Working Paper 4

Europeanization of National Democracies:
The Differential Impact on Simple and Compound Polities
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EUROPEANIZATION OF NATIONAL DEMOCRACIES:

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While how to remedy the democratic deficit in the EU has become the central focus of deliberations in the Constitutional Convention, as model after model of EU institutional organization has been proposed, revised, rejected, and rethought, few have even thought about the democratic deficit at the national level, let alone about how to remedy it. And yet, coming to terms with the impact of the EU on the traditional workings of member-states’ democracies is as if not more important than coming to terms with EU level democracy.

Europeanization, first and foremost, has brought radical change to all national governance practices. It has affected national institutional structures regarding which branches or units of government have power and authority over what kinds of decisions; national policymaking processes regarding which interests have access and influence in policymaking at what stages of the process; and national politics regarding how and by whom citizens’ votes are represented and their voices expressed. Moreover, in altering national governance practices, the EU has necessarily challenged traditional ideas about national democracy with regard to who ought to exercise power and authority, how and where interests should have access and influence, and which votes and whose voices should carry the greatest weight. Because these challenges have mostly not been addressed directly by national leaders, national citizens are generally left with questions about the democratic legitimacy of EU as well as national governance practices, and confusion over who is responsible for formulating EU and national policies, who is in control of their implementation, and who can be held accountable for them.

Complicating matters even further, however, is the fact that while all countries have experienced major EU-related changes in national governance practices and challenges to national ideas about democracy, the changes and challenges are comparatively more significant for some countries than for others. Some countries have been harder hit institutionally than others by the EU, however, largely as a result of questions of institutional ‘fit’.
As a ‘compound’ governance system in which power, access, and voice are highly dispersed among multiple authorities, the EU has been more disruptive to ‘simple’ polities, where power, access, and voice have traditionally been channeled through a single authority, than to more ‘compound’ polities, where power, access, and voice have traditionally been channeled through multiple authorities, as in the EU. This has in turn made for a greater clash with simple polities’ traditional ideas about democracy, where the channeling of power, access, and voice through a single authority is a primary basis for democratic legitimacy. Their dispersion through the EU’s multiple authorities in consequence contradicts a foundational organizing principle of national democracy. By contrast, for more ‘compound’ polities, the dispersion of power, access, and voice through multiple authorities is already a foundational organizing principle, and their further dispersion through the EU therefore need not raise questions of democratic legitimacy.

Explaining the problems member-states have in the process of Europeanization terms of questions of institutional ‘fit’ has its limits, however. While the impact of EU governance practices on national governance practices may be greater for simple polities because of institutional ‘misfit,’ projecting national policy preferences on to the EU and implementing EU policies are generally easier for simple polities for the self-same reason. No such generalizations with regard to questions of ‘fit’ can be made for the impact of EU policies on national governance practices, however, since specific EU policies may mandate not only the ‘compounding’ of simple polities but also the ‘simplifying’ of compound polities.

Moreover, although the EU-related changes in governance practices generally fit with the institutionally grounded democratic organizing principles of compound polities but clash with those of simple polities, no generalizations can be made about their ‘fit’ with other culturally and historically grounded values involving questions of political rights, economic order, and social justice. What is more, such values may serve to mediate the ideational impact of the EU, by reinforcing or undermining the ‘fit’ (or lack thereof) with the institutionally grounded principles of compound or simple polities. Needless to say, political, economic, and social interests also make a difference—whether by helping to override value concerns or to add to them. All of these factors together help explain why member-states may have such different reactions to the EU, and different issues with regard to any democratic deficit, including member-states with similar institutional arrangements and ideas about democracy.
The main problem for EU member-states with regard to a national democratic deficit, however, is not so much that institutions have changed and ideas have been challenged, and more so in simple than in compound polities. It is that national leaders have generally failed to come up with new ideas that reflect the new Europeanized realities. Instead, national leaders’ discourses have tended to hold on to traditional visions of democracy.

Coming up with new legitimizing ideas is of course more easily said than done. This is a question of discourse, which involves not only generating new ideas about the polity but also communicating them to the public.

Here, too, member-states’ institutional differences matter. But in this case, the ‘simple’ polities which have a harder time adjusting ideationally to Europeanization than ‘compound’ polities because of less institutional ‘fit’ may very well have an easier time discursively because of those self-same institutions. This is because in ‘simple’ polities, where a restricted, government elite tends to ‘coordinate’ the construction of the ideas and then to ‘communicate’ them to the public for discussion and deliberation, the public can get a clear message to consider—to accept, reject, or modify. By contrast, in ‘compound’ polities, where a much wider range of actors is involved in the ‘coordinative’ stage of discourse, the ideas communicated to the public may get lost in a cacophony of voices if there is no consensus, which will in any case take time to build.

Even greater problems affect discourse in the EU taken as a whole, however, because it is itself a doubly ‘compounded’ system, with an even greater range of national and EU-level actors involved in the ‘coordinative’ discourse and little ‘communicative’ voice of its own, since it depends upon national leaders for much of its communication to national publics. In this, however, the current Constitutional Convention provides a welcome exception, since it has proved a forum both for the generation and communication of ideas about democracy at the EU level.

This paper begins with an examination of the Europeanization of national governance practices with regard to the changes in national institutional structures, policymaking processes, and representative politics in simple and compound polities. It then goes on to explore the clash of the new governance practices with traditional ideas about democracy, again in simple and compound polities. Next, it focuses on the main problem for EU member-states: new practices, old ideas, and little discourse seeking to generate new ideas about democracy. It ends with a
discussion of the implications of Europeanization for national legitimizing discourse. Throughout, it illustrates using examples from the four largest EU member-states, with France and Britain as examples of simple polities and Germany and Italy of more compound polities.

THE EUROPEANIZATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

The EU can best be characterized as a ‘compound’ polity. It has a high degree of dispersion of power and authority through quasi-federal institutional structures, allows for a high level of interest access and influence through quasi-pluralist policymaking processes, and emphasizes consensus-oriented politics through largely non-partisan patterns of voting and exercising voice in a quasi-proportional representation system. As such, the EU has a differential impact on national polities depending upon where they can be situated along a continuum from more ‘compound’ to more ‘simple’ in terms of their governance practices (see Figure 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple Polity</th>
<th>Fr</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Gr</th>
<th>It</th>
<th>Ger</th>
<th>Sp</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Compound Polity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Figure 1: Countries on a Continuum between Simple and Compound Polity**

At one end of the spectrum are countries such as Germany, Spain, Belgium, or Italy. These are ‘compound’ polities with a similarly high dispersion of power and authority through federal or regionalized institutional structures, a lower but still significant level of interest access and influence through corporatist policymaking processes, and an emphasis on more consensus or compromise-oriented politics in proportional systems of representation, despite reasonably partisan patterns of voting and exercising voice. At the other end are countries such as Britain, France, or Greece. These are more ‘simple’ polities with a greater concentration of power and authority in unitary institutional structures, a lesser amount of interest access and influence through statist policymaking processes, and a more polarized or conflictual politics in majoritarian representation systems with highly partisan patterns of voting and exercising voice (see Table 1).
Institutional Structures  

Policymaking Processes  

Representative Politics  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Power and Authority</th>
<th>Interest Access and Influence</th>
<th>Orientation and Partisanship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple Polity</td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Polarized and politicized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(UK, France)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound Polity</td>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Consensus-oriented and politicized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Germany, Italy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supranational Compound Polity (European Union)</td>
<td>Highly diffuse</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Highly consensus-oriented and non-politicized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 1: Governance Practices in Simple and Compound Polities**

In between are a range of other countries that often do not fit institutionally as neatly into any one place on the continuum, as one or another institutional element may be more ‘simple’ even though the polity as a whole functions more in a more compound manner, or vice-versa. Thus, for example, while the Netherlands and Sweden are both closer to the compound end of the continuum, given corporatist policymaking processes and consensus-oriented politics, they also exhibit characteristics of more simple polities, since both are unitary states while Sweden also has more majoritarian politics. This enables both countries to act like more simple polities when corporatist processes break down and/or they cannot arrive at consensus, as in the case of the reform of welfare policies in the 1990s. Even in polities that are closer to the simple end of the continuum, however, certain sectors may in fact operate in a more compound manner, as in the case of agricultural policy and certain areas of labor policy in France, or Britain and France in particular aspects of environmental policy. But by the same token, even the most compound of polities act like more simple ones in such sectors as monetary policy and defense and security.

The EU, as a compound polity, has generally served to move all EU member-states’ governance practices farther along the continuum toward the compound end. But in so doing, it has a greater impact on member-states with more ‘simple’ polities—because it upsets their traditional concentration of power, limits on interest access, and emphasis on majoritarian
politics—than on those with more ‘compound’ ones—where it adds to their traditional dispersion of power, openness to interests, and consensus politics.

Simple polities have become more compound not only because of the EU, however, but also because of internal dynamics and reforms that have increased the independence of the judiciary, devolved greater powers to subnational units, ensured greater access and influence to interests via policy networks and the like, and provided for more citizen input. Compound polities, moreover, may in some areas have become less compound, as EU policies have sometimes concentrated greater powers in the executive. But however much the governance practices of traditionally simple polities have moved toward the compound end, they nevertheless remain closer to one end of the continuum, while traditionally compound polities remain closer to the other.

Fit in Institutional Structures

First of all, the EU’s quasi-federal institutional structures have altered the traditional power and authority of national governments. National executives have become EU level decision-makers in exchange for giving up autonomy in national policymaking. National legislatures have become transposers of EU directives at the same time that they have lost traditional legislative powers of initiative and oversight. National judiciaries have become interpreters of EU law, and subnational units, implementers of EU regulations, at the same time that both have gained in independence from the national executive.

In countries with already compound institutional structures—federal states with a diffusion of power across differing territorial levels and branches of government—the EU’s quasi-federal structures have had comparatively less of an impact than those with more simple institutional structures—unitary states where power and authority is traditionally concentrated in the executive. In unitary states like France and Britain, the highly autonomous executives have lost a comparatively more significant amount of power and authority not only because of the shift of decision-making power upward to the EU but also because national judiciaries and regions have gained in independence from the executive as a result of their EU-related roles (as well as because of internal dynamics related to judiciary activism and devolutionary reforms). By contrast, the loss of executive autonomy has been comparatively less significant for more federal states like Germany and Italy, given that the executive has always had to share power and authority with other national and sub-national units of government.
Paradoxically, moreover, although the diminution in national parliaments’ legislative powers of initiative and approval has been potentially of greater significance in federal states, it too has in the end affected unitary states more. This is because in federal systems in which the executive’s greater legislative role in the EU stood to alter the balance in the national division of powers to the detriment of the legislature and regions (when represented in a second house of Parliament), legislatures were often able to negotiate a re-equilibration of powers with the central executive, as in Germany, Belgium, Austria, and even Spain, although in this last case re-equilibration was delayed due to the regions’ initial resistance to any accommodation with the center. For unitary states such as France and Britain, no such re-equilibration could be imposed by the regions, given their lack of independent constitutionally-based powers, nor by the parliament, given its control by the executive as representative of the majority party. The French parliament’s traditionally highly limited powers have only become more limited, despite reforms attendant upon the Maastricht Treaty. The British parliament has by comparison managed to retain its traditionally greater powers of oversight and voice, although it too has lost significant powers of initiative and approval. In Italy, a highly regionalized but technically unitary state, by contrast, the reduction in the parliament’s powers of initiative and approval were balanced out by greater effectiveness, as the transposition of EU directives made impossible the log-rolling of the past.

The greater independence of the judiciary from the national executive has also been of greater consequence for unitary than federal states, even though the national courts’ loss of autonomy to the European court has been more problematic for federal states. In France, for example, where the courts have traditionally been subordinated to the executive, the courts’ increasing independence—the result of internal dynamics even more than of their empowerment as an enforcement arm of the EU—has been particularly unsettling to the executive, concerned by corruption investigations as well as more resistant with regard to the application of EU law than either Germany or Britain. In Britain, because the courts have always been more independent and the precedent-setting approach of British common law matches EU practice, the executive found it somewhat easier to accept the growing independence of the judiciary, but not the proliferation of EU-inspired laws, while the courts bristled at giving up their long-established prerogatives and have referred many fewer questions to the ECJ than France or Germany. In Germany, where the courts have always been even more independent than in Britain and the
importance of law as a regulatory instrument parallels EU practice, the problem has been neither with the even greater independence of the courts nor with the proliferation of EU laws but rather with constitutional issues related to the precedence of EU law over German. In Italy, however, the technically unitary nature of the state, despite increasing regionalization, meant that the courts were generally subordinate to the political power until recently when, even more so than in France, they asserted their independence not just through the EU but more significantly through a variety of corruption investigations (mani pulite and tangentopoli) that went so far as to bring down major political and business officials, along with the entire postwar party system.

Finally, the regions’ enhanced independence from the national executive as a result of their closer linkages with the EU through regional policies, committees, and funds has so far been most significant for France, where the regions have long been subordinated to the center, and least significant for federal Germany, where the Länder already have had great independence, or regionalized Italy, where the regions have gained increasing autonomy since the 1970s. It stands to have the greatest significance for Britain, however, given the process of devolution that started in the late 1990s for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland with elected legislatures, but which has yet to begin for the recently created English regions.

**Fit in Policymaking Processes**

The EU’s quasi-pluralist policymaking processes have also impinged on traditional patterns of policy formulation and implementation. National interests have gained access and influence in an EU policymaking process which involves a much vaster array of actors in a much more complex set of interactions with many more points of entry than that of any member-state. Moreover, national administrations have been pressed into more regulatory and legalistic modes of enforcement—where the rules are applied without exception by independent regulators and judges—from approaches that often relied instead on administrative discretion, joint-regulation, or self-regulation.

Just as the EU’s institutional structures have had a comparatively greater effect on simple polities than compound ones, so have the EU’s policymaking processes. Countries with already compound policymaking processes—corporatist polities in which certain ‘privileged’ interests, mainly business and labor, participate in policy formulation and implementation—have more readily adapted to the EU’s quasi-pluralist processes than countries with more simple
processes—statist polities in which the state retains control over policy formulation and implementation.\textsuperscript{16}

The EU’s quasi-pluralist model of relatively open access to organized interests more closely approximates the German and Italian corporatist approaches to interest intermediation, even though these countries tend to allow in a more restricted range of non-governmental interests to policy formulation. It differs from the British model, which is statist to the extent that the executive has traditionally tended to make its decisions autonomously, even though interests have long had access through lobbying Parliament and policy networks have more recently had an increasingly important effect on executive control in some areas.\textsuperscript{17} And it differs even more so from the traditionally highly statist French approach, where interests until recently had barely been allowed into the policy formulation process by a highly autonomous executive. French organized interests, as a result, have had the steepest learning curve, having had to learn how to lobby effectively by getting in early with solid technical information as opposed to ‘\textit{a la française},’ by taking people out to lunch and relying on political arbitration late in the process. Once having learned, however, the impact has been most empowering for French organized interests, since they now have greater input at the EU level on decisions from which in the past they were normally excluded at the national level.\textsuperscript{18} The British, by comparison, have had much less to learn, organized interests having honed their lobbying skills in their relations with Parliament and their one-on-one negotiation skills with the bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{19} Italian interests, given a long training in clientelism, have also had less to learn than the French with regard to the process of lobbying, but arguably more as to its content, to wit, that it is neither a political nor an influence peddling process. The Germans have had the least to learn, having been schooled in the same kind of cooperative negotiating style and committee work prevalent in the EU, as evidenced by their success in dominating standard-setting committees.\textsuperscript{20} By the same token, however, the interest intermediation process at the EU level has served to unbalance the national in certain cases—for example, by giving business greater access than labor in areas other than the social and labor policy arena\textsuperscript{21} and by undermining national business associations where large firms have a direct EU role, such as in the Transatlantic Business Dialogue.\textsuperscript{22}

The EU’s closed, regulatory and legalistic process of policy implementation has also been less difficult to absorb for Germany than France and Britain or Italy. In France, EU requirements to apply the rules without exception go against traditional patterns of administrative
discretion, where making exceptions was the rule as often as not, and which balanced out the lack of consultation in policy formulation with flexibility in implementation. But although the regulatory model may have ensured greater equality and predictability in the implementation of the law, it has denied French organized interests the accommodation of the past, and has made those without access to EU policy formulation more prone to confrontation at the national or, increasingly, the EU level—the case of truckers with regard to EU-mandated liberalization and workers in the infrastructural ‘service public’ industries worried about privatization and deregulation.  Similarly, moreover, EU-mandated regulatory agencies and codified rules go against British governments’ traditional preferences for self-regulatory arrangements, informal agreements, and voluntary rules, thereby denying British organized interests the voluntary rules and self-governing arrangements of the past, leaving them to complain of the increasing rigidity and formal rules coming from the EU (even though this also has national sources). By contrast, the EU has allowed corporatist implementation processes to continue where they existed, and therefore has had little impact on Germany or Italy in those areas. In non-corporatist policy areas, however, while Germany still benefits from a reasonable ‘goodness of fit’ since its implementation has traditionally been regulatory or legalistic, the problems for Italy are potentially even greater than for France, since it has traditionally tended to derogate the rules even more than France, say, 90% of the time to France’s 50% of the time.  

**Fit in Representative Politics**

Finally, even EU consensus-oriented representative politics, as embryonic as they are, have begun to modify traditional modes of participation, partisan politics, and mobilization. National electoral politics have been complicated by voting in European elections which have often become referenda on national elected officials (especially when they occur in the middle of a government’s term in office).  Political conflict and contestation has been submerged by the general quest for consensus and compromise. National partisan politics have been subordinated, first, to the national interest politics of the Council, as national ministers speak in the Council in the name of the nation rather than as the representative of the governmental majority; second, to the public interest politics of the European Parliament, as members of the European Parliament speak for the general good rather than as representatives of electoral majorities; and, third, to the organized interest politics of the Commission, as citizens exercise voice more effectively when lobbying in Brussels than voting or protesting in national capitals.
As with the Europeanization of institutional structures and policymaking processes, so with representative politics: countries with already compound polities—where consensus or compromise-oriented politics is the norm, given proportional electoral systems with multiple parties and/or two powerful legislative chambers where control may be divided between government majority and opposition—are a closer match with the EU’s quasi-consensual politics than countries with more simple polities—where more conflictual or polarized politics are the product of majoritarian electoral systems with first-past-the-post elections, two main parties, and only one powerful legislative chamber controlled by the government majority. In Germany and Italy, the complex negotiations and search for consensus that go on in the EU are not so different from their own politics, and is therefore not experienced as the loss of political power which it is to Britain or France, where majoritarian electoral systems generally provide for stronger governments with less need to negotiate or to find consensus, since they have the power to impose.

Moreover, the EU’s accentuation of interest representation (whether territorial, public or special interests) over the electoral is less of a disruption of political representation systems for countries such as Germany and Italy, in which governments also often compromise on their political commitments to the electorate in response to the federal or regionalized powers of territorial units, the corporatist or clientelistic influence of organized interests, and the strength of the opposition in the second chamber and/or regional governments. The disruption is much greater for countries such as Britain and France, where governments have not generally needed to compromise on their political commitments, given the traditional subordination of other territorial units in the unitary state, the distancing of organized interests in statist policymaking, and the weakness of the opposition in the winner-take-all electoral system. The subordination of representative politics to territorial or interest politics may therefore lead to greater disaffection on the part of British and French electorates, which have come to expect more clearly politically demarcated policies and positions, than for German or Italian electorates, which are used to more ambiguous policies and positions based on compromise. Although in Italy electoral reforms toward a more majoritarian system beginning in the early 1990s have certainly produced a clearer articulation of political positions than in the past, it is still nothing like in France or Britain.
Europeanization of Practices vs. European Integration and Europeanization of Policies

‘Simple’ polities, in short, have greater problems adapting to the Europeanization of their governance practices than ‘compound’ polities as a result of a lack of institutional fit. Isomorphism, or the question of ‘fit,’ however, is mainly a problem for ‘simple’ polities when we consider Europeanization of governance practices, or the top-down impact of the EU’s structures, processes, and politics on its member-states. European integration, as the bottom-up process of building a European space, in which member-states project their policy preferences onto the EU, is another matter entirely. And so is the Europeanization of national policies, whether in terms of member-states’ institutional capacity to implement EU policies or in terms of member-states’ institutional adjustment to EU policies. (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Fit with EU</th>
<th>Europeanization of Practices</th>
<th>European Integration</th>
<th>Europeanization of Policies #1</th>
<th>Europeanization of Policies #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compound Polity</td>
<td>Easier to adapt practices</td>
<td>Harder to project preferences</td>
<td>Harder to implement policies</td>
<td>No generalizations on adjustment in practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Polity</td>
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<td>Easier to project preferences</td>
<td>Easier to implement policies</td>
<td>No generalizations on adjustment in practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Different Challenges depending upon Polity Type

Whereas in the process of Europeanization, ‘fit’ between EU and national governance practices is a significant factor in a member-state’s ease of adaptation, in the process of European integration ‘misfit’ may instead very well be the key to having fewer problems and greater clout. ‘Simple’ polities in which power is more concentrated in the executive such as Britain and France are often better able to defend national preferences if not also to project them onto the European stage than countries with ‘compound’ polities in which power is more diffuse. Other factors are of course also at work, such as relative size and economic weight (with bigger countries naturally having greater sway than smaller), strategic position (e.g., when a country has the presidency of the European Council), or good ideas. But there can be little question that
countries where the executive has hierarchical control of its ministries and regions is more effective in Brussels because able to speak in one voice than those where ministries and regions have greater measures of independence.

This helps explain the fact that national leaders of more ‘simple’ democracies often seek to offset the impact of Europeanization by leading European integration. Thus, in France, national leaders have often sought to impose their preferences—whether by proposing grand initiatives as part of the ‘Franco-German partnership, by maneuvering to maintain CAP subsidies for French farmers, or by insisting that Europe-based institutions such as the ECB or NATO’s southern command be led by Frenchmen. This serves the dual purpose of increasing French power in the EU while ensuring that in exchange for the loss of national autonomy come greater benefits for France. In the UK, by contrast, while national leaders have occasionally sought to engage in grand initiatives, as in Blair’s great leap forward on European security and defense in St. Malò in 1998, they have more often resisted the EU because (among other things, such as the clash with values) they were not leading it, as in the case of Thatcher on monetary union and social policy. This too serves a dual purpose, by ensuring that the national executive retains as much national power and autonomy as it can while still participating in the EU, even though it consecrates the UK as the EU’s ‘awkward partner.’ In a country like Germany, by contrast, even when national leaders have sought to impose a preference, as in reducing its contributions, they have had great difficulty except when they were suggesting things in the context of the Franco-German partnership. In Italy, where exercising leadership domestically has itself been a near impossible task until the 1990s, national leaders have been content to follow rather than lead.

Moreover, institutional ‘misfit’ also generally ensures that simple polities have an easier time in implementing EU policies, since they need not negotiate compliance with sub-national regions or corporatist interests, as in many compound polities. The regulatory turn in implementation reinforces this by substituting arms’ length relations for the administrative discretion of the past. However, the opposite proposition—that institutional ‘fit’ causes compound polities greater difficulty in implementing EU policies—does not always hold. In Italy, for example, Europeanization has increased the state’s capacity to govern. Moreover, although compound polities may have a harder time because they have to negotiate reforms, the
negotiated policy outcomes may work better than those imposed by simple polities—especially where there is public resistance.

Institutional ‘fit,’ then, is a double-edged sword for simple and compound national polities. The same institutional arrangements that make for disadvantages with regard to the Europeanization of national governance practices—since adapting institutional structures, policymaking processes, and representative politics is harder for simple than for compound polities—make for advantages with regard to European integration—since projecting preferences is easier—as well as with regard to the Europeanization of national policies—since implementing policies is also easier for simple polities. Other institutional issues with regard to the Europeanization of national policies, however, do not allow for any such generalizations.

Most importantly, where EU policies mandate change in the national governance practices of a given policy area, no generalizations with regard to the differential impact on simple or compound polities is possible. With policy-related institutional changes, Europeanization may be as disruptive to compound polities—by pushing them in a more simple direction—as to simple polities—by pushing them in a more compound direction. Whereas in more simple polities, an EU policy-related push toward the compound end of the continuum may involve empowering other branches or levels of government, introducing interests into the policy formulation process, or forcing consensus-oriented politics, in more compound polities, an EU policy-related push toward the simple end may entail concentrating greater powers in the executive, banning interests from policy implementation, or accentuating political divisions. In environmental policy, for example, while the UK and France have become more compound in policy formulation, as the EU has mandated adding more interests in the consultation process in a variety of areas, Germany and the Netherlands found themselves pushed toward greater ‘simplicity’ in policy implementation, as state oversight has often been required.

In short, the farther we get away from ‘polity’ issues, that is, the Europeanization of national institutions, and the closer we come to ‘policy’ issues, whether European integration with regard to the projection of national policy preferences or Europeanization in terms of the implementation of EU policies or the adjustment of national practices to EU policies, the harder it is to generalize because of the number of factors other than institutional ‘fit’ in question. In fact, if we were to change our register, and to focus on what drives policy change rather than polity change, a whole host of factors come into play, of which ‘fit’ between EU and national
policies is only one, although in the literature it has gained the most attention. Elsewhere, I have argued that national policy change in response to Europeanization is best explained by reference to five intervening variables: 1) whether a country has vulnerabilities that establish the need for change; 2) whether it has the political institutional capacity to impose change (in single-actor systems or, in the terms used here, simple polities) or to negotiate change (in multi-actor systems or compound polities); 3) whether proposed policy reforms ‘fit’ with policy legacies; 4) whether they also ‘fit’ with policy preferences, old or new; and 5) whether there is a discourse which enhances political institutional capacity to change by altering perceptions of policy problems and legacies, thereby influencing preferences.

In the analysis of policy change, in short, a range of factors helps explain the impact of Europeanization on national policies. In the analysis of polity change, there is only one main factor to consider with regard to the impact of Europeanization on national practices: whether they are simpler or more compound democracies.

**The Clash of New Practices with Traditional Ideas about Democracy**

That national governance practices have changed in response to Europeanization, and more in simple national polities than in compound national polities, is not the main problem for EU member-state democracies. It is that their ideas about democracy generally have not changed, leaving open questions about the legitimacy of the new practices and confusion over political responsibility, control, and accountability with regard to the new policies—and more so in simple polities than in compound ones, where the clash is greater between the new practices and traditional ideas about democracy (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Ideas</th>
<th>Representative Politics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simple Polity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Compound Polity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Institutions</strong></td>
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<td>Distribution of Power, Access, and Influence</td>
<td>Institutional Structures</td>
<td>Policymaking Processes</td>
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<td>Channeled through Single Authority</td>
<td>Power concentrated in executive to govern effectively</td>
<td>Policymaking closed to interests to ensure against abuse</td>
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<td>Dispersed through Multiple Authorities</td>
<td>Power diffused thru multiple authorities to safeguard against government excess</td>
<td>Policymaking open to interests to govern effectively</td>
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<td>Politics diffused in multiple authorities and open to interests to achieve consensus for all</td>
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TABLE 3: Democratic Practices and Ideas in Simple and Compound Polities

More specifically, Europeanization tends reinforce compound polities’ beliefs that institutional structures should have a high degree of diffusion of power and authority to ensure against government excess; that policymaking processes ought to be open to interest access and influence in order to govern most effectively; and that representative politics ought to seek consensus and compromise among the wide range of elected authorities open to interest intermediation. By contrast, Europeanization tends to clash with simple polities’ long-held notions that democratic institutional structures should concentrate power and authority to ensure that government has the capacity to govern effectively; that democratic policymaking processes should be largely closed to interest access and influence in order to ensure against abuse; and that representative politics should be led by a single, political executive representative of the people (or at least of the majority) who is also capable of acting effectively.

The Clash in Ideas about Institutional Structures

The EU-related compounding of institutional structures largely reinforces the underlying assumptions in compound polities such as Germany that democracy is best served by the dispersion of government power and authority, such that citizens’ rights are protected from government excess through checks and balances resulting from the vertical and horizontal division of powers. By contrast, it challenges the underlying assumptions in more simple polities such as France and Britain that democracy is best served by the concentration of government power and authority both vertically and horizontally, such that the government has the sole responsibility as well as the capacity to respond to citizens’ wants and needs effectively. In Italy, which has a mix of simple and compound structural elements, EU compounding reinforces the assumptions underlying the increasingly regionalized practices that promote the dispersion of power and authority, even as it challenges what is still in principle a unitary state.

For France, the EU-related compounding of its institutional structures runs counter to the country’s Jacobin philosophical foundations that concentrate power and authority in the ‘one and indivisible’ Republican State. Democratic legitimacy has traditionally been based in a unitary state and embodied in an autonomous executive with no obligation to any other authorities, whether other national branches of government or subnational units of ‘administration,’ let alone other national governments. Moreover, even today, this unitary idea of the French state remains, even though French ideas about how much European integration is compatible with the unitary
state have evolved—from President de Gaulle’s insistence on a "Europe of nations" to President Mitterrand’s vision of a France increasingly conjoined with a more federal Europe to President Chirac and former Prime Minister Jospin’s consensus on Europe as a ‘federation of nation-states.’ What is more, the unitary ideal persists despite not only the changes resulting from the Europeanization of institutional structures but also the decentralization reforms beginning in the 1980s that gave more power and resources to subnational governments and a measure of autonomy to Corsica.

In Britain, the EU-related compounding of institutional structures has not been quite as great a challenge to national ideas as for France, mainly because British ideas about the institutional balance of power and authority has long been somewhat more compounded than those of France. But although the executive has never been as unitary as the French—given the historical evolution of the power of the monarchy, which has since the Magna Carta been tempered by the growing power of Parliament, a certain modicum of local autonomy (until the late 1970s and again since the late 1990s), as well as in recent times by a more independent judiciary—this has in no way made Britain more receptive to the Europeanization of its institutional structures. Much the contrary. Any increase in the vertical division of powers in favor of subnational authorities was the bête noire of Conservative governments under Thatcher and Major. And although Blair’s recent devolutionary reforms suggest a willingness to give up centuries-old ideas about the unitary state and government by an autonomous, central executive, this has been more in response to subnational pressure for local autonomy, in particular Northern Ireland and to a lesser extent Scotland and Wales, than supranational pressures from the EU (with the exception, perhaps, of the administrative devolution of the English regions).

Neither Germany nor Italy has had the same ideational problems as France or Britain with regard to the compounding of their institutional structures, given that they were already highly compounded. The further compounding of Germany’s federal system sits well with a centuries-long history in which the regions have been relatively strong and autonomous and a shorter postwar history in which the different branches and units of the national government have also been strong and autonomous. Only the Bundesbank’s subordination to the ECB can be characterized as a major disruption to German ideas about the appropriate organization of the federal state—but this was in fact of concern less because of the loss of institutional power per se than because of what the Bundesbank symbolized for the nation as the protector of economic
stability. The compounding of Italy’s regionalized system also fits with a long history of strong regions and a recent history of devolutionary reforms, with ideas about the state moving from a unitary notion to a more divided one, and challenges coming more from internal questions related to the demands of the Northern League rather than externally from the EU.

**The Clash in Ideas about Policymaking Processes**

Similarly, the EU-related compounding of policymaking bolsters the views in Germany and Italy that government responds most effectively to citizens’ wants and needs by being open to a multiplicity of inputs from intermediate interests through its multiple centers of power. By contrast, the EU undermines the views of Britain, and even more those of France, that the executive, as the primary center of power, ensures its citizens against governmental excess by being closed to interest intermediation.

In the policy formulation process, the EU’s quasi-pluralist approach clashes in principle with statist systems’ foundational concepts of democratic participation and representation. In France, involving organized interests in policy formulation by way of pluralist processes offends French ideas prevalent since the Revolution that have viewed any such interest intermediation as illegitimate, since the State is to be the sole representative of the people, to act in the name of the collective will for the collective good. In Britain, interest intermediation interferes with notions of parliamentary sovereignty as embodied in the executive who represents ‘the Crown in parliament’—although parliamentary lobbying is acceptable so long as the government keeps its distance. In practice, though, while British interest involvement in EU level pluralism raises few real questions of legitimacy since interests have always had some voice in national policymaking, French interests’ experience of EU level pluralism can raise questions about the legitimacy of national policymaking principles that deny them access and voice in national policy formulation processes, especially when these involve EU-related policies. French businesses’ experience is a case in point.\(^{34}\)

In the implementation process, moreover, the EU’s regulatory model—wherein derogation of the rules is illegal and statutory rules rather than voluntary self-governing agreements are the norm—clashes with both countries’ belief in flexible implementation processes. For France, the EU’s regulatory model, by disallowing the state’s accommodation of interests in implementation, not only denies minority interests voice in the entire statist policymaking process, but also leaves them no option other than confrontation—as noted above.
For Britain, the problem is rather with the statutory rules that, by abrogating organized interests’ voluntary self-regulatory arrangements, increase the scope and rigidity of the public sphere and thereby encroach on the private sphere which governments see as their duty to protect.35

For compound polities, there is less of a clash in ideas about policy formulation, given that interests are expected to have access, although not in exactly the same way. In Germany, although organized interests have generally adjusted readily to EU level interest intermediation, the EU process has served to undermine corporatist ideals by tipping the balance in favor of business in EU level negotiations. By the same token, however, it has expanded the number of interests heard. In policy implementation, moreover, there is little clash in ideas, given that where its enforcement is not corporatist, it is regulatory or legalistic. What is more, because business, labor, and subnational units all have access to European policymaking via national as well as European channels, they have not felt cut out of the policy process in the way that many French interests have.

In Italy, however, there is likely to be more of a clash in ideas than in Germany, despite the compound nature of the polity. In policy formulation, the public discrediting of the traditionally clientelistic, politicized system of interest consultation as of the 1990s could cast doubt on the EU’s pluralist process, although more likely is a spillover in the opposite direction, with EU-style interest intermediation to become the ideal for Italy. In policy implementation, because in non-corporatist areas Italy has followed the administrative pattern of France rather than the more legalistic patterns of Northern Europe, with even more derogation of the rules, Italian interests are likely to feel more cut out of the policy process than even the French, were the government to implement the rules.

**The Clash in Ideas about Representative Politics**

Finally, the EU-related compounding of representative politics sustains the German and Italian postwar acceptance of political compromise among the plethora of elected authorities open to corporate interest intermediation. By contrast, it weakens the British and French expectation of clear political leadership by a single executive, acting solely in the name of the voters.

In simple democracies, legitimacy is focused in the executive, which is the locus of political responsibility and accountability. For France, the executive embodies the one and indivisible ‘Republican state,’ as the political representative of the people who is to act without
obligation to other authorities and without intermediation by organized interests, charged to protect citizens’ political rights based on the ‘universal rights of man’ if not also to project them throughout the rest of the world. In consequence, Europeanization means that national democratic legitimacy can always be called into question, since the loss of executive autonomy is necessarily a dilution of government responsibility and accountability, although leadership in European integration—as the projection of national preferences, in terms of policies and political rights—can serve offset the perceived loss of legitimacy somewhat. In Britain, where the executive is seen as the representative of ‘parliamentary sovereignty,’ the potential challenges to legitimacy are even greater, since any EU-related loss of parliamentary sovereignty can also be seen as an attack on the ‘historically established rights of Englishmen.’36

In compound democracies, by contrast, whether the EU, Germany, or Italy, legitimacy rides on the functioning of the system as a whole, as responsibility and accountability are both diffuse, given the numbers of actors that can be seen to have a legitimate role to play as representatives of political constituencies or organized interests. In consequence, democratic legitimacy is generally not in question despite the shift in power and authority resulting from Europeanization unless the people lose trust in the system as a whole. For Italy, such a loss of trust was the case for much of the postwar period until the 1990s with regard to national government but not the EU, which was seen as the rescue of the nation-state.

Another way to conceive of the differential impact of Europeanization on the institutionally grounding organizing principles about democracy in compound and simple polities is by analogy to polytheistic and monotheistic religions. Where you already have a number of gods, a few more is not a major problem (as when the Greeks incorporated Roman gods when they became part of the Roman Empire). However, when you believe in only one God, the inclusion of any others is an attack on the very fundamentals of one’s faith (as when the early Christians chose martyrdom rather than accept the Roman gods). And so it is with more ‘simple’ democracies such as France and Britain, for which the new gods of the EU represent a major challenge to the one and true central authority, by contrast with more compound democracies such as Germany and Italy, for which the new gods simply add to the diversity in the large pantheon of powers.37
Institutionally grounded vs. other historically and culturally grounded democratic ideas

It goes without saying that other questions of democratic legitimacy also can and do come up. These are related to changes in governance practices or policies that may clash with more nationally-specific political, social, and economic values, for example, about the appropriate balance of power between given institutional authorities, about the inviolability of long-established political rights, about the bases of citizenship, identity and community, about the grounds for social justice and the equitable distribution of social goods, or about the just distribution of economic goods and the organization of the economy. With these kinds of questions, the lack of fit with the EU may be as great for compound polities as for simple ones.

In explaining responses to Europeanization, such historically and culturally-grounded values are often difficult to separate except analytically from the institutionally-grounded organizing principles of democracy, since they serve to inform them and, indeed, may also be informed by them. However, sorting the two out serves a heuristic function, by helping to explain why the clash with ideas about organizing principles can lead to such different national responses to Europeanization. Put another way, where one’s independent variables are the institutional organizing principles of democracy, these culturally and historically based political, social, and economic values act as intervening variables in the explanation of national responses to the process of Europeanization (see Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Responses to EU change in governance practices, depending upon organizing principles of democracy, meditated by other democratic values](image_url)
In simple polities, for example, these political, social, and economic values lend insight into how countries mediate the clash with their democratic organizing principles—for example, why the French—with their ideas about a civilizing cultural mission and the universal rights of man—have embraced Europeanization despite its potential impact on the powers of the ‘Republican state’ whereas the British have kept Europe more at arms’ length because it threatens ideas about the historically-established rights of Englishmen and parliamentary sovereignty. In compound polities, they show how the ‘fit’ with democratic organizing principles was enhanced by social and political values, with the Germans embracing Europe as a way to submerge national identity in a larger whole, the Italians, as a way to rescue the nation-state, and the Spaniards, as a way to reinforce democracy—the same reason as the Greeks, despite their more ‘simple’ polity. Moreover, such values shed light on why some Scandinavian countries have resisted the euro—because of concerns about its impact on social justice in the social-democratic welfare state—while Germany has accepted it—because of its fit with notions of economic order and the stability culture of the Deutschmark.

In addition, it is important to note here that particular EU-related policies can always bring out different responses, whatever the general attitude. Thus, although the French and the Germans are both on the whole pro-European, when EU policies threaten the French state’s social service mission through liberalization of public utilities or Germany’s economic order through decisions against the lending practices of the regional banks, the responses have been as negative as the British or the Swedes on the euro—with the difference that neither the French nor the Germans can call a referendum on the issue, since they are bound to accept EU decisions in these areas.

Interests also matter, of course. One cannot understand the general push for European integration without recognizing the economic, political, and social interests that enabled countries to overcome ideational obstacles to change—the French desire to lead politically in Europe; the German interest in serving its economic and social purposes; the British willingness to go with economic interest, despite political reticence; the Italian hope to overcome the economic, political, and social costs of state paralysis; or the need for small states such as Denmark, Sweden, and Austria to be part of a larger political entity in order better to manage economic externalities.
Finally, experiences of European integration or policy implementation may also have an
effect on perceptions of the Europeanization of practices. Thus, for example, success in
projecting national preferences onto the EU can help offset concerns about the impact of the EU
on national democratic practices and ideas—the case of France, where leadership in the EU has
long served to obscure the state’s real loss of power. By contrast, success in policy
implementation may only increase concerns about the impact of the EU—as in Britain, where its
stellar implementation record has meant that it has only felt the effects of Europeanization more,
thereby adding to the clash with national institutionally, historically, and culturally grounded
ideas.

Thus, although Europeanization has had a greater impact on simple polities than on
compound polities due to matters of institutional ‘fit,’ national responses to the EU depend on
not only on how Europeanization fits with institutionally-grounded ideas about democracy but
also on how it fits with culturally and historically grounded political, social, and economic
values, with political, social, and economic interests, as well as with experiences of European
integration and policy implementation. What is more, such national responses are clearly not
fixed, since ideas, values, and interests all change over time as a matter not only of experience
but also of social construction—which also means of discourse.

**THE MAIN PROBLEM: NEW PRACTICES, OLD IDEAS, LITTLE DISCOURSE**

The problem for national democracies is that while national governance practices have
changed dramatically in the process of Europeanization, national leaders have not only not
generated new ideas to legitimize the new practices, they have often persisted in speaking about
Europeanization as if the old ideas about democracy still applied. As a result, their discourse has
failed both cognitively to explain the logic and necessity of changes in national institutional
structures, policymaking, and representative politics and normatively to persuade of their
appropriateness in terms of institutionally grounded principles of democracy or culturally and
historically grounded political, social, and economic values. Again, however, the problems
resulting from the lack of new ideas are more pronounced for more simple polities such as
France and Britain than for more compounded polities such as Germany and Italy. But where
simple polities develop new ideas, their ability to convey them to the public through discourse is
likely to be greater than in compound polities.
The Lack of New Ideas about Democracy in the Discourse

National leaders have tended to pass over the changes in national practices in silence and to downplay any perceived impact on ideas about democracy. Although EU-related policy issues are often at the forefront of national discourse, as national politicians blame the EU for unpopular policies or take credit for the popular ones (with or without mentioning the EU’s role), polity issues tend to take a back seat other than in certain ‘defining moments,’ at times of Treaty referenda or accession agreements. In national discourse, in most countries other than Britain, national politicians continue to talk as if the EU has had little impact on national governance practices. And although this is understandable—politicians, after all, are not likely to use their scarce political resources to speak about changes that are complicated and difficult to ‘sell’, and there are no electoral incentives to do so—it adds to the problems of the democratic deficit.

In France, for example, national leaders still speak as if the state were unitary, despite the federalizing trends related not only to the EU but also to internal reforms, as in the case of Corsica. They continue to insist that they remain a leader in Europe, despite the faltering of the Franco-German partnership and, most importantly, the fact that France has followed much more than led in the 1990s, and sometimes quite reluctantly, as in the liberalization of the public services industries, which they loudly opposed, or in the change in immigration policy, which they implemented without any nod to its EU genesis. The problem with ignoring the impact of Europeanization on the policy while emphasizing France’s leadership role in the EU is that French leaders risk being held accountable for actions for which they are not fully responsible.

Britain has the opposite problem. National leaders have tended to highlight the impact of the EU on national governance practices: under Thatcher in highly polemical diatribes against overly ambitious integration plans that challenge national sovereignty and excess regulations that reduce the private sphere while rigidifying the public sphere, under Major in a quieter, but equally negative discourse. Under Blair, by contrast, there has largely been silence, in particular over possible entry into the eurozone, which has been portrayed as a strictly economic problem—leaving Fleet Street to continue the negative polity discourse. The result is that the public has been made maximally aware of the drawbacks to Europeanization and few of the benefits, such that any government that moves toward greater integration risks being seen as responsible for undermining British democracy.
Neither Germany nor Italy have problems as serious as those of France and Britain with regard to the changes in governance practices, given their better fit with the EU as compound democracies. Thus, the discourse of national leaders has been mostly positive in terms of its national impact, with the Italians arguably even more positive, and any potentially negative impact downplayed. For Italy, the problems with regard to governance practices may come when it is forced to implement the rules. For Germany, problems are more likely when EU policies are seen to challenge the practices of its social market economy (of which the savings and loan decision was a foretaste), because these are seen as fundamentals with regard to citizens’ economic and social rights.

In all countries, however, the lack of polity discourse by mainstream leaders has left the issues wide open to the extremes on both sides of the political spectrum, to exploit for their own electoral purposes—on the extreme right with regard to the impact of immigration and on the left with regard to the welfare state. Indications of the political problems are also found in the surveys, opinion polls, and electoral studies that show that citizens’ trust in national governments as well as in EU institutions is down, while general cynicism about national leaders is rampant and voter apathy, evident in higher and higher rates of abstentionism, is up.

The democratic deficit, in short, is a significant problem at the national level, whatever one thinks of it at the European. And it will remain a problem so as long as national leaders and citizens in each and every one of the member-states do not start reevaluating what they mean by national democracy today, even before they decide how to democratize the EU for tomorrow. The EU is no longer an elite project supported by a ‘permissive consensus.’ But it is not yet a peoples’ project grounded in a ‘democratic consensus.’

But how to build such a democratic consensus? For this, we need to look to the interactive dimension of discourse in European democracy at both EU and national levels, which also differs in simple and compound polities.

*The Europeanization of Discursive Interactions*

The problem with regard to Europeanization is not just that countries hold to old ideas that do not reflect the new practices. It is also that the new EU governance practices have generated new patterns of discourse, and that these have also affected the discursive patterns of interaction in ‘simple’ and ‘compound’ polities.
Discourse, as defined herein, represents both the ideas that speak to the soundness and appropriateness of policies and practices and the interactive processes that serve to generate and communicate those ideas. In the interactive sphere, all polities have both a ‘coordinative’ discourse in which policy actors generate ideas about policies and practices and a ‘communicative’ discourse in which political actors convey those ideas to the public for deliberation and legitimization. But in compound polities such as Germany and Italy—with federal or regionalized states, corporatist or clientistic policymaking processes, and proportional representation systems—the coordinative discourse finds greatest emphasis, given the number of policy actors needed to agree on any new ideas. By contrast, in simple polities such as Britain and France—with unitary states, statist policymaking processes, and majoritarian representation systems—the communicative discourse finds greater emphasis, given the more restricted access to decision-making and the greater need, therefore, to legitimize any new ideas directly to the more general public.

In the EU, the discursive pattern of compound polities is even more pronounced. While the EU’s coordinative discourse has an extremely wide range of policy actors involved, as organized interests along with other interested parties discuss and deliberate with supranational EU policy actors and national actors acting in a supranational capacity, the EU’s communicative discourse has very few political actors capable of speaking for the EU as a whole and no single European public to speak to, given the lack of a common European language, European media, credible EU-level political parties, and European public opinion, let alone European citizenry or directly elected President. In consequence, while the EU benefits from the most elaborate of coordinative discourses, with European policy ideas generated through a complex discursive process with a plethora of actors, it suffers from the thinnest of communicative discourses, with European policy ideas conveyed mostly indirectly, by national political actors in national contexts. As such, it has had a differential impact on countries with simple and compound discursive patterns.

In simple polities, Europeanization has fundamentally altered national discursive patterns. At the coordinative stage of discourse, many more national organized interests traditionally left outside the national coordinative discourse find themselves inside the EU one. This in and of itself complicates the communicative task of political actors, since they must legitimize policies to the general public for which they may have had comparatively little input.
and to which they may not be politically committed. Moreover, they are not generally aided by the national organized interests with input at the EU level, since these are often weak intermediaries at the national level, given their traditional lack of input or standing in national policymaking. As a result, organized interests in simple polities cannot do what organized interests do in compound polities, which is to pick up the slack in the communicative discourse by acting as credible communicators to their own constituencies within the coordinative discursive context. It goes without saying that where national organized interests are not present at the EU level and policies go against their wishes, the problems for political leaders’ communicative discourse are even greater.

However, the traditionally strong communicative voice of national leaders, in the absence of any EU level communicative discourse, can be a boon if and when national political leaders take advantage of this. They can, for example, make no mention of the EU-inspiration for policy change, legitimizing such policies in purely national polity terms, as in the case of French immigration policy. Moreover, were they to decide to embrace the changes in national practices with a full communicative discourse of legitimization, they would be able to speak clearly and in one voice, with all their traditional authority, to seek to change the public’s traditional ideas about democracy. This could even entail coming up with new governance practices to make up for the national level ‘democratic deficits’ resulting from Europeanization.

For example, in France, national leaders, instead of continuing to reiterate the fictions of a unitary state and an all-powerful executive, could seek to cast the new realities of their Europeanized polity in a positive light, rather than ignoring them. Thus, they could note that the EU-related increase in the horizontal and vertical division of powers through more independent courts and subnational authorities acts as a check on national executive power. They could point to the fact that the EU-related increase in policymaking access and enforcement ensures greater interest participation in policy formulation at the EU level and greater equality and predictability in policy implementation at the national level because the derogation of the rules is no longer allowed. What is more, they could even do more to bring organized interests into the national policy formulation process, to overcome the problems related to the loss of flexibility in policy implementation. This has already begun to happen with regard to some purely national problems, as both the Jospin and Raffarin governments have been appointing expert commissions to lead public deliberations on the most divisive polity issues and seeking
concertation with the social partners on the most divisive work-related issues. But these are minimal measures when one considers the vast array of areas that could benefit from greater interest involvement in policy formulation—in particular those related to EU policies.

In Britain, similarly, national leaders, instead of either railing against the EU’s incursions on sovereignty (as in the Thatcher years) or falling totally silent on the EU’s impact on the polity (as today), could also put the new Europeanized realities in more positive light. Thus, they could note that the growing horizontal and vertical division of powers acts as a check on a political system which has been called an “elected dictatorship;” that the EU also demands greater interest participation in policy formulation at the national level in certain policy domains; and that it ensures greater equality and predictability in policy implementation because laws rather than voluntary agreements are involved. Unlike the French, however, the British can find no answer to the loss of flexibility on this latter score, other than perhaps to seek to keep Brussels from enacting more rules and regulations—or to keep from enacting such rules themselves, since internal reforms are as much if not more of a cause of the increase in the rigidity of the British system than EU-related reforms.

In compound polities, by contrast, the impact of the EU on national discursive interactions has not been as significant as in simple polities because the EU level coordinative discourse tends to bring in the same actors in the same relationship as at the national level, while political actors’ communicative task is less onerous with regard to policy changes since national organized interests as well as subnational authorities have been fully part of EU level discursive interactions. Here, problems will arise mainly where policies violate national ideas about the role of government in the economy and other deeply held values (e.g., about the environment)—but then, the general poverty of the communicative discourse may raise major red flags for the public. This was the case with the euro in Germany, and may become increasingly true in areas that challenge the country’s economic model, while for Italy it may occur when, as noted earlier, the country is pushed to implement policies thoroughly. Moreover, where the EU challenges national democratic ideas or practices, public discussion and deliberation through the kind of ‘deliberative democracy’ that Habermas has consistently called for is very difficult, given the range of voices speaking at the same time and seeking to be heard, without any one having any more of an authoritative voice than any others. Reaching a consensus in the context may therefore be quite long and difficult compared to any simple polity.
For both Britain and France, then, the challenge is to change ideas about the polity, but the strong communicative discourse is there to make that a possibility, were leaders willing to engage in the discourse. For Germany and Italy, it is a good thing that the polity issues are not as serious, since they would have a much harder time projecting a successful communicative discourse. Policy issues that challenge deep-seated values, however, do need addressing—and this is where potential problems lie.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the EU, in shifting power and authority upward to a quasi-federal mix of institutional structures, has had a comparatively greater impact on simple polities’ unitary states by significantly reducing the concentration of power and authority in the executive than on compound polities’ federal or regionalized states, where power and authority has always been more diffuse. Similarly, the EU, in increasing interest access and influence through its quasi-pluralist policy formulation process while restricting it in implementation through its regulatory model, has had a comparatively greater impact on simple polities’ statist processes, which are largely closed to interests in policy formulation while more accommodating in implementation, than on compound polities’ corporatist processes, where a restricted set of interests have always been involved in both policy formulation and implementation. Finally, the EU’s emphasis on consensus politics has more undermined the majoritarian politics of simple polities than the already consensus-driven politics of compound polities.

This in turn has clashed more with traditional ideas about democracy in simple polities than in compound polities, and therefore demands more from simple polities in the way of new ideas about democracy than from compound polities. But how to generate such new ideas, let alone new national practices to make up for the EU—related changes? No EU level Convention can do this; just as no EU level solution to the democratic deficit, however inspired, can solve national problems of democracy. Because European integration affects each country differently, given differences in institutions, interests, culture, politics, collective memories, values, and more, each country has to find its own way with regard to the reevaluation of democracy in light of the new national practices and policies.
REFERENCES


FOOTNOTES

1 For an extensive definition, see Leslie (2001, p. 217).
2 See Schmidt 1999a, 1999b.
3 Schmidt 2003.
4 Norton 1996a
5 Stone Sweet 2000; Burley and Mattli 1993; Weiler 1994
6 Hooghe 1996; Keating and Jones 1995
7 See Schmidt 1999a.
8 See Saalfeld 1997.
9 Boerzel 2002.
10 Rizzuto 1996
11 Norton 1996b
12 See Stone 1992
13 Conant 2001
14 See, for example, Greenwood (1997; forthcoming) on interest organization in the EU.
15 See Majone (1996) on the increasing importance of the regulatory approach. See also Schmidt 1999b.
16 See Schmidt 1999b.
17 See Rod Rhodes, David Marsh, Martin Smith.
18 Schmidt 1996; Cowles 2001
19 Greenwood and Stancich 1998
20 Egan 2001, pp. 144-5
21 Falkner 1998.
23 Schmidt 1999b, 2001
24 See Schmidt 1999b.
25 Gabel 2001; van der Eijk and Franklin 1996.
26 Schmidt 1999b. On the difficulties of building party politics at the EU level, see: Ladrech 1999; Mair 1995.
28 I use Lijphart’s (1984) distinction between majoritarian and consensus democracies.
29 It is important to note, however, that the fact that simple polities have less need to negotiate or find consensus does not entail that they never seek compromise and are always conflictual. The UK before Thatcher was one in which there was indeed compromise and consensus—e.g., ‘Butskellism’. Moreover, the UK has tended to have greater ability to impose than France in cases where ‘co-habitation’ of rival parties controlling the presidency and the government has sometimes forced compromise on policies. By the same token, the fact the compound polities generally seek compromise and consensus does not mean that they always achieve it, and it does not rule out often highly conflictual politics. The differences between the two kinds of polities, in other words, are matters of degree along a continuum.

30 George 1990


32 See Boerzel 2002; Cowles, Caporaso, and Risse (2001); Börzel and Risse (2000); Héritier (2000)


35 See Schmidt 1999b; 2001

36 Schmidt 2002b.

37 Schmidt 1999a.

38 This says nothing about the substantive content of EU policies, however, which may violate national preferences in compounded systems as readily as in simple systems.


40 Geddes and Guiraudon 2002

41 See Schmidt 2002b.
