

## A European Democracy on a Domestic Level

Vasiliki Poula, Jack Bissett, Maitrai Lapalikar, Maria Soraghan & Antonia Syn, London School of Economics

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Literature rejecting the ‘democratic deficit’ in the EU argues that either the EU is as democratic as it should be (because democracy would subordinate the EU’s Pareto-efficient activities to the majoritarian rule) or as democratic as it could be (due to the constitutional checks and balances, indirect democratic control via national governments, and the increasing powers of the European Parliament in place). In positing that a potential democratic deficit is not a problem, the literature extols the virtues of ‘enlightened’ bureaucracy against the dangers of majoritarian democracy.

Nevertheless, the European Union no longer (if ever) is a merely regulatory state with Pareto-efficient functions, as EU policies do have redistributive effects – for instance, one might consider the Eurozone or migration/refugee crisis, while potential for democratization is traced among various EU institutions. As such, the European Union emerges as a system, which needs democratic legitimacy as the normative benchmark of its success.

We argue that EU should be more democratic and could become so, by examining the nature of the democratic deficit, exploring the usefulness of categorisations which divide the deficit into levels, which reveal multiple distinct democratic deficits within the EU, and suggest that targeted solutions should be implemented to acknowledge the polythetic nature of the problem.

We evaluate the efficacy of different proposed solutions to the problem of the democratic deficit related to different institutions.

Concerning the Commission, we evaluate the recently established process of the Spitzenkandidaten, but we conclude that a top-down process is unsuitable in achieving a democratic shift, and specifically, our desired shift to a European democracy, which requires a more organic, broad-based reform that simply cannot be achieved through the channel that is the Commission, for it is constitutionally limited and its relationship with the Parliament could not possibly be one of a parliamentary-style government.

Regarding the European Parliament, we evaluate the electoral platform and the idea of transnational parties, concluding that their success would be limited, since European societies are plural, heterogeneous in character, and they treat elections as second-order, while European

Parliament results, by not being not linked to the performance of specific EU parties, present a political deficit.

The Council and the European Councils would again be lacking, for their emphasis is on national interests more so than European, they have an anonymous decision-making process, against domestic accountability, while the unequal legislative power of the Council's power over the Parliament is also a limitation.

Therefore, we conclude that the ideal channel of a fruitful, realistic European democracy would be the national representative institutions, and more specifically, domestic debate on European matters and national elections. As such, we side in favour of arguments which suggest that we must shift our perspective on the prospect of a European democracy, finding validity in the democratic proposals.