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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF FRENCH GUIANA, MAYOTTE AND NEW CALEDONIA

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ABSTRACT

The current political map of the world still shows many territories that did not free themselves during the decolonisation and thus continue to be connected to their metropolises, often thousands of kilometres away. This study discusses one such example, three overseas territories of the French Republic, namely French Guiana, Mayotte and New Caledonia. These were chosen considering their different geographic location and similar size of population. The study aims to analyse the intensity of relation of these territories to Paris and to compare their status in a comprehensive way. To fulfil this goal the study focuses on 25 relevant criteria divided into eight thematic areas (geographic-demographic, historical, constitutional, economic, political, ethno-religious, strategic, symbolic). Following detailed analysis of the data collected in each criterion, the study—using comparative method—attempts to classify the territories locating them on a scale according to the intensity of their connection with the metropole and the likelihood of becoming independent.

Keywords: status, metropole, French Guiana, Mayotte, New Caledonia, (in)dependence

RESUMEN

El mapa político actual del mundo todavía muestra muchos territorios que no se liberaron durante la descolonización y, por lo tanto, continúan conectados a sus metrópolis, a menudo a miles de kilómetros de distancia. Este estudio analiza uno de esos ejemplos, tres territorios de ultramar de la República Francesa, a saber, la Guayana Francesa, Mayotte y Nueva Caledonia. Estos fueron elegidos teniendo en cuenta su diferente ubicación geográfica y el tamaño similar de la población. El estudio tiene como objetivo analizar la intensidad de la relación de estos territorios con París y comparar su estado de manera integral. Para cumplir este objetivo, el estudio se centra en 25 criterios relevantes divididos en 8 áreas temáticas (geográfico-demográficas, históricas, constitucionales, económicas, políticas, etno-religiosas, estratégicas, simbólicas). Tras un análisis detallado de los datos recopilados en cada criterio, el estudio, utilizando un método comparativo, intenta clasificar

los territorios que los ubican en una escala de acuerdo con la intensidad de su conexión con la metrópoli y la probabilidad de independizarse.

Palabras clave: estatus, metrópoli, Guyana Francesa, Mayotte, Nueva Caledonia, (in)dependencia

RÉSUMÉ

La carte politique actuelle du monde montre encore de nombreux territoires qui n'ont pas été libérés lors de la décolonisation et restent donc connectés à leurs métropoles, souvent à des milliers de kilomètres. Cette étude analyse un tel exemple, trois territoires d'outre-mer de la République française, à savoir la Guyane française, Mayotte et la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Ceux-ci ont été choisis en tenant compte de leur situation géographique différente et de la taille similaire de la population. L'objectif de l'étude est d'analyser l'intensité de la relation de ces territoires avec Paris et de comparer globalement leur état. Pour atteindre cet objectif, l'étude se concentre sur 25 critères pertinents répartis en huit domaines thématiques (géographique-démographique, historique, constitutionnel, économique, politique, ethno-religieux, stratégique, symbolique). Après une analyse détaillée des données collectées dans chaque critère, l'étude, à l'aide d'une méthode comparative, tente de classer les territoires qui les localisent sur une échelle en fonction de l'intensité de leur lien avec la métropole et de la probabilité de devenir indépendant.

Mots-clés : statut, métropole, Guyane française, Mayotte, Nouvelle-Calédonie, (in) dépendance

Introduction

This article focuses on three overseas territories of the French Republic, namely French Guiana, Mayotte and New Caledonia. The determining factors for selection of these territories were different geographic location (French Guiana is located in South America, Mayotte in the Indian Ocean and New Caledonia in the Pacific) on one hand, and similar size of the population (French Guiana has 240,000 inhabitants, Mayotte has 220,000 inhabitants and New Caledonia has 320,000 inhabitants) on the other hand. The aim of the article is to analyse and compare the status of the surveyed territories. The key argument is that the intensity of the link between these territories, as territories under the sovereignty of the French Republic (French Guiana and Mayotte being *collectivités territoriales uniques à statut particulier* according to Art. 72 in connection with Art. 73 of the Constitution, while New Caledonia being *collectivité d'outre-mer à statut particulier* according to Art. 72 in connection with the title XIII of the Constitution), and the

metropole does not differentiate and remains constant.

When analysing the status of French Guiana, Mayotte and New Caledonia and their relationship to the metropole, the article focuses on a set of criteria that have been assessed as the most relevant in terms of research objectives. The selection of criteria and their distribution into thematic areas were made with the intent to cover all the specifics of the relations between overseas territories and the metropole, partly also with regard to the potential of the analysed territories to obtain and maintain sovereign status in case of independence, even though it is not the primary subject of research. Emphasis has been placed on the objective and factual (i.e. precisely describable or quantifiable) nature of all criteria so as to minimise the likelihood of distorted or speculative outcomes. On the basis of these prerequisites, the criteria were divided into eight dimensions based on the thematic context: the geographic-demographic dimension, the historical dimension, the constitutional dimension, the economic dimension, the political dimension, the ethno-religious dimension, the strategic dimension and the symbolic dimension. Each of the thematic dimensions includes three (or four) specific criteria; the total number of criteria is 25 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Overview of analysed criteria

<i>Geographic-demographic dimension</i>	Distance from metropole
	Area (in relation to metropole)
	Population (in relation to metropole)
<i>Historical dimension</i>	Total period of existence of an independent state
	Total time of belonging to metropole
	Ratio of total period of existence of an independent state to total time of belonging to metropole
<i>Constitutional dimension</i>	Status according to the Constitution (level of autonomy)
	Existence and strength of own legal norms
	Form of relationship to the EU
<i>Economic dimension</i>	GDP per capita
	Ratio of GDP per capita in territory to GDP per capita in metropole
	Own currency
<i>Political dimension</i>	Existence of own political bodies
	Specifics of party system
	Degree of representation of territory in metropole

Table 1: Overview of analysed criteria (cont.)

<i>Ethno-religious dimension</i>	Ethnic composition (in relation to metropole)
	Language
	Religious belief (in relation to metropole)
<i>Strategic dimension</i>	Existence of strategic infrastructure
	Existence of significant natural resources
	Exclusive economic zone (EEZ) area
	Region stability
<i>Symbolic dimension</i>	Existence of own symbols
	Existence of own cultural institutions and church administrative units
	Membership in international organisations, associations or federations

Source: own elaboration

Definition of Research Objectives

The main research objective of the article is (using a comparative analysis of precisely defined criteria, divided into eight thematic areas) to answer the questions of identity/difference of the intensity of links of these territories to the metropole, current status of these territories and its future development. Specifically, the article deals with the following research theses (or hypotheses):

What differences can be found in the intensity of the French Guiana, Mayotte and New Caledonia links to the metropole?

What factors in particular affect the status of French Guiana, Mayotte and New Caledonia?

Are these factors (their importance) identical within the studied territories?

Can there be a certain trend in terms of the status of analysed territories based on diachronic comparisons?

Is this potential development evolving to strengthen links to the metropole, or, on the other hand, to the weakening of relationships?

Is it true that these tendencies are similar in the three territories under examination?

Theoretical Basis

In order to fulfil the defined research goals of the article, it was necessary to develop a theoretical approach (concept) based on the analysis of the factors and criteria defined above. The article, however, works with several theoretical concepts, each of which is relevant to the correct understanding of the analysed problem. Inspirational is, for example, the theory of the internal territorial structure of states, which can be used in the analysis of factors within the constitutional and political dimension (Cabada and Kubát 2002:413; Říchová 2012:189; Glassner and Fahrer 2004:108). Another relevant concept is the theory of dependence (center-periphery model), useful mainly in studying economic and symbolic dimensions (Říchová 2014:279). This Rokkan concept, however, penetrates virtually all the studied dimensions. The theory of the nation (the nation state) is of particular importance for the research of the ethno-religious dimension (Baar 2001:42). Last but not least, the article is inspired by the distance models defined by Alan K. Henrikson, which are applicable in the geographic-demographic dimension. In addition to classical physical distance, Henrikson lists three other types of distance: gravitational, topographical and attributional. Gravitational distance is based on the idea that the remote area is far more difficult to control; it is closely related to spheres of influence. The closer the remote territory is to another strong international political actor, the more physical distance from the metropole is increased (Henrikson 2002:444). The topographical distance takes into account whether another territories are present between analysed areas, which again reduces the intensity of the link between the metropole and the periphery, also depending on their potential number and size. The attributional distance gives a real 'distance' between the territories in conjunction with common political and cultural characteristics.

Methodology

The empirical-analytical theoretical approach is applied in the paper, as it is most suitable for studying the given issue. In the individual parts, the article (using the historical, legalistic and institutional approach) builds on an analytical, descriptive and comparative method of exploration. The article uses qualitative methods (to a lesser extent also quantitative methods), namely the methodological approach of a comparative case study. Regarding the timeline of the applied comparative method, the research is based both on synchronous comparison (comparison of the same criterion at the same time in different territories) and on diachronous comparison (comparison of the same criterion

within a territory in historical development).

The qualitative level of research, which is partly complemented by the quantitative approach, also prevails during the processing of the quantity of analysed data. In the qualitative phase, emphasis is placed on data analysis and their comparison. Based on the results, the article responds to the research thesis and formulates synthetic conclusions. On the contrary, the quantitative level of research is rather complementary regarding the application of the data obtained. It should serve to better illustrate the results of the research and to better illustrate the trends of the status of the investigated territories and the intensity of their link to the metropole.

As already mentioned, data are primarily measured by qualitative research (in particular by analysis and comparisons), and secondly, for the sake of clarity, they are also quantified in the following form. For each criterion under examination, 0, 2 or 4 points are assigned to the given overseas territory, where 0 points indicate the strongest link to the metropole, and 4 points on the other hand indicate certain level of autonomy (difference or uniqueness) of the territory. The ‘average’ 2 points are used for criteria where the dichotomous division of 0/4 points would be too simplistic, and also if there are no data that can not even be inferred (see Table 2 for details).

Table 2: Analysed criteria and evaluation parameters

Geographic-Demographic Dimension (GeoDem)	
<i>Distance from metropole</i>	<p>0 p. = distance up to 1,000 km \wedge absence of other territories¹</p> <p>2 p. = distance over 1,000 km \vee presence of other territories</p> <p>4 p. = distance over 1,000 km \wedge presence of other territories</p>
<i>Area (in relation to metropole)</i>	<p>0 p. = up to 5% of metropole area</p> <p>2 p. = between 5% and 10% of metropole area</p> <p>4 p. = over 10% of metropole area</p>
<i>Population (in relation to metropole)</i>	<p>0 p. = up to 5% of metropole population</p> <p>2 p. = between 5% and 10% of metropole population</p> <p>4 p. = over 10% of metropole population</p>

Table 2: Analysed criteria and evaluation parameters (cont.)

Historical Dimension (Hist)	
Total period of existence of an independent state	0 p. = absence of independent state 2 p. = independent state with a duration of up to 100 years 4 p. = independent state with a duration of over 100 years
Total time of belonging to metropole	0 p. = belonging of over 250 years 2 p. = belonging between 100 and 250 years 4 p. = belonging of up to 100 years
Ratio of total period of existence of an independent state to total time of belonging to metropole	0 p. = independence up to 10% duration of belonging 2 p. = independence between 10% and 50% duration of belonging 4 p. = independence over 50% duration of belonging
Constitutional Dimension (Const)	
Status according to the Constitution (level of autonomy)	0 p. = absence of autonomy 2 p. = partial autonomy 4 p. = full autonomy
Existence and strength of own legal norms	0 p. = absence of territorial legislative autonomy \wedge of judicial system 2 p. = territorial legislative autonomy \vee judicial system 4 p. = territorial legislative autonomy \wedge judicial system
Form of relationship to the EU	0 p. = part of the EU (outermost regions) 4 p. = outside the EU (overseas countries and territories)
Economic Dimension (Econ)	
GDP per capita	0 p. = up to USD 5,000 2 p. = between USD 5,000 and USD 15 000 4 p. = over USD 15,000
Ratio of GDP per capita in territory to GDP per capita in metropole	0 p. = up to 50% of GDP per capita in metropole 2 p. = between 50% and 100% of GDP per capita in metropole 4 p. = over 100% of GDP per capita in metropole
Own currency	0 p. = absence of own currency 4 p. = own currency

Table 2: Analysed criteria and evaluation parameters (cont.)

Political Dimension (Pol)	
Existence of own political bodies	<p>0 p. = absence of autonomous legislative body \wedge of executive body</p> <p>2 p. = autonomous legislative body \vee executive body</p> <p>4 p. = autonomous legislative body \wedge executive body</p>
Specifics of party system	<p>0 p. = two most powerful parties² have metropolitan character</p> <p>2 p. = one of two most powerful parties has metropolitan character</p> <p>4 p. = two most powerful parties have territorial character³</p>
Degree of representation of territory in metropole	<p>0 p. = participation in metropolitan parliamentary elections \wedge representation in metropolitan legislative body</p> <p>2 p. = participation in metropolitan parliamentary elections \vee representation in metropolitan legislative body</p> <p>4 p. = no participation in metropolitan parliamentary elections \wedge absence of representation in metropolitan legislative body</p>
Ethno-religious Dimension (EthnRel)	
Ethnic composition (in relation to metropole)	<p>0 p. = difference of three most numerous nationalities⁴ up to 20%</p> <p>2 p. = difference of three most numerous nationalities between 20% and 50%</p> <p>4 p. = difference of three most numerous nationalities over 50%</p>
Language	<p>0 p. = absence of another official language \wedge the most widely used language is official in metropole</p> <p>2 p. = other official language than in metropole \vee the most widely used language is not official in metropole</p> <p>4 p. = other official language than in metropole \wedge the most widely used language is not official in metropole</p>
Religious belief (in relation to metropole)	<p>0 p. = difference of three most numerous religious beliefs⁵ up to 20%</p> <p>2 p. = difference of three most numerous religious beliefs between 20% and 50%</p> <p>4 p. = difference of three most numerous religious beliefs over 50%</p>

Table 2: Analysed criteria and evaluation parameters (cont.)

Strategic Dimension (Strat)	
Existence of strategic infrastructure	<p>0 p. = strategic military infrastructure \wedge transport infrastructure</p> <p>2 p. = strategic military infrastructure \vee transport infrastructure</p> <p>4 p. = absence of strategic military infrastructure \wedge of transport infrastructure</p>
Existence of significant natural resources	<p>0 p. = significant natural resources</p> <p>4 p. = absence of significant natural resources</p>
Exclusive economic zone (EEZ) area	<p>0 p. = EEZ area over 250,000 km²</p> <p>2 p. = EEZ area between 100,000 km² and 250,000 km²</p> <p>4 p. = EEZ area up to 100,000 km²</p>
Region stability	<p>0 p. = FSI of countries in region (within 500 km) higher than 80</p> <p>2 p. = FSI of countries in region (within 500 km) between 40 and 80</p> <p>4 p. = FSI of countries in region (within 500 km) lower than 40</p>
Symbolic Dimension (Symb)	
Existence of own symbols	<p>0 p. = absence of own symbols</p> <p>2 p. = one own symbol⁶</p> <p>4 p. = two or more own symbols</p>
Existence of own cultural institutions and church administrative units	<p>0 p. = absence of own cultural institution \wedge of church administrative unit</p> <p>2 p. = own cultural institution⁷ \vee church administrative unit</p> <p>4 p. = own cultural institution \wedge church administrative unit</p>
Membership in international organisations, associations or federations	<p>0 p. = absence of membership in international organisations</p> <p>2 p. = membership in one international organisation</p> <p>4 p. = membership in two or more international organisations</p>

Source: own elaboration

The quantitative phase is completed by the inclusion of the surveyed territories into 5 groups according to the intensity of the bond with the

metropole (Table 3): territories with an intensive link to the metropole (0-20 points), territories with a strong link to the metropole (21-40 points), territories with a moderate link to the metropole (41-60 points), territories with a weak link to the metropole (61-80 points), and territories with a marginal link to the metropole (81-100 points).

Table 3: Proposed classification of overseas territories

<i>Territories with intensive link to metropole</i>	0-20 p.	<i>Compliance in criteria, close ties, without differences</i>
<i>Territories with strong link to metropole</i>	21-40 p.	<i>Prevalence of similarities in criteria, occurrence of certain differences</i>
<i>Territories with moderate link to metropole</i>	41-60 p.	<i>Neutral results of criteria, same proportion of similarities and differences</i>
<i>Territories with weak link to metropole</i>	61-80 p.	<i>Prevalence of differences in criteria, occurrence of many different factors</i>
<i>Territories with marginal link to metropole</i>	81-100 p.	<i>Diametral differences in criteria, loose ties, factors suggesting independence</i>

Source: own elaboration

The article focuses mainly on the period after the World War II, with an emphasis on the current state of play. For the purpose of diachronous comparison and determination of the tendencies regarding territories' status and intensity of their link to the metropole, relevant historical data are also mentioned and analysed in the text. During the elaboration of the article, one of the main resources have been literary monograph sources and studies in periodical literature (Gérard-François Dumont, Jean-Yves Faberon, Gérard Gabriel Marion, Laurent Blériot, Jacques Ziller) dealing with the studied territories (useful for historical, political and strategic dimension). In addition, the original texts of Constitutions, declarations and other relevant legal documents have been used, since they represent invaluable primary resources (useful especially for constitutional dimension). Among other important sources are numerous internet sources, providing various statistical data and information reports (useful for geographic-demographic, economic, ethno-religious and symbolic dimension). In this context, it is necessary to mention, for example, the official websites of the relevant state institutions (or their territorial units), the data of the national statistical offices (*Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques*) and the international statistical databases (CIA World Factbook, UNdata). The research also exploited information and data from Advanced Google Maps Distance Calculator.

Overseas France

The French Republic, in addition to so-called 'metropolitan France' (*la France métropolitaine*), also includes a number of overseas territories, which are the remains of a former large colonial empire. These territories are spread across the globe; most of them are located in the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Overseas France (*la France d'outre-mer*) is divided into several administrative categories: overseas departments/regions (*département/région d'outre-mer*), single territorial collectivities with special status (*collectivité territoriale unique à statut particulier*), overseas collectivities (*collectivité d'outre-mer, COM*), overseas sui generis collectivities (*collectivité d'outre-mer à statut particulier*) and overseas territories (*territoire d'outre-mer, TOM*). France currently has two overseas departments/regions (Guadeloupe, Réunion), three single territorial collectivities with special status (Mayotte, French Guiana/*Guyane*, Martinique), five overseas collectivities (French Polynesia/*Polynésie française*, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Martin, Saint Pierre and Miquelon/*Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon*, Wallis and Futuna/*Wallis-et-Futuna*), one overseas sui generis collectivity (New Caledonia/*Nouvelle-Calédonie*) and one overseas territory (French Southern and Antarctic Lands/*Terres australes et antarctiques françaises, TAAF*). The Clipperton Island (*Île de Clipperton*) is privately owned by the state. The last two mentioned territories are not permanently populated. There are approximately 2,700,000 inhabitants in all French overseas territories (approximately 4.1% of the population of the whole French Republic). These territories occupy an area of 112,000 km² (approximately 17.5% of the total area of the French Republic) and have an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 9,800,000 km² (excluding Adélie Land), representing 96.7% of the EEZ of the French Republic. Whereas in overseas collectivities there is a legislative specialty regime (*régime de spécialité législative*), signifying more legislative autonomy/independence, in departments/regions and single territorial collectivities with special status a legislative identity regime (*régime de l'identité législative*) is in place, meaning that all laws passed by the *Assemblée Nationale* in Paris are directly applied in these territories.

In the following sections, attention will be paid to two single territorial collectivities with special status (French Guiana and Mayotte), of which the latter was until 2011 an overseas collectivity, and New Caledonia as a *sui generis* collectivity. As already mentioned at the beginning of the article, these three territories were selected for a different geographical location and similar size of population.

Comparison of Analysed Criteria in French Guiana, Mayotte and New Caledonia

Geographic-Demographic Dimension

French Guiana, officially only *Guyane*, is located on the north coast of South America. The name 'Guyana' is derived from the languages of the original Indian population and means 'land of waters.' French Guiana differs from the other overseas territories of the French Republic by not being of an island nature. The capital city of Cayenne is 7,066 km from the metropole. From the perspective of Henrikson's topographical distance, we can say that there is no other state entity or territory among the surveyed territories, since the notional link between Paris and Cayenne intersects only the Atlantic Ocean. Contact with the mother state is provided by direct air connection on a daily basis (operated by Air France and Air Caraïbes). The area of French Guiana is 83,534 km², representing 15.15% of the metropolitan area of France (551,500 km²). With this area, *Guyane* is the largest of the permanently occupied French overseas territories. There are currently 244,118 inhabitants in French Guiana (data on 1 January 2013), while statistics for metropolitan France indicate 63,697,865 inhabitants. The population of *Guyane* thus accounts for a negligible 0.38% compared to the population of the metropole. French Guiana has been experiencing a population boom since the twentieth century, with only 33,500 inhabitants in 1961 and only 114,700 inhabitants in 1991 (Madinier 1993:403). The statistics also show that *Guyane* has the lowest population density of all French territories (only 3 inhabitants per km²).

Mayotte is located in the Indian Ocean, consisting of the main island of Grande-Terre (or Maore), the smaller island of Petite-Terre (or Pamanzi) and several small islands. The capital of Mamoudzou is 8,052 km from the metropole. From the point of view of Henrikson's topographical distance, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that the line between France and Mayotte crosses part of Italy and, in particular, several important states in Africa, namely Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya. The link to the metropole is thus weakened, though Corsair and Air Austral currently operate four direct flights a week between Paris and Dzaoudzi Airport. The area of Mayotte is 374 km² (Blanchy 2002:677), representing 0.07% of the metropolitan area of France (551,500 km²). With this area, Mayotte is the smallest territory of the overseas departments and regions *largo sensu*. Mayotte has 217,091 inhabitants (data for 2012), while statistics for metropolitan France show 63,697,865 inhabitants. Thus, the Mayotte population accounts for only 0.34% of the population of the metropole. As in the case of French

Guiana, Mayotte has experienced significant population growth since the second half of the twentieth century. According to estimates, only 9,000 inhabitants lived on the island in 1878, and only 23,000 in 1958 (Dumont 2005:520). The statistics also show that Mayotte has a very high population density (580 inhabitants per km²), the second highest figure right after Saint Martin.

Collectivity *sui generis* New Caledonia is located in the southwest Pacific. The archipelago, including the eponymous main island (also Grande Terre) and many other islands (Îles Loyauté, Îles Chesterfield, Île des Pins), is part of Melanesia. The designation 'New Caledonia' is derived from the Latin name for the northern part of Great Britain (roughly equivalent to today's Scotland), Caledonia. The capital, Nouméa, is located 16,758 km from the metropole. From the perspective of Henrikson's topographical distance, it is necessary to point out that New Caledonia is located almost exactly on the other side of the globe. The link between two territories is, besides a considerable distance, further weakened by the number of significant states situated between France and *Nouvelle-Calédonie*. There is currently no direct flight between France and New Caledonian La Tontouta Airport. The area of New Caledonia is 18,575 km², representing 3.37% of the metropolitan area of France (551,500 km²). With this area, New Caledonia is still the second largest of the permanently inhabited French overseas territories (after French Guiana). *Nouvelle-Calédonie* currently has 320,595 inhabitants (data for 2014), while statistics for metropolitan France speak for 63,697,865 inhabitants. The population of New Caledonia thus forms marginal 0.50% compared to the population of the metropole. Population density is the second lowest of all French territories (17 inhabitants per km²), just after French Guiana.

Historical Dimension

The territory of today's French Guiana was originally inhabited by Indian tribes; first Europeans arrived at the beginning of the sixteenth century: in 1503, the area was settled by Spaniards. The first French attempt to colonise the territory dates back to 1624, when Rouen traders settled in Sinnamary. In 1643, the French founded Cayenne. However, due to the attacks of local Indians and colonisation competitors, especially the Dutch and Portuguese (the Dutch in 1658 established *Kolonie Cayenne*), they failed to gain control of the wider territory. Stabilisation of the situation was brought about by the Breda Treaty of 1667, on the basis of which the territory was transferred to the French. Until 1752, *Guyane* was administered from Martinique, but then a French governor and intendant (Marion 2005:27) were installed in Cayenne. That is why in

the eighteenth century the French administration was consolidated; the French possessions were also retained after the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763. As a result of the Napoleonic wars, today's French Guiana was briefly held by Portuguese (between 1809 and 1817), but France regained it and since then it has formed part of its overseas realm. In 1946, *Guyane* became the French overseas department, before that it had been used for nearly a hundred years by Paris as a penal colony (the famous Devil's Island, *Île du Diable*), which brought it to the wider public attention. We can sum up that the inhabitants of today's French Guiana have never had an independent state, always (or from the arrival of the first Europeans) they were part of a colonial empire, whether it was a Dutch, Portuguese, British or French empire. France has controlled the territory from 1667 to the present day (with the exception of an eight-year break at the beginning of the nineteenth century), a total of 343 years.

The Mayotte Archipelago was originally probably inhabited by Bantu, Malayan and Indonesian tribes. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Mayotte was taken over by Arabs who forced the indigenous people to convert to Islam. In the following centuries, Mayotte (at that time Maore or *Mawuti*, meaning the 'island of death') was ruled by sultans from other islands of the Comoros archipelago, mainly from the island of Anjouan (Nzwani). For the European colonisers (French, British, Dutch and Portuguese), these islands served for a long time only as a supply station on their way further east, not showing any special interest in them. It changed only in the nineteenth century. In 1836, Maore became independent from Anjouan, and the local sultan proclaimed the independence of the island. However, it did not last long, because the treaty, concluded in 1841 and ratified in 1843 (Bélorgey 2002:84), meant French occupation and proclamation of the protectorate. Paris also acquired other Comorian islands (Anjouan, Mohéli and Grande Comore), and created a single colony from all four islands, since 1912 governed from Madagascar (*Colonie de Madagascar et dépendances*). Between 1942 and 1946 the Comoros Islands including Mayotte were occupied by the British. After World War II, the islands became the French overseas territory, which was granted autonomy in 1961. In 1975, the three islands (Grande Comore, Anjouan and Mohéli) declared independence as the Comoros. However, the population of Mayotte, in two referendums, opted for remaining with France: in December 1974 with majority of 63.8% of votes and at the beginning of 1976 with support of 99.4% of voters (Candau and Rey 2014:124). This state persists until today even though the Mayotte archipelago is still being claimed by the Comoros. Unlike *Guyane*, Mayotte did have an independent country status in history, but it lasted only seven years. Since 1843, except for the four-year British occupation, the island has been administered by

France, which means currently 171 years.

New Caledonia was populated by Melanesians already by 3,000 BC. First contact with Europeans took place only at the end of the eighteenth century: in 1774 the British and in 1793 the French arrived. France gained control over most of the New Caledonian territories in 1853 (Marion 2005:38), concurrently Port-de-France (today's Nouméa) was established. New Caledonia became a penal colony, and European colonisers had to face a number of rebellions of the original Kanak population. During World War II, *Nouvelle-Calédonie* served as a major allied base in the South Pacific. In 1946 New Caledonia became the French overseas territory, which is still today. It can be said that the French administration of the islands has been in existence for 165 years.

In a referendum held in 1958, New Caledonia citizens confirmed their affiliation to the French Republic, with a majority of 98.12% of voters agreeing to retain close ties with Paris. On the political scene, however, the tension between the representatives of the original Kanak population, favouring the autonomy, and the representatives of French immigrants, whose interest was to remain an integral part of the French Republic, were already evident. This fundamental cleavage, which began to manifest in the seventies, has created two opposing political formations that are still active today: Kanak and Socialist Front of National Liberation (*Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste, FLNKS*) demanding independence (or at least autonomy) and the Union for the Caledonia in the Republic (*Rassemblement pour une Calédonie dans la République, RPCR*), which as the name implies has preferred to maintain the status quo, that is closer ties with France. Paris has responded to this power struggle by launching a referendum on independence in September 1987, which was however boycotted by the independence movements, as France did not allow the presence of UN observers. The result was clear: for independence voted only 1.7% of inhabitants. The frustration of the Kanak population grew in a series of riots culminating in the spring of 1988 in the Ouvéa cave, when the militant FLNKS captured dozens of French policemen and held them hostage to re-launch a dialogue on the independence of New Caledonia (so-called *prise d'otages d'Ouvéa*). The period of chaos edging civil war ended with the conclusion of Matignon and Oudinot agreement (*Accords de Matignon-Oudinot*) in June and August 1988. The agreements were confirmed in two referendums. It was supported by 80.0% of voters in metropolitan France, and by 57.0% of voters in New Caledonia. The compromise agreed in the Matignon Agreement included twelve months direct state control, the establishment of three provinces (the province of Sud, the province of Nord and the province of Îles Loyauté), the intensive French investment in island development, the education program of the Kanak population

(with a view to its involvement in local affairs), amnesty for certain offenses committed during the riots and, last but not least, the promise of a referendum on the self-determination of New Caledonia to be held in 1998 (Muckle 2009:180). For the first time, the agreements granted New Caledonia a considerable degree of autonomy. The following decade was characterised by calming the situation and preparing a new status arrangement (Monnerie 2002:614). From the dialogue between the already fragmented FLNKS, RPCR and Paris, the Nouméa Accord (*Accord de Nouméa*), concluded in May 1998, emerged. The Accord was supported by 71.85% of voters in New Caledonian referendum. *Accord de Nouméa* continued in gradual transfer of the autonomous powers to New Caledonia, in particular to the original Kanak people. The main principles of the agreement include recognition of the identity of the Kanak people and consensus on the continuation of the dialogue on the future development of the *Nouvelle-Calédonie* status (Faberon 2002:40). France has retained only its core competencies, namely foreign and defense policy, police, immigration and currency. The Accord has also determined a transitional period of 20 years during which another referendum would take place, this time on the full independence of New Caledonia.

Constitutional Dimension

As mentioned above, French Guiana used to be (as far as administrative divisions are concerned) since 1946 an overseas department and region. Currently, it can be described as *collectivité territoriale unique à statut particulier*, which was created on December 18, 2015 on the basis of the Organic Law 2011-883 on Collectivities Governed by Art. 73 of the Constitution and on the basis of Law 2011-884 on the Territorial Collectivities of French Guiana and Martinique. The status of *collectivité territoriale unique* means that the collectivity in its territory carries out at the same time (i.e. embodied in one single authority) powers of the department and the region. This eliminated duplication of legislative and executive bodies. Martinique and Mayotte are currently in a similar position as French Guiana, while Guadeloupe and Réunion have refused this special status. *Guyane* as department No. 973 forms an integral part of the French Republic and enjoys the same status as metropolitan departments, resulting from Art. 72 in connection with Art. 73 of the Constitution (Blériot 2005:59). The legal framework does not, in principle, reflect the specificity of the overseas territories, for example in the case of French Guiana difficult accessibility to most of its territory and sparsely populated areas (Elfort 2002:27). In a referendum held on January 10, 2010, *Guyane* residents rejected the option

(for more autonomy only 29.78% of voters) to make their territory an overseas collectivity with a certain degree of autonomy governed by Art. 74 of the Constitution. French Guiana thus remains a fully integrated part of the French Republic, which, according to Art. 73 of the Constitution, does not have autonomous powers. This article grants *Guyane* and other overseas departments and regions limited autonomy in a limited number of matters that must be determined by law. In the same article, however, a broad range of agendas into which overseas territories can not intervene (citizenship, human rights and freedoms, status law, judiciary, foreign policy, defense, security, currency, electoral law) is listed exhaustively. The actual possibility for French Guiana to autonomously govern its territory at present (especially after the referendum in 2010) does not exist.

In the area of justice, since 2012 *Guyane* has been given—besides first degree courts (*tribunal de grande instance, TGI*)—also an appeal court (*cour d'appel*), which had been previously abolished in 1947. From 1947 to 2012 all appeals were brought to the court of second degree in the Martinican Fort-de-France, more than 1,400 km from Cayenne. There is also an autonomous and continuously enlarged administrative court in French Guiana, currently equipped with four judges.

From the point of view of the relationship with the European Union, French Guiana represents one of the outermost regions (*régions ultrapériphériques, RUPs*), thus forming an integral part of the Union (Ziller 2002:127). *Guyane's status in the European Union* is governed by an almost identical legal framework as that of metropolitan France. French Guiana is part of the customs union, but the rules of the Schengen area do not apply to it.

Mayotte, like French Guiana, has a status of *collectivité territoriale unique à statut particulier* (similar to overseas department and region), however, the adjustment of its position to Paris has undergone somewhat more complicated developments than in case of *Guyane*. The island was granted autonomy in 1961, which in 1976 resulted in the gain of the status of an overseas collectivity with a wide range of powers. Because of the permanent threat of annexing Mayotte by the Comoros, however, Mayotte gradually strengthened the tendencies towards a stronger link to the metropole. This process resulted in the transformation of Mayotte in 2001 into the so-called *collectivité départementale*, an arrangement that the French administration did not know until then (Candau and Rey 2014:124). Although this reform did not mean (despite its designation) creation of the Mayotte department, Mayotte began to apply metropolitan law in more cases and there were significant institutional changes. This reform was approved in a referendum held in July 2000 with 72.4% of voters supporting the change (Dumont 2005:520). The

Mayotte departmentalisation was completed on March 31, 2011, when the island became the fifth overseas and overall 101st French department (No. 976). Crucial in this regard was the result of a referendum held in March 2009, in which 95.22% of voters favoured status change to the overseas department and region. Mayotte thus has lost its autonomous privileges and has become an integral part of the French Republic. This means, for example, the need to abandon the application of Islamic and customary law, which will be completely replaced after a transitional period by the French metropolitan legal system. Polygamy will be abolished and equal status of women in the area of inheritance law will be introduced. Officially, the so-called *quadi* function will disappear, *quadi* will henceforward have only consultative power instead of individual dispute resolution under Islamic law competence. This change was followed by the *collectivité territoriale unique à statut particulier* status, based on the Organic Law 2010-1486 on the Mayotte department and the Law 2010-1487 on the Mayotte department. Mayotte is now governed by Art. 73 of the Constitution; it does not have autonomous powers, except for limited self-government in a limited number of matters that must be determined by law (as in the case of French Guiana).

The Maorais judicial and legal system has long been characterized by a specific regime, including the duality of French and Islamic (sometimes customary Malagasy) law. *Mahorais*, as the Mayotte people are called, could decide which system to follow. After the departmentalisation, elements of Islamic law are gradually replaced by metropolitan law, which also applies to the judiciary. Currently Mayotte hosts courts of first instance (*tribunal de grande instance, TGI*), which are complemented by the *cour d'appel*. The Mayotte judicial system is strongly linked to the system existing on the island of Réunion (especially in the case of higher-level courts).

Although Mayotte became an overseas department in 2011, it still remained for a certain period in the Overseas Countries and Territories category, i.e. outside the European Union, only associated with the European Union. This situation changed on January 1, 2014, when Mayotte joined the so-called outermost regions (*régions ultra-périphériques, RUP*), which form an integral part of the Union. Mayotte, following the example of French Guiana, has almost an identical legal framework concerning relations with the Union as metropolitan France. Mayotte forms part of the customs union, but it does not form part of the Schengen area.

Accord de Nouméa obviously affected the constitutional framework of *Nouvelle-Calédonie*. This territory became a *sui generis* collectivity (*collectivité sui generis*), governed by the special title XIII of the Constitution, specifically by Art. 76 and Art. 77 of the Constitution (Faberon 2005:8). New Caledonia has a unique position within the French Republic

(Al Wardi 2009:199), because thanks to the Nouméa Accord it has been given really wide (though not absolute) autonomy, which can be transformed into complete independence.

This partial self-government is logically reflected in other areas of the judiciary. Strong position in this respect is reserved for the traditional Kanak Law, based on customs, dividing New Caledonia into eight so-called customs zones (*aires coutumières*) according to individual clans (tribes). The Kanak people (so-called customs senate) have special powers when it comes to approving legislation on Kanak identity (Lafargue 2002:105). Civilian disputes are also addressed by Kanak appeal courts. However, in the area of penal law, Kanak customs are limited, particularly if there is a danger of violation of fundamental human rights recognised by the French Republic (e.g. the death penalty). In addition, New Caledonia possesses (in the area of metropolitan law) the courts of first instance (TGI) and *cour d'appel*, which also exercises jurisdiction over Wallis and Futuna.

From the point of view of the relationship with the European Union, *Nouvelle-Calédonie* belongs to the category of overseas countries and territories (*pays et territoires d'outre-mer, PTOM*), i.e. it is a territory outside the Union, only associated with the Union. The application of European Union law is thus very limited. Nevertheless, the citizens of New Caledonia can participate in European Parliament elections and have also citizenship of the European Union (Ziller 2005:153). New Caledonia has also a specific position in negotiating international treaties (Goesel-Le Bihan 2006:5).

Economic Dimension

The economy of French Guiana is based on services, production and construction. Agriculture accounts for only a small proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Mining is negligible. Approximately one quarter of GDP is generated by the Guiana Space Centre (*Centre Spatial Guyanais*) in Kourou. Also due to the links to Paris, *Guyane* has one of the highest gross national income in South America. The main trading partners are France, other EU Member States and other French overseas territories, in particular Guadeloupe and Martinique. Gross domestic product per capita in 2013 (last available data) amounted to EUR 16,210 (approximately USD 21,397). GDP of metropolitan France in the same period reached EUR 32,559 (approximately USD 42,978). The GDP of French Guiana currently reaches 49.79% of GDP in metropolitan France. The official currency of *Guyane* is euro.

The bases of the Mayotte economy are services and agriculture (vanilla, coffee, manioc, ylang-ylang). Mayotte is heavily dependent on

metropolitan France, representing the main business partner. Gross domestic product per capita in 2013 (last available data) was EUR 8,047 (approximately USD 10,622). GDP of metropolitan France in the same period reached EUR 32,559 (approximately USD 42,978). Mayotte's GDP is currently at 24.72% of GDP in metropolitan France. In a wider context, the Mayotte GDP per capita is only half that of the average of all French overseas territories. On a regional scale, however, Mayotte is the richest territory, with GDP per capita many times higher than that of the Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique or Tanzania (Candau and Rey 2014:124). The official currency of Mayotte is the euro.

The economy of New Caledonia is dependent on services, mineral extraction (especially nickel) and on financial contributions from the metropole. These have become particularly important since the 1970s, when their share rose from 9% of GDP to 36% of GDP. In the 1990s, their levels stabilised at around 25% of GDP (Muckle 2009:182). New Caledonian GDP is one of the highest in the South Pacific region, but wealth distribution is very unbalanced. Kanak's income is only a quarter of that of French immigrants. Europeans own about two-thirds of land and have far less unemployment than the original Melanesian population. Gross domestic product per capita in 2011 (last available data) amounted to XPF 3,490,000 (approximately USD 39,161). GDP of metropolitan France in the same period reached EUR 31,976 (approximately USD 42,848). *Nouvelle-Calédonie's* GDP is currently at 91.40% of GDP in metropolitan France. The official currency of New Caledonia is the so-called CFP franc (in the original meaning currency of French colonies in the Pacific, *franc des Colonies françaises du Pacifique*, in the modern meaning *Communauté Financière du Pacifique* or *Change Franc Pacifique*; the XPF code). CFP franc has been the legal currency since 1945 not only for New Caledonia but also for French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna. CFP franc is firmly linked to the euro at 1 EUR = 119.3317 XPF.

Political Dimension

The structure of the French Guiana political bodies corresponds to its status of *collectivité territoriale unique*. The supreme administrative authority is the Assembly of French Guiana (*Assemblée de Guyane*), which in December 2015 replaced *conseil général* existing at the level of the department and *conseil régional* operating at the level of the region. *Assemblée de Guyane* has 51 deputies and exercises delegated (not autonomous) departmental and regional powers. The head of this body with predominantly executive function is the chairman of the assembly, currently Rodolphe Alexandre. The President of the French Republic also appoints the prefect as his representative in French Guiana, who is

currently (since January 2016) Martin Jaeger.

In *Guyane*, three main political streams can be traced in general. They are right-wing loyalists, represented by UMP (*Union pour un Mouvement Populaire*) and LR (*Les Républicains*), left-wing loyalists, represented by PSG (*Parti socialiste guyanais*), the Walwari movement and FDG (*Forces démocratiques de Guyane*); finally, the third branch is an extremely leftist independentist movement, the MDES (*Mouvement de décolonisation et d'émancipation sociale*) (Daniel 2005:134). The effort of the French overseas movements to gain a greater degree of political emancipation for their territories is also evidenced by the initiative of representatives of the Guadeloupe, Martinique and *Guyane conseil régional*, who issued a statement in December 1999 called the *Déclaration de Basse-Terre*. The main requirement which, however, remained unanswered was the establishment of a specific fiscal and social regime for the three territories (Daniel 2002:594). The last election (two-round proportional representation system) to the newly formed Assembly of French Guiana took place in December 2015, the winner being a candidate list under the universal name DVG-DVD (*Divers gauche-Divers droite*) led by Rodolphe Alexandre, which received 35 seats. Alexandre is a typical representative of loyalists, as he has been a candidate for the PSG and the UMP in the past. The second place in the elections was taken by the MDES (16 mandates), whose list was led by Alain Tien-Liong. With regard to the electoral system, neither third PSG nor fourth Walwari won a seat.

The inhabitants of French Guiana participate in the elections to the metropolitan legislative bodies; they have two representatives in the *Assemblée nationale* and *Sénat*. More specifically, they are represented by deputies Gabriel Serville (DVG) and Lénaïck Adam (*La République En Marche !*) and senators Georges Patient (DVG) and Antoine Karam (DVG). It is certainly interesting to mention that former French Minister of Justice (2012-2016) Christiane Taubira comes from Cayenne and her career began as a militant representative of Guyanese independentism in the Walwari movement, which eventually became part of a loyalist camp. The inhabitants of *Guyane* also participate in the European Parliament elections; however, as a result of the electoral reform of 2018, they lost the guarantee of having one own representative. In the period from 2014 to 2019, it was Louis-Joseph Manscour from Martinique, elected in a constituency called *Outre-Mer* and Atlantic Section, covering *Guyane*, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Martin and Saint Pierre and Miquelon.

The structure of the Mayotte political authorities corresponds to the status of the *collectivité territoriale unique*. The highest administrative authority is the *Conseil départemental de Mayotte*, which at the same time

operates at regional level. The *Conseil départemental de Mayotte* has 19 deputies, headed by the council chairman, currently Soibahadine Ibrahim Ramadani. The President of the French Republic also appoints the prefect as his representative on the territory of Mayotte, who is currently (since May 2016) Frédéric Veau.

The Union for the Defense of Mayotte Interests (*Union de défense des intérêts de Mayotte, UDIM*), which in 1967 transformed into Mayotte People's Movement (*Mouvement populaire mahorais, MPM*), can be considered as the first political movement on the Maorais scene. MPM openly supported the idea of separating Mayotte from the rest of the Comoros archipelago and subsequent archipelago decentralisation (Hachimi Alaoui, Lemerrier, and Palomares 2013:60). As the results of the last local elections held in March 2015 show, Mayotte does not have a significant local political force; metropolitan political parties have the greatest success. Five representatives of the DVG, five representatives of the UMP (or LR, including chairman Ramadani), four representatives of the Union of Democrats and Independents (*Union des démocrates et indépendants, UDI*) and three representatives of the Socialist Party (*Parti socialiste, PS*) are currently present in the Mayotte Department Council. *Nouvel élan pour Mayotte* (NEMA), the only truly regional political formation (however not anti-French) counts just with two members of the council.

Mayotte residents take part in elections to metropolitan legislative bodies; they have two members in the *Assemblée nationale* and *Sénat*. Specifically, they are deputies Ramlati Ali (independent for *Groupe La République En Marche !*) and Mansour Kamardine (UMP) and senators Thani Mohamed Soilihi (DVG) and Abdallah Hassani (independent for *Groupe La République En Marche !*). *Mahorais* also participate in the European Parliament elections; however, as a result of the electoral reform of 2018, they lost the guarantee of having one own representative. In the period from 2014 to 2019, it was communist Younous Omarjee from Réunion, elected in a constituency called *Outre-Mer* and Indian Ocean section, covering Mayotte and Réunion. To be noted that despite this fact, Younous Omarjee successfully defended his mandate in 2019 and remained Member of the European Parliament, this time elected in the newly created single constituency for the whole French Republic.

The nature and structure of the political bodies of New Caledonia derives from the *Accord de Nouméa*. *Nouvelle-Calédonie* has an autonomous legislative and executive body whose composition is identical (based on the same election). The legislative body is the New Caledonian Congress (*Congès de la Nouvelle-Calédonie*) composed by 54 members, to which the Government (*Gouvernement de la Nouvelle-Calédonie*) is responsible. As results from the *sui generis* collectivity status, the New Caledonian arrangement is unique within the French overseas territories

(Clinchamps 2005:83). Autonomous legislation is referred to 'as land laws' or *lois du pays* and covers a wide range of agendas listed in the Nouméa Accord (including taxes, property issues or customary law). The President of the French Republic is represented in the territory of New Caledonia by the High Commissioner (*Haut-commissaire de la République en Nouvelle-Calédonie*), whose position corresponds to the prefect but has only limited powers. The current High Commissioner, referred to as *Haussaire*, is Laurent Prévost (since August 2019).

From the times when the New Caledonian political scene was polarised on the independentist FLNKS and the loyalist RPCR, the distribution of forces has changed significantly. Gradually granted autonomy led to FLNKS internal fragmentation to the wing supporting this development and to a radical faction persisting on the requirement of total independence. The latest New Caledonian elections to the Congress took place in May 2019. However, according to a clause contained in the Nouméa Accord and confirmed by the Versailles Accord (February 2007), the electorate was limited to those who had lived for at least ten years at the time of the elections in New Caledonia and to their adult descendants. Excluded were recent immigrants (mainly immigrants from metropolitan France). In total, this measure could affect about 10% of the potential electorate, in the capital of Nouméa up to 20% of residents (Muckle 2009:190). The elections ended with victory of the right-wing anti-independence formation *L'Avenir en confiance* (AC, 18 mandates), followed by *Union calédonienne* (UC), which split from FLNKS and which has advocated for independence with 9 mandates, and the National Union for Independence (*Union nationale pour l'indépendance*, UNI), a militant socialist pro-independence movement, also with 9 mandates. Fourth came loyalist *Calédonie ensemble* (CE, 7 mandates) and fifth FLNKS with 6 mandates. The current structure of the mandates looks as follows: 28 seats are held by loyalist deputies, 26 members of Congress are calling for independence. The chairman of the congress is Rock Wamytan (UC), the president of the autonomous government is Thierry Santa (LR).

The inhabitants of New Caledonia are participating in the elections to metropolitan legislative bodies; they have two representatives in *Assemblée nationale* and *Sénat*. Specifically, these are deputies Philippe Dunoyer (CE) and Philippe Gomès (CE) and senators Pierre Frogier (UMP) and Gérard Poadja (CE). New Caledonians also participate in the European Parliament elections; however, as a result of the electoral reform of 2018, they lost the guarantee of having one own representative. In the period from 2014 to 2019, it was Maurice Ponga of New Caledonia, elected in a constituency called *Outre-Mer* and Pacific section, covering New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna.

Ethno-Religious Dimension

Regarding the national and religious composition of metropolitan France and its overseas territories, unfortunately there are no official statistics. The law of 1872 prohibits the collection of such data by state authorities because of traditional French secularism and the protection of individuals' personal data. As for the ethnic composition of *Guyane*, the population is mostly of mixed origin (Creole); represented are also French from the metropole, the indigenous Indian population (Affergan 2002:581), Surinamese, Haitians (Calmont 1993:427), Brazilians, Chinese and the Laotian community of Hmongs. The varied structure of the Guyanese population (Pommerolle 2013:694) is also complemented by Indians, who emigrated to French Guiana as a result of the British-French Agreement of 1861, which limited Indian (and Chinese) immigration of cheap wage labour (*coolies*) to only four French possessions: Martinique, Guadeloupe, Réunion and French Guiana (Speedy 2009:126). According to estimates, 64.5% of Guyanese population are French and 35.5% are foreigners, mainly Surinamese (13.8%), Haitians (8.8%) and Brazilians (8.7%). On the other hand, the statistics of metropolitan France refer to the following national composition: 93.8% French and 6.2 % foreigners—of them mainly EU citizens (35.7%), Algerians (12.0%), Moroccans (11.2%), Turks (5.5%) and Tunisians (4.1%). The ethnic composition is thus quite dissimilar, the difference in the representation of the 'Guyanese' three most numerous nationalities in Guyana (French, Surinamese, Haitians) and in metropolitan France is 51.9% (it is calculated that the percentage of Surinamese and Haitians in metropolitan France is negligible). The official and most widely used language is French (which of course is also the official language in metropolitan France); Guyanese Creole and a number of native Indian languages (*Arawak*, *Wayana*, *Emerillon*), none of which have official status, are also spoken. The Roman Catholic Church (approximately 80% of the population) dominates the religious composition, followed by Protestantism (6%) and traditional religions (about 4%). In metropolitan France, the composition of the population according to religious beliefs is estimated as follows: 63% Roman Catholic Church, 23% not religious, 7% Islam, 2% Protestantism. The difference in percentages of the 'Guyanese' three most numerous religions in French Guiana and metropolitan France is thus 25% (again, it is based on the premise that traditional religions are represented only marginally in metropolitan France).

As for the ethnicity of Mayotte, the Comorians and immigrants from nearby islands, usually called Kwassa-Kwassa according to their vessels (small fishing boats crossing the Indian Ocean), dominate the statistics. According to estimates, Mayotte is inhabited by 65.0% of Comorians,

25.2% of the Malagasy ethnicity Bushi (*kibouchi*) and 3.3% of the population of Swahili origin. The representation of the French does not reach even one percent. On the other hand, the statistics of metropolitan France refer to the following national composition: 93.8% French and 6.2% foreigners—of them mainly EU citizens (35.7%), Algerians (12.0%), Moroccans (11.2%), Turks (5.5%) and Tunisians (4.1%). The ethnic composition is thus quite dissimilar, the difference between the Maorais three largest ethnicities (Comorians, Bushi, Swahili) in Mayotte and in metropolitan France is 93.5% (none of the listed nationalities is to a significant extent represented in metropolitan France). Although the only official language is French, it is not the most widely spoken language. This is the Comorian language *shimaore*, which 55.1% of Mayotte inhabitants use as a mother tongue. Other quite widespread languages are *shindzwani* and the dialect of Malagasy called *kibushi*. According to the latest statistics, French is the first language for only 1.4% of the population; however, as a second or third language, it is spoken by more than half of Maorais population. The knowledge of French has significantly improved recently, thanks to its compulsory teaching and exclusive use in the media. French is now known by over 90% of children under the age of 14, and it can be assumed that this percentage will continue to rise. In terms of confessions, Islam (approximately 97% of the population) dominates Mayotte; metropolitan immigrants and a fraction of the indigenous population are Roman Catholics (about 3% of the population). Affiliation to other religions is negligible. Despite the secular nature of the French Republic, Mayotte has long been called *état civil de comoriens musulmans*, which was replaced in 2000 by a more neutral expression of *état civil des personnes de statut civil de droit local applicable à Mayotte* (Luchaire 2007:402). In metropolitan France, the composition of the population according to religious beliefs is estimated as follows: 63% Roman Catholic Church, 23% not religious, 7% Islam, 2% Protestantism. The difference in the percentages of the Maorais largest religions in Mayotte and in metropolitan France is thus 150%.

As for the ethnicity in New Caledonia, Kanak people (population of Melanesian origin), inhabitants from metropolitan France (so-called *caldoche*) and Polynesian immigrants (Wallisians, Futunans, Tahitians) are significantly represented. Immigration of Wallisians and Futunans after the World War II has reached such a dimension that today there are more Wallisians and Futunans in New Caledonia than in Wallis and Futuna itself (Rallu 1982:167; Gohin 2002:79). According to estimates, New Caledonia is inhabited by Kanaks (40.3%), French (29.2%) and Wallisians/Futunans (8.7%). Other nationalities include Tahitians (2.0%), Indonesians (1.6%) and Vietnamese (1.0%). On the other hand, the statistics of metropolitan France refer to the following national

composition: 93.8% French and 6.2% foreigners—of them mainly EU citizens (35.7%), Algerians (12.0%), Moroccans (11.2%), Turks (5.5%) and Tunisians (4.1%). The ethnic composition is thus quite dissimilar in the case of New Caledonia; the difference in representation of the New Caledonian three most numerous nationalities (Kanak, French, Wallisians/Futunans) in *Nouvelle-Calédonie* and in metropolitan France is 113.6% (it is calculated that the percentage of Kanaks and Wallisians/Futunans in metropolitan France is negligible). There is no language officially established in New Caledonia, but the Nouméa Accord recognises the special status of a number of Kanak languages (*drehu*, *nengone*, *paicî*) and French. The French language is the most widespread (over 95% of the population uses it); the knowledge of at least one of the Kanak (Melanesian) languages is declared by approximately 35% of the population. Religious beliefs in New Caledonia are strongly dominated by Christianity: approximately 60% of the population are Roman Catholics and about 30% of the population are Protestants; Muslims account for roughly 3% of the population. In metropolitan France, the composition of the population according to religious beliefs is estimated as follows: 63% Roman Catholic Church, 23% not religious, 7% Islam, 2% Protestantism. The difference in the percentage of the New Caledonian three most numerous religions in New Caledonia and metropolitan France is thus 35%.

Strategic Dimension

In the area of strategic infrastructure, we have to mention the Guiana Space Centre (*Centre Spatial Guyanais*, CSG) located near Kourou (Nabajoth 2002:140). As already indicated, CSG generates about a quarter of *Guyane's GDP*. France built this space center between 1964 and 1968 in response to the need to leave the spaceport in Hammaguir, Algeria. The CSG is of key strategic importance not only for France but also for other European countries. The satellites and probes of the European Space Agency, the CNES (*Centre National d'Études Spatiales*) and the satellites of the French private company Arianespace are launched from there. The relevance of other Guyanese transport infrastructure is rather low, Félix Eboué Airport in Cayenne and the seaport in Dégrad des Cannes are of local significance only. There are currently approximately 1,900 French soldiers in *Guyane*; one of their main tasks is to ensure a smooth running of the CSG. Directly in Kourou is located the Third Infantry Regiment of the Foreign Legion, Cayenne airport hosts a unit of the French Air Force and Dégrad des Cannes serves as one of five French naval bases located outside metropolitan France (and at the same time as the main base for the Caribbean). There are no significant

natural resources in French Guiana; mineral extraction is thus negligible, only gold is mined to a lesser extent. The size of the EEZ is 134,656 km². *Guyane* is in a relatively unstable region, as evidenced by the data obtained by averaging the Fragile States Index (FSI) of neighbouring states (i.e. countries situated within 500 km of the border of French Guiana). There are three states in the defined radius: Guyana with FSI 71.3, Suriname (65.9) and Brazil (68.2). The average FSI of this region is thus 68.5, which means the 'low warning' category.

In terms of transport infrastructure, Mayotte does not have much importance. Both the airport and the port of Dzaoudzi are of a purely regional nature. In Dzaoudzi, however, the DLEM (*Détachement de Légion étrangère de Mayotte*) unit is being deployed to maintain the military presence of Paris in the Indian Ocean and East Africa. Mayotte does not have any relevant natural resources. The size of the EEZ is 62,982 km². Mayotte lies in an unstable region, mainly due to the nature of the neighbouring Comorian regime, as well as to the fact that the Comoros still claim the territory of Mayotte (Sermet 2002:152). There are three states in the defined radius: Mozambique with FSI 89.0, Comoros (84.8) and Madagascar (84.0). The average FSI of this region is 85.9, which means the 'high warning' category.

In the field of transport infrastructure, New Caledonia has no major importance; both La Tontouta airport and Nouméa port are mainly designed for regional transport, which is also reflected in the numbers of handled passengers. More than 2,000 FANC soldiers (*Forces armées de Nouvelle-Calédonie*) are present on the islands; strategic air and naval bases are also located there. The territory of *Nouvelle-Calédonie* is rich in natural resources. New Caledonia has a quarter of the world's nickel reserves (De Deckker 2002:166) and is currently the world's fifth largest producer of this metal (after the Philippines, Russia, Canada and Australia). Another major mineral resource is chromium, cobalt and iron ore. The size of the EEZ is 1,422,596 km²; it is the second highest value of the permanently settled French overseas territories (after French Polynesia). Regarding the stability of the region, there is only Vanuatu in the defined 500 km radius, but with no specified FSI. Alternatively, when choosing the 1,000 km range, Solomon Islands (84.8) and Fiji (76.9) will be included with an average FSI of 80.9, which means the 'high warning' category.

Symbolic Dimension

Guyane has its own flag, created in 1967 and endorsed by the then *conseil général*. The flag, in which the green color represents the forests, the yellow color gold and the red five-pointed star socialism, is at the

same time a symbol of the MDES movement. However, in accordance with the Constitution the flag of the French Republic is the only one used officially. French Guiana does not have its own anthem or motto. There is no theater, gallery or museum of 'national' character in Cayenne or any other city. The Diocese of Cayenne (*Diocesis Caiennensis*) forms part of the Fort-de-France Ecclesiastical Province. Directly in Cayenne the residence of the bishopric and Saint-Sauveur cathedral are located. *Guyane* is not a member of any international organisation or association, with the only exception being the membership in the CONCACAF (*Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football*) football organisation since 2013. However, French Guiana is not a member of FIFA. *Guyane* thus does not participate at the World Cup (qualifications) and the local football federation *Ligue de Football de la Guyane* is directly subordinated to the metropolitan *Fédération Française de Football*.

The official flag of Mayotte is, as in the case of French Guiana, a French tricolor. Mayotte also has an unofficial flag, which consists of a white box and a coat of arms. There is a national motto *Ra Hachiri* on the coat of arms, which means "we are awake" in *shimaore*. Mayotte does not have its own anthem, but it is interesting to note that the island is mentioned in the Comorian national anthem *Udzima wa ya Masiwa*. Mayotte does not possess a theater, gallery or museum of 'national' character. Mayotte falls under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic Vicariate of the Comoros Archipelago located in Moroni; in the case of Islam, it is for obvious reasons impossible to speak about hierarchical structure. Mayotte is not a member of any international organisation, association, or federation.

New Caledonia has in accordance with *Accord de Nouméa* its own official flag, which has been since 2010 used along with the flag of the French Republic. It is the Kanak flag previously used by FLNKS. *Nouvelle-Calédonie* has also its motto (*Terre de parole, terre de partage*, loosely translated 'Land of words, land of sharing'). The national symbols include the anthem *Soyons unis, devenons frères*, which is officially played together with *La Marseillaise*. The Nouméa capital houses *Théâtre de l'île* and *Musée de Nouvelle-Calédonie*, dedicated mainly to Kanak culture. The territory of New Caledonia forms part of the Ecclesiastical Province Nouméa, headed by the Archbishop-Metropolitan of Nouméa, who is responsible also for the suffragan dioceses of Wallis and Futuna and Port-Vila (Vanuatu). New Caledonia is a member of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). *Fédération Calédonienne de Football* is recognised by the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) as a full member; *Nouvelle-Calédonie* is also a member of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA).

Conclusion: Results of the Criteria Analysis and Impact on the Links to the Metropole

Table 4: French Guiana (criteria analysis)

GUYANE (GUY)		
Geographic-Demographic Dimension		
<i>Distance from metropole</i>	7,086 km, Absence of other territories	2
Area (in relation to metropole)	15.15% (83,534 km ² vs. 551,500 km ²)	4
Population (in relation to metropole)	0.38% (244,118 vs. 63,697,865)	0
Historical Dimension		
Total period of existence of an independent state	0 yrs	0
Total time of belonging to metropole	343 yrs (from 1667 to 1809, since 1817)	0
Ratio	0.00% (0 yrs vs. 343 yrs)	0
Constitutional Dimension		
<i>Status according to the Constitution (level of autonomy)</i>	Art. 73 of the Constitution (integral part, no autonomy)	0
Existence and strength of own legal norms	No legislative autonomy, existence of judicial system (<i>régime de l'identité législative</i>)	2
Form of relationship to the EU	Part of the EU (RUP)	0
Economic Dimension		
<i>GDP per capita</i>	USD 21,397 (2013)	4
Ratio of GDP per capita in territory to GDP per capita in metropole	49.79% (USD 21,397 vs. USD 42,978)	0
Own currency	No (EUR)	0
Political Dimension		
<i>Existence of own political bodies</i>	Absence of autonomous body	0
Specifics of party system	1 Party metropolitan character (DVG-DVD)	2
Degree of representation of territory in metropole	Participation in elections, representation in body	0

GUYANE (GUY)		
Ethno-religious Dimension		
<i>Ethnic composition (in relation to metropole)</i>	Difference 51.9% (French, Surinamese, Haitians)	4
Language	French (official + most widely used)	0
Religious belief (in relation to metropole)	Difference 25% (Roman Catholic, Protestant, traditional)	2
Strategic Dimension		
<i>Existence of strategic infrastructure</i>	Military + Transport infrastructure (Kourou, CSG)	0
Existence of significant natural resources	No	4
Exclusive economic zone (EEZ) area	134,656 km ²	2
Region stability	FSI 68.5	2
Symbolic Dimension		
<i>Existence of own symbols</i>	Flag	2
Existence of own cultural institutions and church administrative units	No/Diocese of Cayenne	2
Membership in international organizations, associations or federations	CONCACAF	2
		34

Table 5: Mayotte (criteria analysis)

MAYOTTE (MAY)		
Geographic-Demographic Dimension		
<i>Distance from metropole</i>	8,052 km, Presence of other territories	4
Area (in relation to metropole)	0.07% (374 km ² vs. 551,500 km ²)	0
Population (in relation to metropole)	0.34% (217,091 vs. 63,697,865)	0
Historical Dimension		
<i>Total period of existence of an independent state</i>	7 yrs (from 1836 to 1843)	2
Total time of belonging to metropole	171 yrs (from 1843 to 1942, since 1946)	2
Ratio	4.09% (7 yrs vs. 171 yrs)	0

MAYOTTE (MAY)		
Constitutional Dimension		
<i>Status according to the Constitution (level of autonomy)</i>	Art. 73 of the Constitution (integral part, no autonomy)	0
Existence and strength of own legal norms	No legislative autonomy, existence of judicial system (<i>régime de l'identité législative</i>)	2
Form of relationship to the EU	Part of the EU (RUP)	0
Economic Dimension		
<i>GDP per capita</i>	USD 10,622 (2013)	2
Ratio of GDP per capita in territory to GDP per capita in metropole	24.72% (USD 10,622 vs. USD 42,978)	0
Own currency	No (EUR)	0
Political Dimension		
<i>Existence of own political bodies</i>	Absence of autonomous body	0
Specifics of party system	2 Parties metropolitan character (DVG, UMP)	0
Degree of representation of territory in metropole	Participation in elections, representation in body	0
Ethno-religious Dimension		
<i>Ethnic composition (in relation to metropole)</i>	Difference 93.5% (Comorian, Bushi, Swahili)	4
Language	French (official), <i>shimaore</i> (most widely used)	2
Religious belief (in relation to metropole)	Difference 150% (Islam, Roman Catholic)	4
Strategic Dimension		
<i>Existence of strategic infrastructure</i>	Military infrastructure (DLEM)	2
Existence of significant natural resources	No	4
Exclusive economic zone (EEZ) area	62,982 km ²	4
Region stability	FSI 85.9	0
Symbolic Dimension		
<i>Existence of own symbols</i>	Flag, Motto	4
Existence of own cultural institutions and church administrative units	No/No (Apostolic Vicariate of the Comoros Archipelago)	0

MAYOTTE (MAY)		
Membership in international organisations, associations or federations	No	0
		36

Table 6: New Caledonia (criteria analysis)

NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE (NCL)		
Geographic-Demographic Dimension		
<i>Distance from metropole</i>	16,758 km, Presence of other territories	4
Area (in relation to metropole)	3.37% (18,575 km ² vs. 551,500 km ²)	0
Population (in relation to metropole)	0.50% (320,595 vs. 63,697,865)	0
Historical Dimension		
<i>Total period of existence of an independent state</i>	0 yrs	0
Total time of belonging to metropole	165 yrs (since 1853)	2
Ratio	0.00% (0 yrs vs. 165 yrs)	0
Constitutional Dimension		
<i>Status according to the Constitution (level of autonomy)</i>	Title XIII of the Constitution (partial autonomy)	2
Existence and strength of own legal norms	Legislative autonomy, existence of judicial system (<i>régime de spécialité législative</i>)	4
Form of relationship to the EU	Outside the EU (PTOM)	4
Economic Dimension		
GDP per capita	USD 39,161 (2011)	4
Ratio of GDP per capita in territory to GDP per capita in metropole	91.40 % (USD 39,161 vs. USD 42,848)	2
Own currency	Yes (XPF)	4
Political Dimension		
<i>Existence of own political bodies</i>	2 Autonomous bodies (<i>Congrès, Gouvernement</i>)	4
Specifics of party system	2 Parties territorial character (AC, UC)	4
Degree of representation of territory in metropole	Participation in elections, representation in body	0

NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE (NCL)		
Ethno-religious Dimension		
<i>Ethnic composition (in relation to metropole)</i>	Difference 113.6% (Kanak, French, Wallisian/Futunan)	4
Language	French (de facto official, most widely used), Kanak (de facto official)	2
Religious belief (in relation to metropole)	Difference 35% (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Islam)	2
Strategic Dimension		
<i>Existence of strategic infrastructure</i>	Military infrastructure (FANC)	2
Existence of significant natural resources	Yes (nickel)	0
Exclusive economic zone (EEZ) area	1,422,596 km ²	0
Region stability	FSI 80.9	0
Symbolic Dimension		
<i>Existence of own symbols</i>	Flag, Anthem, Motto	4
Existence of own cultural institutions and church administrative units	Theatre, Museum/Ecclesiastical Province Nouméa	4
Membership in international organisations, associations or federations	WMO, FIFA, FIBA	4
		56

A thorough analysis of all the examined criteria confirms that it is currently French Guiana to have the strongest link to the metropole, closely followed by the island of Mayotte. The intensity of the link between these two overseas territories and the metropole can be characterised as strong. This is a situation in which we can find prevailing similarities between *Guyane*/Mayotte and the metropolitan France in most of the factors analysed; to a lesser extent there are also some differences, evidences of weakening of the bond. It should be noted that on the evaluation axis these two territories are very close to the territories with a moderate link to the metropole. New Caledonia is rather different from French Guiana and Mayotte: with a rating of 56 points, we can classify this *sui generis* collectivity as a territory with a moderate link to the metropole, but prone to become a territory with a weak link to Paris.

For French Guiana, it can be summed up that in all the analysed dimensions it shows elements of a strong or moderate link to the metropole. *Guyane* has the strongest bond from a historical, constitutional and political point of view; as a moderate we can label the intensity of the

link in terms of geographic-demographic, economic, ethno-religious, strategic and symbolic dimension. Mayotte—in contrast to the very balanced results of the *Guyane* rating—moves in a broader spectrum with greater fluctuations. Mayotte has the strongest ties in the perspective of the constitutional, economic and political dimension. On the geographic-demographic, historical and symbolic level, the link is rather moderate. On the other hand, as far as the ethno-religious and strategic dimensions are concerned, Mayotte is close to a weak link values. Also in the case of *Nouvelle-Calédonie* the spectrum of the results of the analysed criteria is quite varied. The strongest link can be found in the historical, strategic and geographic-demographic dimension. Moderate values practically absent. A weak link is present in the symbolic, constitutional, economic, political and ethno-religious dimension.

Looking at the results according to the logic of each dimension, not the territory, we come to the following conclusions. At the geographic-demographic level, the values are similar, with *Guyane's* area size contributing in particular to weakening the link to metropolitan France. In cases of Mayotte and New Caledonia on the other hand, the weaker bond is caused by the physical distance and further reinforced by the fact that there are other territories between Paris and these two regions (topographical aspect). Historically, French Guiana has the strongest bond (in French possession with a small break since 1667), followed by New Caledonia (governed by France since 1853) and Mayotte (the only one of analysed territories that in the past had its own state). In the constitutional dimension, for the first time, different statuses of the investigated territories are fully manifested. *Nouvelle-Calédonie* as a *sui generis* collectivity has a considerable autonomy. This leads to the logical significant weakening of the link. On the other hand, French Guiana and Mayotte as single territorial collectivities with special status (*collectivité territoriale unique à statut particulier*) form an integral part of the French Republic without recognised autonomy. Whereas in New Caledonia there is a legislative specialty regime (*régime de spécialité législative*), signifying more legislative autonomy/independence, in *Guyane* and Mayotte a legislative identity regime (*régime de l'identité législative*) is in place, meaning that all laws passed by the *Assemblée nationale* in Paris are directly applied in these territories. Another difference is the fact that New Caledonia as a PTOM is not part of the European Union, while *Guyane* and Mayotte as RUPs belong to the Union. From the economic self-sufficiency point of view, the signs of stronger bond shows especially Mayotte (with only a quarter of GDP per capita in relation to the metropole), followed by French Guiana (the level of GDP per capita half of the metropole). New Caledonia has clearly the highest GDP per capita (reaching over 90% of that in metropolitan France); moreover it has also its own currency (XPF).

In the political perspective, Mayotte shows many similarities with the metropolitan scene (absence of an autonomous body, strongest parties have metropolitan character). *Guyane* slightly differs thanks to a more structured spectrum of political parties, represented in particular by independentist MDES. On the contrary New Caledonia, which has its own autonomous institutions (*Congrès, Gouvernement*) and whose strongest political parties are purely territorially oriented (AC, UC, UNI, CE), represents a very significant change. In all the analysed territories, the inhabitants participate in elections to metropolitan legislative bodies and are also represented in them. Mayotte is definitely the territory with the weakest link to the metropole from the point of view of ethnic and religious composition. It differs both in the area of ethnic composition (Comorians, Bushi, Swahili) and in the area of religion (Islam). The most widespread (though not official) language is *shimaore*. Also in the case of *Nouvelle-Calédonie* the ethnic composition is very varied and distinct from the metropole (Kanak, Wallisians); moreover, the official language is Kanak. Only in terms of confession the differences are negligible. From the ethno-religious point of view *Guyane* is the territory with most similarities to metropolitan France, especially in terms of language and religion. The ethnic composition is also quite diversified (Surinamese, Haitians), but it does not reach the same scope as in the case of other two territories.

From a strategic point of view, New Caledonia is of most importance for Paris (military infrastructure, nickel mining, EEZ size). *Guyane* does not have significant natural resources and has a relatively small EEZ, but it is crucial for France due to the military and transport infrastructure (CSG in Kourou). Mayotte is the most 'dispensable' from a strategic perspective, though it has also a military infrastructure (DLEM). On the symbolic level, *Nouvelle-Calédonie* has the strongest position, as it has its own symbols (flag, anthem, motto), own national theater and museum and is a member of international organisations (WMO, FIFA, FIBA). French Guiana has only a flag, there are no national cultural institutions in its territory; it is at least a member of CONCACAF. Symbolically the weakest is Mayotte; this island is not a member of any international organisation, it has no own cultural institution but it possesses own flag and motto.

Currently, French Guiana and Mayotte are more likely to tend towards strengthening links to the metropole. This also corresponds to the distribution of preferences of local population. In a referendum held on January 10, 2010, *Guyane* residents rejected the option (for more autonomy only 29.78% of voters) to make their territory an overseas collectivity with a certain degree of autonomy governed by Art. 74 of the Constitution. Very similar is the case of Mayotte, where, in a referendum held in March 2009, 95.22% of the voters supported change of status to

the overseas department and region (later upgraded to the *collectivité territoriale unique à statut particulier*). Mayotte has thus lost its autonomous privileges and has since been an integral part of the French Republic. The main motive for closer ties with Paris is probably permanent threat from the Comoros claiming Mayotte as well as high instability of the entire region in which Mayotte is situated. France provides the local population with the necessary security and financial guarantees. On the other hand, New Caledonia has since *Accords de Matignon-Oudinot* in 1988 and particularly since the entry into force of the Nouméa Accord in 1998 weakened its links to the metropole and has a specific position. The situation is not as tense as before, but the fragmentation of the population is apparent, as evidenced by the electoral gains of FLNKS and its factions. This was lastly demonstrated also by the results of the referendum on the full independence of New Caledonia, which was held on November 4, 2018. Voters were given the choice of remaining part of the French Republic or becoming an independent country. The question asked was: “*Voulez-vous que la Nouvelle-Calédonie accède à la pleine souveraineté et devienne indépendante ?*”. As agreed in the Nouméa Accord of 1998, recent inhabitants who were registered to vote in general elections (mainly those who arrived from metropolitan France) were not eligible to vote in the referendum; these voters represent 17% of the total of 210,105 registered voters in New Caledonia. Majority of voters—56.67%—opted for maintaining status quo, while 43.33% of them voted in favour of independence. As foreseen by the Nouméa Accord of 1998, a second referendum will take place in September 2020, since majority of *Congrès* members decided so in June 2019. Another, possible third referendum would be organised in 2022, again, if *Congrès* allows it and if the previous one (of 2020) is not ‘successful’ in terms of favouring the independence.

Although the analysis shows that currently the links of French Guiana and Mayotte to the metropole are almost the same, it is to be expected that Mayotte will reach in the course of time even closer ties with Paris, as evidenced by recent developments, especially by the referendum held in March 2009 and by the regional geopolitical situation (real threat from the Comoros). In contrast with these dynamics in the *Mahorais* relations with the metropole, it is likely that *Guyane’s links to the metropole will not change dramatically, owing to the relative stability they have experienced in the past decades. New Caledonia* is undoubtedly the most advanced in terms of autonomy, having held a referendum on the independence in 2018. Given the fact that the ethnic composition of *Nouvelle-Calédonie* is quite stable and the percentage of Kanaks in the overall population is not definitely growing, it is however highly improbable that the results of the next referendum in 2020 will grant New

Caledonia an independent status. If the opposite is true, for Paris, there will be several crucial questions to be answered during the negotiations on the very form and other conditions of the possible independence: the future of nickel mining, the size of the New Caledonian EEZ, or legal status of immigrants from the metropole, whose share has risen in recent times and whose arrival is for strategic reasons—in order to strengthen the ties—welcome and promoted by metropolitan France.

Table 7: Comparison of analysed criteria and classification of territories

	Geo Dem	Hist	Const	Econ	Pol	Ethn Rel	Strat	Symb	
GUY	6	0	2	4	2	6	8	6	Strong link (34 p.)
MAY	4	4	2	2	0	10	10	4	Strong link (36 p.)
NCL	4	2	10	10	8	8	2	12	Moderate link (56 p.)

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Notes

- ¹ According to Henrikson’s topographical distance.
- ² Based on the results of the last parliamentary elections.
- ³ It operates only in overseas territory, unlike a ‘metropolitan’ political party that operates nationwide.
- ⁴ Sum of differences in the percentage of the three most numerous nationalities in the overseas territory compared to their percentage in the metropole.
- ⁵ Sum of differences in the percentage of the three most numerous religious beliefs in the overseas territory compared to their percentage in the metropole.
- ⁶ Flag, Anthem or Motto.
- ⁷ National Theater, Gallery or Museum.

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