



The Democratic Deficit of the EU

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Topic and background

- There is a gulf between the European decision-makers and their citizens. On the one hand, the EU (EC) leaders have been making every effort to promote European identity and establish more democratic governance. On the other hand, many Europeans are losing confidence in a poorly understood and complex system to deliver the policies that they want. The Union is often seen as remote and at the same time too intrusive.



A Constitution
for Europe

EUROPEAN UNION

LEGAL PERSONALITY

EU OBJECTIVES

- *Internal objectives of the Union*
- *External objectives of the Union*



EU VALUES

- *Respect for human dignity*
- *Liberty*
- *Democracy*
- *Rule of law*
- *Respect for human rights and for minorities*
- *Pluralism, tolerance, justice*
- *Solidarity, non-discrimination*
- *Equality between women and men*

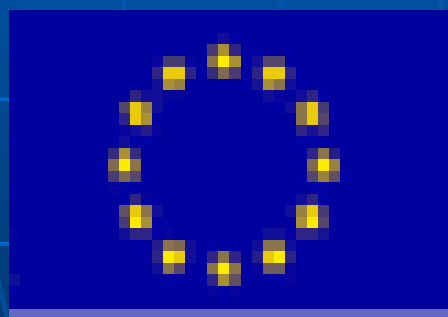




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THE SYMBOLS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

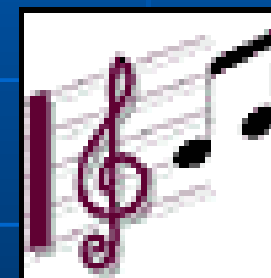
UNITED IN DIVERSITY



↓
THE FLAG



↓
THE CURRENCY

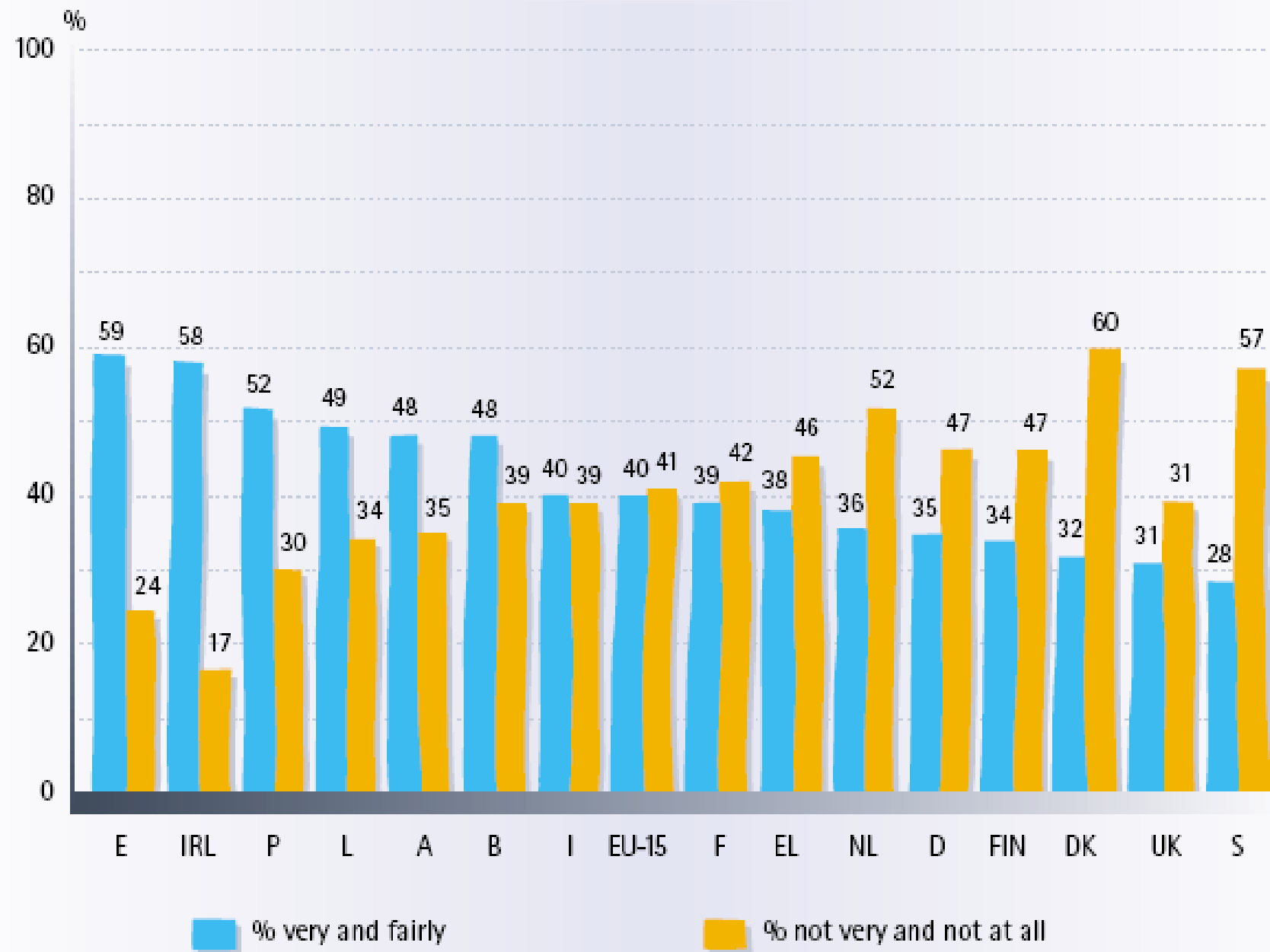


↓
ODE TO JOY

9 MAY : EUROPE DAY

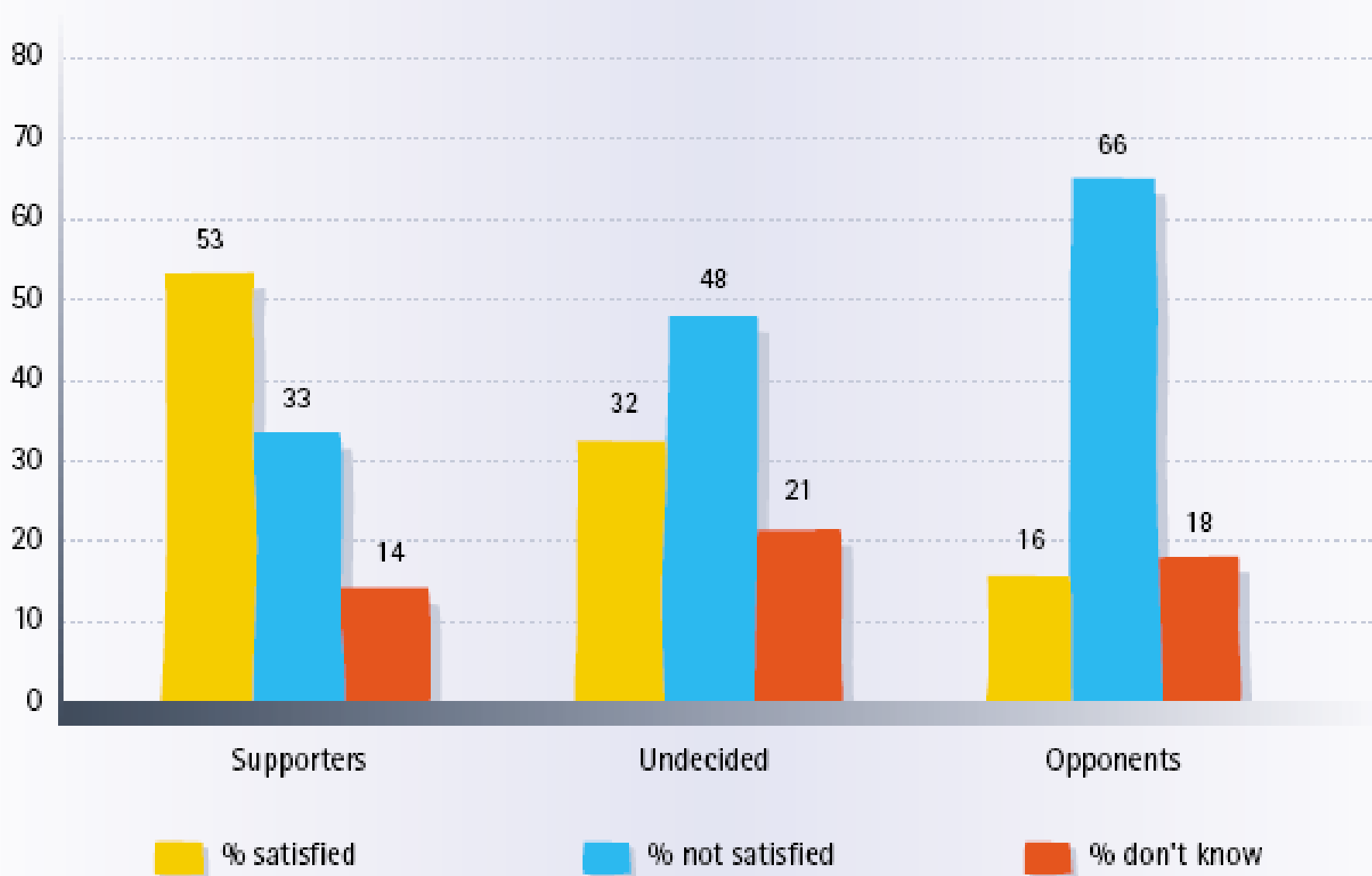
European Commission

Graph 8: Satisfaction with the way democracy works in the European Union



Graph 9: Satisfaction with EU democracy

Differences between supporters, people who are undecided and opponents of the EU



Tow questions

- How should we comprehend and evaluate the European Union's democratic deficit?
- Is there any procedures to bridge the gulf between European decision-makers and their citizens?

The European Union: Democratic Legitimacy in a Regional State

By Vivien A. Schmidt
Boston University

A Quick look at the outline

- Introduction
- From Nation-‘States’ to ‘Regional’ State
- Compound governance and fragmented democracy
- National practice and simple and compound polities
- The lack of communicative discourse
- conclusion

The main argument

conceptions of the EU's democratic deficit are grounded in the wrong model: that of the nation-state. Being seen as a regional state, the problems of the democratic deficit at the EU level would turn out not to be as great as they are sometimes made to appear. But the problems for national democracy within the context of the EU turn out to be much greater, with a national democratic deficit as the result of the impact of the EU on the traditional workings of Member States' democracies.

From Nation-‘States’ to ‘Regional’ State

- The EU is better conceptualized in terms of its process of development into the first of the regional states
- EU’s sovereignty is shared with its constituent Member states and contingent on internal acceptance and external recognition
- EU’s boundaries are variable with regard to policy reach and not as yet fixed with regard to geography
- EU’s identity is composite in terms of ‘being’ and ‘doing’, given EU, national and sub-national levels

Compound Governance and Fragmented Democracy

- The EU has a more highly compound governance system than any nation-state. This makes for a more fragmented democracy in which legitimacy depends on both EU and national levels
- In the EU, political participation 'by the people' and citizen representation 'of the people' has generally been much weaker than effective governance 'for the people'
- 'government *with* the people' through consultation with organized interests.
- the EU mainly provides democracy '*for* the people' and '*with* the people' – largely through the elaborate process of interest intermediation known as the 'Community method' – leaving to its Member States 'government *by* and *of* the people'.

National Practice and Simple and Compound Polities

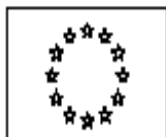
- The democratic deficit at the national level, which results from the impact of the EU on national democratic practices.
- These problems for national democratic practices are arguably more pronounced for more simple polities than for those more compound polities.

The Lack of Communicative Discourse

- political leaders in most Member States, instead of acknowledging the changes and seeking to redefine national democracy in light of them, have instead tended to hold on to traditional ideas about their country's democracy
- The inherent weakness of the EU's communicative discourse demands a much stronger national communicative discourse to legitimize EU-related changes to national publics.
- problems come not only from a lack of new ideas but also from problems with national communicative discourses themselves, problems moreover which differ in simple and compound polities.

Four instruments

- European governance
- Communication strategy
- Public consultation
- Development of civil society



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 25.7.2001
COM(2001) 428 final

EUROPEAN GOVERNANCE

A WHITE PAPER

European Governance

- “Governance” means rules, processes and behavior that affect the way in which powers are exercised at European level, particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence
- The Commission cannot make these change on its own, nor should this White Paper be seen a magic cure for everything. Introducing change requires effort from all the other Institutions, central government, regions, cities, and civil society in the current and future Member States.

Can EU hear me?

How to get the EU's message out

- 30 practical ideas for Margot Wallström
- Analysis of 3,500 replies to Gallup surveys on EU's communications ills
- Views of 20 top opinion-makers



EU stakeholders

- Brussels institutions
- Member states
- Regional authorities
- Civil societies
- European citizens

suggestions

- During your first six months visit each EU Member State
- Promote the benefits of EU Membership
- Make the EU news message more interesting
- React faster to news
- Adapt the media channels to the story and the Member State
- Change the prevailing culture towards communications in the EU institutions
- Use business and events media to reach specialized audiences
- Get the message out to people in Member States
- Use 'CCC' – Citizens Convince Citizens – to transmit the EU message
- Make a special effort to reach young people



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