

Federations

What's new in federalism worldwide

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Federalism and the politics of change

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- A federal Philippines?
- Federalism and ethnic diversity
- Why Yugoslavia failed

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An overseas Iraqi voter casts her ballot in Toronto, Canada.



The Forum of Federations is an independent organization that was initiated in Canada and is supported by many countries and governments.

The Forum is concerned with the contribution federalism makes and can make to the maintenance and construction of democratic societies and governments. It pursues this goal by

- **building international networks fostering the exchange of experience on federal governance,**
- **enhancing mutual learning and understanding among practitioners of federalism and**
- **disseminating knowledge and technical advice of interest to existing federations and of benefit to countries seeking to introduce federal elements into their governance structures and constitutions.**

The Forum of Federations

The name implies a meeting place for federal countries, where they can share and exchange ideas on matters of common interest. And the Forum does play that role. But it plays that role as an international non-governmental organization, which gives it the flexibility to work all over the world in a great variety of ways.

The Forum works with partners on the worldwide Global Dialogue project, a multi-year enterprise that is producing a series of unparalleled resources on comparative federalism, covering themes such as constitutional origins, division of powers and fiscal federalism. The Global Dialogue brings together scholars, researchers and seasoned practitioners. It has a worldwide range of activities, building from country workshops to global conferences.

The Forum also works intensively in a select group of countries, in collaboration with local partner organizations. Currently, these countries are India, Nigeria, Mexico and Brazil. The Forum has a vast international network of experts and practitioners. In these country programs and others, the Forum brings this international expertise to bear on the challenges each country confronts.

In countries where federalism could be part of a solution to conflicts between ethnic, religious and tribal groups, the Forum also offers its expertise and services. It has significant resources for programs in Sudan and Iraq. It also has been active in Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

The Forum also works with young practitioners and young academics in federal countries and elsewhere to help them create a worldwide network to exchange information and ideas on federal systems, and, in co-operation with other agencies and governments, to offer to youth opportunities for advancement in learning about federal practices and federal countries.

And the Forum produces a number of high-quality publications and multimedia products, all directed at busy practitioners and others, to make expertise and knowledge accessible and useful to a broad public worldwide.

Canada provided the impetus to get an organization such as the Forum off the ground. The Forum's inaugural world conference was held in Canada, at Mont Tremblant, Quebec, in 1999. That first conference led to the founding of the Forum as an ongoing institution, based in Ottawa. It also led to the International Conference of 2002, held in St. Gallen, Switzerland with participants from even more countries. The International Conference on Federalism 2005 took place in Brussels, Belgium, and the next conference will be hosted by India in New Delhi in 2007.

After the 2005 Conference, the Forum became even more international. Eight governments have now signed agreements with the Forum and they sit on the Forum's Strategic Council, supporting Forum activities and providing expertise. The governments of countries that have signed to support the Forum are Austria, Australia, Canada, India, Nigeria, Switzerland, Mexico and Ethiopia.

Forum of Federations
700-325 Dalhousie, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7G2 Canada
Tel.: (613) 244-3360 Fax: (613) 244-3372
Email: forum@forumfed.org

www.forumfed.org

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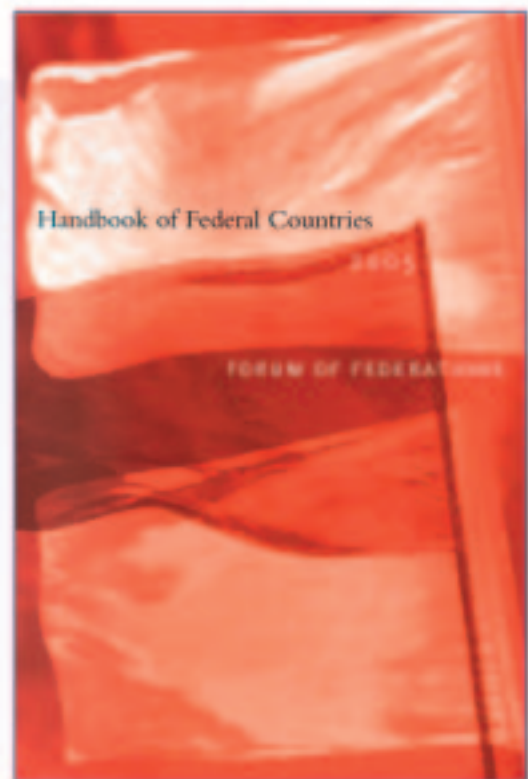
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