

Representing Europeans

A Pragmatic Approach

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List of Abbreviations/acronyms

ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
CoR	Committee of the Regions
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
DG	Directorate General
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECR	European Central Bank
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EES	European Election Study
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party
EU	European Union
MEP	Member of European Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NUT	Territorial Unit of Statistics (from French)
OECD	Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PERMREP	Permanent Representative
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
WTO	World Trade Organization

*Every citizen shall have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union.
Decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen.*

Treaty of the European Union (Maastricht) Article 10.3

Introduction

The End of Integration by Stealth

The tragic events we have lived through have perhaps made us wiser. But men pass on and others take their place. We will not be able to hand on our personal experience. It will die with us. What we can hand on are institutions.

Jean Monnet, in O'Neill 2009

We have reached a stage where the political agenda can no longer hide behind the economic one, and must assert itself in its own right. These issues cannot be dealt with if Europe remains an UPO—an Unidentified Political Object.

Jacques Delors, President, European Commission 2001

The European Union was not created by pressures from public opinion to represent 'We the People of Europe'. The treaties that serve as the EU's constitution have been negotiated by European officials and national governments with virtually no public involvement. In accordance with the normal practice of international law, treaties are signed by heads of state. Popular participation is not considered necessary. Thus, the Treaty on European Union declares that it is adopted in the name of His Majesty the King of the Belgians, followed by a succession of presidents and monarchs that concludes with the commitment of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The founders of the European Union thought first of Europe rather than Europeans.¹ A legacy of war and depression had shown the failure of the historic European system of sovereign states. The goal was to escape the evils of Europe's past by creating new institutions that would secure freedom, peace, and prosperity through the development of an ever closer Union. The European Coal and Steel Community took economic resources essential for war out of the hands of national governments and created a supra-national European Commission to carry out policies binding on national governments. The 1957 Treaty of Rome created the European Economic Community.

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The architect who designed the initial European institutions, Jean Monnet, envisioned European integration as advancing by stealth. He did not emulate Winston Churchill in making grand proclamations about European values. Instead, Monnet operated behind the scenes to create institutions that would, almost unnoticed, adopt seemingly small economic measures that demonstrated the practical benefits of European integration. Instead of having an electoral mandate, the European Commission was created to develop effective policies that would have little political visibility, but would cumulatively promote European integration. In the words of Walter Hallstein, the first chair of the European Commission, ‘The Communities are in politics, not business.’ The strategy of integration by stealth was designed to lead eventually to a United States of Europe.²

The benefits of European integration have been transformed in half a century. The means by which Napoleon and Hitler sought to unify Europe, described by Winston Churchill as ‘war, war’, has been replaced by ‘jaw, jaw’, in which leaders of national governments meeting in the European Council, Members of the European Parliament, and European Commission civil servants talk through policies promoting European integration. EU leaders have claimed credit for economic growth that by the end of the twentieth century gave ordinary Europeans a standard of living far beyond anything that could have been imagined by Europe’s founders.

The impact of EU policies has been transformed too. As long as the benefits are large and costs low, or at least not visible, the European Union could operate as an Unidentified Political Object. The absence of public interest could be interpreted as showing that it did so with the ‘permissive consensus’ of Europeans.³ However, the Eurozone crisis has resulted in visible costs coming before distant benefits and awakened public opinion. Instead of being asleep, it is now an elephant, poking its nose into what is done in Brussels and what Brussels does to it.

European Union policymakers have responded to the crisis of the Eurozone with a call for more of the same, that is, to increase political integration. The President of the Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, has invoked Jean Monnet’s dream of a federal Europe as the only way to end Europe’s crisis of confidence and compete with the superpowers of a globalized world.

A deep and genuine economic and monetary union, a political union with a coherent foreign and defence policy, means ultimately that the present European Union must evolve. And let us not be afraid of the words. We will need to move toward a federation of nation states.⁴

This prescription ignores the public debate about whether the European Union is part of the problem or part of the solution. This book adopts a twenty-first century approach. It argues that the end of integration by stealth

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requires the European Union to secure the political commitment of people who are both national and EU citizens.

I The Need for Popular Commitment

To charge the EU with having a democratic deficit on the grounds that it ought to be governed like a democratic state is a category error; it confuses the relation of states with each other and the relation between individual citizens and their state. The United Nations and the International Monetary Fund show that major intergovernmental institutions are neither democratic nor are most of their member states democratic. The EU is a Unique Political Object because it is an intergovernmental organization that requires its member states to be democracies.

In 1992 the EU's Maastricht Treaty conferred European citizenship on everyone who was already a citizen of a member state. However, when a Eurobarometer survey asked European citizens what was meant by the term citizen of Europe, a majority said that they didn't know. Only 43 per cent of people on whom citizenship has been automatically conferred claim to have an idea of what this means. Even more tellingly, only 33 per cent think that their voice counts in the EU.⁵

There is a sharp contrast between the influence that individuals have on national governments and the very restricted influence that the same people have on the governance of the European Union. The EU's governors are not accountable, as is the case in a democratic political system, because European citizens cannot vote for a European government nor can they vote it out of office. As national citizens, people have the right to challenge their government about what it does in Brussels; however, as European citizens they do not have the right to challenge what is collectively adopted there. The absence of influence encourages a lack of commitment to the policies that the EU adopts.

The argument. The European Union needs the commitment of its citizens in order to deal with the problems that today challenge Europeans on a continental scale. Justifying more integration by invoking achievements of a half century ago has no more appeal than a black-and-white television set. Europeans today have a very different experience of politics than their grandparents. They are not haunted by the fear of armed invasion nor are they deferential or trusting of their governors.

Instead of engaging in a discussion about what democracy means in the abstract, this book focuses on what the shortfall in popular commitment means for the European Union. It asks first: Who or what do European Union institutions represent? The short answer is: Most don't represent people; they represent other organizations or abstract principles. Secondly:

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How, if at all, do Europe's citizens relate to EU institutions? The answer is: Indirectly or not at all. Given weak links between Europe's citizens and policy-makers, what is the best way to find out whether agreements made in Brussels to advance an ever closer Union actually represent the views of their citizens? The answer is: The commitment of citizens to further transfers of powers to Brussels can best be tested by a pan-European referendum.

The idea of directly consulting Europe's citizens is rejected by most EU policymakers. In the tradition of Jean Monnet, they see themselves as trustees acting for the collective good of Europe. Insofar as the creation of an ever closer Union is regarded as of overriding political importance, then popular politics should be kept out of deciding the future of Europe. Decisions should be taken by a consensus among EU policymakers. However, consensus at the European level introduces a double distortion. First of all, it assumes that when prime ministers make commitments in the name of their country they speak for all of their citizens. Public opinion surveys show that they do not. Secondly, a consensus among 27 national governments can only be arrived at by compromises that leave each with a curate's egg that is good in parts.

Any referendum will reveal a division of opinion about what is agreed in Brussels. A referendum creates a fear among policymakers that their decisions will be rejected by citizens whom they nominally represent. Rather than allaying their fears by campaigning for popular support for an ever closer Union, policymakers reject measures to give citizens more voice. The evidence that follows shows that their fear is often mistaken.

Does it matter? In an age of 24/7 globalization, the boundaries between nation-states have become increasingly porous. Many problems facing national governments—financing deficits, promoting trade, or combatting terrorism—are not confined within national boundaries. Interdependence is a visible fact of life in big countries such as Britain and Germany as well as in small countries with big neighbours, such as Ireland and Austria. In dealing with problems of interdependence, no national government can completely control what happens to it. This is good reason for collective EU action.

When collective action imposes visible costs, as in the Eurozone crisis, national governments are pulled in opposing directions by the need to reconcile competing national and European demands. They are simultaneously accountable to their national electorate and parliament while in meetings in Brussels they are under pressure to accept decisions that represent a consensus of 27 national governments. There is a trade-off for national governments between accepting measures that are good for Europe as a whole and opposing their adoption in response to national opinion. In an increasingly interdependent world, the politics of Europe is about tension management.

National governments face complementary risks. Measures decided in Brussels may succeed in imposing costs on many member states without securing

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the promised benefits. Alternatively, if the EU is unable to act effectively, then what happens will be decided on other continents. Clinging to outmoded concepts of national sovereignty can keep the formal right of decisionmaking in national hands but as and when the mace of sovereignty is wielded it will be shattered by stronger forces. Thus, even though the British government increasingly seeks to opt out of EU decisions, it cannot opt out of the effect of what happens in an international economy in which Eurozone countries have a larger displacement than the United Kingdom.

Popular commitment is needed if the EU is to carry out effective policies that have costs as well as benefits, such as measures to resolve the Eurozone crisis. Otherwise, agreements arrived at by elites risk repudiation by national electorates when their costs are known. The fear of public opinion has encouraged a 'too little, too late' approach to policy. In the words of the veteran Eurozone prime minister, Jean-Claude Juncker, 'We all know what to do, but we don't know how to get re-elected once we have done it.'

The European Union has yet to find the means of securing popular commitment to measures agreed at the EU level but subject to challenge nationally. The EU offers citizenship lite: the rights that an individual has as a citizen of Europe are fewer than their rights as national citizens; so too are the obligations. It is complemented by commitment lite to EU institutions. The EU's own Eurobarometer surveys show that half of Europe's citizens are not interested in what the EU does. This is not surprising, since the EU's work is conducted in a distant country and language foreign to most EU citizens. A lack of interest in EU affairs is compounded by limited popular understanding of EU institutions and less media attention to the activities of the European Union than to European Cup football competition. Defenders of the EU system argue that uninformed and uninterested people are unsuited to taking decisions on major EU matters. This ignores the argument in favour of democratic participation: Bringing people into the political process is a good way to gain commitment to what governors do.

It is an oversimplification to divide the peoples of Europe into two categories, those who are for and those against the European Union, and it is even more misleading to polarize people into supporters of a united Europe and those wanting their country to withdraw from it. There are moderate positions between these two extremes. Among committed supporters of European integration, fundamentalists who advocate European unity as an ideal are now outnumbered by Euro-realists, who want to use the opportunities that existing EU institutions offer to promote policies for collective action that have substantial support among European-level interests. The subtext of these activities is furnished by Jean Monnet: this is the practical way of advancing an ever closer Union.

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The label Eurosceptic is confusingly applied to different kinds of unwilling EU citizens. People can accept the existing powers of Brussels as a *fait accompli* yet disapprove of measures to extend its powers on the grounds that ‘small is beautiful’ or greater trust in the actions of their own national institutions. They are soft eurosceptics. The British Conservative government is notable for having many MPs who are hard eurosceptics. They are actively pushing for the return to Westminster of a significant number of powers that have been transferred to the EU or to withdraw from the European Union.

The balance of public opinion rests with people who have no fixed commitment for or against the goal of an ever closer European Union. Uncommitted Europeans are numerous enough to tip popular support for or against policies advancing European integration. Some are of two minds about what the EU is doing, approving the single Europe market while opposing big EU subsidies for agriculture, or approving EU measures for social protection while opposing the competition that accompanies the single market. Others have no opinion, answering ‘don’t know’ to Eurobarometer polls. As long as people are unaware of being European citizens, then under-commitment is of no political consequence. However, EU laws and regulations that now fill more than 90,000 pages and grow bulkier every year are increasingly reminding people that even if you are not interested in what the European Union does, it is interested in what you do.

The pragmatic approach of this book is questioning rather than committed to a view that the EU is always right or that it is always wrong. It rejects commitment to an ever closer Union as an end in itself, the implicit or explicit assumption of many studies of European integration. Pragmatism is consistent with scepticism in the original Greek sense: it encourages asking questions and searching for evidence before coming to a conclusion. The answer arrived at may or may not endorse a policy that increases European integration. It reflects David Hume’s Enlightenment principle of testing ideas against experience. After more than half a century, there is lots of experience about the ways in which EU institutions do and do not represent Europeans.

Pragmatism evaluates existing policies by asking how they work and what their consequences are. When there is political dissatisfaction in a given policy area, pragmatists first diagnose the causes of the problem without any commitment for or against EU action. This is more open-minded than the Community method, which assumes that the European Union is best suited to deal with every major problem facing national governments. In a world of interdependence, there are many collective action problems that could justify EU engagement, but that is no guarantee that the EU has the capacity to act effectively. Thus, instead of debating what the EU ought to do about such things as the failure of European economies to converge, the pragmatist first asks: What *can* the European Union do? This avoids the mistake of confusing

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exhortation with effective action. Does a proposed policy address the causes of a problem? How will it operate? What political and administrative resources are required to achieve its aims? If these pragmatic criteria are met, then the adoption of a measure can be debated on the grounds of its political desirability. In such circumstances, pragmatism may support effective steps towards an ever closer Union. However, if a proposal fails to meet pragmatic criteria, there is a *prima facie* case for going back to the drawing board to match means and ends to deal with a problem, while national governments meanwhile show how effectively or ineffectively they can act without direction from the European Commission.

While this book respects the benefits that integration has brought, its pragmatic approach questions the assumption of the desirability of more of the same, that is, the classic Community method of adopting one-size-fits-all policies for the varied problems now confronting 27 diverse member states and their peoples. Instead, it proposes a look-before-you-leap approach to evaluating policies pragmatically.

II A Bridge too Far?

European integration has two meanings, one static and the other dynamic. Its weaker form is a description of the European Union as it is today; integration describes the institutional system within which member states carry out common policies. While this description is accurate as far as it goes, it doesn't go far enough. It fails to take into account the dynamics that have turned an institution with six member states and very limited powers into a Union with significant powers over 27 member states and a readiness to acquire more powers. A static description assumes that the EU operates in a stable environment. The appearance of stability, described by critics as stagnation, occurs only when member states are not faced with challenges. This is anything but the case today. For EU policymakers to do nothing today would be an admission that the issues for which it is responsible are out of control.

Where the European Union stands today is the dynamic consequence of past decisions. In dynamic terms European integration is a process of moving toward an ever closer Union of European states. A bicycling metaphor is sometimes used to describe the need for continuous movement. If a steady forward momentum, involving the deepening and broadening of policies, does not occur, there is a risk of collapse. However, the idea that movement is desirable depends on the direction that is being taken. Critics pay unintended tribute to the strength of the EU's momentum by claiming that European integration has gone too far. In the sardonic words of one, 'The fact that the EU is not perfect does not mean it cannot get worse'.⁶

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If this book had been written a decade ago, it would have focused on the challenge of enlarging the European Union to incorporate ten new member states from Eastern Europe. Ten years is a short span of time but a long way from where the European Union finds itself today. The EU now faces major challenges to its economic and political foundations. It is over-reacting to see the Eurozone crisis as evidence of the EU breaking up. However, it is under-reacting to ignore changes in the political debate about the future of Europe. Events have demonstrated that while central banks and economists claim to be apolitical, politics and economics are inextricably linked in the governance of Europe and in the EU's impact on the lives of its citizens.

The immediate challenges that the European Union now faces come from within the ranks of older member states. Ireland, Portugal, and Greece, the three most troubled Eurozone countries, have each belonged to the EU for more than a quarter of a century. Another vulnerable country, Italy, was a founder member of the European Union. The historic anchors, Germany and France, face challenges radically different from the 1950s. Moreover, the British view of EU membership is no longer what it was in 1975, when 64 per cent endorsed EU membership in a referendum. Given that so many facts have changed, Keynes's injunction to think afresh is apt.

The technocratic justification for creating the European Central Bank, which was modelled on the German *Bundesbank*, was that it would enable all Eurozone countries to achieve high growth and low inflation. The executive board of the European Central Bank (ECB) consists, according to its charter, of 'persons of recognised standing and professional experience in monetary or banking matters' and a Governing Council of members of national central banks in the Eurozone. Locating its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main emphasizes its independence of Brussels and commitment to Germany's tradition of giving priority to fighting inflation. The technical complexities of the ECB's operation are well beyond the understanding of most of the policymakers who approved it; it makes decisions by stealth with a substantial political impact. In the words of the European Council President, the introduction of the euro implied the need for a full-fledged economic and political union: 'However, the general public was not really made aware of it.'⁷ The political implications of a single currency made Britain, Denmark, and Sweden stay out of the Eurozone when it came into effect.

The Eurozone crisis shows the risk of going a bridge too far; a single currency was adopted to further European integration among ill-matched countries in an institution with inadequate powers.⁸ Now that the euro has come under heavy fire in international financial markets, it cannot be abandoned as readily as an unsuccessful military attempt to seize a strategic bridge. The official doctrine is that national membership in the Eurozone is irreversible.

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Governments of both lender and debtor states are pulled in opposing directions by European institutions and national electorates. National governments are expected to comply with recommendations of EU institutions to reduce their deficits immediately by reducing public spending, the bulk of which goes on pensions, health care, and education. The nationally popular alternative is to stimulate growth in the economy by the Keynesian policy of increased public spending. However, indebted governments do not have the money to spend, they face punitive interest rates to finance the cost of past debts, and, as Eurozone members, they lack the ability to print money.

Indebted Mediterranean states appear weak because they have difficulty in borrowing the money they need to meet current obligations arising from past borrowings and to finance current expenditure. However, lenders are vulnerable because if these debts are not repaid their own balance sheets would be filled with red ink and some banks would be at risk of bankruptcy. Before the euro was introduced, debtors could ease their position by devaluing their currency, a strategy Sweden and Britain have used more than once. Eurozone countries cannot do so, short of leaving the Eurozone. This would not only create fresh domestic difficulties but also call into question the maintenance of the Eurozone as an engine for European integration, as well a source of funds for indebted member states.

The EU is seeking to maintain the Eurozone by a strategy that the French describe as *la fuite en avant*, that is, running away forwards. The plan is to get rid of the threat that indebted countries pose to the future of the EU's integrated currency by loaning more money to indebted countries with strict conditions attached. These conditions are set out in the 2012 Treaty on Stability, Coordination, and Governance agreed by 25 member states; Britain and the Czech Republic are the outsiders. National budgets are expected to have a structural deficit of no more than one-half of one per cent. A government can be subjected to fines of hundreds of millions or billions of euros if Brussels decides that it has failed to meet this target and fines can be enforced by a binding decision of the European Court of Justice. In an English understatement, a lawyer comments, 'This is unlikely to generate inter-state harmony between the 25 signatories.'⁹ Moreover, the Treaty's conditions are meant to be applied not only in small states such as Greece, Ireland, and Portugal, but also in big states with a much greater political and economic displacement, such as Spain, Italy, and France.

Working on the hypothesis that cash begets control, the EU has made an open-ended pledge to buy short-term bonds of countries whose governments meet its conditions. These include reductions of spending and raising taxes in accord with balanced budget principles; abandoning lax regulatory and spending policies that benefited political supporters but not the economy; and raising standards of governance to reduce waste and corruption. In addition,

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countries are being pushed to take actions to increase their competitiveness internationally, since they cannot do so by devaluing their currency. The EU and the International Monetary Fund will supervise the implementation of reforms. The EU has not done so before because, as a senior ECB official has noted, 'When you deal with banks, you deal with politics. Automatically. It's very dangerous'.¹⁰

The amount of cash available to indebted countries depends on decisions taken in lending states as well as in Brussels. The funds available are provided by national governments and national parliaments now have MPs asking questions that are awkward because they raise legitimate doubts about how and whether new measures can be effectively implemented. The German Federal Court has ruled that payment additional to its 190bn commitment of euros must be approved by the German Parliament, which faces re-election in October 2013. The conditions are also subject to supervision by the German Federal Court in Karlsruhe, and it has mandated that German participants in Eurozone decisions keep MPs informed of ongoing discussions so that in an emergency the Parliament is not confronted with a *fait accompli*.

If a borrowing country fails to meet the ECB's conditions then the ECB can either give the debtor an open-ended commitment in terms of the time required to pay back its debts or stop buying its bonds and threaten the country's exit from the Eurozone, with uncertain consequences for its remaining members, both lenders and borrowers.

However, measures justified at the EU level as economically necessary to save the Eurozone can be challenged as politically unacceptable at the national level. National citizens can use their votes to eject from office a government that is squeezing pensions, raising taxes, and imposing visible, immediate, and harsh economic costs to meet EU directives. However, changing control of a national government does not get rid of the pressures that it faces from Brussels and from international financial markets.

The debate about what to do to save the Eurozone has gone public because the measures recommended have big and visible costs. Public reaction shows that nationalism is not dead but transformed. The traditional definition of a nation—the territory that a group of people would fight and die for—is no longer relevant. In Europe today a nation can be defined by economics: It is a group of people who are willing to pay taxes to resolve the financial problems of others. This willingness stops at the national border. The resistance to transfer payments is found not only in Germany but also among Greeks and Spaniards who do not want to pay national taxes so that their government can use the money to repay debts incurred in the past to foreign institutions. In short, the Eurozone has created a common currency but not a single nation for the purposes of paying taxes.

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III Diagnosis and Prescription

The first chapter shows how the EU political system institutionalizes two essential features of democratic politics. Its diverse institutions are representative of a plurality of states, interests, peoples, and principles and there is lots of accountability, since its institutions impose many checks and balances on each other. This prevents any one country or institution from dominating the EU; instead, decisions require bargaining to arrive at a consensus. However, weak links between EU decision makers and Europe's citizens mean that citizens have limited commitment and trust in the EU's institutions. Explaining how the EU works today by citing treaties signed in the distant past by long dead politicians is insufficient to secure popular commitment. Nor can justification of EU institutions on grounds of effectiveness, such as the EU's historic promotion of economic growth, deliver popular commitment when the European economy falters.

Although the European Union's scope was limited when it started, there was no limit on ambitions. The dynamic that has forged today's ever closer Union is set out in Chapter 2. Big bang treaties agreed between member states have given the EU new powers. Concurrently, quiet discussions in Brussels have maintained the momentum for adopting many seemingly small laws and regulations that cumulatively affect Europeans in big ways. The EU's power to have a direct effect on citizens is limited because it lacks the money and public employees of member states. However, it compensates by exercising lawmaking powers superior to those of national governments. While the EU's appetite for integration has grown with its institutions that of Europe's citizens has not.

The refusal to place boundaries on the definition of Europe makes the European Union open to a diversity of peoples. Chapter 3 documents how the fall of the Berlin Wall has been followed by the EU more than doubling its membership. This has not only changed the EU's size but also its shape. The EU now includes countries whose Atlantic coastlines link them to Boston and Brazil and countries whose eastern boundaries are with Russia and Turkey. Its members differ greatly in population and income, and in corruption too. Concurrently, television, travel, and work have exposed people to influences from other countries. However, contrary to expectations, Europeanization has not created a demand for more European integration.

The European Union is open to discussing policies with a multiplicity of multi-national institutions. In the Council national governments are under pressure to agree compromises with more than two dozen other national governments and defend agreements to their national electorates. The European Commission and European Parliament are continuously in discussion

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with trans-national organizations advancing claims in the name of business, industry, and civil society. Efforts to reach beyond organizations based in Brussels encounter both practical and political difficulties. The constitutional convention that the EU called did not have any input from its citizens. Chapter 4 shows that the result is citizenship lite.

Referendums enable citizens to participate directly in politics but EU policy-makers reject this institution of direct democracy as inconsistent with their definition of direct democracy. Referendums also pose a risk to their power to commit EU citizens to decisions that they take as trustees on their behalf. By contrast, a clear majority of European citizens want the right to vote in referendums deciding whether more major steps should be taken towards an ever closer Union. Member states have called dozens of national referendums on measures expanding the EU's constitutional powers. Chapter 5 shows that even when a majority endorses further European integration, each referendum vote shows more division among citizens than appears from the consensus decisions of EU institutions. Furthermore, almost one-quarter have rejected decisions agreed in Brussels.

Europe's citizens do have the right to elect Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). However, the Parliament is not elected on the basis of one person, one vote, one value. Instead, seats are assigned to member states by a formula of degressive proportionality. A better name for this formula is disproportional representation; the number of MEPs assigned smaller countries is much bigger than their share of the European population would justify. Chapter 6 shows that the EP gives unequal representation to the citizens of Europe. Moreover, there is an asymmetry of representation; a majority of electors do not bother to vote for an MEP, while MEPs work hard to advance policies in Brussels with little contact with the electors they nominally represent.

To participate effectively in the European Parliament's activities, MEPs representing more than 160 national parties join multi-national European Party Groups. Nominally, the Groups endorse socialist, liberal, green or vague popular principles. Whatever policy commitments are given in the national programmes on which MEPs are elected, MEPs usually vote along lines laid down by the whip of their multi-national Group. In most cases the majority is formed by MEPs from the Socialist and People's Party Groups. However, Chapter 7 shows that these are the two Groups whose MEPs have disagreed most in the programmes that they present to their national voters. The effect of such co-operation is that the European Parliament is a cartel advancing European integration.

In peace as in war states no longer enjoy stand-alone sovereignty. The interdependence of policies across national boundaries results in national governments lacking the full capacity to make effective policies; outcomes

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are the result of decisions of other countries as well as their own. A primary justification of the European Union is that it adopts collective policies that deal with the challenge of interdependence in such trans-national fields as trade and environmental pollution. Chapter 8 shows how the increase in interdependent issues has resulted in policy changing politics. But politics also affects policy, when there is no consensus about what the EU ought to do. The Eurozone crisis is a striking example: it forces Germans to worry about Greek financial policies and Greeks to worry about the standards that the German government sets for public finance. Globalization gives the single Europe market an international dimension while simultaneously exposing it to influences beyond the control of Brussels. To deny the reality of interdependence is to pursue a foreign policy without foreigners.

Interdependence stimulates demands for collective action but it does not guarantee that the European Union has the capacity to supply a solution. Chapter 9 identifies major deficits in the EU's capacity to act. These include legal challenges from the German Federal Court and the British Parliament, and the lack of money to meet the potential financial claims of the Eurozone crisis. The EU also lacks the power to maintain the rule of law in old member states where corruption is chronic, as well as in new member states where corruption has remained high since their admission. The EU's lack of capacity should place limits on enlargement, when seven of the eight countries that are now potential candidates for admission have far weaker economies and more corruption than member states. The varying characteristics of 27 member states make the EU today a political system in which diversity is the norm. This reduces the likelihood that one-size-fits-all policies will produce benefits clearly outweighing costs for every member state. When disagreements arise about what the EU should do, the alternatives are for the EU to do nothing or for member states that want to form coalitions of the willing to do so. The EU has procedures for enhanced cooperation that enable countries favouring steps towards an ever closer Union to act together while the unwilling stand aside and watch what happens to those who go first. The Eurozone is an example of this.

The conclusion argues that giving all of Europe's citizens a chance to register their views in a pan-European referendum of EU treaties would be the best way to test how much popular commitment there is to the expansion of EU powers. It would also be fairer, getting rid of the current practice of one nation, whether small, like Ireland, or large, like Britain, calling a referendum that vetoes a treaty signed by 27 governments. If national governments do represent their citizens in multi-national Brussels deliberations, in the great majority of states a referendum will endorse what their governors have done and losers should accept defeat in a national referendum. If there are countries where a majority is against a treaty, then procedures for enhanced co-operation should

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allow it to opt out. The majority can demonstrate what the benefits of such a step may be while others await evidence on which to make a pragmatic decision about whether the benefits are worth the costs. A successful policy would encourage countries that initially opted out to join subsequently in order to share the benefits of integration. This was the basis on which the United Kingdom joined the European Union a decade and one-half after initially refusing to be a founder. An unsuccessful policy would confirm the view of member states that opted out that some steps towards an ever closer Union are better avoided. Events have produced a British consensus that it was desirable not to be a founder member of the Eurozone.

IV Perspective of the Author

The European Union is valuable because many problems of interdependence cannot be effectively dealt with by states acting in isolation. Small European states, a big majority of the members of the European Union, have long known this. The logic of European Union action can often be defended by a motto of an unwilling EU citizen, Margaret Thatcher, 'There is no alternative.' However, this book is critical of the way in which half a billion people have had to accept an unending series of moves towards an ever closer union without the right to check major Brussels decisions and say 'Enough is enough.' Pan-European referendums would provide this. While the voice of the people is not always right, it is wrong to deny citizens any say in making crucial decisions about how they and their children will be governed for generations in the future. That is why this book gives two not three cheers for the European Union as it is today.

Because the European Union encompasses diverse peoples, the book's audience is diverse. It is addressed to everyone who is familiar with English, whether as a native English or American speaker or knowing English as a Foreign Language (EFL). EFL is the language of political discourse in the European Union today. EFL-speakers do not think that a market is best defined by an absence of controls. The fact that Britain is governed by native English-speakers is a problem for both London and Brussels. EFL-speakers can also be a problem for Washington, where Europe tends to be seen as a junior partner in NATO, an assumption that is challenged by European states that do not contribute manpower or money to US-led initiatives on other continents.

This book is a work of political science in the traditional sense of politics being about the exercise of power, and science about acquiring knowledge through the systematic observation and interpretation of evidence rather than by introspection, abstraction, or assertion. It cites public opinion surveys showing divisions about Europe in order to reject the methodological nationalism

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that assumes national governments represent all their citizens when participating in EU decisionmaking. This evidence also undermines the assumption of EU treaties reflecting a common will of Europeans.

To communicate what is important about the European Union, I give clarity precedence over professional jargon. If some readers regard vivid phrasing as provocative, this is better than hiding political controversy under a blanket of abstractions and qualifications. Because this book covers a wide ground, it draws on a large and diverse range of academic writings about European Union institutions that have been helpful in formulating an argument that sometimes significantly challenges the conventional wisdom found there. Since many readers concerned with European affairs have neither the free access to journals in university libraries nor the training required to follow statistical analyses that proliferate there, footnotes are restricted to sources of direct quotations. An appendix provides a note on further reading.

The distinctive approach of this book reflects my own scholarly background in the study of public opinion and of presidents and prime ministers. This has given me sympathy with people at the top and people at the bottom of the multiple political systems in which Europe's elites and citizens are now embedded. At one time or another I have presented my ideas in seminars and lectures in 25 of the 27 member states of the European Union and in publications translated into eleven European languages.

I am a European but not a European citizen. Having dual citizenship in the state of Missouri as well as the United States has helped understand multi-level government and an American upbringing has certainly made it easier to see Europe as a whole. Having started studies in Europe when the legacy of war was very evident in cathedrals without roofs and men without an arm or a leg, I have a deep respect for the founders of the European Union, who had seen much more and much worse. That era, fortunately, is now past. Final alterations to the text were made in autumn 2012, when the EU's policymakers hoped that they had arrived at a means of turning the Eurozone crisis into an opportunity for further European integration, but their hopes had yet to be tested by the pressure of events.

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