

2 April 2019

Session on the Szekler autonomy movement in Romania

In the framework of the seminar “The Quest for Self-Determination: from Catalonia to Switzerland”, the Institute of Geography of the University of Bern in cooperation with the Institute for the Protection of Minority Rights (KJI) in Budapest invites to a session on the Szekler autonomy movement in Romania. Dr. Attila Dabis, Foreign Affairs Commissioner of the Szekler National Council (SZNT) will be our guest. The SZNT is an influential civil society organization that claims territorial autonomy for the Szeklerland in Romania. The Szeklerland is a region in Transylvania/Romania where the Hungarian Szekler population is a majority, whereas in Romania it is a minority. We will discuss with Attila Dabis the domestic and international challenges of the Szekler autonomy movement and of minorities in Europe more generally that are striving for (more) self-determination.

Time: 15:15 – 16:45 (18:00)

Location: University of Bern, Room F-105, Unitobler, Lerchenweg 36, 3012 Bern

Contact: Dr. Béla Filep, Institute of Geography, bfilep@giub.unibe.ch

Time	Description
15:15-15:30	The Szekler autonomy movement Input by students of the Institute of Geography, University of Bern
15:30-16:45	Discussion with Dr. Attila Dabis Foreign Affairs Commissioner, Szekler National Council; International Coordinator, Institute for the Protection of Minority Rights (KJI)
16:45-17:00	Break
17:00-18:00	Student workshop on the Szekler autonomy movement

Dr. Attila Dabis is a political scientist and the Foreign Affairs Commissioner of the Szekler National Council (SZNT). In this capacity, his main task is to establish and maintain relations with political and cultural organizations of other national communities in Europe. In addition, he works to inform various international organizations such as the UN or the Council of Europe on Romania’s conduct towards implementing international obligations on minority protection. Dabis also serves as the International Coordinator of the Institute for the Protection of Minority Rights (KJI) in Budapest. He holds a PhD in International Relations from the Corvinus University of Budapest. The dissertation was titled “Misbeliefs about Autonomy - The Constitutionality of the Autonomy of Szeklerland”. His research revolves around European regionalism, self-determination issues, the functioning of autonomies, as well as minority rights and conflicts.