

# GRANT SOVEREIGNTY WITHOUT LOSING DEMOCRACY



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CONTRIBUTIONS

## CHOOSING A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY

Even if laboriously, the Treaty of Lisbon has moved forward thinking about European Union as an inedited “supranational democracy”. Its procedures are defined according a unique institutional structure and respect, in a large part, the democratic principles.

When the Treaty was just entered into force, financial and economic crisis grew up dramatically asking for urgent interventions particularly for some countries in the Eurozone.

Because of the less availability of some of these countries, it was not possible ask for other kind of intervention scheduled in the Treaty. For this reason, some governments contracted self-supporting agreement<sup>1</sup>, out of the institutional structure of the Union.

A new two-speed Europe grows up. While, in the internal market, rules and politics are adopted with democratic procedures; rules, economic and financial policies, are adopted through intergovernmental treaties with serious democratic deficit<sup>2</sup>. In this way, they assume their own responsibilities in conducting Economic and Monetary Union but without answering to an elective Assembly at European level. These agreements have any margin of negotiation and they are only emergency agreements. After all, a negotiation, concerning more than one parliament assembly, should compromise efficiency, above all in these moments of strong crisis<sup>3</sup>.

It is necessary to adopt a political strategy to face this problem focusing on the possibility of changing treaties without great delay. If not, democratic deficit will continue to restrict the fundamental right of European citizens. One possibility is to bring back new treaties into the program of the Union (as for the Treaty of Schengen and Prum), permitting to countries to gain political union in less time than possible. Another possibility is to create an Economic and Monetary Union separated from the Union of the common market but founded on a similar constitutional supranational system, with same guarantees about democratic procedures.

**We cannot keep the paradox of a dual system: a supranational model concerning traditional common politics and an intergovernmental model for a more advanced Eurozone policy, thinking about a democratic legitimacy founded only on national parliaments.**

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Some important political initiatives are possible also without changing treaties. One of these, is the presentation of respective candidates for the European Commission Presidency from European political parties. This can simplify the political debate on programs and European institutions at a European level and, at the same time, creating in Parliament, majorities more coherent with political addresses presented by the candidate. Another point is to fortify supranational institutions (European Parliament and Commission) towards the intergovernmental (European Council and Council). We will not have the same results if, on the contrary, we will focus on a modification of treaties only to establish the direct election of Commission President from citizens.

In all cases, also the indication of the candidate expects the sharing of choices and political programs, both on institutional plan and on politics to realize, punishment, the failure of every reformation project.

### IMPLEMENTING DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE

**Democracy is not only made by procedures approving power management** but it is also made by a combination of politics, operational modalities, traditions and praxis with aim the participation of citizens to political choices.

At this point, the effort of political parties is very important, at a European but also at a national level. The ups and downs of the single currency without economy government is not a European mistake, but of our governments, our deputies, our national parties, worried about the possible loss of sovereignty in fiscal and budgetary policy. In 2004, it was wrong to open Europe to 10 new more countries.

It is necessary to activate all of those spaces dedicated to democracy practice mentioned



in the Treaty of Lisbon. I refer to recent innovations but also to the more traditional such as the respect of fundamental rule of representative democracy, social dialogue, transparency of acts and procedures, the subscription of national deputies.

**While legislative work is under continuous control by lobbies, the attention of national deputies does not follow regularly the rhythm of European decisions. It is true that there is a lack of coordination between political positions both at a national and a European level.**

Above all now that, through intergovernmental agreements, a lot of very important political decisions are adopted, is more urgent and necessary a timely, efficacious parliament control.

In the perspective of a new destiny of united Europe, it is a task of political parties and civil society organizations to contribute to the construction of a public European space and solid citizenship.

Progressive parties have to break the silence of the European institutions on fundamental rights injuries and on common values made also on Union area, in order that, it can appear in all its true nature: a Union under law designed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

1) See the "Trattato che istituisce il Meccanismo Europeo di Stabilità", subscribed February 2, 2012 by 17 Eurozone Members and see also "Trattato sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance dell'unione economica e monetaria", including Fiscal Compact, subscribed march 2, 2012 by 25 Member States of EU, excluded United Kingdom and Czech Republic)

2) See V.A. Schmidt, *Deficit democratico 2.0: how remedy?* In *Italianieuropei*, I, 2013, p.22

3) About these treaties see G.L. Tosato "il fiscal Compact" and "Asimmetrie e dilemmi istituzionali tra UE ed Eurozona" in Astrid, "Le istituzioni europee alla prova della crisi" by G. Amato and R. Gualtieri, ed Passigli 2013.

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