# EUROPEANISATION AND THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRACY

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**Summary** This article sets out to clarify the complex relationship between Europeanisation and democracy. In the process we will get a better understanding of what the EU is, what it is not, and what it might become in the shadow of the ongoing Eurozone crisis. Organisationally, the EU is a hybrid between intergovernmentalism and statehood. It has an ideological commitment to democracy and European integration. It has done more to promote democracy in Europe than anyone else, but it cannot practice all that it teaches. It is not – and cannot develop into – a full-blown democracy on a par with its member states as long as European state and nation building remains incomplete.

**Keywords** Europeanisation, state building, democracy

Europeanisation is a fashionable concept tightly intertwined with the European Union and its project of integration. The EU has promotion of democracy and the rule of law in Europe as primary objectives, and – to this end – Brussels has initiated a large-scale harmonisation of legislation throughout Europe and a wholesale transfer of principles of good governance from the EU core to prospective new member states. All in all, this has been a success story. The expanded EU (from 15 member states in 1995 to 27 in 2007) has become what it was intended to be: a club of European democracies.

But the EU has even more ambitious plans. The EU is also a state and nation building project cast in a democratic institutional setting. The EU refers to itself as a democracy, and the architects of the Eurobarometers keep asking respondents for their assessment of how democracy works in the European Union. Even so, the EU clearly is not a full-blown democracy. It has been marred by legitimacy and accountability problems, the so-called democratic deficit, for years. But not even the most dedicated European federalists would launch parliamentarism as the obvious solution to the problem. Its application

would expose the member states to the constant risk of being overrun by parliamentary majorities. Democracy on the level of the member states is much more straightforward, but the EU agenda contributes to its complexity. Somehow the EU member states have to come to grips with the European state building project in the current tug-of-war between the European Commission and nationalist forces for or against deepening European integration.

This article sets out to clarify the complex relationship between Europeanisation and democracy. In the process we will get a better understanding of what the EU is, what it is not, and what it might become in the shadow of the ongoing Eurozone crisis.

**The EU as a Moving Target**

The EU has appeared in many shapes and forms – and under different labels – since it was founded in 1957. It is a moving target of sorts, and it was always easier to identify its visions than to define what it is. It started as a peace project in the wake of the Second World War. Economic cooperation was to make the countries of Western Europe, particularly France and Germany, so intertwined that war between them would be unthinkable. After more than half a century of cooperation in Europe, the peace project stands out as quite a success story, even though nobody knows what would have happened if the EU had not materialised. But in the background the vision of something even greater – the United States of Europe – always loomed large (Zielonka, 2007: 7-9). The EU was thus a state building project from the very beginning. The vision is far from fulfilled, but the EU has gradually progressed towards statehood. Its sphere of

competence has expanded radically and within its sphere of competence supranational decision making prevails. Individual member countries may, therefore, find themselves overruled by a qualified majority vote in the Council. But the EU is not yet fully in charge of high politics – defence, security and foreign affairs – generally considered the very core of the nation state. High politics remains a domain for intergovernmental decision making with full veto rights for all member countries. EU foreign policy is therefore frequently reduced to noncommittal declarations patching over the differences between the 27 member countries.

The EU thus does not qualify as a state, or as an intergovernmental organisation like the United Nations. It is perhaps best described as a mixture of the two forms of organisation (Berglund *et al.*, 2009: 11-35). But the overall direction – from intergovernmentalism towards statehood – is indisputable, and here we have the source of the conflict within the EU between those who promote this development and those who oppose it. The former are frequently referred to as federalists, and the latter as EU-sceptics. Both camps are heterogeneous, but defined by their most dedicated and articulated members. Hard-core federalists see ever deepening integration (read: state building) not only as a distant goal but also as the solution to whatever problems the EU may encounter along the way. This is the position frequently taken by leading politicians in core member countries such as France, Germany and Belgium. The hard EU-sceptics are also easy to identify (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2008). Here we find those who reject the European integration project and call for their respec-

tive governments to get out of the EU. They tend to sympathise with right- or leftwing extremist parties campaigning on a nationalist, at times xenophobic, platform. But among the EU-sceptics we also find people who think that the EU is a good thing, but disapprove of the pace and scope of the process of integration. This applies to major political parties and the entire political establishment in individual member countries.

The conflict about the future direction of the EU is partly a product of the deepening economic integration, but it is also the result of the massive territorial expansion of the European Union between 1957 and 2007. The original six – France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg – were gradually joined by the bulk of the EFTA, Great Britain's alternative to the European Union, and a number of new democracies in Southern and Eastern Europe. The exodus out of the EFTA began with the EU-accession of Britain, Denmark and Ireland in 1973 and was all but over in 1995, when neutral Finland, Sweden and Austria were accepted as full members of the EU. These were countries that had been critical of the European integration project from its very beginning; once in the European Union, they turned EU-scepticism into a powerful force. Portugal, one of the new democracies in Southern Europe to join the EU in the 1980s, is in fact the only former EFTA member in the EU not to have a long record of EU-scepticism (Berglund *et al.*, 2009: 82-83; 101). The first few years of the new millennium (2004-2007) finally brought 10 new democracies in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe into the EU. For most of them EU (and NATO) membership was a crucial part of a foreign policy paradigm shift from

the Russian to the Western sphere of interest, and in most cases the European integration project did not become an issue of contention until later on.

This is not to say that the new member countries since 1973 with their special agendas hold the original six back from realising their federal visions. Europeanisation and the road map defined by Brussels have not always had a favourable audience among the original six. In 2005 France and the Netherlands somewhat unexpectedly brought the EU into a deep constitutional crisis by rejecting the EU Draft Constitution in two consecutive referendums in May and June respectively – a crisis that was not resolved until the Lisbon Treaty was ratified in November 2009. The campaign for or against the Draft Constitution was marked by concern about the long-term impact of the recent eastward enlargement. The French EU-sceptics warned against an influx of cheap labour from Eastern Europe, eroding French salaries and adding to the unemployment rate. But many voters in France and the Netherlands were also frustrated about the all-European nationalist rhetoric in the draft constitution (Toonen *et al.*, 2005). Everybody knows that the EU is not a nation state. But Brussels, nevertheless, likes to describe the EU as a nation with all which that entails – a flag and a national anthem, a common European citizenship, common political institutions, a common currency, and, if it had worked out according to plan, a common constitution. This is a perfectly normal strategy on the part of the European Commission. State building and nation building are parallel phenomena that usually require a great deal of time, sometimes hundreds of years. This time around the all-European nationalist

rhetoric was apparently premature. The problem was eventually solved in a classical EU manner. The offensive references to EU symbols were removed and the Draft Constitution was restructured into the Lisbon Treaty. But the changes introduced in the Draft Constitution were carried over into the Lisbon Treaty lock, stock and barrel; Valéry Giscard d'Éstaing, chairman of the Constitutional Convent and architect of the Constitutional Draft, sees the two documents as interchangeable in terms of substance. Even so, the outcome must have been a source of dissatisfaction for Giscard and his followers (Giscard d'Éstaing, 2007). Their vision had been censored, even though the all-European symbols were everywhere to be seen.

**The Democratic Deficit**

The EU has probably done more for the development of democracy in Europe than any other international actor or group of actors, but it has also earned itself a reputation for its so-called democratic deficit. The term implies that we have democracy, but it is somehow flawed. This is probably an accurate description, even though there are those who question the democratic character of the EU altogether. Those who complain the loudest about the democratic deficit in the EU tend to be EU-sceptics and inclined to reject a bi-cameral parliamentary system as the obvious solution to the problem. They prefer the current power sharing arrangement between the European Parliament and the Council, where decision making tends to be consensual. The qualified majority clause is rarely used and presumably helps to speed up the search for a compromise acceptable to all 27 government ministers in the Council.

The EU is not a parliamentary democracy like so many of its member countries, or a semi-presidential democracy like some of its member countries, or a presidential democracy like the United States. But it would arguably qualify as a democracy according to the criteria it imposes on prospective member states since the EU Summit in Copenhagen in 1993. The democratic institutions are in place – the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Justice. The rule of law prevails. The EU is in fact governance by treaties to the extent that politics was long relegated to a secondary position. The EU undoubtedly promotes human rights and respect for national minorities within and beyond the Union. But – as may be inferred from Figure 1 – there is a problem with the way democracy works in the European Union.

Figure 1 is part of the standard comparative politics toolbox. It represents the three objects or levels of support – the authorities or the political actors, the regime, and the political community – identified by David Easton, as he developed his conceptual framework in the mid-1960s. Here the 'regime' has been broken up into its three constitutive components – regime principles, regime performance and regime institutions, as suggested by Pippa Norris in 1999. Easton defines politics as the 'authoritative allocation of values for a society' and societies tend to be associated with nation states (Easton, 1965b: 21). But his model is theoretically applicable to any political system and highly suitable for comparative purposes. It helps us to identify similarities and differences between the political system of the European Union and the political system on the level of its member states.

**Figure 1**. Levels and Objects of Political Support

| Object | Characteristics of support |
|---|---|
| *Political actors* | Specific support for particular political actors or authorities. |
| *Regime principles* | Support for the regime type as a principle or ideal, i.e. as the most appropriate form of government. |
| *Regime performance* | Support for the way the system functions in practice. |
| *Regime institutions* | Attitudes towards the constitutional framework, the police, the state bureaucracy, political parties and the military. Support for institutions rather than persons; support for the presidency as such rather than the incumbent. |
| *Political community* | A basic attachment to the nation beyond present institutions of government and a general willingness to co-operate politically. |

*Sources*: Easton, 1965a, 1965b; Norris, 1999

One might expect the differences to dominate, but this is not the case. The similarities are in fact striking. The EU may not have a written constitution, but it is committed to a number of regime principles, including democracy and the rule of law (Sattler, 2008: 58-62). The EU government institutions reflect the somewhat limited scope of the Union, but the core democratic institutions are in place and the Union features a popularly elected parliament as well as European political parties. Elections to the European Parliament are held throughout the Union every five years, but – in all fairness – they boil down to a series of national elections. The electoral campaigns have a distinctly national flavour, and the parties running are almost always identical with the political parties competing for mandates in national elections. The ties between the candidates and parties running for the European Parliament and the parliamentary factions or 'parties' within the European Parliament are unknown to most voters and many of them abstain from voting (Hix, 2008: 76-84). Together these parliamentary parties form an embryonic all-European party system, including socialist, conservative and liberal parties, but it has thus far left precious few imprints on the party systems of the member countries (Hix *et al.*, 2007). This takes us back to Figure 1, more specifically to the sense of political community

or – in this particular case – rather the lack thereof on the EU-level. European society is simply too loosely defined to provide a solid platform for an all-European civil society and an all-European public sphere. Such a platform may materialise in the long run. In the meantime, the debate about Europe rolls on in German, French and even British media, but it hardly has repercussions beyond the elite sphere. In the Nordic countries, even the elite strata keep a low profile on issues of European integration. If at all addressed, they are addressed as foreign policy issues.

The composition of the Council and the European Commission makes sense in terms of the history of the European Union. The Council serves as an Upper House or Senate in a bi-cameral parliamentary system, but it is not a popularly elected body. It is a forum for all the relevant government ministers. In a similar vein, it may be noted that the European Commission – the government of the EU – is made up of one commissioner from each of the now 27 member countries. These institutional arrangements are traces of intergovernmentalism that make full-blown democracy difficult. This can be corrected through institutional reform, but the competing visions about the nature of the European Union are likely to make such a reform process difficult. The other flaws we have identified are much more challenging in the sense that they cannot be removed from the agenda by a stroke of the pen. A party system, a civil society or a public sphere evolves organically. This is what happened in the nation states of Europe in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and in the long run it might very well happen in the EU as well. The contemporary European party system is, for instance, reminiscent of the party systems that emerged in Western Europe during their first few years of democratisation (Duverger, 1967; Epstein, 1967); when holding out the prospect of public funding for all-European parties, the EU is obviously trying to promote such a development. The EU – and its member countries – could also do more to make the European elections a genuinely all-European affair (Hix, 2008).

The democratic process runs much more smoothly within the member states. Some of them are engaged in state and nation building projects of their own, but they all have a much more solid societal foundation than the EU. This could provide the EU with a reservoir of democratic legitimacy, if the EU and the member states were generally seen as moving in the same direction. But they are not. There is no widespread call for deepening integration in contemporary Europe. This is not why the EFTA countries started to defect to what was then known as the European Economic Community; and this is not why the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe lined up for membership in the EU in the early 1990s. Support for the European integration project is generally stronger among those who initiated it in the 1950s, but the original six also have a fair share of critical voices (Berglund *et al.*, 2009). The conflict has been there all along. The current debt crisis in Europe has only made it more visible.

**The Debt Crisis**

The financial crisis in the US in 2008 had far-reaching ramifications, and Europe has since been at the centre of a series of sovereign debt and bank crises. The economic uncertainty unleashed a debate about the Euro and its poten-

tial to survive as the common currency of the European Union. In the latter part of 2011, international media foresaw the imminent breakdown of the Eurozone. The focus was then on the escalating debt crisis in Greece – an economically marginal country within the all-European context. But the European Commission has since been reminded of the mounting problems in far more economically central countries like Italy and – more recently – Spain.

Brussels – unsurprisingly – sees more integration as the solution to the problem. This includes empowering the European Central Bank (ECB), making it into a player more on a par with national banks in countries like Great Britain and the US. Exactly what this implies is still being negotiated. The rich countries in Northern Europe are understandably reluctant to assume full responsibility for debts accumulated by their poor partners in Southern and South-Eastern Europe, and changing the legal framework is a daunting task anyway in a constitutional setting, where consensus is *a sine qua non* for amendments. Brussels has therefore failed to live up to the expectations of the market time and again, but in spite of the harsh message often accompanying its interventions, ECB's readiness to prop up economies in crisis and defend the common currency has been seemingly boundless. Support has been forthcoming in many shapes and forms, direct (loans) as well as indirect (friendly interventions on the bond market), and the amount of money that has thus far been poured into the crisis economies is difficult to estimate. The economic consequences have been manifold, including a weaker Euro (as compared to the US dollar) and the conspicuous downgrading of Germany's credit rating by Moody's in late July 2012. Germany apparently lost its top level credit rating due to its commitments towards other Eurozone countries, while Great Britain – a country with weaker economic performance, but full control over its own currency – defended its top level rating (Spiegel Online, 25.7.2012). Germany has therefore called for Brussels to be given oversight authority in budgetary and fiscal matters in the member countries so as to avoid a repeat of the recent economic crises in the EU.

The main scenario – at least in Brussels – is thus more of the same. Deepening economic and political integration may very well be what the Eurozone needs to stabilise the common currency and avoid unpleasant surprises, but it is not necessarily a hit in the EU at large. It will at any rate increase the gap between insiders and outsiders within the European Union, and it may eventually prompt Britain, always a reluctant European, to opt out of the EU altogether. But much may happen along the way. Voters in countries not part of the crisis may get tired of subsidising allegedly lazy and unreliable people in debt-ridden countries. The German Constitutional Court may render German participation in the European integration project increasingly difficult or put an end to it, and Greece may throw in the towel, declare bankruptcy and opt out of the currency union (Böll *et al.*, 2012a: 23-31). The latter might seem to be a minor problem, but it is not. Greece only accounts for a minor share of the European gross domestic product (GDP), but its economy is deeply intertwined with that of other EU countries; the chain reactions in the wake of a Greek Euro exit simply cannot be foreseen. No one fore-

saw that the bankruptcy of the *Lehman Brothers* investment bank in New York in the autumn of 2008 would result in a worldwide economic meltdown. Yet, it unleashed a chain reaction that brought us frightfully close to such a meltdown.

It is frequently argued that firewalls around countries like Greece are imperative to prevent contagion. Brussels has no doubt tried to build such firewalls. But there is a number of countries in different stages of crisis and many firewalls to build; in the final analysis, it is a moot question whether they are strong enough to contain the crisis. The doomsday scenario is thus not entirely without substance. The British government had such a scenario in mind when – in November 2011 – instructing Her Majesty's embassies all over Europe to brace themselves for social disorder and riots in the wake of the pending breakdown of the Eurozone (Public Intelligence, 28.11.2011), and the German magazine *Der Spiegel* has repeatedly warned that unskilful handling of the Eurozone crisis might set the clock back to the 1930s with mass unemployment, hyperinflation, protectionism, right-wing populism and xenophobia – the very kind of setting that brought about the Second World War and that the EU was designed to prevent from ever materialising again (Böll *et al.*, 2012a: 22-27). This is also the ultimate argument for EU funding of member countries in crisis.

The doomsday prophets are still numerous, but the prospects look much brighter now than they did a year ago. The EU – and particularly the Eurozone – is moving towards deeper integration; Greece and other crisis economies are trying to come to grips with their problems within the Eurozone. It has been a

very costly rescue operation, and it is not over yet. But the European great powers have invested too much money and prestige into the common currency to let it slide out of control. The debt crisis has no doubt dealt a serious blow to the image of the European Union, but the EU has not lost its attraction on neighbouring countries. EU membership remains coveted. But there is more to the EU than the Eurozone, and it is a moot question whether the common EU institutions will be sufficient to accommodate the Eurozone as well as the member states that have opted out of it.

**The Challenge of Democracy**

It should be clear by now that democracy constitutes a challenge for the EU and its member countries. The EU has established itself as a club of democratic countries and successfully promoted democracy in applicant countries with an authoritarian and even totalitarian past. This objective was achieved by making the adoption of European standards of governance into a *sine qua non* for successful completion of the drawn-out process of negotiations between the candidate member countries and the European Commission, the so-called *acquis communautaire*. This rather hands-on approach towards the applicant countries is also known as EU conditionality. It worked well in a setting where the applicant countries had EU (and NATO) membership as their primary foreign policy goal, and – as may be gauged from Table 1 – it redrew the political map of Europe.

With Freedom House scores between 1 and 2, the ten East European enlargement countries of 2004-2007 and two candidate member countries (Croatia and Serbia) now qualify as democra-

**Table 1**. Democracies, Hybrid Regimes and Autocracies in Eastern Europe, 2011

| Democracies (Scores: 1-2) | Hybrid regimes (Scores: 2.5-5) | Autocracies (Scores: 5.5-7) |
|---|---|---|
| **Czech Republic (1)** | Montenegro (2.5) | Azerbaijan (5.5) |
| **Estonia (1)** | Albania (3) | Kazakhstan (5.5) |
| **Hungary (1)** | Macedonia (3) | Russia (5.5) |
| **Lithuania (1)** | Moldova (3) | Tajikistan (5.5) |
| **Poland (1)** | Ukraine (3) | Belarus (6.5) |
| **Slovakia (1)** | Bosnia and Herzegovina (3.5) | Turkmenistan (7) |
| **Slovenia (1)** | Georgia (3.5) | Uzbekistan (7) |
| **Bulgaria (2)** | Kosovo (4.5) | |
| Croatia (2) | Armenia (5) | |
| **Latvia (2)** | Kyrgyzstan (5) | |
| **Romania (2)** | | |
| Serbia (2) | | |

*Note*: The classification in Table 1 is based on Freedom House ratings of the countries of the world on a seven-point scale running from strongly democratic (1) to strongly autocratic (7), but the cut-offs defining the regime types are those of Linde and Ekman (2011), and Berglund and Ekman (2013). Country scores are reported within parenthesis. The countries listed in bold have been part of the EU since the eastward enlargement of 2004-2007.

cies. Countries with scores in the range of 2.5-5 have been classified as hybrid regimes. They belong to the grey zone between democracy and outright dictatorship or autocracy. But there are different shades of grey; and countries somehow within the EU's sphere of interest generally do better than other hybrid regimes. The table thus suggests that actual or perceived closeness to the EU furthers democratisation.

The countries of the Western Balkans such as Serbia, Montenegro and Albania are close to the EU in the sense that they are officially listed as potential EU members. Though interested in membership and/or close ties with the EU, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia are not seen as potential members in the foreseeable future. Relations with those countries are handled within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) – an EU programme launched in 2004, offering everything but membership to the EU's new neighbours in Eastern Europe. This was the first attempt to define the borders of the European Union, but it was also designed to calm Russia, always fearful of incursions into its so-called Near Abroad of former Soviet republics.

The EU thus deserves credit for having made Europe safe for democracy, but its own road towards democracy has been considerably bumpier. Most political scientists would argue that democratisation of the EU is an impossible endeavour as long as the EU is not a state (Linz and Stepan, 1996). But state building is not enough. There should also be a

sense of political community, and it simply is not there – at least not on the grass root level. For the vast majority of European citizens, nationality remains the primary source of identification (Berglund *et al.*, 2006). Any other outcome would have been astounding, considering the transformation of the EU in terms of scope as well as size. What was previously a forum for economic cooperation has turned into an aspiring political union, as the number of member countries increased from 6 to 27. This is hardly an ideal setting for the formation of stable European identities or, for that matter, for the development of a lively and multifaceted all-European civil society. Harsh as it might seem, it may be argued that the EU political institutions were built exclusively for the European political elite – heads of state, prime ministers and other ministers. There was a parliamentary body at the outset, but it was indirectly elected and only had consultative functions. The direct elections to the European Parliament represent an innovation; as does the gradual empowerment of the parliament. These were important steps towards integrating the grass root level into the decision making process, but they did not make the EU a full-blown democracy.

The relations between the EU and its member states are marred by at least three problems. The EU is frequently seen as something far removed and of little concern – thence the generally low turnout in elections to the European Parliament. It is also associated with red tape and bureaucracy by virtue of its many directives and regulations (Hix, 2008). These are minor problems compared to fundamental conflicts about the direction of the EU. There have been quite a few of those over the

past few years revolving around treaties and opt-outs, policy issues and budgetary matters, but nothing as potentially disruptive as the current British position on the EU. An EU-member since 1973, Britain now wants to renegotiate the terms of its EU accession with the European Commission. In a speech on 23 January 2013, Prime Minister David Cameron also vowed to submit the renegotiated terms for approval or rejection by his voters in a simple in/out referendum on Britain's relations with Europe (Cameron, 2013). If the EU does not comply with this request, David Cameron will have little choice but to pull Britain out of the EU if re-elected in 2015. If the EU does agree to renegotiate, the new deal might be rejected by British EU-sceptic voters anyway, and the EU Commission would have to brace itself for similar requests from other member countries keen on improving the terms of their EU memberships. Vocal EU-sceptics within the Conservative Party and the rightwing UK Independence Party have supposedly driven the Conservative Prime Minister to this drastic move. The economic crisis and the call for deepening integration to stabilise the Eurozone have added fuel to EU scepticism and nationalism throughout the Union; in the long run, this nationalist revival in Europe might turn out to be more damaging to the EU than stabilising the common currency.

**By Way of Conclusion**

Organisationally, the EU is a hybrid between intergovernmentalism and statehood. It has an ideological commitment to democracy and European integration. It has done more to promote democracy in Europe than anyone else, but it cannot practice all that

it teaches. It is not – and cannot develop into – a full-blown democracy on a par with its member states as long as European state and nation building remains incomplete. Deepening or vertical integration has increased the competence of the European Union, but statehood is not in any way near. It is not even on the agenda of the European Commission. There is no road map towards a European federation within the European Union, but the logic of the European integration project is such that the obvious solution to most problems is more rather than less integration. In this sense, the EU constitutes a permanent challenge to the nation states of Europe, and the nation state is a formidable foe.

Political integration is a bold project. It is not over until the different units have somehow merged. State and nation building usually takes a very long time, and it is usually accompanied by force and conquest. In the European Union, however, integration is based on consent, and not on coercion. The EU is a club of European democracies, but it has a record of opening up for new members upon demand. It is what José Manuel Barroso, Chairman of the European Commission, facetiously referred to as a 'friendly empire' (Barroso quoted in the Telegraph, 11.7.2007; Barroso on youtube, 10.7.2007). The 27 countries now in the EU add an almost mind-boggling complexity to the process of European integration. The founding fathers of the European Union, somewhat naively, believed that the material benefits of economic integration would initiate a shift of loyalties from the national to the European institutions (Pentland, 1973: 162-167). This never happened. The EU institutions were not visible enough, and the governments of the member countries were always ready to take credit for what worked out well and shift the blame for failures onto the EU. Integration and innovation processes have much in common – they are non-linear, contingent upon critical events and thus difficult to foresee (Berglund *et al.*, 2006: 19-24). The current Eurozone crisis may turn out to be such a critical juncture. It has put the Eurozone on a fast track towards deepening integration. Most of the EU countries not in the Eurozone are theoretically in a slow lane; they will join the Eurozone in the future when they fulfil the economic convergence criteria. But the EU also includes Eurozone opt-outs like Great Britain in search of parking space rather than a slow lane towards deepening integration. It remains to be seen whether or not the current EU institutions will prove robust enough to accommodate the actual and potential Eurozone countries as well as the permanent opt-outs.

The increasing malaise in Europe is largely a function of the ongoing economic crisis. It has brought escalating unemployment figures, harsh austerity programmes and – in many cases – an influx of immigrants and asylum seekers. The voters hold their government and the EU responsible for this dismal state of affairs – thence their shift towards new, alternative or populist parties often campaigning on a nationalist and protectionist platform. Not so long ago, when times were good and economic prospects brighter, European citizens tended to be satisfied with their respective government as well as the European Union. So, with economic recovery, the current nationalist wave in Europe may possibly recede. But economic recovery will not make nationalism go away. The latter will keep haunting the European integration project.

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## Europeizacija i izazov demokracije

SAŽETAK Članak objašnjava kompleksan odnos između europeizacije i demokracije. Nudi se dublje razumijevanje same Europske Unije te njene transformacije u svjetlu krize Eurozone. Organizacijski, EU je hibrid interguvernmentalizma i državnosti. Posjeduje ideološku predanost demokraciji i europskoj integraciji. Imala je presudnu ulogu u promicanju demokracije u Europi, iako ne može uvijek ispuniti ideal koji zagovara. Nije – i ne može biti – punokrvna demokracija na istoj razini sa svojim članicama dokle god izgradnja europske države i nacije ostaje nedovršena.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI europeizacija, izgradnja države, demokracija