

Decentralisation in Times of Crisis

Friday, November 26th, 2021

Online – Zoom Platform

Context

During the recent COVID-19 pandemic the issue of the intergovernmental relations has been called into question on several occasions. In situations of emergency a decentralised architecture of the government constraints the central government's power through competition among different levels of government. Therefore, it is crucial to reconsider the role of government in the European democracies and the necessity to protect civil liberties and economic freedom through the activity of different levels of government which interact and confront the central government's power and, if necessary, limit it. Indeed, small and competing jurisdictions may transform the decentralised architecture into a laboratory of public policies where there is trial-and-error learning from experimentation and also an induced competitive effect for the selection of good politicians, implying an accountability improvement.

The choice between centralisation and decentralisation depends on the trade-off between the inefficiencies derived from the uniform policies and those derived from the lack of coordination at local level. The differentiation of situations and the information available locally favour the role of the sub-national governments and may be a multiplier of the economic and social growth.

The project aims to compare the experiences of different models of government (centralised, decentralised, mixed) in Europe in the phase of the emergency, and that of the recovery in terms of innovation and differentiation of the policies and limitation of the Leviathan's power.

The project will:

- Assess the benefits of competition among several levels of government versus a centralised governance in terms of policies innovation and differentiation in emergency situations;
- Focus on the role of decentralization in preserving the liberties with respect to the power of the central government;
- Compare the experiences of different models of government (centralised, decentralised, mixed) in Europe on both fronts.

About the event

The event consists in the presentation of the book "Decentralisation in Times of Crisis", published by the European Liberal Forum in cooperation with Fondazione Luigi Einaudi and Paddy Ashdown Forum, and in a conference where speakers from several EU countries assess the current situation of decentralisation in their countries – either on a political, economic, social or legal point of views.

Friday, November 26th.

10:00 Introductory Remarks and presentation of the book (TBC)

Speaker: [Marco Mariani](#), European Liberal Forum Board Member

Conference Moderator

[Emma Galli](#), Scientific Director of the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi

10:15 - The case of Italy – An economic perspective

Speaker: [Prof. Roberto Ricciuti](#), University of Rome la Sapienza

10:45 – The failure of recentralization. How pandemic dispelled the illusions of government omnipotence in Poland.

Speaker: [Pawel Rabiej](#), Deputy Major of Warsaw

11:15 - Coffee break

11:30 – The case of Portugal

Speaker: [Ricardo Silvestre](#), Movimento Liberal Social

12:00 – The case of Hungary.

Speaker: [Attila Rokay](#), Deputy on Anti-Corruption, Momentum.

12:30 - Q&A and discussion with the speakers

13:00 - Lunch Break

14:00 – The case of Sweden

Speaker: [Magnus Ek](#), Member of the Swedish Parliament and Environmental Policy Spokesperson

14:30 - The case of Italy – A political perspective.

Speaker: [Prof. Enrico Graziani](#), University of Rome la Sapienza

15:00 – The case of Czech Republic.

Speaker: [Noah Brooks](#), Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Institute for Politics and Society

15:30 – Coffee Break

15:45 - Q&A and debate with the speakers

16:45 - Highlights of the findings and conclusive remarks

Emma Galli, Scientific Director of the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi

17:00 – End of the event

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