

Curriculum Vitae Eva Maria Belser

Eva Maria Belser
evamaria.belser@unifr.ch

Chemin du Riedelet 7
CH-1723 Marly
+41 26 436 22 36

Prof. Dr.iur, Chair for Constitutional and Administrative Law, www.unifr.ch/ius/belser
Co-Director, Institute of Federalism, www.federalism.ch
UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Democracy
University of Fribourg
Avenue Beauregard 1
CH-1700 Fribourg
+41 26 300 81 30/25

Personal details

Prof Eva Maria Belser (EMB) holds a Chair for Constitutional and Administrative Law at the University of Fribourg (since 2008) and a UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Democracy (since 2014). Since 2008, she is Co-Director of the Institute of Federalism and heads the international unit. She is a member of the board of the Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights and co-directs the thematic cluster “Institutional Aspects of Human Rights Implementation”. In 2016, she has been elected first vice-president of the International Association of Centres for Federal Studies (IACFS). Since 2018, she is a member of the independent expert group on the European Charter of Local Self-Government. For her achievement in the field of comparative federalism, she was awarded the federalism prize 2019 by the ch foundation.

EMB has research and teaching experience in Swiss and comparative constitutional law, constitution-making and transition, democracy, national and international human rights, minority rights, federalism and decentralisation, globalisation, development cooperation, law, literature & film.

She is a Swiss national, born on 26 June 1970 in Lucerne, and married to Stephan Wyss, Dr. phil. and lic. theol. She is the mother of Luis Severin, born on 22 September 1997, and Antilia Teresa, born on 23 August 1999.

Educational Qualifications

EMB holds a bilingual (German-French) Master of Law (Licentiate), *summa cum laude* (award), and a Doctor iuris (PhD) from the University of Fribourg, *summa cum laude* (award). Her doctoral thesis was a comparative analyses of the effects of unequal bargaining power of parties on contract law (“Freedom of Contract and Justice of Contract, A Comparative Analyses”, Freiburg 2000). She conducted SNF-funded postdoctoral research at the *Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales* in Paris (2000-2002) and at the *Faculty of Law* of the *University of the Western Cape* in Cape Town (2002-2003) where she was also lecturing and participating in development cooperation projects in South Africa and Mozambique. In 2006, she obtained a *venia legendi* in public international law, economic law and private law for her habilitation thesis (“The White Man’s Burden, Labour and Human Rights in a Globalised World”, Freiburg 2007). In the habilitation thesis, she examined the historic and current links between labour and human rights and liberalised markets. She analysed the effects of trade liberalisation on state power and stability and on socio-economic equality and compared the colonial ideology (“the white man’s burden”) to today’s paradigms of globalisation.

Since 2006, EMB is a tenured Professor at the Law Faculty of the University of Fribourg. She has been a guest professor at the *McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism* in Montréal (2011), at the *Center for Transnational Legal Studies* (CTLS) in London (2013 and 2016), at the *Center for Federal Studies* (CFS) at Addis Ababa University (2013 and 2016), at the *Max-Planck-Institute for Foreign Law and Public International Law* in Heidelberg (2014), a visiting researcher in Vienna (2015) and a guest professor at South China Normal University in Guangzhou (2017).

Relevant Work Experience

From 2014-2017, EMB has been a Vice-Dean of the Fribourg Faculty of law. From 2006-2014, she has been a member of the Fribourg Commission on Research (Swiss Foundation of Scientific Research). She is directing a SNF-funded research project on “The constitutional and international framework of social aid and emergency assistance – Embedding the support of the poor in the context of federalism and fundamental rights” (PhD student Thea Bächler). Since 2016, she is a member of the Scientific Board of the Project „Western Balkans: Performing and Responsible Social Sciences (PERFORM)“, a long-term cooperation between SDC, Helvetas and the University of Fribourg, member of the advisory board of the research project “Sustainable Soil Governance and Large-Scale Land Acquisitions Originating in Switzerland” and of the research project “Curbing illicit financial flows from resource-rich developing countries,

Improving natural resource governance to finance the SDGs” and a number of international research projects, boards and juries (e.g. “Baxter Family Competition on Federalism”, McGill University). She is also an active member of numerous national and international professional associations and working groups in the field of constitutional law, public law, federalism and human rights and regularly organises and participates in national and international conferences, seminars and workshops.

Since 2008, EMB heads the international unit of the Institute of Federalism. She coordinates and supervises the activities of the international projects of the Institute and cooperates with international and national partners. She is the contact person for the international activities of the IFF, sponsored or mandated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Human Security Division (HSD) and other national and international partners. She is one of the Swiss experts for the Moscow Mechanism of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (since 2017). She is also on the United Nations Development Programme list of constitutional experts (UNDP Constitution Making Experts Roster).

As one of the co-directors of the Institute of Federalism, she is responsible for the following programs:

- Author’s Workshop on Federalism and Conflict Resolution (in cooperation with Dr Elisabeth Alber and Dr Sören Keil)
- International Summer University on Federalism, Decentralisation and Conflict Resolution
- Practitioner’s Course on Multilevel Governance
- Guest Researcher Program (3-month stay at IFF, recent guests have come from Algeria, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, Nepal, Nigeria, Palestine, Rumania, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Uganda and Zimbabwe)
- International research and cooperation programs
- Joint conferences and workshops (with partners in China, Germany, Ethiopia, India, Italy, Palestine, South Africa and Syria, etc.)
- Study tours and delegations (recent delegations have come from Azerbaijan, Belgium, Congo, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Iraq, Israel, Kenya, Morocco, Myanmar, Palestine, South Africa, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, UK, Ukraine)
- Alumni Network

EMB regularly accepts mandates to serve as a Swiss expert in international cooperation projects and is involved in a number of international cooperation projects as well as training and consultancy activities in the field of federalism, decentralisation, democratisation, human rights and good governance. Relevant experiences in the field of institutional knowledge transfer during the last five years include:

- Scientific support of the constitution-making process in Syria, European Center for Kurdish Studies Berlin, Berlin (with Dr. Sören Keil):
 - o «Einheit in Vielfalt – Eine Verfassung für Alle Syrer*innen», Zweiter Workshop für Mitglieder des Syrischen Verfassungskomitees (Malta, 8-12 May 2019);
 - o «Einheit in Vielfalt – Eine Verfassung für Alle Syrer*innen», Erster Workshop für Mitglieder des Syrischen Verfassungskomitees (Malta, 26-30 March 2019);
 - o Drafting Workshop – Constitution of Syria (Berlin, 12-13 January 2019);
 - o Drafting Workshop – Constitution of Syria (Canterbury, 1-2 December 2018);
 - o Forth Dialogue Workshop 2018 with representatives of the Syrian opposition, “Power-Sharing for a United Syria” (Athens, November 2018);
 - o Third Dialogue Workshop 2018 with representatives of the Syrian opposition, “In Diversity United – Jointly Creating a Syrian Future”, Power Sharing for a United Syria (Berlin, October 2018);
 - o Drafting Workshop – Framework for a future Constitution of Syria (Fribourg, July 2018);
 - o First Dialog Workshop 2018 with representatives of the Syrian Opposition: Working together to shape Syria’s future (Bucharest, May/June 2018);
 - o Dialog Workshop on the Rule of Law, Democracy and Human Rights at the Local Level – with special focus on the situation in Afrin (Istanbul, April 2018);
 - o Workshop on Government Systems, Elections, Power and Resource Sharing, Territorial Organization and Transition, Capacity building and training for representatives of minority groups in Syria (Istanbul, November 2017);
 - o Workshop on the past and future of capacity building in the context of the peace process in Syria (Istanbul, September 2017);
 - o Workshop on Minority Rights and Minority Protection, Capacity building and training for representatives of minority groups in Syria (Istanbul, May 2017);
 - o First Dialog Workshop with Members of Arab and Kurdish Opposition in Syria on options for power-sharing, inputs on motives for power-sharing, forms of federalism and decentralization, group works and discussions (Istanbul, April 2017);

- Negotiation Strategies (security, natural resources), Capacity building and training for members of the Kurdish National Council (Erbil, March 2017);
- Drafting Workshop – Constitution of Syrian Kurdistan (Berlin, October 2016 and Fribourg, November 2016);
- Follow-up workshop on “Visions for a Future Syria – Federalism and the Kurdish Region”, support of the Law Commission of the Kurdish National Council (KNC) in the drafting of a constitution for a Kurdish region in a future federal Syria (Erbil, September 2016);
- “Visions for a Future Syria – Federalism and the Kurdish Region”, support of the political leaders of the Kurdish National Council (KNC) in the drafting of a constitution for a Kurdish region in a future federal Syria, comments to a draft constitution and moderation of a workshop (Geneva, July 2016).
- Scientific cooperation on governance options for Ukraine and Syria, University of Geneva (Prof. Micheline Calmy-Rey):
 - Follow-up meeting on the “Colloquium on options of transregional/transnational governance: Case studies – Options for Ukraine and Syria”, Global Studies Institute (Geneva, February 2017);
 - “Colloquium on options of transregional/transnational governance: Case studies – Options for Ukraine and Syria” (with constitutional experts from Ukraine, Russia, EU and Switzerland), Global Studies Institute (Geneva, September 2016).
- Scientific cooperation on federalism as a peace-making instrument in the Horn of Africa, Centre for Federal Studies (CFS) of Addis Ababa University (AAU):
 - Symposium on “What Keeps a Federation United?, ”, jointly organised by the Centre for Federal Studies and Governance (CFS) of Addis Ababa University (AAU), the South African Research Chair in Multilevel Government, Law and Policy (SARChI) of the Dullah Omar Institute for Constitution, Governance and Human Rights of the University of the Western Cape, the Institute for Comparative Federalism of Eurac Research Bozen, and the Institute of Federalism of Fribourg University, Addis Ababa, December 2018;
 - Doctoral Colloquium, Centre for Federal Studies and Governance (CFS) of Addis Ababa University (AAU), December 2018 (with Yonathan Fessha, Nico Steytler, Jaap de Visser, Tinashe Chigwata and researchers);
 - Symposium on “Functions and Relevance of Subnational Constitutions in Federal Systems”, ”, jointly organised by the Centre for Federal Studies (CFS) of Addis Ababa University (AAU), the South African Research Chair in Multilevel Government, Law and Policy (SARChI) of the Dullah Omar Institute for Constitution, Governance and Human Rights of the University of the Western Cape, the Institute for Studies on Federalism and Regionalism of Bozen (EURAC), and the Institute of Federalism of Fribourg University, Addis Ababa, December 2017;
 - Doctoral Colloquium, Centre for Federal Studies (CFS) of Addis Ababa University (AAU), December 2017 (with Francesco Palermo, Nico Steytler and researchers);
 - Symposium on “Federalism as a peace-making instrument in the Horn of Africa: Comparative and country perspectives”, jointly organised by the Centre for Federal Studies (CFS) of Addis Ababa University (AAU), the South African Research Chair in Multilevel Government, Law and Policy (SARChI) of the Dullah Omar Institute for Constitution, Governance and Human Rights of the University of the Western Cape, the Institute for Studies on Federalism and Regionalism of Bozen (EURAC), and the Institute of Federalism of Fribourg University, Addis Ababa, December 2016;
 - Doctoral Colloquium, Centre for Federal Studies (CFS) of Addis Ababa University (AAU), December 2016 (with Assefa Fiseha, Karl Kössler, Nico Steytler, Jaap de Visser and researchers);
 - “Minorities within Minorities, Swiss Experiences in Relation to National and Cantonal Minorities”, Seminar on Ethiopian Federalism and Minority Rights in the States, co-organised by the Center for Federal Studies, Addis Ababa University and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Addis Ababa University, May 2016;
 - “Constitutional Review in Federal Switzerland – The People, the Parliament and the Courts”, Experience sharing tour on Intergovernmental Relations of a high Delegation of Ethiopia to Switzerland, Forum of Federations, Bern, May 2016;
 - “Regional Conference on Federalism and Decentralisation in the Horn of Africa”, Addis Ababa, February 2013, Report.
- Sino-Swiss Cooperation
 - “Democracy and the Rule of Law”, Seminars in Ghuangzhou and Yunfu City, South China Normal University, June 2017;
 - Sino-Swiss Workshop “Globalisation and Domestic Law: An Unequal Relationship or a Fine Balance”, IFF in cooperation with China University of Political Science and Law CUPL, Fribourg, November 2016 (with Peter Hänni and Rekha Oleschak-Pillai);
 - “Procedural rights in administrative procedures”, “Procedural Rights in Swiss Constitutional Law”,

- “Access to the Judiciary”, “Legitimacy of law making processes”, Series of Sino-Swiss workshops co-organised by CUPL and IFF, Beijing, October 2014, June 2013 and June 2012;
- “Use of natural resources: Swiss cases”, Sino-Swiss workshop co-organised by Minzu University and IFF, Beijing, January 2011.
- Fact Finding Mission in Iraq on Federalism and Power-sharing, meetings and interviews, reports and protocols, briefings und debriefings (with Terrence Billeter, Martin Aeschbacher and Lorenz Pfrunder). Bagdad, Erbil, Suleymania and Amman, October 2016.
- Scientific support of the constitution-making process in Sri Lanka
 - “Key Issues of Federalism: Comparative Perspectives”, Study Tour and Consultancy in Sri Lanka, seminars, round tables and expert meetings with academics, politicians, members of parliaments and governments as well as representatives of universities, minority groups and civil society related to the constitution-making process, Jaffna, Kandy and Colombo, January 2016;
 - Two reports on “Power Sharing in Sri Lanka – Some comments and recommendations to the constitutional debate from a comparative perspective”, briefings und debriefings (with Nico Steytler and Maurizio Maggetti);
 - “Swiss Democracy – Structure, Practices and Trends”, Parliament of Sri Lanka, Colombo, January 2016.
- Working group on governance and territorial division (University of Trento, Prof. Roberto Toniato):
 - “Comparing Patterns of Territorial Division of Governmental Power: Questioning the Scientific Foundations of the Regional State” and “The Participation of Cantons in the Swiss Federal System”, Workshop on the research project LIA “RS: Regional State” (Trento, May 2016).

The Institute of Federalism is partner of the Horizon 2020 project “LoGov – Local Government and the Changing Urban-Rural Interplay (H2020-MSCA-RISE-2018 Grant Agreement). EMB is a member of the project’s Research Coordination Committee (RCC).

- Kick-off Meeting LoGov – Local Government and the Changing Urban-Rural Interplay (Bozen, 26 and 27 February 2019)
- Meeting of the Research Coordination Committee (Bozen, 27 February 2019)

As a member of the board of the Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights and co-director of the thematic cluster “Institutional Aspects of Human Rights Implementation” (since 2011, with Prof. Peter Hänni and Prof. Christof Riedo), EMB is involved in a number of result-oriented research projects related to human rights implementation in multilevel states and interlinkages between international human rights, democracy and federalism. Her past activities include applied studies and working papers on follow-up mechanism to international human rights recommendations, human rights of travellers and linguistic and religious minorities, persons with handicaps and economically vulnerable persons. She also contributed to electronic newsletters and developed training materials and trainings. Her current project deals with human rights of elderly persons (together with Christine Kaufmann, Andrea Egbuna-Joss, Sabrina Ghielmini and Gabriela Medici).

Further professional experiences:

Member of the Lecturer for the postgraduate course Psychotherapeutic Psychology (2010-2014); Academic Director of the *Executive Master on Children’s Rights*, Institut Universitaire Kurt Bösch, Sion (2006-2009); Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Fribourg (2004-2008); Internship at the land registry of the district Sense, Fribourg, legal opinions (2003-2004); Lecturer at the *Faculty of Law of the University of the Western Cape*, Belville (South Africa, 2002-2004); Establishment of a Master in International Economic and Commercial Law at the Faculty of Law of the University Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo (Mozambique, 2002-2003); Research Assistant at the *Chair for Private Law and Comparative Law* (French section, Prof. Franz Werro, 1996-2000); Lecturer at the *Haute Ecole Suisse des ingénieurs en bois*, Bienne (1997-2000); Research Assistant at the Chair for Constitutional and Administrative Law (German Section, Prof. Peter Hänni, 1996); Student Assistant at the Chair for History of Law (Prof. René Pahud de Mortanges, 1993-1996); part-time journalist, *Freiburger Nachrichten* (1994-1996); replacement teacher (primary and secondary school, 1991-1994); Internship, Psychiatric Hospital Lucerne (1991); Attendant, Lucerne Festival (1988-1991); Person in charge of leisure time for persons with disabilities (1985-1991); Youth Group Blaurig (1995-1991); AFS Volunteer (1987-1989).