



EUREL Conference 2016  
**Governance and Religion in Europe**  
University of Luxembourg, Belval Campus  
29-30 September 2016

## Call for papers

The international conference *Governance and Religion in Europe* is jointly organised by the Eurel network of sociologists and legal scholars of religion ([www.eurel.info](http://www.eurel.info)), and the University of Luxembourg.

The Conference aims at focusing on **the role of religion in European policy-making and law**. Its approaches will be based in political science, sociology, and law. Proposals for presentation fitting in one of the following four panels are particularly appreciated:

### **• Panel 1: Religion, Party Discourse, and Policy-Making**

The partial deconstruction of the traditional party system in contemporary times has gradually altered the systemic interaction between the political actors and religious institutions. In particular, the larger religious communities have the potential to mobilise their members in politically influential ways and to ally themselves with political parties, which may advocate their agenda not solely on the basis of ideology, but also with regard to expected electoral effects.

The panel's aim is twofold:

- to identify the representation of religious topics within the ideological structure of the various political actors and
- to examine the influence of the religious organizations on policy making both at the national and the European level. The rise of populist political movements across the EU and their religious agendas will be given special attention.

The panel welcomes papers approaching the following topics qualitatively as well as quantitatively:

- the place and impact of the religious discourse within a political group or a party, in particular, concerning the core features of the party's ideology;
- the religiosity effect on party politics as a factor for reformulating the party's cultural and moral agenda;
- the role of religion in public policy making and how this varies in different domains (socio-moral issues versus macro structural concerns), with particular reference to the role of minority religious groups.

### **• Panel 2: Religious Engagement and Political Mobilization of Minority Religious Groups**

This panel aims at elaborating political, cultural and social factors, which fuel the claim for political legitimacy and institutional recognition by State authorities. It is directed at broadening the knowledge of political and religious engagements, and of

the status of religious leaders and their relations within and outside their own community's structures, regardless of the respective level of the State's recognition. Both quantitative and qualitative works are welcome for this panel. The following topics should be addressed:

- the status of religious stakeholders within their own group, and whether they form a majority or a minority;
- the place of converts within their own group and their social representation;
- the links between the different movements within given religious communities and the religious engagement in society;
- the importance of the quest for legal recognition;
- the links of religious actors with domestic political party groups, and the question of religious radicalization;
- the connection between gender and religious engagement;
- the role of external actors (e.g. State agencies, immigrant networks, home countries) on the formulation of the religious agenda.

### **• Panel 3: Religious Groups as Actors and Objects of Local Governance**

Religious organisations are increasingly taking part in local governance functions. They are invited to join local governments in their attempts to counter radicalization. They are often considered crucial actors for the provision of social services, and actively advocate minority rights. Simultaneously and, in particular, after 9/11, religious diversity groups and religious organisations have moved up in the agenda of most European countries. Hereby, the local level is the first to govern religious diversity.

This panel aims at analysing whether, how, and why religious organisations become subjects and objects of local governance. The focus is both at the level of religion in local governance as such, and at the level of the symbolic and discursive repertoires mobilised to justify or oppose it. Papers looking at the involvement of religious organisations and faith-based NGOs in local governance networks and policy-making processes, as well as contributions dealing with the ways religious variety is depicted as an object of policy and is diversely governed, are welcome.

The following topics should be addressed:

- the role of faith-based organisations in local governance between providing social services and playing an active role in the design and implementation of local policies;
- the acceptance or exclusion of religious groups as partners in the local governance, and the justification of their involvement;
- the regulation of religion at the local level by local governments, and the main issues at stake (use of the public space, access to land, use of religious symbols in municipal facilities).

### **• Panel 4: Religion in Legislation and Law Enforcement**

States and religions interact in different ways. Firstly, secular State law refers to religion because it provides religious freedom and accommodates religious needs. Beyond that level, it may draw from religious thought in order to resolve contemporary problems. This panel aims at tracing the religious as well as the anti-religious argument in both legislative acts and case law. Topics to be addressed comprise:

- the interaction of religious communities pursuing their interests in regard to legislation regulating their own position;

- the official involvement of religious communities in the enforcement of law (e.g. urban planning or the protection of cultural heritage);
- the composition of committees on ethics, their agenda and their influence on general legislation;
- secular vs. anti-religious arguments;
- the differentiation of two levels in legal doctrine: the scope of protection and the limitations of religious freedom;
- studies of case law, where a specific religion is concerned, where a religious position is hidden, etc.

The working languages of the conference will be English and French.  
 Conference fee is 20 €, including coffe breaks.  
 Submissions will be made online via the website of the conference until **31 January 2016** (300 words max. abstract, along with a short biographical statement max. 100 words)

<http://eurel.sciencesconf.org/>

The notification of decision on papers will be given in March 2016.  
 Acceptance to the conference is a commitment to attend.  
 The conference proceedings will be published as a collective volume.  
 For further information, contact [eurel@misha.cnrs.fr](mailto:eurel@misha.cnrs.fr).

**Conference committee:** Brian Conway (Ireland), Julia Martinez Ariño (Spain), Konstantinos Papastathis (Luxembourg), Philippe Poirier (Luxembourg), Wolfgang Wieshaider (Austria), Siniša Zrinščak (Croatia), Anne-Laure Zwilling (France).

