

Scientific Coordination

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International Seminar
**Asymmetric Policy Making
in Federal Systems**

EURAC – Viale Druso 1, 39100 Bolzano
30 November 2007

9:00

Opening

9:15

Introductory remarks: *Francesco Palermo* (EURAC)

9:30

First Session

**Asymmetric Policy Making in Federal Systems:
A Complex Rationale**

Chair: Anna Gamper (Universität Innsbruck, Austria)

09:45

Michael Burgess (University of Kent, United Kingdom)

10:30

Discussion

11:00

Coffee Break

11:30

Frank Delmartino (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium)

12:15

Discussion

13:00

Lunch break

15:00

Second Session

**Asymmetric Policy Making as a Key to
Conflict Resolution**

Chair: Giovanni Biaggini (Universität Zürich, Switzerland)

15:15

Joseph Marko (Institute for Minority Rights, EURAC and
Universität Graz, Austria)

16:00

Discussion

16:30

Coffee Break

16:45

Dirk Brand (South Africa)

17:30

Debate and Concluding remarks

Hazem Hanafi (University of Kent, United Kingdom)

Luis Medina Alcoz (Universidad Complutense Madrid, Spain)

Karen Schlüter (Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg, Germany)

19:00

Dinner

November 30th, 2007

**“An asymmetric federal government
is one in which political institutions
correspond to the real social
federalism beneath them”**

C.D. Tarlton Symmetry and Asymmetry as Elements
of Federalism: A Theoretical Speculation, in *Journal of
Politics*, vol. 27 (1965), p. 867

The purpose of the conference is to investigate the recent “trends of federalism in theory and practice”, from the viewpoint of a key-element of modern federal policies: asymmetric institutional setting and policy-making. All federal and federalizing countries, including the European Union, show an increasing degree of diversity, both in their institutional design and in the national and sub-national policy-making. For this reason, asymmetry can be considered a fundamental feature of compound systems. This is due to many reasons, although two of them seem particularly significant in this respect: accommodation of national, ethnic, linguistic, religious differences and more efficient policy-making. It is thus necessary to further investigate the degree and the limits of asymmetry in a territorially compound polity. What degree of institutional unity and diversity is required and tolerable in a federal system? Is asymmetry a tool for preserving unity or is it rather a threat? Is asymmetry in institutions and policies enhancing equality among citizens or rather leading to intolerable disparities?

In order to address these and other questions, the conference aims at investigating the topic from two different perspectives. In the first session, theoretical and comparative aspects will be discussed, with particular regard to the challenges the concept of federalism is facing in the age of asymmetry. In the second session, two peculiar cases of asymmetric federal setting for the accommodation of diversities will be analyzed: Bosnia and Herzegovina and South Africa. The seminar targets in first place scholars and interested specialists from the practice.