistened separatism, since Québec has really large autonomy. In addition to that, businesses in Montréal, Québec's financial center, do not have majority of Anglophile elites anymore. Now, the third referendum seems unlikely to happen (Bryant 2014).

3.2 The EU fractioning and the EU membership as a key factor

Regions separating from states would significantly change the map of Europe. It would create more states, but little ones with even greater interdependence and all negotiations would take even more time to conduct. Not to mention the amount of time that would have to be provided for new states to access the European Union (or at least free market) which in meantime, would cause incredible falls of economies (of newly emerged states, their former states, but the whole European Union too). That kind of situation would also weaken the European Union on the international level (mainly, but not only, in economic negotiations).

Being the EU member showed to be crucial in debating advantages and disadvantages of the independence. Whereas Catalan pro independent parties claimed succession to the EU would be smooth, Spain counter argued against this, because its consent would have to be made in order to allow potential Catalan state to be part of the EU, which would unlikely be given (Muro and Vlaskamp 2016: 1115).

In the article of Muro and Vlaskamp, a survey was conducted among the Catalans containing three different scenarios regarding EU inclusion (or exclusion). On one side, separating from one state and joining the European Union may seem as contradicting ideas, since the EU is a large political community without internal borders. However, most separatist supporters are in favor of joining the EU (Muro and Vlaskamp 2016: 1116).

On October 30th 2017, political leaders of present Catalan separatism fled to Brussels in order to avoid prosecution in Spain. Apart from that, they also tried to search for the support for their cause from the European Union. Carles Puigdemont (Catalan president at that time) together with other notable politicians held expectations that in the capital city of the European Union, he could find sympathizers to his cause. The right to self-determination is between the main values of the European Union, such as open, democratic society, as we can see in examples of the Irish and former Eastern Bloc countries (i.e. the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Poland, etc.). However, Catalan president Puigdemont did not find any sympathy in Brussels, and his effort of separating Catalonia from Spain were mostly condemned by politicians. Even outside of the European Union, specifically in the United States of America, it was stated by president Trump that the United States of America support unified Spain. Despite all that, an asylum was offered to Puigdemont and his companions (Scaliger 2017: 19).

Even though Catalan political elite at that time was leftist, pro-socialist and had a close ideology with the majority of European political spectrum, it did not earn them any sympathy whatsoever (Scaliger 2017: 21). In nowadays situation of interdependent rule of the European Union, under which many countries had given up their decision-making capabilities and handed them over to the supranational power, separatism is seen as a clear danger to current international order. If one movement succeeded, even though this movement could be ideologically identical with the political stream of the European Union, other separatist movements would feel heavily encouraged by its success and pressed even harder for their cause to meet a desired objective as well. Under the circumstance that separation (self-determination) would be acknowledged by the European Union, it could cause its breakdown, since many newly created states would either have to negotiate their membership or other kind of international deal, which would unbalance the European Union for many years forward. Not only that successful Catalan movement could inspire other separatists in other states, but it could also put lack of faith towards the European Union membership to states which already possess skepticism towards it, such as Denmark and the Netherlands. In the worst scenario, this situation could eventually lead to dissolution of the European Union. Therefore, the European Union is unlikely to support any kind of separatist movement within its member states (Scaliger 2017: 22).

3.3 Economic consequences of separatism

Catalonia, as mentioned several times, is the wealthiest region of Spain (size of its economy is similar to the one of Denmark). In 2017, it also counted for more than a quarter of the national export (mainly with cars, food and chemicals). If Catalonia separated after legally-binding referendum, the economic transition would be more or less without pain. If (which is more probable option) it separated unilaterally though, it could create “chaos”, mostly because Catalonia would have to (even if temporarily) leave the European Union. That could cause decrease in foreign investment as businesses would start to move their headquarters elsewhere. Even after the 2017 referendum voting, doubt over independence did harm to tourism and property market in Catalonia. Despite that, Catalonia is attractive for foreign investors, as can be seen on examples of firms such as Amazon or Uniqlo. It was also ranked as the best Southern European region for foreign investment for 2018 and 2019 by fDi Magazine (which is a publication owned by Financial Times) (Thomas 2018).

If, for example, we look into how colonies’ trade changed after the gain of independence, we can get a bit of an insight into how the situation could possibly look like for independent Catalonia, even though of course, due to its geographical location and the fact that it is not colony the situation would probably look different, however, an example provided here can serve as a bit of an illustration of how it might work. According to the findings provided in the article, independence reduces trade (both import and export) with the former colonizer. How much varies country from country, though. For example, trade in former French colonies with France is lowered by roughly 50% on average (when the whole post-independence period is compared to pre-independence period). In addition, ex-colonies of France also trade less with other French ex-colonies. These are long term impacts, but they emerge soon after independence, especially in export. On the contrary, Great Britain and its colonies experience different situation. Trade did not decrease on the route between Great Britain and its former colonies, which can be rooted in Britani’s lack of protectionism (Lavallée and Lochard 2015: 17). And in general, after the independence, both export and import of ex-colonies is increased with countries in the rest of the world (outside of former colonial empire) (Lavallée and Lochard 2015: 18).

Catalonia holds a high share in overall numbers of Spain’s export – 25.3%, which is more than a quarter of total Spain’s export. Majority of export is from automobile, chemical and equipment industries. Chemical sector is the most used one in terms of export (26.2% of total Catalan export), followed by automobile sector (17.6%), equipment

sector (17.3%) and food, drinks and tobacco export (12.4%). Naturally, most of the export from Catalonia goes to the countries of the European Union (the European Union absorbed almost two thirds of Catalonia's export in the first half of 2018 – 65.6%). The most significant importers of Catalonia's goods were France (16%), Germany (11.2%), Italy (8.7%), and Portugal (6.8%) (ACN 2018a). A certain portion of export from Catalonia goes to the rest of the world, namely Asia (9.3%), Africa (6.4%), Latin America (5.8%), and North America (3.8%). In the first half of 2018, Catalan export had the highest number ever, with sales worth 36.6 bn euros (ACN 2018a). Had the separation been successful, economic situation would change dramatically for both parties, Catalonia and Spain. In short term conditions, economic impact would be negative for both Catalonia and Spain, it would result in loss of work places, wealth and income, because new borders would have to be established. Catalonia is the most prosperous region of Spain, which makes 223.6 billion euros a year. This number is almost 20 percent of total Spain's GDP. If the separation happened, Catalonia would gain about 16 billion euros yearly, because they would not have to continue in paying taxes to Spain, and it would also result in a loss to the Spanish GDP yearly (about 2%) (Bosch 2018).

When looking at the economic situation and potential causes, it is important to take into account Spain's national public debt. Out of all Spain, Catalonia has one of the highest debts, in 2016 it was estimated to be around 72.2 billion euros. That being said, Catalonia holds approximately around 7% of Spain's debt. After the separation, this full debt would probably, but not necessarily fall upon Spain to fulfill. If it had fall upon Spain, it would heavily affect its economy. Obviously, it is not possible to predict for how many years the transition situation would last. Catalonia would be affected too, and how much would depend on the amount of debt it would have to assume. If it had to assume substantial part of debt, it would hurt its economy and economic potential significantly (yet it is impossible to predict and calculate precise numbers) (Bosch 2018).

As mentioned in previous chapters, in the case of successful separation, Catalonia would face difficult negotiations with the European Union. In economic terms, it would be necessary to set up their mutual trade relations. Of course, if Catalonia had remained to be part of the European Union, Catalonia's trade would be without changes. However, if Catalonia were to be denied the European Union's membership, Catalonia's economy would be in front of high transition costs, because as already stated before, approximately 66% of Catalonia's export goes to the European Union. In consequence of separation,

Catalonia would face increased tariffs on their goods and services, as well as problems with currency (it would either had to establish new one or negotiate a deal with the European Union) (Bosch 2018).

As it was discussed, fruits are one of the most important export articles of Catalonia. When it comes to fruit production, Catalonia is one of the main regions in Europe to produce and to export them. In terms of production, Catalonia is second in the world in producing peach and nectarine. It also produces a lot of sweet and citrus fruits, pear and apple. And finally, export. Catalonia is a huge exporter of fruits, because over 80% of all fruits made in the region are exported to foreign markets (both European and international) (Fruit business forum 2018).

Catalonia would either become member of the European Union and basically remained part of the European Single Market (all the European Union's members are part of it and it aims to provide free movement of goods, capital, services and labor) or in case of non-membership it would have to negotiate economic ties with the European Union through the European Economic Area (as Iceland, Norway or Liechtenstein did), or by bilateral treaties (as it is in case of Switzerland) (Harmon 2019).

4. Application of conflict theory on the international impact of Catalonia independence efforts

Firstly, let's begin to apply highlighted points from conflict theory in the first chapter of this thesis on Catalonia's case.

Catalonia struggles both in terms of status (they are not officially a nation under the Spanish law) and for resources (they argue that they deserve to receive more money). Catalonia has goal incompatibility with Spain (they want secession, Spain does not), the origins of conflict are in hostility, since Catalonia was forced to join Spain, and throughout the history, it experienced oppression in terms of killings, bans to use language, to promote culture, and so on. Their relationship involves conflict behavior, because they repeatedly clash with each other (i.e. over taxes or independence).

To prove both parties have incompatible goals, we can apply both approaches used in the theoretical chapter. Firstly, for both Catalonia and Spain it is impossible to achieve their goals simultaneously, since every one of them wants something different. Here, Catalonia wants independency, and on the contrary, Spain does not want Catalonia to separate. Therefore, they naturally have incompatible payoffs, which was second condition. Spain does have conflict behavior towards Catalonia, nevertheless, Catalonia has conflict behavior towards Spain, too. That means two things – both do harm to each other and both find themselves in pursuit to reach the goal which is not suitable for the other (i.e. Catalonia pursues independence, Spain sovereignty).

As mentioned, incompatible goals can be incorporated in three ways - incompatible roles, values, and contested resources. Their roles are obviously incompatible and their values arguably too. Catalonia argues that they have a democratic nature because they want to let people choose their fate peacefully, not enforce it with violence. On the contrary, Spain argues that Catalans are the ones who are non-democratic, because their run for independence is unconstitutional. Regarding the wealth, it is meant money. Both parties want them, and Spain nowadays relies on Catalan's economy a lot, therefore it needs its resources.

The argument of unjust treatment can also be applied in this case, because Catalonia feels that it does not receive enough money back from the taxation according to its contribution. Especially in the times of unemployment, the situation is critical.

Another moment when conflict emerges is when the legitimacy of ruler is doubtful, which Catalonia experienced for example in year 2010, when it was stripped of some of its privileges. Situation to Catalonia correlates even with Marx's claims regarding the clashes tied to private ownership. It could be argued once again that Catalonia feels that their resources are taken away and not reproduced into their own territory, therefore they can feel they are in a role of exploited.

Applying the explanation of Conflict Theory by Ralf Dahrendorf, we can see that Spain is the one who protects interest of the whole (unity of the country) and Catalonia defends interests of its group (its people). Naturally, they clash.

Back to incompatible values – they can evolve in different cultures. Catalonia has still preserved its somewhat distinct culture from the rest of the country, and through values such as nationalism, developed a different kind of group identity. It is also because even during Franco's regime and the arguably historically highest oppression, they still preserved their culture and identity.

For an outside observer, it can be sometimes difficult to map the conflict, because during its evolution, it can generate confusion, since conflicting parties engage a lot and exchange a lot of hatred. A level of emotion rises. We can see that throughout the common history in one state, Catalonia and Spain were on a spiral of emotions. Sometimes the situation seemed more relaxed (when Catalonia was granted higher autonomy), then full of tension again (after Catalonia experienced another stripping out of it). That is why the history and context of the conflict must be explored, in order to set up further research.

As Dahrendorf stated, conflict groups can rise under these conditions – if they have leaders who are willing to go into conflict (which both parties have, recently Puigdemont and Rajoy for example), if they have conflict ideology (separatism x unionism), if they are free to organize conflict (questionable, since referendum is prohibited, but still took a place in a certain degree) and if they have if they have members who are able to communicate with each other (political representatives and civil society, as well as media have many mutual communications, and sometimes it indeed only escalates the issue even further).

Additional cause that can result in hostility is a previous grievance – Catalans still feel frustration from both siege of Barcelona in 1714 and from Franco's oppression during his rule.

Lastly, another cause for creation of conflict group, ideology, was created as well, because many members of Catalan society share common goal (independence).

Catalan conflict also became internationalized (because international actors were brought into it). In this case, due to the large role of media and easy and fast broadcast to the whole world, means how to do it were easier than in the past. In this case, there was no intervention, however, Catalonia tried to invite third parties to intervene. Even though it did not meet with success, the whole world was watching and acutely discussed the situation around 2017 referendum and its aftermath. Catalonia's success in internalization of the conflict can be found in the diplomatic area, though. Through its diplomacies and cultural activities in foreign countries, it actively promotes and lobbies for its cause at the doorstep of important international players (as we can see on example of "embassies" in Brussels and around the world). Their look for international support therefore actively continues.

After application of Conflict theory, it was therefore proved that Catalonia and Spain are in a conflictual relationship and that their goals are incompatible and that they find themselves in an inevitable and repeated clash. It was also proved that Catalonia's "conflict" is internationalized, because Catalonia sought for international help, and also medialized the conflict in order to find international support for their cause. All the reasons why Catalans find themselves in this kind of relationship with Spain were described in detail in chapter 2.

The first moment when the conflict became internationalized was in 2012, when the protests on The National Day of Catalonia had earned a great worldwide media coverage. Even at the football games in Barcelona, international audience can see and hear expressions of people's will for independence.

Another international impact arising from Catalonia's independence efforts arose after the elections to the European Parliament in 2019. Former president of Catalonia Carles Puigdemont who ran to Brussels after 2017 referendum, Oriol Junqueras, his ex-deputy who is currently imprisoned, and Antoni Comín were elected to be MEPs. However, they were not allowed to attend the European Parliament's convenes on 2nd July, because they have not made a promise in front of the Central Electoral Board and comply with the Constitution in Spain.

A decision not to let them in was heavily criticized, and it limits rights of voters, because people elected them so they could stand for their cause, which they now cannot. It is therefore direct international impact of Catalonia's independence efforts on the international politics, because it made impossible for democratically elected members to

perform their new duties, because they are unable to comply with their duties before they could assume their seat.

Another international impact, or more so, influence in shape of soft public diplomacy, is performed by Catalonia in a shape of Diplocat, a public-private consortium made for promoting Catalan cause which consists of several political, medial, cultural, educational, sporting, and other important Catalan organizations.

Stepping further into international impacts, we can observe that in case of successful secession, Catalonia could serve as an ignition for other separatists around Europe, but possibly in Canada too. In further detail, this could lead up to potential huge economic consequences, because Catalonia is a very important exporter for the European Union. And if other separatist gained confidence, pushed for it and accomplished it, we could witness the possible split or dissolution of the whole European Union. It is therefore a precedent that requires a lot of caution. Interestingly, what connects those regions is that they are richest in their respective countries, which even underlines the great importance of economic factor.

However, in some of those countries, referendum is legal (i.e. case of Scotland or Québec) and in order for their countries to persuade them to stay with them, they were granted a high degree of autonomy, which leads us to the last point of this section, being a look how the conflict could be managed, resolved.

For Catalonia's case, thesis argues that the third and fourth approach proposed by Butler sooner in the chapter one of this thesis could be used. The third approach uses adjudicatory (which includes legal, extra-legal, and normative institutions and ways to achieve legal equalization with other parties). That could result into legal settlement with both parties. Even though it is hard to guess what would be the legal settlement which would be acceptable for both parties (since they have not found it yet) it could be argued that creation or modification of some laws regarding the statute of autonomy could help. Catalonia would have a higher degree of independence and recognition, but Spain would stay whole. The other proposed and here possibly used approach is settlement or by accommodationist (which includes traditional and non-traditional diplomatic instruments to reach an agreement with other parties). In other words, it is similar to the third one. Firstly, negotiations and appeals on calming down the situation would be done, and lately possible changes (i.e. in legal system) could be discussed and eventually implemented.

Another mean of settlement is peacekeeping, though in this case (because outright violence and war has not ignited) it does not suit the case. Also, Spain would most likely not give consent for peacekeeping mission.

The other option in form of mediation is more interesting and applicable. If the situation would only escalate, the European Union could take this position. Even though in the events of the last referendum the European Union remained reluctant towards taking any action, it seems as a potentially ideal role for her. It could press Spain for giving higher autonomy to Catalonia and therefore settling conflict (if we assume Catalans would be satisfied with higher autonomy instead of full independence, which is doubtful), or press Catalonia that if they will not calm down, the European Union will stop making trades in and out of the region and therefore making it economically relevant (again, given the assumption that Spain would be consenting with re-allocating its resources to another part of the country, not to mention all the international companies).

Conclusion

Referendum in 2017 which was supposed to be a moment of shift towards the ultimate goal of independentists, being separation of Catalonia from Spain, received a big response of world's public and media. Many felt surprised, shocked rather, that the violence which was unleashed during the voting by Spanish police was possible in a Western democracy, on the soil of the European Union member.

This referendum caused that Catalan cause started to be taken seriously not only in Spain, but also behind their borders as well. It raised questions whether Catalans should have hold the right to separate, even if it is unconstitutional, because every nation should have a possibility to express themselves and decide of their own future, or if it is a rough violation of democratic principles to call a referendum which was not internationally supported nor had the support in the domestic legal system.

Based on these events and taking into account historical connections and facts, this thesis tried to assess if there are any international impacts of this conflict, if it reaches out of its territory and influences others as well, or if it is only a matter for a closed group of people.

According to findings presented in this thesis, it is clearly possible to say that independence movements do have an impact which goes beyond the borders of the state they want to separate from. It affects not only neighboring countries, but also international communities, such as the European Union. Moreover, the impact falls heavily on those who want to separate as well, because it can give them further encouragement.

The impacts are both political and economic. However, the economic aspect is more subject to hypothetical moment when Catalonia would actually separate, rather than being a current issue. But given to its economic significance not only within Spain, but on the European level, a potential Catalan separation would have a huge (if more short or long term is subject to speculation) economic consequences not only on the region itself, but on all of member states or those who are part of the Schengen Area. As was showed in numbers, Catalonia is very important exporter in many fields of products.

Let's finalize the answer for the question raised in the introduction of this thesis - *"What is the international impact of Catalonia independence efforts?"*

Catalonia independence efforts do have several international impacts, some of them appeared immediately, some of them will perhaps develop more. The immediate ones are, for example the election of former Catalan leaders as MEPs, who then could not take their

seats in the European Parliament, therefore refraining from executing democratically elected function to those with future impact, such as possible economic consequences. The possible consequence to which almost one chapter of this thesis is devoted to addresses how it could possibly affect other separatist movements and the European Union. Based on the statements provided in this thesis, it shows that it could affect hereby mentioned parties in a big way.

Not only that in case of Catalan success they could get a necessary encouragement, but given the possibility they would succeed too (because some of them can even decide about the matter legally), it would cause a massive fragmentation of a political map of Europe as we know it now. That is why it is unlikely that in a foreseeable future Catalans will receive international, not to mention European support for their cause. As we could have seen after the 2017 referendum, the world was shocked, but remained without intervention. The aftermath of referendum unsurprisingly changed political situation in Spain, however, it has not experienced a lot of movement further towards any kind of deal or solution, even though some proposals have been made.

Furthermore, the thesis also aimed to answer several additional questions, such as: *“Does Catalonia use any means of diplomacy?”* or *“Is there a possible solution to the conflict?”*

Answers to both of these questions are positive. Catalonia indeed uses means of diplomacy, mainly public diplomacy. It does so by the so called Diplocat, which a public-private consortium that was made for promotion of Catalan culture, identity, as well as independence struggle. It consists of many organizations from all spheres of society. To name a few - Government of Catalonia (public institution), General Council of the Official Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Catalonia (business association), FC Barcelona (worldwide known and famous sporting organization), University of Barcelona and the Pompeu Fabra University (academic institutions) (Gyimesi 2017). As mentioned in the text though, Diplocat is not the only one conducting diplomacy in the name of Catalonia, because other significant contributor to public diplomacy of Catalonia is the Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalonia’s political institution that consists of the Government, the Parliament and the President of the Generalitat).

The answer to the third research question was provided in final, the fourth chapter. There are several ways of possible solution, but all of them depend either on compromise from one or both conflicting sides, or by a mediator in form of the European Union for

example, which could help to negotiate a deal suitable for both Catalonia and Spain. However, for now, the European Union did not hint that it would even remotely consider such an option to happen.

To conclude, it was proved that Catalonia's independence efforts indeed have international impact. However, it is not yet possible to determine how much (or if at all) it can increase in future, nor if Catalonia's independentism will rise or fade. This will be witnessed in following years and it will also highly depend on people in political representation of all involved parties.

Master's Thesis Summary

This master's thesis main goal was to answer the following question: "What is the international impact of Catalonia independence efforts?"

This question may have appeared as too general, however, the thesis proved that although it covers a wide range of content, the answer to it was comprehensive.

The thesis provided theoretical framework to set up space for application of it in the initial section of the thesis, then in the following chapter introduced all necessary connections (historical, cultural, political, diplomatic) in order to present current situation, immediate and possible future impacts, as well as later on offering a potential solution to the issue.

In the latter stages of the thesis, all theoretical frameworks and information were connected together and applied in correlation with asked research question, in order to find a suitable and sufficient set of answers.

The goals laid out by the thesis were reached by using both academic and online resources.

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