

We would like to explore this issue further, from the perspective of a very simple typology whose principal components are: Form of government, size of population and territory, wealth and growth, culture, and law and justice. With the aid of such a typology one can unlock the main problems of small countries.

Concerning size, we distinguish between small countries of 1-10 million inhabitants, and microstates with a few thousand. We distinguish between rich and poor countries, and multicultural countries (as in Switzerland) and monocultural countries (as in Japan and Sweden). Countries may also be differentiated by whether the justice system is strongly developed (as in Liechtenstein) or weak (as in Panama). In South America and Asia there exist some states that can best be described as robber states, in the sense that criminals have taken over the government, as is almost the case in Colombia and Peru.

We make a simple distinction here between democratic, egalitarian and efficient states that rule with the consent of the government on the one hand, and states that rule by force on the other. In these states ruled by force, there exist problems of controlling the population, and there one works with force, terror, and deception.

If we concentrate on microstates in what follows, we can see a general survival problem, particularly concerning the strength of the economy, which is dependent on finding niches for its products and services.

For the richer small countries there is the problem of defense against poor but strong neighbors. If Kuwait had organized itself for defense like Switzerland or Israel, the Gulf War might have been avoided.

Poor small countries have an economic growth problem. In multicultural countries there is the problem of social integration of minorities (for example in Estonia, Latvia and especially in the former Yugoslav republics of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia and Macedonia). The problems of monocultures are quite different. There people are much less concerned with external cultural influences, and have difficulties with isolation. This is more of a problem of large countries, but exists as well in small ones. The big countries tend to cultural arrogance. When one is in Russia, one must speak Russian. When one is in Switzerland one can make oneself understood in four or five languages.

Law and order require that small countries cooperate with big ones, if laws are supposed to provide protection. Then there is the problem of certain profit-making influences, as for example unrestricted bank secrecy with