

Title : Can EU cross-border governance be democratic? Some theoretical thoughts on citizen's participation in the European Union.

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Abstract English

As the title of the article in the *RECERC journal* reveals, the contribution scrutinizes to what extent EU cross-border governance structures are open for democratic innovation. The everlasting discrepancy of representation and normative democratic theory existed since the theoretical debate of liberalist and communitarian school of thoughts in the 1970's. Representation (and later governance) in institutions and administrations (nation-state) have been considered as incongruous with societal dominion (society). Since the EU White paper on European governance (2001), scholars as well as practitioners seek to bridge the chasm by introducing concepts like "participatory governance", "new governance" or "democratic governance". Democratizing governance arrangements is assumed to bolster democratic legitimacy in the European Union.

This essayistic article follows the assumption of "bringing the citizens back in" in participatory governance arrangements by emphasizing cross-border regions as arenas for both international contact zones as well as regional democracy. The structure of the article follows an inductive procedure: First, the EU will be described according to democratic patterns in EU multilevel governance along the triplet of *politics* (processes), *polity* (structures) and *policies* (contents). Second, the observations will be theoretically reflected, the notion of participatory governance elaborated and analytical models of civil society participation in cross-border regions presented. The article concludes with recommendations of how cross-border governance arrangements shall be organized and structured to fulfil both requirements: to be effective as well as inclusive.

Key Words

Participatory Governance; Cross-border cooperation; European Union; Civil society; Regional Democracy