

Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy
University of Regina and Forum of Federations

CONSTRUCTING TOMORROW'S FEDERALISM

Federalism in Switzerland

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Federalism in Switzerland

1. Introduction
2. Federalism, democracy and power-sharing
3. Self rule and shared rule
4. Reform of the federal system
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1. Introduction

95 % live in multicultural states

40 % live in federal states

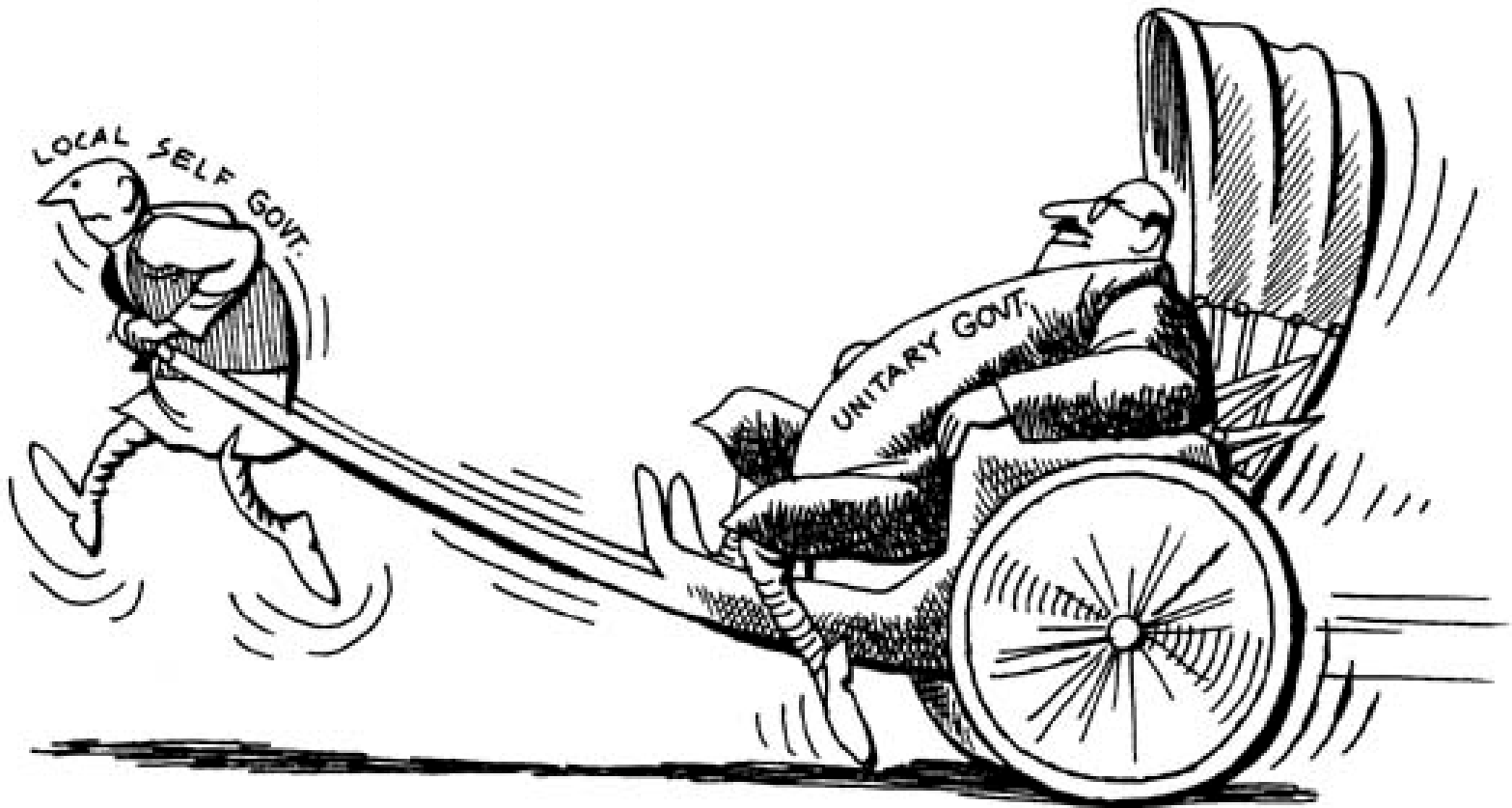
Federalism = possible solution to conflict in multicultural societies

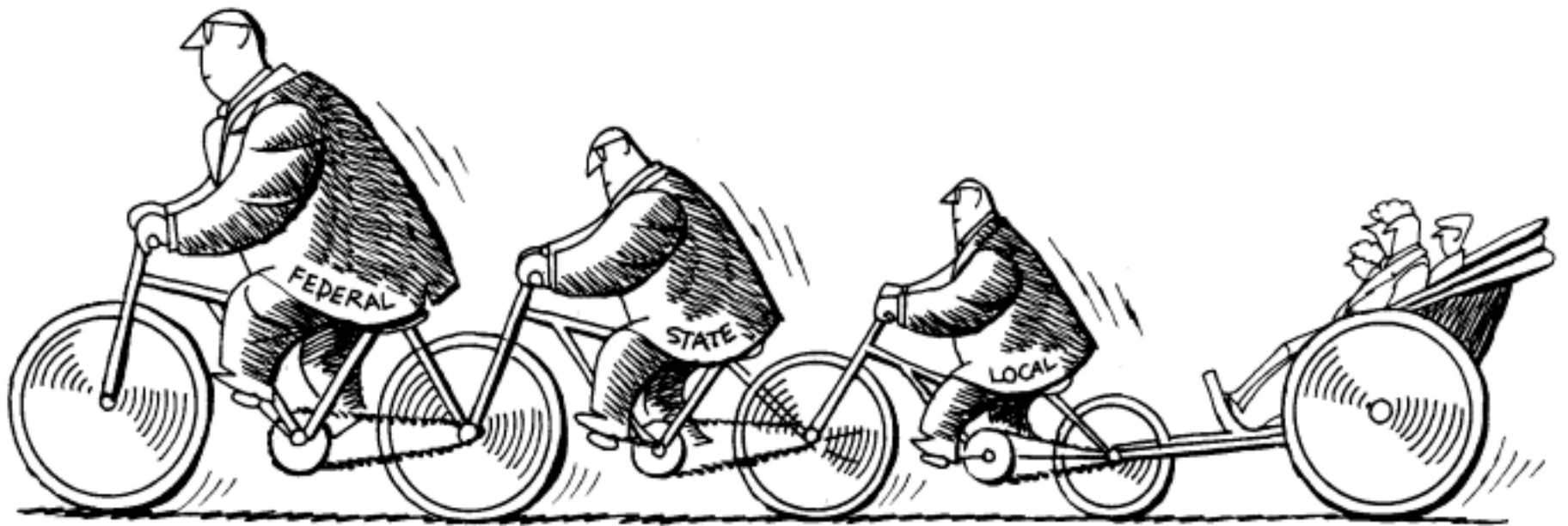


2. Federalism, Democracy and Power-sharing

Federalism: a structure, a process and a political culture

The national legitimacy of Switzerland is based on the legitimacy of municipal and cantonal democracies





Democracy

Referenda

Popular votes on parliamentary decisions
constitutional amendments (Swiss people and the
cantons
legislation (Swiss people)

The popular initiative

Signatures of 100 000 citizens required

Power-sharing

Involving all political groupings in the exercise of power

Protecting minorities

3. Self rule and shared rule

Art. 3 Cantons

The cantons are sovereign insofar as their sovereignty is not limited by the Federal Constitution; they shall exercise all rights which are not transferred to the Confederation.

➔ Self rule

Art. 45 Participation in Federal Decision Making

¹ In the cases foreseen by the Federal Constitution, the cantons shall participate in the decision-making process on the federal level, in particular in federal legislation.

² The Confederation shall inform the cantons timely and fully of its plans; it shall consult them if their interests are affected.

➔ Shared rule

The Senate

46 delegates elected by the people of the cantons. Two seats per full canton, one seat per half canton.

The House of Representatives

200 representatives elected by the people according to the system of proportional representation.

The Federal Government

7 members, each individually elected by the Parliament.



The Conference of the Cantonal Governments

Promoting the co-operation among the cantons influencing the political decisions on the federal level.

4. Reform of the federal system

Reform of Financial Equalization and Task Allocation between the Confederation and the cantons (RET).

Key features

Reallocating the responsibilities of the Confederation and the cantons.

Improving cooperation and financial restructuring between the Confederation and the cantons.

Encouraging intercantonal cooperation.

5. Federalism and Globalization

International legislation with direct effect (EU)

IMF, WTO

MNEs

NGOs

6. Conclusion

150 years of Swiss federalism

Multilevel legitimacy

New challenge EU

Switzerland between innovation and stagnation

