

The Community Deficit

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Abstract

The European Union is suffering not just from a democratic deficit, but a community deficit. The level and scope of its integration activities far exceed the degree of community that it sustains. The article explains why community, particularly normative-affective community, is needed and how it can be built in the EU.

Introduction

The question of whether independent nations can form encompassing and lasting unions has been studied in recent years with special attention given to the EU, widely regarded as the most advanced union of its kind in contemporary history. Within this context, theoretical questions have been raised regarding the ‘design’ of the EU – what changes in its architecture will ensure further development? And – what changes might hinder its growth? Much of the debate has focused on changes in political institutions, especially on the so-called democratic deficit. The argument presented here, however, points out that much more attention needs to be paid to the community deficit, the lack of shared values and bonds.¹ Such a deficit must be curtailed if the union is to continue to solidify and must be reduced before the democratic deficit can be overcome. The article closes by comparing various measures that have

¹ For more discussion on the need for community in Europe, see Greven and Pauly (2000) and Offe (2002).

been suggested to strengthen the EU, paying special attention to those that can help reduce the community deficit.

I. Basic Concepts

Three concepts are used to proceed. The first concerns the *level and scope of integration* of the activities of the nations involved. This *level* of integration varies from low to high. For instance, the budgetary integration of the EU is low with its budget consisting of no more than 1.27 per cent of its GDP in 2000 to 2006, whereas the budgetary integration of the US is high with its budget consisting of approximately 20 per cent of its GDP in 2000 (Economic Council, 2000–02). The *scope* of integration also varies from narrow (for example, only economic) to broad (for example, both economic and cultural). The second concept concerns the *political architecture* of the union involved. It may be intergovernmental or supranational or various mixes of the two and it may be based on unanimous consensus or majority rule (within the framework of a constitution) or some mix of the two (Haas, 1958). The third concept concerns the level of *community building*. Because this is the focus of this article, the term requires more discussion than that given to the other two.

The term community is often used very loosely and can mean very different things (Booth Fowler, 1991; Frazer and Lacey, 1993), hence, a definition is essential. The definition I maintain holds that the members of the social entity involved have formed a core of shared values (i.e. a moral culture) and a web of bonds of affection.² To avoid confusing this definition of community with others, I shall refer to it as a normative-affective community. The focus of this article is on internal elements of community building in contrast to external conditions that can also affect a community's future. The focus on internal factors is based on the assumption that as a rule, these factors can be more readily modified and controlled than external conditions, such as the international political environment, the economic environment and the natural environment. Finally, the article deals mainly with the role and formulation of shared values, leaving an examination of the ways bonds of affection are formed to another publication.

II. Step I versus Step II Unions

It is useful to differentiate between two types of transnational unions, which I shall refer to as Step I and II. These are ideal types; various intermediary states can readily be envisioned.

² For more explanation of this definition see Etzioni (1996, p. 127).

Step I unions have a low level of transnational integration and a much narrower scope as compared to Step II unions. Step I unions form free trade zones that allow a high level of free movement of goods and some services as well as the free flow of capital. They also engage in considerable harmonization of regulations and laws, especially those that concern economic activities. The political architecture of these unions relies on intergovernmental institutions. The participants in these bodies are representatives of the nations involved. All important decisions require unanimity and hence each member nation has both *de jure* and *de facto* veto power on decisions. National sovereignty is thus preserved. Community building in Step I unions is relatively low. The loyalty of the citizens is to their nation and not to the union; their bonds of affection are largely national or sub-national. There is little commitment to the union's common good and to the projects in which the union is engaged, including the project of further unification.

In contrast, Step II unions have a high level and broad scope of integration. They allow not only the free flow of goods and services across the borders of member nations, but also have a single currency. They differ from Step I unions especially by allowing the free flow of people, including people who are not citizens of any of the member countries, such as immigrants, 'white slaves' and even suspected terrorists. Member nations largely surrender their border controls to the union. Step II unions harmonize numerous activities, including many non-economic ones. Their political architecture draws on some supranational bodies and/or makes at least some important decisions based on the majority of the national representatives rather than on unanimity. Stage II unions no longer treat national sovereignty as a decisive legitimating principle on at least some key issues. Supranational bodies are needed because intergovernmental institutions are too cumbersome to handle the high volume of integrated activities, especially if the scope of these activities has expanded from the economic sphere to many others. Attempts to relegate decisions to bureaucrats and experts instead of allocating them to supranational bodies will be successful only if the decisions are of limited import and low in public visibility. In the long run, such a strategy (characteristic in what is often referred to as a 'regulatory state'³) will be rejected as authoritarian, undemocratic and illegitimate. For the reasons spelled out below, the supranational political architecture that a Step II union needs presupposes a considerable level of normative-affective community building.

³ For a complementary analysis on this point, see Hooghe and Marks (2003). Also, for a description of a regulatory state and its problems, see Caporaso (2005).

Step II unions can be turned into nations.⁴ However, these unions differ from nations in that they (a) have nations as members, which are expected to continue to command distinct cultures and loyalties; that is Step II unions are communities of communities, not *Gemeinschafts*; (b) the scope of the shared values and the loyalty Step II unions require can be considerably narrower than that of nations; (c) although nations are often forged by force or are expressive of a primordial tribal ethos, Step II unions, we shall see, can emerge out of moral dialogues between free people and be expressive of shared values.

III. Within History

Thus far, Step I and II unions have been discussed as ideal types. I now move to examine actual unions with this analytical distinction in mind. Several free trade areas are close to Step I unions including those in North America, South East Asia and parts of Africa. One reason that free trade zones seem to be stable and self-sustaining is that they produce benefits for all participants, although not to the same extent. Another major reason free trade zones seem to be stable, indeed growing, is that their level and scope of integration, political architecture and community building are all compatible – they are all low. Representatives of the member governments retain control and hence can veto the expansion of the scope and nature of integrated activities beyond what is considered beneficial and legitimate by their electorate. These unions have no or only very weak supranational institutions. NAFTA, for instance, has a process to make binational panel decisions on trade disputes, but the panel's power is limited – as recently illustrated by America's decision to ignore the panel ruling on Canadian softwood lumber. Furthermore, these unions engage in no real community building.

The EU grew out of a limited endeavour at economic co-operation between six nations limited to some industries. The European Coal and Steel Community was founded in 1951 to that end, although its founders had much loftier ideals to create a union in order to bring peace to a war torn continent. Over time, the level and scope of integrated activities expanded, leading in 1957 to the formation of the European Economic Community. It in turn still further expanded the scope of its activities, which resulted in the creation of the EU in 1992. More members were added throughout the process. Initially the union introduced only freer trade in goods and services. However in 1985, several of the Member States passed a major threshold that separates Step I

⁴ 'Nation' is commonly defined as a community invested in a state. It is true that many groups aspiring to such a status call themselves a nation – as many Basques, Scots and some black Americans do. These expressions are widely recognized as aspirations, however, not facts.

from Step II unions when they signed the Schengen Agreement that lifted border checks and allowed for the free movement of people. Another significant threshold was passed when the EU introduced the Economic and Monetary Union and 12 of the Member States adopted a common currency. However, while the level and scope of integration activities increasingly expanded, few efforts were made to create Step II architecture.⁵ True, the 1986 Single European Act did provide for some qualified majority voting, but it was not until 2005 that a major attempt was made to shift the Union from a high degree of unanimous decision-making to a high degree of majoritarian decision-making. The EU Constitutional Treaty proposed this and other important changes in the political architecture, but it was rejected by France and the Netherlands and has since been sidelined.

Thus the EU remains in at least a somewhat precarious position, with increasing integration but 'without a definitive and superordinate centre for the resolution of conflicts or for the allocation of public goods – [it has] only a process and hence no definite person or body that can be held accountable for its actions in the public realm' (Schmitter, 2000, p. 16). Even less, very little in effect has been done to provide for normative-affective community building. This mismatch between ever higher levels of integration and expanding scope, the lagging political institutions and above all community building is a major cause of the current difficulties facing the EU. The hypothesis presented here is that *either the lagging factors will have to catch up or the advanced ones will have to be scaled back*.

The mismatch and its resulting stress come into focus when one examines the two major thresholds on the way from Step I to Step II unions – the introduction of a single currency and the free movement of people. The introduction of a common currency will be considered first. A common currency requires the formation and implementation of transnational macroeconomic policies that in turn necessitate the existence of suitable political institutions to make the needed decisions. The rationale is as follows.

The two instruments of macroeconomic policy are monetary policy (e.g. changes in interest rates and money supply) and fiscal policy (e.g. changes in tax rates and public spending). Most economists accept that the reach of the institutions that formulate and enforce macroeconomic policies must parallel the area in which the currency is used. One main reason is that the currency must be protected from excessive extension of credits and the creation of large deficits by member nations, or the economy of all the members will suffer from loss of trust in its currency due to fears of hyperinflation or

⁵ Although the EU has not developed a robust supranational political architecture, this is not to say that no power has been diffused into the hands of a European-level governance. For a detailed description of this diffusion of power, see Hooghe and Marks (2001).

depression (or even both). When the EU introduced a single currency, it also introduced the European Central Bank to attend to monetary policy for all of the EU. Fiscal policy, however, was left almost completely in the hands of the members' national governments. Although fiscal policy is subject to common rules on deficits and debts delineated in the Maastricht Treaty, the Stability and Growth Pact and the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, those rules have not been closely followed. Entering into 2005, 11 members of the EU, among them Germany, France and Italy, were in breach of the Stability and Growth Pact's decree that deficits are not to exceed 3 per cent of GDP. Increasing deficits help individual nations stimulate their own economies, but in the long run they harm the value of the euro and the long-term interest rate in the euro area.⁶ As such, no matter what the ECB does in terms of monetary policy, the euro will be in trouble if fiscal policy is not effectively kept in check. If in the longer run fiscal policy is not integrated much more effectively than it is now, the common currency is going to be endangered.

To turn to the second threshold, a similar double lag (both in political architecture and community) was created when the free movement of people was introduced. To the extent that border checks were eliminated following the Schengen agreement, illegal immigrants, criminals and terrorists were free to move across national borders with impunity and hence EU-wide policing was required. Europol, the EU's nod towards a police department, as well as the European Justice and Home Affairs Council are designed to tackle this challenge. However, these bodies are poorly funded and understaffed. Above all, they are in need of a much higher level of harmonization of national policies than the existing political institutions can provide and the existing level of community can tolerate. For example, effectively deporting illegal immigrants is increasingly difficult as illegal immigrants ordered to leave one country are moving to another one (as well as hiding in the first). Of the more than 650,000 illegal immigrants ordered to leave the EU in 2004, approximately two-thirds avoided expulsion and remained in the EU in 2005 (Bowley, 2005).

Complications in arrests and extraditions of suspected criminals provide another example of the effects of mismatch between free movement of people and low-level political architecture and community (particularly value) harmonization. Prior to 2004, the amount of time needed for one EU member to surrender a criminal suspect to another EU member was nine months on average. In many cases, the timeframe was much longer and in some cases extradition was withheld or nearly withheld – in an extreme case in 1994, Belgium threatened to grant asylum to a Basque couple wanted in Spain for

⁶ For more discussion of this problem, see Feldstein (2005). Also see Pisani-Ferry (2002).

terrorist activities (Ireland, 1995, p. 262). The creation and implementation of EU warrants finally streamlined the extradition process in January 2004 and cut the average extradition time to 43 days. But it has since come under fire. For example, the German constitutional court declared the EU warrant null and void in July 2005, arguing that it provides inadequate protection to German citizens. And, in April 2005, the Polish constitutional court annulled the Polish law implementing the warrant. British MP John Denham summarized the situation well: 'the lesson to be learned was that Euro- and national MPs needed to debate proposals when they were tabled, not after they have already been turned into national law' (European Information Service, 2005).

Free movement of people without a robust political architecture and community has also led to pronounced stress and concern about social dumping. Immigrants who enter one EU nation are in effect free to move to other nations. Thus a relatively lax immigration policy in Spain and poor border controls in Italy have saddled many other EU members with immigrants in numbers and of backgrounds that the overwhelming majority of their citizens do not favour. For example, in 1992, 65 per cent of applications from Tamil refugees were approved in France, but only 1 per cent were approved in Germany. Once inside France, however, these and other such refugees are able to move into Germany and elsewhere in the EU, leading to what analysts have called 'refugee dumping' (Ireland, 1995, p. 245). A reviewer of a previous version of this article argued that although there was a wide perception of a 'race to the bottom' no hard evidence for such a race exists. He cited Vogel's (1995) *Trading Up* as evidence to the contrary. As I see it, severe dislocation can and does occur without a 'race to the bottom'. Moreover, even if such fears are merely in the public mind, they still must be addressed.

Moreover, many people are beginning to fear that since labour is generally less costly in the south and east and benefits are richer in the north, jobs will move to the southern and eastern Member States and those who seek to exploit the system will move northward. Economists liken this phenomenon to adverse selection in which 'net beneficiaries are attracted to jurisdictions engaged in redistribution, while net contributors are repelled' (Wildasin, 1994). Citizens and politicians call this phenomenon 'social dumping' – one country 'dumps its problems on their neighbours' (Ireland, 1995, p. 245). Dumping, it is feared, will not only impoverish strong welfare states, but also encourage a race to the lowest common denominator – countries will lower their own social welfare benefits to limit their attractiveness as dumping destination points. Although the scope of these flows is not well-established, politicians have made a case out of it and drummed up fear which further undermines the EU. This fear is particularly pronounced in France where the fear of an inundation of 'Polish plumbers' and other cheap labour has

dominated the discourse that led to the rejection of the EU Constitutional Treaty (Sciolino, 2005). Ultimately, only harmonization of welfare (as well as tax policies and much else) can allow the free flow of people to continue.

Although several important externalities have also contributed to the EU malaise,⁷ one can conclude that a great deal of strain on the Union has been generated from the fact that *the EU has an increasing Step II level of activities and scope with a largely Step I architecture and above all, a weak community.*

IV. The Movement to Step II

A considerable number of analysts and EU policy-makers have taken the position that no new Step II political architecture or accelerated normative-affective community building must be introduced even as the volume and scope of integrated activities has risen to a Step II level. To employ the image cited above, these analysts are content for the EU to stand ‘midair’ between two steps. The UK, for instance, has opposed many of the measures to create a more robust political architecture on the grounds that they are not needed. Thomas Risse explains that this consistent opposition to deepening European integration is rooted in a ‘distinctive nationalist English identity [that] is incompatible with federalist or supranationalist visions of the European political order [...] and still perceives Europe as the (friendly) “other”’ (Risse, 2001, p. 199).

Other analysts, especially in the earlier years of the EU, have argued that more integration is necessary, but that it is to occur as a functional spillover that will automatically lead to the formation of the needed political architecture. They argued essentially that as ‘Brussels’ (a code word for the European Commission and more generally, the EU’s governing bodies) affects ever more EU-wide activities, various interest groups will shift their attention from the national capitals to the EU capital.⁸

In contrast, others hold that the EU needs to work explicitly towards making a much more robust political architecture and sense of community. European Commission President José Manuel Barroso states that ‘it is simply

⁷ Other developments that were not introduced by the EU also increased the stress on the Union in the same period. These developments are beyond the scope of this article, but one of them is so consequential that it should be briefly cited. In the first period of the EU, one of its latent functions was, as German Chancellor Helmut Kohl put it, to lock Germany into Europe and to protect Germany from itself. Germany was initially content to pay a large portion of the EU budget and let France serve as the major governing power of the EU. Germany, however, has gradually shed its post-Second World War feelings and has come under increased domestic stress. This development has recently led Germany to curtail its contributions and to challenge French leadership. In turn, French ardour for the EU has cooled. Both of these processes are just beginning to unfold and are likely to continue in the future, adding to the difficulties that the EU will face.

⁸ Among others, Ernst Haas proposed this view, see Haas (1958). It has since been criticized because functional spillover seems limited to elites, see van Hamm (2001, p. 242).

wrong to think that a single market can be sustained without social cohesion, a political vision and the solidarity that flows from the feeling of belonging to a common project' (Barroso, 2005). German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer has called for turning the EU into a federation, what Winston Churchill once called a United States of Europe (Fischer, 2000). The 2005 draft Constitutional Treaty entailed the introduction of majority voting in significantly more areas in which unanimous decision-making had hereto prevailed. Such a change would have meant that Member States would no longer be able to veto in effect measures they strongly opposed – and hence, supporters of the Constitutional Treaty held that progress could be made much more swiftly. The rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by French and Dutch voters and the fear that several other nations will not endorse it, make the Constitutional Treaty's fate rather unclear at this stage. What is clear, however, is that the most important move to form a new political architecture suitable for a Step II union has, at least, been derailed.

The 2005 constitutional initiative raises important questions. The hypothesis here advanced is that democratization requires a significantly higher level of community than the EU now commands or ever commanded even before the recent enlargement.

V. Curtailing the Community Deficit before the Democratic Deficit

There are at least two major reasons for why normative-affective community building is needed prior to more democratization. (These words are chosen carefully; the argument is not that a fully-fledged community must be in place before democratization nor that no democratization is at all possible without more community building.)⁹

The first of these reasons is that democratization requires willingness on the part of the members of a union to make sacrifices for one another. The second is that the making of democratic policies requires shared values.

Democracy imposes sacrifices on citizens for the sake of the collective whole, often in the form of high-level taxation and sometimes in the case of committing citizens to war.¹⁰ Frequently, it also imposes disproportional losses on some members of the Union for the sake of others. This is most

⁹ There is an important and valuable dialogue among scholars as to whether or not the existing democratic institutions of the EU, especially the parliament, suffice to legitimate the EU. Whatever the conclusion, I suggest that these institutions cannot grow significantly unless there is more community building. On the dialogue see Bellamy and Castiglione (2000), Chrysochoou (2001); for counter argument see Lord and Beetham (2001).

¹⁰ Democracy also demands that those who lose a vote will nonetheless abide by the outcome of that vote. For a detailed analysis of this kind of sacrifice and the conditions under which it is best fostered, see Anderson *et al.* (2005).

evident when one considers public policies that involve the reallocation of scarce resources (these policies include public budgets, subsidies, credits and much else), as well as changes in macro-economic and related policies. Thus, to give one example, if the EU is to follow a unified economic policy, some nations' economies will have to be slowed down, because the economy of some other nations is 'overheating' (growing too fast, threatening run-away inflation). This means that the citizens of say Germany and France would have to see their unemployment rates be further increased, income per capita decreased and public policies under-funded because the economies of say Ireland and Portugal have been growing too fast! Members of one community do so without much reflection. Americans, for instance, would accept an economic lag in the South if it were necessary to abate the economy overheating in California and New York, because they view the United States as one community. EU Member States are much less inclined to accept such sacrifices for each other and for the EU.

For the EU citizens to accept the sacrifices such decision-making entails they need to value the EU common good and the purposes it serves. That is, in selected matters, the EU must acquire what I call a narrow trumping loyalty before the democracy deficit can be curtailed. Such split loyalty (between one's nation in some matters and the EU in others) is far from unknown. In effect, it exists in many nations that are federations or act as if they have some such qualities. In the United Kingdom for instance, a person often splits loyalty between being Scottish or Welsh and being British. As political theorist Andreas Føllesdal puts it: 'citizens need a shared sense of belonging to two political communities, as citizens of two commonwealths: loyalty to members of their own sub-unit and an "overarching loyalty" to other citizens in the political order' (Føllesdal, 2006).

One might argue, however, that citizens of EU nations do indeed already have this narrow trumping loyalty and have shown that they are willing to make sacrifices for the EU as a whole. One might point to the fact that the EU has long sustained a budget and made income transfers in the form of Structural and Cohesion Funds to regions considered in need of development help, including Greece, Portugal and Ireland.¹¹ Hence the EU seems to command the necessary loyalty. However, thus far the EU budget has amounted to only a tiny fraction of the Member States' budgets – the 2000–06 budget has a ceiling of 1.27 per cent of EU-area GDP – and almost all social welfare programmes remain under the control of individual nations. Indeed, the EU's social and redistributive component has been quite limited; even

¹¹ This is a reference to the EU's Structural and Cohesion Funds. For details on this funding, see European Communities (2004b).

after a nearly 20 per cent increase from 2003, Structural and Cohesion Funds accounted for only 34 per cent of the EU budget in 2004, equivalent to no more than 0.4 per cent of EU-area GDP.¹² Efforts to expand the 2007-13 EU budget have been marked by acrimonious debate and failure. Europeans are not ready to sacrifice much over and above their limited contributions to the EU – the French do not want to surrender their farm subsidies, the British do not want to relinquish their \$6 billion annual rebate from the EU and the Germans (as well as the Swedish and Dutch), who are painfully aware that they have paid much more into the EU than they have gained from it, seek to freeze the EU budget at the current level of 1 per cent of gross national income, rather than allowing it to increase to the suggested 1.14 per cent of GNI.¹³

The current paucity of EU-wide normative-affective community is further evident in pressures to re-establish national borders with regard to immigrants, criminals and suspected terrorists. Citizens of many European nations are not willing to put up with sacrifices imposed upon them by the border policies of other nations, as has been previously discussed. Failed attempts to harmonize the divergent welfare policies of Member States provide another example of the EU's lack of normative-affective community and its effects. To harmonize welfare, countries with rich schemes would have to curtail theirs, those with more meagre ones would have to jack theirs up or some nations would have to transfer significant funds to others. However there is very little support for such harmonization. Without harmonization, however, the free movement of people and jobs is undermined and the union and a united economic policy, as has been previously demonstrated, is hobbled.

In a response to the argument that there is a need for a core of shared values, Andreas Føllesdal remarked that sharing universal values like human rights does not necessarily build European community.¹⁴ The point is not without merit, but it dodges the main thrust of the argument presented here. The argument is that the EU needs more than values that are universally shared; to build community, it needs particularistic values. To this claim Føllesdal responds that the values Europeans have are particular to each nation but not to the whole EU. Actually, however, there seem to be several strong candidates for EU-wide particularistic values. These include a strong

¹² For budget statistics, see Commission (2004a). For further information on the limited nature of redistribution programmes, see Caporaso (2006) and Majone (1993).

¹³ The Netherlands puts 0.44 per cent more of its gross national income into the EU budget than it takes out; Germany has a negative balance of 0.33 per cent and Sweden 0.38 per cent (Reuters, 2005).

¹⁴ Føllesdal writes, 'The required values are seldom uniquely European and the European features that merit respect are not common values' (Føllesdal, 2005).

commitment to prevent war between the members and to deal with non-members (even rogue states) with peaceful means. Also included is a strong commitment to the social market. Although Europeans are now thinking about trimming down the social market, they greatly differ from the United States in their shared and strong commitment to it.¹⁵ (Britain on all these accounts is at the margin of the EU or beyond.) Finally, although the willingness to openly face common histories, especially the Holocaust, is far from fully shared, it is stronger in EU countries than in countries such as Japan's willingness to repent for atrocities it committed.

Before moving on, it is helpful to clarify the references to a narrow trumping loyalty and to a core of shared values – neither entails an entirely comprehensive commitment. The reference to a *core* of shared values does not entail that these values be all encompassing. Indeed there is room for a high level of national subsidiarity,¹⁶ not merely in matters of governance but also in normative positions on matters such as euthanasia¹⁷ or tolerance for hate speech. And in the same vein, there is no need to abolish loyalties and bonds of affections to one's nation, as long as on *selected* matters the loyalty to the new, encompassing community, trumps that of loyalty to one's nation.

The end result is an EU that is more than a civil society but less than an all-encompassing, social entity. It is to be a community whose members share a core of values, whose common good and purpose they find compelling and whose institutions are considered legitimate to the extent that their design and actions are compatible with the shared values. Hence it is to be a community that commands trumping loyalty in select matters, but defers to national loyalty in other matters.

VI. The Pivotal Role of Moral Dialogues

Now that the need for community building has been established, the discussion turns to explore the ways that a core of shared values can be enhanced. These differ from a number of suggestions that have been made as to how to enable the EU to continue to flourish, sometimes also referred to as 'community building'. It is neither possible nor necessary to examine them all here. They can be sorted, however, into several major categories which will

¹⁵ For more discussion on the existence or potential existence of distinct European shared values, see Caporaso (2006); Hoffmann (1988) and Jospin (2003). Also see Walter Laquer, who points to Europe's 'dedication to reaffirming the life instinct' and 'working to live rather than living to work' (Laquer, 2005).

¹⁶ For more on the concept and the place of national subsidiarity, see Etzioni (2004).

¹⁷ Euthanasia, however, would have to be limited to local residents lest one nation become a destination point for euthanasia and thereby stultify other nations' policies against it. This limitation can be legislated by stipulating that euthanasia can only be made available to people who have known the executing physician for at least one year, thus in effect limiting euthanasia to locals.

serve to highlight the difference between normative-affective community building and other measures that may or may not strengthen the EU.

We have already mentioned suggestions like Fischer's call for federation and the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty that entail profound *changes in the political architecture*. Along similar lines, Philippe van Parijs has proposed directly electing parliament members from an EU-wide list or having pan-European elections for President of the EU Council (van Parijs, 1997). For reasons already indicated, however, such measures best follow a significant measure of normative-affective community building and cannot drive it.

Several *symbolic* measures have been introduced such as an EU flag, EU licence plates, EU passport covers and an EU anthem. These symbolic measures can contribute when there is a sense of community to express and solidify – but they cannot create community where it is absent.

Increased contact among the citizens of the various nations has also been suggested. For instance, student and scholar exchanges have been implemented under the ERASMUS programme, a branch of the EU's broader SOCRATES programme to enhance European education. One observer hoped that if these programmes would be much increased, community building would be enhanced.¹⁸ Some benefit has been indeed generated this way, however data from other such plans suggests that one's prejudices are likely to be reinforced by such programmes and are often reasserted once those students and scholars return home.

Reference to shared values is often met with a considerable degree of value *angst*, which leads several key liberal theoreticians to seek to keep values out of the scope of public policy. They fear that drumming up an EU 'ethos' will be akin to nationalism, which led to the fascist and totalitarian movements, the bane of recent European history.¹⁹ These fears are not to be taken lightly; however, in the case of the EU, the danger that its ethos will be expressive of a kind of primordial sense of tribalism is very remote.²⁰ First, the Member States are not expected to vanish and loyalty to them will continue to counterbalance EU loyalties. Second, the EU – once driven by Catholic and conservative leaders and followers – has grown much more diverse in terms of the members' values. The EU's problem, hence, is not that one set of values will overwhelm all others and grow totalistic, but rather that it must find some significant shared values. Moreover, two values that

¹⁸ For more discussion on community building through education and exchange, see Peck (1997).

¹⁹ Not all political theorists agree – some, including David Miller and Alex Warleigh, hold that a deep cultural and ethnic ethos or 'demos' is in fact necessary to form a stable and democratic Union. They argue that the lack (and potential impossibility) of such a demos in Europe is the principle problem for unification. See Warleigh (2003) and Miller (1995).

²⁰ Føllesdal argues similarly, see Føllesdal (2005).

many Europeans do share is the aversion to war and abhorrence of totalitarianism, based on their shared experiences. Indeed, if and when the EU develops a more significant core of shared values, the most likely result will be somewhat akin to the rise of shared values that were at the formation of the United States – not the evocation of a primordial ethos, but a new covenant formed by those who choose to participate in the formation of the new union.

Such a new covenant may arise – and other shared values may be formed – out of *moral dialogues*. Moral dialogues are public discussions that engage values rather than merely interests or wants. They involve more than facts and reasoning; they engage beliefs and normative commitments. Moral dialogues are not dialogues among experts but among citizens. They often include some factual and logical arguments, but they are mainly ethical, rather than empirical, in nature. Take the question of whether or not there should be a death penalty. The empirical question of whether or not it deters murder plays some role in the relevant moral dialogue. However, the main issues are moral ones: whether the state ever has a right to take a life and whether one ought to keep those convicted of hideous crimes alive in prison in order to avoid the fatal error of executing even one innocent person. To provide but one more illustration, the debate on whether or not gay marriages should be sanctified by the state is not driven by empirical questions (for example, can they make good parents), but by one's religious, humanitarian and other values.

We are familiar with moral dialogues in families and small groups. Whole societies, however, even if their population ranks in the hundreds of millions, can and do engage in moral dialogues that lead to changes in widely shared values. These moral dialogues are composed of the many millions of hours spent over meals, in pubs, while commuting, at work and in the media discussing moral issues. They entail linking millions of local conversations into society-wide networks and shared public focal points, including call-in shows, debates on network television and in widely circulated newspapers and magazines. The dialogues are often triggered and closed with political decisions (for example, legalizing gay marriages), but moral dialogues should not be confused with political participation.²¹

When a community is engaged in a moral dialogue, the discussion often seems disorderly, meandering and endless. However, such dialogues frequently do lead to new, shared moral values. Most importantly, through the process of moral dialogue people often modify their commitments and behaviours. For example, in the 1950s European as well as other societies had no sense of a moral obligation towards the environment. This does not mean that there were not some studies, articles and individuals who saw great value in

²¹ For more discussion of such dialogues, see Etzioni (1996, chapter 4). Percy B. Lehning presents an objection to this point of view, see Lehning (2001).

the environment; but the society as a whole did not rank protecting the environment among its core values. A profound moral dialogue that developed in the 1960s and 1970s led not merely to a shared sense of moral duty to Mother Earth (although communities continue to differ on what exactly that entails) but also to a fair measure of changed behaviour (voluntary recycling for example), regulations and public policies. There continue to be disagreements about the level of commitment to this cause and the best ways to proceed, but not about the fact that it is a basic value. Another key example is the debate on women's rights that resulted in profound changes in the way the two genders view, treat and deal with one another.

In the past, many of these dialogues were nationwide and led to national action such as new legislation and regulations and new economic incentives and penalties. In recent decades, however, there have been a growing number of *transnational moral dialogues* that have led to shared positions and action. These include both narrow issues and more encompassing ones. Transnational moral dialogues led to wide support for the United Nations and especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; even nations such as Singapore and China no longer dismiss it out of hand. The same holds for a shared moral commitment to the environment, opposition to land mines, the need to curb the trade in ivory and the willingness to intervene for humanitarian purposes.

The nations that are members of the EU have participated in many of these moral dialogues, either within their own respective nations, or as members of the inchoate global community, but not often in EU-wide dialogues. EU-wide dialogues that have taken place have often fallen short of what was needed for normative-affective community building. The reasons for these failures need to be examined if future dialogues are to be effective.

In the past, major EU decisions have typically been made by one nation at a time, for example, nations decided independently whether or not to join the EU in the first place, whether or not to adopt the euro, embrace the Constitutional Treaty and so on. These decisions were even made at different points in time by the various nations rather than simultaneously. The dialogues have focused on what is in the best interest of each individual nation, not on what is best for the EU as a whole.²² Moreover, national governments that have favoured various EU-enhancing steps have chastised those nations that opposed those moves. Thus, these dialogues enforced national differences rather than unity. If EU-wide dialogues are to be effective, they best be linked to forthcoming *EU-wide* decisions rather than such *national* decisions. For instance, votes on the acceptance of an EU constitution should take place in all Member States simultaneously.

²² For a detailed defense of the thesis that European integration proceeded on the basis of national advantage, see Moravcsik (1998).

The dialogues must involve the public. In the past, many EU decisions were conducted behind closed doors, negotiated by diplomats, lawyers, experts and above all civil servants, couched in terms the public could not follow. The resulting documents, such as the Treaty of Rome, the Maastricht Treaty and the proposed Constitutional Treaty included countless pages of complex details. (Sixty per cent of the French voters who rejected the Constitutional Treaty said they voted no because the Constitutional Treaty was too complicated to understand, see Commission, 2005.) The public had very little influence on the content of these documents; they were just permitted into the process to vote yes or no. Moreover, the various documents were often promoted as serving various interests of the member nations or groups within them, rather than presented as normative commitments to shared values and the common good of the budding EU community. This evidence suggests that significant adjustments need to be made if EU-wide moral dialogues are to be fomented. The example that follows illustrates what an effective EU-wide moral dialogue might look like. This specific case can be substituted by another, but the format may be essential.

Suppose the EU governments were to announce that the EU needs a closely shared immigration policy due to the fact that immigrants that are allowed to make their way into one Member State often end up in other EU countries. (Another potential topic could be the extent to which the EU should enlarge and whether it should include Turkey – a question particularly relevant to sorting out what EU shared values encompass. Whatever the topic is, it must be evocative enough to engage the public and cannot be limited to procedural or narrow interest issues.) The EU governments would also announce that the new immigration policy would not be decided in nation-by-nation votes, but rather by an EU-wide referendum to take place, say, six months later.

Before the referendum, there would be numerous public hearings and town hall meetings conducted by members of the European Parliament, public intellectuals, local politicians, NGO leaders and others to discuss alternative policies. The ballot would have several parts including immigrant rights, requirements for gaining EU citizenship and policies for illegal immigrants and asylum seekers from countries that are not torn by war.

One might think that what is suggested here as a moral dialogue to curtail the community deficit is what others would call public participation to fill the democratic deficit. What is suggested here, however, is to use the political process to trigger, focus and give closure and significance to social processes – particularly that of coming to shared values. Hence at issue here is not polity, but community building. For democracy, voting is an essential element; for community building it is but an instrument.

A key point of the suggested design of the moral dialogues is to encourage EU voters to consider what is best for the larger EU community rather than focus on the interests of their particular nation. Some might say that this would mean that even if all the citizens of a small state were to oppose the measure, it could still be passed. However, the very merit of the suggested format is to encourage people to cease thinking only as citizens of their national state and instead deliberate and vote more on what is best for the EU community, especially on issues such as immigration in which one nation's policies have a dramatic impact on other nations. The debate would surely be emotional and would likely produce different conclusions than a Commission committee. However, it would reflect the people, their values and their preferences and it would commit them to EU-wide policies and, in the process, to the EU itself.

For a moral dialogue to be effective it is essential that people have a sense that it will have a real impact.²³ For instance, people would need to know that the European Parliament would be committed to following the results of the suggested referendum on immigration and to spelling the results out in law. The people would also need to know that the Commission would be bound to implement these laws.

Over time, moral dialogues will nurture the formation of a core of shared values among members of the EU. Such a core is a cardinal condition for the formation of a normative-affective community that is in turn essential for the formation of the political institutions a Stage II union requires. Thus, the lagging elements will be brought in line with those that rushed ahead, meeting on a higher ground rather than being forced to retreat to a lower level. The argument is not that moral dialogues will magically transform the EU all by themselves. Many other factors, however, are in place – most obviously the high volume of activities that are already integrated, the single currency and the relatively free movement of people. It is the community building element that is particularly lagging and it is the one that stands to benefit most from moral dialogues.

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²³ Føllesdal similarly highlights the importance of the public seeing that their decisions in public debates and voting booths have a real effect. See Føllesdal (2005).

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