Governance and Democracy in Multilevel Systems

Description

On September 12 2012, the German Constitutional Court decided on the constitutionality of Germany’s ratification of the European Stability Mechanism. It was therefore up to a court of a single EU Member State to decide, indirectly, on the future of the Eurozone. One could argue that this is an example of the enormous difficulties the European polity has to face due to its incompletely federalized structures.

This summer, the Syriza Government in Greece held a referendum on the third bail-out programme by the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank. During the one-week campaign preceding the popular vote, then-finance-minister Yannis Varoufakis said in an interview with the Spanish newspaper “El Mundo”: “What they’re doing with Greece has a name: terrorism. What Brussels and the troika want today is for the yes [vote] to win so they could humiliate the Greeks. Why did they force us to close the banks? To instil fear in people. And spreading fear is called terrorism.” One of the first high-ranking politicians to go on the record in the aftermath of the no-vote was the German Vice-Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel who declared that "Mr Tsipras had torn down the last bridges on which Greece and Europe could have moved towards a compromise". Shortly after, Martin Schulz, the President of the European Parliament declared: “This is a difficult day. The Greek people have said No, but 18 other member states agreed to the proposal to which the Greek people said No. Now it is up to the Greek government to make proposals that can convince the 18 other member states and the institutions in Brussels.” One could argue that this is an example of the enormous difficulties the European polity has to face due to its incompletely democratized structure.

Very recently, in an interview with “The Banker”, IMF’s Christine Lagarde said: “I think that the Eurozone as a Monetary Union was unfinished business when it was hit by the crisis. And ever since it has been work in progress. And it continues to be so.” One could argue that this is an
example of the enormous difficulties the European polity has to face due to its governance set-up and its relationship with other international organisations. Governance and democracy in a multilevel, quasi-federal system such as the European Union are fundamental concepts for understanding the latter. Within the field of EU studies, these topics occupy an ever more central place. In the state of acute crisis that befalls Europe, getting a better grasp of the tensions between democratic legitimacy, federalisation and global governance becomes indispensable. How “federal” is the EU really? How “democratic” is the EU? How harmonious or, to the contrary, antagonistic are the concepts of multi-level governance and multi-level democracy? What are the tensions affecting both representation and more direct forms of democratic participation at the EU level?

If you opt for taking this class for credit, but also if you are taking it as an auditor, you commit to read the texts we propose for each session. Over the course of the seminar students must submit three 500-word response papers to the readings for a given session and post that paper on the course website at the latest by Sunday evening before class. These response papers are fundamental for the holding of a good discussion of the materials, as is a thorough reading of the assigned texts.

Writing a term paper is encouraged. Please get in touch with Profs. Genschel and Trechsel if you have the intention to do so.

Please register with Adele Battistini (adele.battistini@eui.eu)

1. Introduction: Governance, Democracy and Multilevel Systems (5 October)

Federalism

2. Classic Perspectives (12 October)
3. Modern Perspectives (19 October)


European Union

4. EU Federalism? (26 October)

5. The EU after Maastricht (2 November)

6. Democracy in the EU (16 November)
   - Notre Europe, 2006. “Politics: The Right or the Wrong Sort of Medicine for the EU?” Two Papers by Simon Hix and Stefano Bartolini.

7. The Euro-crisis (23 November)
   **Guest: Jack Seddon**
Global Governance

8. Global Multi-level Governance? (30 November)

9. Global Democracy? (7 December)

10. Instead of conclusions: reflections on the future of the EU (14 December)

   Guest: Sergio Fabbrini