

# *Governance and Civil Society at the EU Level*

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In their article, the authors deal with the role of civil society as a factor of European democratic governance. Democratic governance is perceived as an 'extended polyarchy' that refers both to the electoral dimension of accountability and to the mechanisms of permanent control over power-holders through institutional balance of power. The authors examine specifics of governance and civil society at the EU level, claiming that participatory democracy is unrealistic at the EU level, which holds also for citizens' engagement in civil society organized at EU level. They argue that civil society organized at the EU level can contribute to higher accountability of the Union's institutions, but in a specific way, less through enhancing political engagement of citizens and linking them to political institutions but more through mutual control of different societal actors that would foster greater transparency of political process.

*Key Words:* governance, civil society, democracy, accountability, European Union

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## **Introduction**

Governance that in general terms refers to the system of measures that involve setting the rules for the exercise of power and settling conflicts over such rules (Hyden 1999, 185) is one of the most widely used political concepts and takes a central place in contemporary debates in social sciences (Pierre and Peters 2000, 1). In the last years, the notion of a need for establishment of mechanisms of efficient and democratic governance not only on the national but also on supra-national level has gain on importance. These would mean creation of institutions that would be able to deal with problems brought by the processes of globalization, especially in the sense of provision of global public goods (see, for example, Griffin 2003), and enhancing the accountability of global actors (see Kahler 2004; Held 2004).

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The issue of governance is strongly related with democracy, i. e. its status as a form of political order. The so called third wave of democratization (Huntington 1993) that started in the 1970s in Southern Europe, continued in the 1980s in Latin America and ended with the collapse of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, brought the spread of democracy as a form of government that has been unprecedented in history. However, there are disagreements about the prospects of the development of democracy. While some analysts see some problematic elements in the situation after the fall of communism, that may instead of world-wide democratic order bring the new world disorder (see Jowitt 1993), others claim that nowadays democracy has no equal contender on the global level (see Plattner 1991). The fact is that the number of formally democratic countries from the early 1970s more than doubled (Diamond 1999, 25). However, reversals of democratic processes are not excluded, as well as processes which could undermine the quality of governance of advanced societies. Stability and progress of the democratic process thus depends on political as well as non-political institutions and actors and their mutual relations, especially in terms of their ability to cooperate for the common good.

In our article, we will examine the role of civil associations as a factor of democratic governance at the level of the European Union, a political entity which is the most integrated supra-national association in the modern world. It is characterised by complex interactions and networking between public and private actors. As Smismans (2006, 6) points out, *this may be a democratic time bomb as it challenges traditional ideas of democratic accountability but may also provide a potential to deepen democracy through participatory procedures*. It is often assumed that EU citizens can gain new power and voice through the mobilization in transnational civic organizations. These organizations should represent mechanisms of vertical accountability that may include citizens acting through civic organizations on the EU level policy processes. In this theoretical framework organised civil society is seen as a lever for a higher degree of participative democracy in the EU (Kohler-Koch and Finke 2007; Cichowski 2007).

The purpose of our article is to test some of these assumptions and to contribute to a wide, ongoing academic and policy debate about the role of civil society in the EU governance. First we will clarify some conceptual issues of modern democracy and elaborate the very concept of democratic governance and its main components, and then we will deal

with the specifics of governance and civil society at the EU level, especially in terms of the relation between civil actors and political institutions and the role of civil associations as agents of European governance. We will present our empirical studies, which aimed to explore the ability of civic organisations to mediate between EU citizens and ‘their’ institutions. Our empirical work focuses on intra-organisational ties and mechanisms of communication and cooperation in transnational civic organisations in the EU. We assumed that the quality of these organisational ties could play an important role in assuring democratic effects of civic organisations at the EU level but we questioned the ability of transnational organisations to develop sustainable ties reaching across different levels of EU’s governance (reaching from EU citizens organised on local levels, across national levels and supranational level to the EU institutions and back again to the grassroots of society) which could ensure vertical accountability. Consequently our thesis is that civil society organized at the EU level can contribute to higher accountability of the EU’s institutions, but in a specific way, less through enhancing political engagement of citizens and linking them to political institutions but more through mutual control of different societal actors that would foster greater transparency of political process.

### **Good Governance in a Democratic Polity**

Dilemmas about the future of democracy as a system of governance at the national as well as supra-national level lead us to the very notion of this term, meaning that some conceptual issues ought to be clarified. First of all, it should be pointed out that democracy is a complex phenomenon which could refer to some kind of ideal state of society, characterized by perfect freedom and equality where the real power is located in the hands of people, as well as to real-existing forms of socio-political order, usually referring to modern Western societies (often in connection with the market economy). As stated by Michael Saward (2000, 3), ‘the story of democracy is nothing if a story of innovation’. It is thus characterized by dynamism and openness to new ideas, notions and concepts. Even by the notion of democracy as an existing system (which is nevertheless our research interest) we have different definitions of its ‘scope’ (in the sense of its constitutive elements). Many theorists advocate the minimalist approach, a kind of Schumpeterian definition of democracy as a system in which citizens can choose between different political actors/elites (Schumpeter 1996). In that case, the most important issue is the exis-

tence of institutional mechanisms, which enable free political competition (of course, with constitutionally determined exceptions) and selection of preferable alternatives. The weakness of this approach is its 'shallowness'. Namely, because of its focus on the normative level of politics it often disregards the back-stage happenings, as well as factors that are not a part of the political system but nevertheless importantly influence its nature.

However, there is another, more 'qualitative' notion of democracy which takes into account the conditions needed for its 'healthy' functioning. Dahl's concept of polyarchy as 'real-existing democracy' contains the following institutional factors, necessary for the persistence of democracy: elected officials, free, fair and relatively frequent elections, freedom of expression, alternative sources of information, autonomy of association and inclusive citizenship (Dahl 1971; 1989; 1998). Some theorists stress the importance of institutional factors like viable civil society, rule of law, competent and autonomous civil service etc., without which democratic political life is not possible. O'Donnell stresses the need for control over power-holders through mechanisms of so – called horizontal accountability, which refers to the mutual control in the sense of a system of checks and balances – the principal condition for it is the existence of independent control institutions (judiciary, different agencies etc.) (O'Donnell 1998; see also Schedler et al. 1999). There are also some other factors that are often mentioned as conditions of fully developed democracy, for example the existence of welfare policies and other mechanisms for tackling social inequalities.

Despite the desirability of such kind of qualitative completion, it is necessary to warn against other kind of biases in a case when one wants to include into a framework of democracy everything that is in his/her opinion necessary for the well being of the people. In this way, the characteristics of the concept could become blurred. Too idealized a notion of democracy is problematic since it could lead into disappointment and the belief that democratic order does not exist at all – in this way, he/she neglects the differences between different levels of democracy of existing political systems. As stated by Karl and Schmitter (1996, 59), democracy is even not necessarily more economically and administratively efficient and orderly run than other forms of government. Considering this, we could agree with Samuel Huntington who says: 'Governments produced by election may be inefficient, corrupt, short-sighted, irresponsible, dominated by special interests, and incapable of adopting poli-

cies demanded by the public good. These qualities make such governments undesirable but they do not make them undemocratic.' (Huntington 1991, 10.) But we could add to this that such characteristics make democracies of lower quality.

In our conceptualization, we connect good governance to the notion of democracy as an 'extended polyarchy'. This means a supplementation of the original (Dahle) concept that is related primarily to the electoral dimension of accountability (i. e. processes of political selection based on freedom of political action and political equality) with mechanisms of permanent control over power-holders through institutional balance of power between different branches of government as well as through mutual checking of civil and state actors on a different level of polity.

Our definition of good, i. e. democratic governance is, thus, in accordance with a 'wider' notion of democracy, meaning not only formal rules and institutional norms but also the performance of democratic institutions and their agents. As stated by March and Olsen (1995, 44), 'democratic governance is more than the management of efficient political coalition building and exchange within prior constraints [...] It involves moulding social and political life – shaping history, an understanding of it, and an ability to learn from it.' In this sense, it is related to the state of political stability, perceived in a dynamic and flexible way, as the 'capacity of the political system to be selective when including in its modus operandi relevant actors and topics, and the capability of developing the problem-solving capacities in order to fulfil the functions entrusted to it' (Adam 1994, 37).

### **Quality of Governance at the EU Level**

Since the European Union has been developing into the direction of a more integrated form of political entity, the issue of governance at the Union's level is becoming increasingly relevant. It stopped functioning as an inter-state association but continued as a political formation with institutions, activities and authorities on its own. An important question is whether and to what extent the model of good governance, described above, is applicable to the level of the European Union. Aspects of democratic governance like system stability, inclusiveness and effectiveness are to some extent important for political life at the EU level. However, it is not possible simply to transplant to the EU institutions the principles of democracy that are in place at the level of member-states. There are certain limits to democracy at the EU level if one means by the term

'democracy' the majoritarian principle with equal weight of each citizen's political preference (the rule 'one person, one vote'). What is often stressed is so called 'democratic deficit' (see Norton 1996), meaning the lack of many features we associate with democratic governance (Horeth 1999, 249), such as involvement of citizens in the political processes at the Union's level and their influence on European affairs. The EU is too different from the domestic democratic institutions that citizens are used to. As a result, citizens have troubles in understanding the EU, and have problems with addressing and regarding it as a democratic system, nor can they identify with it (Follesdal and Hix 2006).

This is related to the realization that EU institutions increasingly, through broadening of their policy scopes, directly influence lives of the citizens of the EU, who – if we for instance consider the data from Eurobarometer (2008) – don't really care much for participation on the EU level, don't think that their 'voice is heard on the level of the EU' and don't express high levels of trust regarding the EU institutions. The democratic challenge is one of the reasons why the EU was for instance trying to produce a new constitution and is fostering the development of organized civil society on the level of the EU, designed to make the Union easier to understand, more open and more efficient. One of the main targets of criticism of such a process is its top-down nature that leads to the perception of it as an elite project or enterprise (see, for example, Dahl 1999), which makes the possibility of establishment of mechanisms of vertical accountability that may include citizens acting through the electoral process or indirectly via civic organizations rather questionable.

One has to acknowledge that a number of mechanisms of accountability have been put in place in the EU. Electoral accountability, involving the European Parliament, is only part of the picture. EU institutions are accountable to governments; agencies within governments are held accountable to one another through the process of 'comitology'; a considerable degree of transparency holds participants, much of the time, accountable to the public through the media. Additionally there is a need for mechanisms of permanent control over power-holders through mutual checking of civil and EU actors on a different level of polity, as it is assumed that a number of elements of democracy and accountability are still lacking in the EU. This is true on at least two levels. On one level, the EU lacks the kind of integrated public sphere and civil society that sustains democracy and accountability in national states. On the other level,

the EU's institutions fall short of standards of democracy and accountability: popular representation plays only a minor role in many policy areas, and mechanisms of accountability are not always well-developed. In addition, the EU's policy-making system as well as its political system is not transparent, which prevents effective democratic control and accountability. Solutions to these perceived problems are compounded by the multilevel character of the EU and the diversity between its member states.

This can be clearly seen in the case of the organized civil society on the level of the EU, where even the very basic questions of who are the actors of the civil society (Magnette 2006; Armstrong 2003), organized on the level of the EU, being a multi-form, multi-dimensional and multi-level phenomenon, and what should be their role in the processes of European integration, are unclear and left to contested interpretations. This affects functional mechanisms of communication and cooperation among civil society actors and the EU bodies (Fazi in Smith 2006) which – as we will argue – even though they are intended to foster vertical accountability do not really reach across different levels of the multilevel system of EU governance.

### **Civil Society as an Actor of EU Governance**

It is often assumed that transnational European civic organizations can play an intermediary role between the citizens and institutions of the EU (CEC 2001; 2006) and with these processes also establish mechanisms of vertical accountability that may include citizens acting through civic organizations on the EU level. This assumption plays a key role in defining the ways in which civic organizations, that are active at the EU level, access and can influence the EU policy making (Fazi and Smith 2006; Kohler-Koch and Finke 2007). In the White Paper on European Governance we can find following statement: 'Civil society plays an important role in giving voice to the concerns of the citizens and delivering services that meet people's needs. [...] Civil society increasingly sees Europe as offering a good platform to change policy orientations and society. [...] It is a real chance to get citizens more actively involved in achieving the Union's objectives and to offer them a structured channel for feedback, criticism and protest.' (CEC 2001, 34.) Other important documents, which are defining the dialogue between civic organizations and the European Commission, like The Green Paper (CEC 2006) or the document called 'Communication on general principles and minimum standards

for consultation of interested parties by the Commission' (2003) are full of similar ideas, when defining the role of transnational civic organizations in the EU. Consultations with civic organizations is becoming a common procedure of policy processes on the EU level (see Fazi and Smith 2006; Gornitzka and Sverdrup 2007), even though there are still a number of unresolved questions, especially regarding the representation, accountability in the actual ability of transnational civic organizations, to mediate across the EU's multilevel system. One of the biggest concerns is, whether transnational civic organizations are actually able to mobilise Europeans on specific policy issues and whether they can promote interests and participation of the EU citizens and on their behalf influence the policy making of the EU institutions.

There are thousands of civic organizations in the EU. Many of them have organized themselves on the EU level with intent to influence the policy making on the EU level. Such transnational organizations usually adopt a multilevel structure, including local, national and international elements. European consent is consent between member states, and the structuring of EU associations mainly follows these guidelines. EU associations are mostly confederate structures or, so say, umbrella organizations,, i. e. associations of national associations, that were set up by their members for the purpose of representing their political interests in EU policy-making (Greenwood 2005); even though other forms are also present (individual-based organizations, virtual organizations etc.). These umbrella organizations should 'not only mobilize, but represent a framework for resolving conflicts and reaching agreements, which in turn results in better cooperation and integration of activities' (Hadenius and Ugga 1996, 1622). We should also stress that the majority of these EU associations are composed of national groups/organisations and not of EU citizens (Kohler-Koch 2005; Rek 2007). Their members are national organizations, which present views and concerns as well as represent interests of their citizens or local civic organizations on the EU level. The concept of participation within organized civil society at the level of the EU is limited to organized interests and groups (Magnetite 2006) and provides spaces of interest representation (Warleight 2001; 2003), advocacy (Skocpol and Morris 1999; Ruzza 2008) and lobbying (Saurugger 2006; Greenwood 2005; 2008) and not active participation of citizens.

In an absence of active participation of EU citizens directly on the EU level, the organizational ties of transnational civic organizations (between local, national and supranational/EU level) become crucial for

civil society to be able to play the assumed intermediary role between the EU citizens and 'their' institutions. To better understand the quality and strength of these ties within transnational organizations, which are reaching across different levels of the EU governance, Mateja Rek and Frane Adam (Adam 2007a; Rek 2007) organized a workshop entitled 'Social Capital, Civic Engagement and Quality of Governance in the European Union' in December 2005 in the framework of the 6th framework CONNEX project. The workshop was structured as a focus group. The aim of our focus group was to gain additional insights into current reflections on the role, functioning and characteristics of civil society organised at the EU level by bringing together practitioners (NGOs and interest group representatives, policy-makers etc.)<sup>40</sup> working in the field of civil society in the EU with scientists researching these issues.

The participants in our focus group painted a quite pessimistic picture of co-operation and communication across different levels of the internal organization of EU associations: Talking about European associations, ideally there is a European representation and membership – national members, regional members. In order to be effective in interest representation and in influencing policy decisions, all members should be well prepared to be engaged in the agenda of the discussion and to make compromises and good decision-making possible. It is highly important that everybody is prepared to find a common position and that this common position is accepted across different levels of the confederal composition. This is a question of culture, that includes both the national characteristics that individual players 'bring to the table' as well as the organizational culture of a particular association. Once the composition has been agreed on, it is lobbied during the European decision-making process, preferably with one voice, at the national level vis-à-vis the national institutions and at the same time vis-à-vis the Commission and the parliamentarians in the EU. If everybody is well briefed then there are much greater chances of a successful lobbying outcome.

Yet, as argued by the participants in the focus groups, this is an ideal model but in practice there are usually issues of communication and problems of co-ordination among the different layers. On the one hand, a specialised body of expertise is centered in Brussels and they are the only ones who have contacts, knowledge and up-to date information about the current state of affairs at the EU level. But at the same time it was argued that regional and national organizations, even though they are affiliated with the Brussels level, often do not recognise the impor-

tance of lobbying at the EU level or taking advantage of these affiliations for co-ordinated actions among different levels. In that sense, the vertical communication and co-operation within the multi-level structure of interest group associations seems to be very weak.

In Brussels everything makes sense to everyone in Brussels. It makes perfect sense, all the policies, and the processes. But this needs to be translated down to the national level to regional levels and so on. And vice-versa, when it comes to this 'bottom-level' the information has to come back up.

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Why is a feedback loop important for the lobbyists? The members give them support for lobbying and a negotiation mandate for lobbying at the EU level and often act as lobbyists at the national level. National members or, better said, national organization and experts are usually correspondents for the EU level, feeding them with information from the national and local levels. Members provide resources for the lobbying activities at the EU level, which is crucial especially for the pressure groups of private interests which are usually more dependent on the resources of their members compared to NGOs dealing with social issues, as the latter have easier access to funding by an EU institution. There is a need for a positive, well-informed communication loop between the Brussels level and the national level. In that sense we could argue that civil society organized at the level of the EU and the national levels represents introverted circles that have in most cases only weak (face-to-face) links to the other level. The (horizontal) links between national representations are even weaker – which is an obstacle to building a stronger common position and identification with the organization as a whole, as federal strategies are especially effective when members can participate in more than one national group, thus weaving personal ties among these groups and reinforcing a sense of identity with the larger whole (Putnam 2004, 278) – but as it seems, building horizontal ties among national or local groups remains the future task of EU associations. What is the reason for this state of affairs?

Lobbying in Brussels is a very technocratic job. It is a profession on its own, grasping specialised knowledge of EU affairs and contacts in a specific sector of policy-making in the EU. The national members are not interested in having the skills of an EU lobbyist and to in being able to actively participate in lobbying, but they do need representation. Another reason for 'communication filters' between national and EU levels

was seen in the predominantly virtual form of communication among different levels. Members are geographically distanced from each other and in many cases they do not know each other, or even the Brussels office does not know them personally. If there is no personal contact it is even harder to engage them in the process. If somebody is disinterested to begin with, if they only hear from 'Brussels' in a virtual setting, it is really hard for them to become actually physically involved in the process. When there is just interest from one side in this quasi-virtual space, this creates problems and gaps in communication.

How can the communication between the layers be improved?

- *Personalisation of experience*: by trying to find ways to increase the human touch because this is ultimately the best way of communication. Examples of good practices are small-scale workshops and 'field trips', which make the experience of the EU level tangible, applicable and more personal.
- *Leadership* of the EU associations is an under-researched area but what can be detected is a lack of 'big' or, better put, European leaders. Leadership as perceived in the modern world is really an American concept. In Europe we have to redefine the concept of leadership in terms of the capacity to lead in a multi-national, multi-cultural and multi-lingual environment. Strong leadership figures who are present over a long period of time could have a stronger capacity to mobilise people for participation and to facilitate communication across the filters of different layers.
- *Legitimacy*: in the sense of having trust and confidence in certain organizations as opposed to others. There is a certain boldness on the part of European institutions and the civic organizations at the EU level to fulfil their goals and to present their implementation. Even the Commission and all the civic associations should have to legitimise themselves; by fulfilling their obligations to the members. This is broader than just communicating the ideas or being transparent. Incorporating legitimacy into the organization's strategy could have positive effects for both communication and transparency.
- *The issue of transparency* – all of the stakeholders are calling for transparency – at the EU level and at the level of member states. A more transparent structure of communication could facilitate communication within the organizational structure. In this context, the

problem of virtual or semi-virtual organizations was presented – in the majority of cases it is hard to identify their actual membership and the role of the members in the organization.

These findings can be complemented with other current studies (see Warleigh 2001; 2003; Kohler-Koch and B. Finke 2007; Deth Van et al. 2006; Maloney and Rossteuhtscher 2007) which are suggesting that European civic associations display little interest in educating their members back in the member states about EU issues, but rather get caught up within the ivory tower world of Brussels institutional politics. We can encounter a situation of civil society associations becoming elitist in a way that leadership distances itself from the followers instead of providing incentives for citizens' active participation. In an attempt to detach the elite networks into which leaders of civic organizations are included, a study was carried out in Slovenia and Poland (in the frame of EU's 6th framework Connex project). The study was carried out by coworkers of the Center for Theoretical Sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences (see Adam 2007b) in Ljubljana and a research team affiliated to the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Science in Warsaw (see Gasior-Niemec et al. 2007). In February and March 2007 we conducted a series of structured interviews. One of the preliminary conclusions of this study concerns the relationships between the leadership of national civic organizations (which are usually also the ones who represent the civic organization members in European civic associations) and the members of these organizations. We encounter a situation where non-governmental organizations, in order to exert democratic effects, have to perform in accordance with 'the logic of influence'. If a particular organization is to be successfully engaged in participation (networking), i. e. being able to effectively represent issues or assert influence, it may be necessary to act in pursuit of influence, even if this would consequently mean putting the role of membership behind (Kristan 2007). The study confirmed the assumption that the leadership of civic organizations does not necessarily need to consult membership regarding important issues. On the contrary, it happens quite often that only a few people decide, which raises a serious doubts regarding the democratic nature of civic organizational structures. Their democratic effects are thus highly contingent. We can also encounter a new type of elitism – civic elitism – that still needs to be researched.

The irony of all this focus upon transnational structures of organized

civil society is that EU policies do open up spaces for civic engagement which do have potential to connect societal actors to transnational systems of governance. Though they may not directly bring about the democracy enhancing effects, they can, nevertheless, function as agenda-setters and provide a counter-balance to state and economic actors. By providing an intermediary infrastructure they support the articulation and bundling of societal interests and are also able to give their own impetus to the definition of these interests. But by placing so much emphasis upon the need for a transnationalised and Europeanized civil society, the EU institutions seems to undermine the very claims for the inclusion of civil society which prompted the search for a means of bridging the gap between society and transnational governance. As Armstrong points out (2001), though the explicit objective is to further transnational cooperation, EU policies focusing predominantly on the EU-level organized civil society may in practice create additional obstacles, and domestic civil society actors may further lose influence as transnational governance and transnational civil society take on greater roles – with a stress on representing interests and lobbying – while having only weak links among different levels of EU governance, which is not really a fertile ground for the establishment of mechanisms of vertical accountability that may include citizens acting through civic organizations on the EU level.

### **Conclusion**

The notion of ‘democratic deficit’ of the EU is – as much as it is based on understandable frustration of many Europeans with ‘detached’ and often unresponsive political institutions – problematic since it derives from the assumption of ‘transplantability’ of the democratic principles from the level of member-states to the EU institutions. There are certain limits of democracy at the EU level if one means by the term ‘democracy’ the majoritarian principle with equal weight of each citizen’s political preference (the rule ‘one person, one vote’). The reason for this ‘democratic deficiency’ is the non-existence of a European constitutional *demos* (Weiler, Haltern, and Mayer 1995; Weiler 2002), i. e. a European-wide constituency sharing common values and identity that would replace – or at least complement – national ones. The European *demos*, European public and European civil society could be established only in an evaluative way.

One can argue that participatory democracy is unrealistic at the EU

level, which holds also for citizens' engagement in European civil society. According to the above mentioned, it can be argued that the establishment of mechanisms of vertical (electoral) accountability corresponding to those in nation-states is, at the moment, not an option at the EU level. What is more feasible is the creation of institutions of horizontal accountability, i. e. highly professional, competent and autonomous bodies that would supervise activities of the key executive institutions of the EU. This means in the first place strengthening of the European rule of law and policies that would enhance the transparency of European policies.<sup>41</sup> Civil associations, organized at the EU level, could be a factor of accountability of European political institutions but in a rather elite manner, meaning not through direct involvement of citizenry and representation of grass-root initiatives but through advocacy of different important interests of social, economic, political or cultural nature and informing political institutions as well as the general public on the issues that are of their particular concern. They can be perceived as a part of the European system of checks and balances, where different actors from both the political sphere and civil society cooperate in the process of policy-making to exchange information on different issues as well as to monitor each other's activities.

### Notes

- 1 14 individuals (4 scientists, 2 representatives of business EU associations, 1 representative of a think-tank dealing with EU policies, 2 representatives of civic EU associations, 4 representatives of liaison offices in the field of research and a representative of the European Commission) participated in our focus group. For further information on the participants and outcomes of the focus group, visit: <http://www.connex-network.org/>.
- 2 Some analysts argue that the institutional setting of the EU already contains mechanisms to provide accountability of European policy-makers. As stated by Moravcsik (2002, 604): 'Constitutional checks and balances, indirect democratic control via national governments, and the increasing powers of the European Parliament are sufficient to ensure the EU policy-making is, in nearly all cases, clean, transparent, effective and politically responsive to the demands of European citizens.'

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