

CALL FOR PAPERS

REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2003

FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2003

London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre
Holloway Road
London, UK

ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE POST-DEVOLUTION: DIFFERENTIATION OR CONVERGENCE?

Devolution has generated profound implications for the nature and practice of economic governance in the nations and regions of the UK. While economic development has been integral to the devolution project in the UK, devolved governance arrangements are expected to deliver on two fronts. First, decentralised approaches tailored to sub-national, regional and local circumstances are considered better able to address the continuing problems caused by entrenched territorial inequalities in growth, income and employment. Second, devolved structures are expected to offer an enhanced, democratised political settlement that renders economic development institutions more accountable to their local, regional and sub-national territories. The substantial changes since 1997 have opened up strategic and practical challenges and opportunities for both the academic and policymaking communities within an increasingly multi-layered, devolving governance system working across the local, regional, national and European levels.

This context raises key questions concerning the impact and effects of more devolved forms of territorial management such as:

- **How far is devolution leading to greater differentiation in economic policy and outcomes?**
- **How can national and regional economic priorities be coordinated?**
- **How far is it leading to economic policy innovation and experimentation?**
- **Is devolution leading to greater openness and transparency and accountability or stronger elite power?**
- **How are the interests and views of different sections of the community represented across the UK?**
- **What impact is devolution having on the machinery of government at national and European levels?**

Drawing from contributors to the ESRC's Devolution Programme, the 2003 conference format will have several keynote speakers in the morning including:

- **David Heald**
- **Mark Goodwin**
- **Peter McGregor**
- **Michael Keating**
- **Phil Cooke**
- **Bob Elliott**
- **Martin Burch**

(See over for details of the call for papers)

This will be followed by six open-call, parallel workshop sessions, each addressing key sub-themes. At the conclusion of the conference these sub-themes will be brought together for a final interrogation of the new models of territorial governance in the UK. Papers in all categories are welcomed.

Papers are invited under the following themes:

Regional economic development and institutions: agencies, QUANGOs and Sponsored Bodies; partnership and RDAs; competitiveness and performance indicators. National, sub-national, regional and local institutional inter-relations.

Regional capacity: culture, competitiveness and development; education and intelligence facilities; inter-regional cooperation and competition; growth coalitions and regional elites, policy innovation.

Economic and social partners and devolved government: civic participation and democratic renewal; business, public sector, trade union and voluntary sector engagement in devolved government, boundaries and mapping of functional regions; business incubators and European Business and Innovation Centre and their roles in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship and satellite/out reach roles in rural areas; role of universities and colleges in entrepreneurship; social enterprises (ESF initiative EQUAL)

Devolution and democratic accountability: multi-level governance; asymmetric devolution; assemblies and parliaments; and other aspects raised by the establishment of forms of devolution across the UK. Lessons from international experience.

Incomes, benefits and wages: regional variations in (real and nominal) pay and prices; London weighting; regional differentials in welfare regimes and social services; pay variations; possible devolution of reserved powers over benefits, regulations and guarantees.

Taxation, public expenditure and public finance: fiscal federalism; Barnett formula; local, regional and central government taxation and spending; alternative policies and their implications for economic development, equity and coherence.

Please send offers of papers in the form of 200 word abstracts to Sally Hardy at the Regional Studies Association by Friday 30th May 2003. Submissions should include telephone, fax and e-mail details.

Proposals will be considered by the Conference Programme Committee against the criteria of originality and interest, subject balance and geographical spread.

Sally Hardy
Regional Studies Association
PO Box 2058
Seaford BN25 4QU

Tel: +44 (0) 1323 899 698
Fax: +44 (0) 1323 899 798
E-mail: rsa@mailbox.ulcc.ac.uk