

“The political economy of European citizenship”

(DRAFT PAPER)

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Introduction

The integration process of the European Union is an exciting field of investigation for students of political economy, given the fact that it is an active state building project which takes place in an increasingly complex institutional and socio-economic context, in the midst of a multitude of institutions, processes, actors, and the complexity of the patterns of their inter-relations. The lessons of this process for us are many fold, especially if we are concerned with the question of social cohesion.

The issue of social cohesion constitutes one of the most strategic concerns of the European Commission and the other bodies which want to ensure the success of the creation of this new supra-national state. It is the thrust of this paper that establishment of the EU - as an active

state re-structuring process – is re-defining the scales of “economic integration” and “social cohesion”, which were used to be resolved “simultaneously” at the national scale. As an imagined community, the nation has served to give a sense of coherence and cohesion to the citizens of a state, which in turn provided the ideological infrastructure – not only in moral terms but also in material terms, by making redistribution morally acceptable on the grounds of national solidarity, by making capitalism bearable (cf. Faist, 2001: 46).

At this point, we witness the creation of the EU as a new supra-national state, being more responsible for the maintenance and regulation of a common market, which also dedicates itself to coordinate the new scalar framework of social cohesion in the European Union. What is striking about the EU integration project is that the ‘new scalar framework of social cohesion’ does not necessarily match with the corresponding spatial framework of the new economy. If this is the case, then the various articulations between this “(new) common market” and the new scalar configuration of social cohesion should be brought into the centre of attention. As we shall later show, the attempts of the European Union to strike a balance between a re-scaled economy and a multi-scalar European cohesion framework do not seem to have produced the desired outcomes. One can immediately point the finger at the uneven nature of capitalist development (Harvey, 1985; Duncan and

Goodwin, 1988; Smith, 1991), to the strategic selectivities of the ‘state spatial projects’ and the ‘state spatial strategies’ (Brenner, 2004: chapter 3 and 4), for the root-causes of the challenge to the notion of social cohesion and the immanent inconsistency between the notions of “market” and cohesion (Lawton and Smith, REFERENCE).

Nevertheless, what pervades the explanations about the problematic of the tension between capitalist development and cohesion, is the emphasis on tensions between “competing logics”, which subsumes the individual ‘agents’ into these processes, bound to act according to these logics, or caught in between. In fact, the measures of the European union to deal with this problematic ‘tension’ is also designed at the structural (institutional level), using for example “structural funds” to be transferred to the lagging / targeted regions, and to the targeted states, to the targeted “territorial units” in a de-territorialised and re-territorialised political economy, namely the European Union (cf. Brenner, 1999).

Here, we argue that there is a missing scale in this new configuration, which currently involves the nation state, the EU and the regions: *the scale of “citizen”*. We have two questions that we should pose: a) could the citizen be seen as a scale of cohesion?; b) why is it missing from the cohesion policy of the European Union? In fact, these

two questions are very much interrelated and have to do with the way citizenship defined, or the discursive selectivity involved in the definition of the citizen: which also has to do with the emerging spatial selectivities of the European Union (cf. Brenner, 2004).

The thrust of this paper is that there is an urgent need to re-read the European integration process from a citizenship perspective, whose definition as “subjects” of a political entity becomes more and more invalid given the increasing multitude of the political actors to rule over the lives of individuals. Here, especially the distinction between formal citizenship and substantial citizenship is of interest to us and will constitute the basis of our further analysis.

Our paper has three main sections: the first one develops our perspective on citizenship. Then, we provide a critical analysis of the place of the notion of “cohesion” in the construction of the European Union as a new scale of political-economy, which has a transformative and re-scaling impact on the social, economic and political dimensions of its member territorial units. The last section is where we develop our own framework for a future engagement with the question of European Cohesion.

I – The question of citizenship

The question of cohesion usually comes to the centre of debate, in academic analyses of the EU integration process, as complementary to the creation of a common market, with an awareness that creation of a common market will definitely bring in new winners and new losers, and perhaps will make the old winners better off and the others will remain worse off. Yet, the approach of the EU commission and the reports they produce, as well as the tone of the scholarship on this issue, tend to take it as a matter of, to say the least, a certain level of administration/scale of governance: namely cohesion across the member states, cohesion across the regions, cohesion inside the regions. Yet, the citizen is still concealed from the picture, assumed away as the *natural subject* of any of these political-territorial units.

We argue that if we locate the issue of citizenship to the centre of analysis, we could come up with more concrete policy solutions, other than simply transferring EU funds to the regions/states in need of catching up with the average indicators of development (the average age, the pension plan, the GDP per-capita, etc).

The Birth of a multi-scalar citizenship regime?

First of all, we should make it clear that de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation of the European Union (Brenner, 1999) has challenged and changed the nature of citizenship in an irreversible fashion. Thomas Faist (2001) provides us with a fruitful analysis of this “emerging multi-scalar citizenship regime”. Thomas Faist distinguishes between three alternative approaches to understanding ‘social citizenship’ in the EU context:

- 1) “residual citizenship”, which denotes creation of a weaker citizenship regime at the supranational, - European – level, while realisation of social rights in member states are declining;
- 2) the second approach, Faist calls “post-national conception of social citizenship”, suggests that there is a convergence of social rights guaranteed at the supra-state and member national state level;
- 3) the third approach, that he is a proponent of, is that of “nested membership”: “This multi-tiered membership system consists of a mixture of rights guaranteed by regional, state, inter-state and genuinely European institutions” (Faist, 2001: 38-39).

Having refuted the first two approaches on empirical grounds, Faist also emphasises that nested citizenship is not an additive process, but is rather a product of interactions and tensions between these different levels of governance. Especially of interest to us is the distinction he draws between two constitutive dimensions of citizenship that he builds upon the ideas of Aristotle and Rousseau: a) the relations between the citizens (as active participation in the community); b) and, the status of the citizens, ie citizen *vis-a-vis* the state. Hence, once we talk about an evolving citizenship regime, we are not merely talking about granting of social rights to the citizens by these political sovereigns - now found in multitude in the European context, but also the participation of the individuals to the communities that they participate in as active contributors to its livelihood.

To re-iterate, simply focusing on the institutional aspect of European integration, is not a viable strategy. Another important reason is that, as Faist observes, the EU itself is in a constant flux. We are not talking about an end product. What we are talking about is a process:

“the EU is a supra-state and federative governance network with mixed inter-governmental and common authorities. Within this multi-tiered governance system, the rules of the game for the formulation of institutions and policies are constantly being developed and redefined” (Faist, 2001: 41-42).

For example, on the EU side, the EU legislation and rulings of the European Court of Justice, etc have been important in shaping the formation of the EU social policy. Hence, any account of this evolving phenomenon, as far as we are concerned with the question of citizenship, will be insufficient if the focus remains solely on the axis of 'the citizen <- > the state'. It is exactly at this point where the other dimension of the changing citizenship regime in the EU context enters the picture. The question of how the communities, which define the other dimension of citizenship (or better put: the dark side of the European Citizenship waiting to see the light!), evolve in this process of creation of a common market, and political-integration. In other words, we need to look at how the communities and the community-citizenship models evolve in response to the creation of a common market and a transforming governance structure. Here the notion of community becomes a critical beginning point to unfold our discussion.

For our purposes, community stands for a day-to-day co-existence of a group of people whose co-existence has a future, as well as a past. The prospects of living in that specific place, be a neighborhood, city, region, country based on the prospects of having further benefits, including social safety, the language born into, the prospects of further income, security, feelings of belonging etc ... are important dimensions which provide the terms of 'the social contract between the citizens'. For

example, while criticising the post-national perspective, Faist observes that

“A post-national perspective neglects the double coding of citizenship. It disregards the fact that morally demanding social rights, for example those involving redistribution of funds, require support by strong social and symbolic ties of generalized reciprocity and diffuse solidarity. Such ties are usually limited to collectives which are much narrower than the category ‘European People’ as a whole. For example, generational reciprocity in pension systems does not reach from Finland to Portugal” (2001: 46).

What sort of a citizenship?

Despite the contributions of the framework which Faist develops, it still needs elaboration especially in terms of the tensions between these two dimension of citizenship, in other words the relations between the citizen as a subject of a political sovereign, and the citizen as a participant of a community. Holston’s conceptualisation of citizenship is of help to unfold this shady area of Faist’s analysis. Holston, just like Faist, identifies two dimensions of citizenship: ‘formal citizenship’, which stands for the legal/institutional recognition of the rights that the individuals could exercise as citizens of a political sovereign; and ‘substantive citizenship’ which denotes the degree of the enjoyment of these rights by the actual

individuals. Here it is important to note that these two dimensions do not correspond to the two dimensions Faist portrays.

Put in another way, the distinction Holston proposes is not based on the distinction between the state and the civil society as two separate and different realms of citizenship, unlike that of Faist's. Hence, according to Holston (2001: 326), there does not have to be a complementary relationship between formal status of citizenship and substantive rights people exercise. In other words, formal citizenship does not necessarily guarantee the conditions for substantive citizenship. In the context of urban citizenship, for example, Holston argues,

“it is a de facto regime of new rights and identities...having no formal status per se, urban citizenship is all substance and symbol...rather than homogenize and dematerialize difference to arrive at a formal (national) identity, urban citizenship takes as its substance the heterogeneity and materiality of urban experience.”

Thus, the distinction Holston draws between substantive citizenship and formal citizenship has its roots in epistemological grounds, rather than ontological grounds. Holston's analysis problematises the 'lived space' (Lefebvre, 1996; Lefebvre, 2003), and focuses on the exclusionary aspect of urban/local citizenship, as well as the emancipatory possibilities offered by the experiences of the lived

space. Holston and Appadurai, who argue they are expanding the boundaries of citizenship (2003: 302) also note that

“Overwhelming other titles with its universal citizen, citizenship thus erodes local hierarchies, statuses, and privileges in favor of national jurisdictions and contractual relations based in principle on an equality of rights. On the other hand, the mobilizations of those excluded from the circle of citizens, their rallies against the hypocrisies of its ideology of universal equality and respect, have expanded democracies everywhere: they generate new kinds of citizens, new sources of law, and new participation in the decisions that bind. As much as in anything else, these conflicting and disjunctive processes of change constitute the core meaning of modern citizenship, constantly unsettling its assumptions” (296)

In other words, the gap between the formal citizenship and substantive citizenship fuels and finds its expression in the conflictual process of re-definition of the formal citizenship, which is a part of the constant political negotiation of the boundaries between the state and the civil society, and the boundaries between the excluded and the included.

We argue that we could have a better understanding of the creation of the European Union and the cohesion policies the European commission promotes if we re-configure our research question along the lines of analysis which Holston and Appadurai proposes. Yet, in the literature covering the EU integration process, the emphasis is rather on the formal aspect of citizenship, whereby the individual citizens are seen as the subjects of the political entities, the member states as well as the

European Union. Moreover, the citizens appear in the calculations of the European and National policies as the “per capita”, and are not addressed directly. This task is left to the regions, where, it is assumed that the problems of distribution and re-distribution are solved easily. Now, we will briefly look at the perspectives on the European integration process.

II - The EU integration process: whose cohesion, how?

The nature of the integration process

Needless to say, the European integration process is a complex, tension laden process, especially given the scale of this project, the variety of the concerns and the number and variety of actors involved. One of the authors of this paper recalls a comment made by the then Minister of Foreign affairs of Portugal at a conference in the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, in 1999, where he emphasised that (alluding to Turkey’s accession to the EU): “European Union is like a moving target”. This statement is no less true for the students of the European Union. This complexity has become more emphasised especially with the Maastricht agreement, which “signalled the beginning of a Europe of variable geometry” (Mazey, 1996: 36). Wright (1996) notes that “[t]he EU combines elements of an incipient federation, a supranational body, an

intergovernmental bargaining arena and an international regime” (1996: 150), in institutional terms.

One could immediately recognise that the main axis of tension which shapes the evolution of the European Union is the one between “unity/integration” and “diversity”, or “homogeneity” and “heterogeneity” (Jordan, 2001; Cram, 1996; Middlemas, 1995); which becomes further complicated by the tension between “competition” vs “cooperation”. The attempts to cope with these tensions found its expression in the single policy motto: “cohesion”, as a panacea, a loosely formulated term to provide the unity of the union in the middle of all these tensions.

Here, we should note that this complexity is partially designed and is not a totally unintended consequence of enlargement. Cram, who provides an excellent survey of older approaches to the European integration process notes that one of the main concerns of the founding fathers of the European Union was to prevent and eliminate the future tensions between the nation states of Europe. The functionalist ideas of thinkers like Mitrany, at this point, became strategic. To quote Cram,

“A key factor in understanding Mitrany’s functionalist vision is the distinction which he draws between *political/constitutional co-operation* and *technical/functional co-operation* in his advocacy of a new international society. For him the task was clear: ‘our aim must be to call forth to the highest degree the active forces and opportunities for co-operation while touching as little as possible

the latent or active points of difference and opposition' (Mitrany 1943, 1966: 58). The political/constitutional route had clearly failed to rise to this challenge. [However, the founding fathers of the EU like Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman] borrowed key aspects of what might be termed, the *functionalist method*, without adopting Mitrany's central goal: the dissolution of territorially based authorities" (1996: 42-43).

To reiterate, the European Union adopted both strategies, of creating 'technical'/sector based collaboration schemes, while also pursuing the political integration of territorially based authorities, ironically increasing them in numbers with the establishment of new 'regions' as new territorial administrative/political units. Faist, reminds us that, indeed, the Treaty of Maastricht defines two types of citizens: the member states and the individual citizens of these states (2001: 46). Thus, the "founding" citizens of this new supra-national state became the territorially defined political units including the national states as well as the regional and local states/governments, not the individual citizens who live within the boundaries of these territorially constructed political units. In that regard, the political control of / access to these units become more critical and strategic than before, for individual citizens, if they are to effect any change in the distributive and re-distributive policies of the EU in the first place. In other words, the structure of political representation in the European Union, becomes more and more dependent on the effective control of these territorial units, if a citizen mobilization (especially of "excluded citizens" – or "denizens") is to become successful to challenge their socio-economic problems, either

created by the EU integration process, or to use the EU funds and/or extra-local political support to solve their local problems.

The cohesion policy

The main policy instrument of the EU's cohesion policy has been “re-distribution” between richer and poorer regions, so as to compensate for the effects of the evolving economic integration. The cohesion policy has constituted the second largest item (after CAP, the common agricultural policy) in the EU budget, accounting for about 35% of its total expenditure. The commission has published a number of reports, so called “the Reports on Economic and Social Cohesion”, to tackle with this issue. The first one was published in 1996 (First Cohesion Report), the next in 2001 (The Second Report on Economic and Social Cohesion) and finally the last one in 2004, with the title of “A New Partnership for Cohesion: Convergence, Competitiveness and Competition.” As Michel Barnier (EU Commission: 2004, VII) mentions, the last report, as well as the previous ones reflect “the European Commission's vision for the future of Europe's policy to reduce disparities and to promote greater economic, social and territorial cohesion.” (2004, VIII-X)

In fact, the title of the last report give us a list of priorities which inform the EU’s approach to social cohesion. Once the concerns of the

report is taken into account, and especially their most recent policy framework - labeled the “Lisbon Strategy” -, we can identify four different concerns: 1) Overall growth; 2) Increasing competitiveness; 3) Social stability: Cohesion inside the regions; 4) Overcoming spatial disparities: Cohesion across the regions; and Cohesion across the states. What is important to note here is the fact that these territorial units are seen as the territorial sites of cohesion building. Yet, how they achieve this target is not the main concern. Not only in the recent cohesion report, but also in the previous ones, there is a very clear drive towards defining the EU’s main concerns within mainly economic criteria, such as overall economic growth in the EU region, indicators on competitiveness performance, (un)employment, regional public expenditures.

The policy re-orientation: what does Lisbon Strategy bring?

Here, it should be remembered that the regional policy did not seem to have produced the desired results for the balancing of the uneven development in the EU. With the further enlargement, this looks like a more difficult objective to achieve. Hence, as we shall show below, there is a there is policy re-orientation, which places more emphasis on the nation state, to build the social cohesion in Europe.

In this new framework, as envisaged by the European Commission, the nation states are given more responsibility in the formulation and the implementation of the EU fund distribution process, which will be done according to the “national plans”, as laid down in the cohesion report (of 2004). The Commission has established guidelines for growth and employment for the period 2005-2008, which will serve as the basis for the national reform programmes or action plans that the member states will have to present in the autumn of 2005. Here, we could see that there is a “technical” attempt to homogenise the rules and criteria for re-distribution of funds, but how this is going to be achieved is a separate matter. At this point, it is worth mentioning that the EU project still counts on the viability and capacity of the nation state to promote the social, economic and political sustainability of the Union.

Refocusing on Growth and Employment: A re-scaling of the cohesion policy through the National Scale

After relaunchment of the Lisbon strategy by refocusing on growth and employment in Europe, in consultation with the Commission’s proposals, the Heads of State and Government have delivered a clear message concerning the Union’s priorities over the next few years. The ultimate objective of the Union in this sense is *to focus on growth and employment and take the necessary precautions to promote knowledge, attract more*

people into the labour market and create more jobs at both national and European levels.

The multi-scalar dimension of this strategy gains importance. In order to accomplish the above mentioned objectives and guidelines, the EU framework (as laid by the Lisbon Strategy) needs to mobilise all the resources at national and Community levels. These new improvements on the existing mechanism in order to make this refocusing process effective. These improvements simplify the process considerably and gives more priority to the implementation at the national level. Ironically, even though it might sound a bit rough conclusion at this point, we observe a sort of Keynesian revival at the national scale, this time re-worked and fostered by the European Union. It should be kept in mind that the preceding re-distribution policies of directly addressing the regions themselves, which bore a Keynesian tone as a re-distributive intervention of the EU, directly across the regions, is scaled down to its older cradle, the nation state, but under the supervision of the EU, this time. Now, let's see what the commission suggests in this regard.

Some observations on the Commission's Guidelines

a) The Guidelines promote the Community and the Member States with a stable and coherent framework which makes it possible to implement

priority measures approved by the European Council. They will serve as a basis for drawing up the “national reform programmes” which the Member States are asked to present in the autumn of 2005.

b) These national programmes should be the result of a debate at national level with the competent parliamentary bodies and the social partners, in accordance with the traditions of each of the Member States. This is essential if these programmes are to be embraced by all those concerned.

c) The national programmes may be amended by the Member States to take account of domestic policy requirements.

d) The efforts to make the Integrated Guidelines consistent should also apply to the national programmes. These should therefore bring together within a single summary document all the existing national reports which are relevant to the Lisbon strategy. This includes, in particular, the national reports on employment, the so-called “Cardiff” reports on the process of economic reform, and the sectoral implementation reports (duly simplified), which are covered by the open method of coordination. The national strategic plans portraying / coordinating / orienting / channeling expenditures with regard to the Structural and Cohesion Funds will also be included. Using this simplified mechanism of reports, the Member States will thus be able to focus more fully on implementation.

e) These national reform programmes should be followed up by separate implementation reports in the following years (autumn 2006 and 2007), incorporating the sectoral reports mentioned above, before being replaced by new programmes, which will reflect the new integrated guidelines issued in the spring of 2008.

Then, what are the implications of this proposals and the policy re-orientation they stand for mean for our analysis, especially in terms of the citizenship regime of the European Union, and the tensions between the formal and substantive aspects of citizenship? This is the issue we take up in the next section.

III – The question of citizenship and the cohesion policy of the EU

We have already emphasised that the EU cohesion policy tends to define “social” cohesion (across the constituting territorial units as well as within them) in economic terms. Here, we would like to emphasise another aspect of the cohesion policy, which we have already introduced: the multi-scalar aspect of the EU cohesion.

At this point, one needs to consider the implications of the re-scaling of the member national states, and whether this process has opened new spaces of political representation for various social actors. In

other words, we need to focus on the “...political-economic practices through which state power is articulated and contested at a range of geographical scales and in a range of institutional sites” (Brenner quoted Newman and Paasi, 1998; also see Perkmann and Sum, 2002), in this new scalar geometry imposed by the European Integration.

From a rather optimistic point of view, Barnier claims, “European cohesion policy has been the catalyst for new forms of partnership involving the regional and local authorities, national governments and the Union, working both within and across national borders, planning and implementing common development strategies.” (2004, XII). Even though this statement could bear a certain degree of truth as long as we are concerned with rather “inter-governmental” relations or the emerging forms of governance (cf. Jordan, 2001), this optimism, we contend, could really be sustained if it could be shown that the partnerships organised by / around local / regional governments lead to more democratic and participatory regimes of policy making. As far as we are concerned with how the substantive aspect of citizenship is affected by / articulated with the EU integration process, equating “local” with “democracy” could be no more than a rhetorical device which sets the “local trap” (Purcell, 2005) preventing the problematisation of the power struggles taking place at the local scale.

As we noted earlier, the policy shift which came with the Lisbon strategy could partially be seen as a response of the commission to the fact that the cohesion policies, mainly centred around regions, did not cure the problem of uneven development as much as expected. The extensive case studies which Geddes (2000) conducted across Europe indicated that attempts at partnership building at the local scale, with the purpose of building social cohesion in Europe (an attempt actively supported by the EU), has not been a success story after all.

To our opinion, an important reason behind this problem has to do with the distribution of structural funds with “technical concerns”, according to a principle of neutrality reminiscent of a “formal citizenship” perspective, aiming to offer equal opportunity to all citizens to lessen the GDP per capita gaps between regions / localities, without paying much attention to the power imbalances between the prospective members of the coalitions (assuming that all sectors of the local society has a chance to participate...)¹. In the case of Vienna, for example, Redak (2002) shows, fund transfers to local coalitions could actually serve to worsen the re-distribution process, making the poor worse off, while making those who lead the coalition better off at the end. What is more, the neo-

¹ Despite the best intentions of the EU policy-makers: As the EU Council president Claude Juncker emphasized, “economic growth is not an end in itself.” He also maintained that the new Lisbon strategy should preserve the “basic balance” between competitiveness, social and environmental policies.” (Euractiv, 2004)

liberal strategies aiming to dissolve the welfare schemes developed at the national scale could be initiated at the local level, as was the case with the Swedish case (Mahon, 2005)

Following this logic, at first sight, it makes sense to prioritise the national programs to strengthen and implement the EU's cohesion policy. For, as Smith argues, "at the very list, different kinds of society produce different kinds of geographical scale for containing and enabling particular forms of social interaction". (2003: 228). Thus, better strategies could be developed to tackle with the question of social cohesion provision. On the other hand, this also presumes that there exists an equally / uniformly applicable opportunity scheme within the boundaries of the nation states, which could solve the problems of redistribution easier. Evidence, however, "shows that it is those regions which are best integrated into national circuits of influence who have most influence in Brussels" (Keating, 2003: 270; also see Keating and Hooghe, 1996), which indicates that the political influence of the territorial units, including the national states and the regions, are becoming more and more uneven, and thus the benefits that they could deliver to their own citizens (cf. Smith, 2003: 233).

Furthermore, the EU policy of cohesion needs to take into account the fact that the re-territorialisation of the EU, the abolition of official

borders and the free flow of capital and labour are also transforming the socio-economic structure of urban areas and the regions of Europe, portrayed and documented meticulously by Brenner (2004). It could be argued that this transformation is challenging the social texture of the solidarity patterns in those places, which, in turn, prepares a fertile ground for the development of alternative approaches to the construction of the European Union. Especially in that context, the following observation made by James Wessley Scott becomes valuable for our investigation:

“While there can be no doubt that state-society policy paradigms of neo-liberal hue have made inroads in both European and national policy debates, they co-exist with alternative paradigms that emphasise solidarity and subsidiarity ...

I interpret spatial politics in the European Union as expressing different, perhaps not always competing, representations of EU political community based on market, civic and cultural models. Each of the models has associated with it a differing spatial logic: the economic space of unfettered interaction within a borderless EU; the space of a democratic *demos* united by political ideals and issues; and cultural attachments to regions, cities and other specific places. Thus we find a co-existence of different notions of space and place that express the complexity of societal relationships within the EU” (2002: 164).

The co-existence of these alternative representations of the European political community, it should be noted, do include, and are based upon, different conceptions about the nature of / the role that should be played by different levels of government. Here, we argue, it is not simply a matter of ideational tensions, but a matter of political

struggles which are formulated at different scales of experimentation, where the political struggles between different citizen groups on different policy issues could initiate changes across the Europe. Just as the case with the “fast policy transfers” (Peck, 2002), alternative policy innovations created by the citizen engagement especially at the local scale could also be diffused quickly across the European Union, both in territorial terms, as well as across the scales (cf. Mahon, 2003) especially given the fact that the divergent policy regimes created during the reign of the nation states, could now find a larger ground to be diffused. Yet, such a fast alternative policy transfer could only be stimulated if the intensity of inter-governmental interactions could also be matched at the level of alternative citizenship-community projects challenging the negative impacts of the creation of a common market. In other words, there is a need for the citizen groups challenging the tensions created by the gap between the formal and substantive aspects of citizenship, to re-scale their level of organisation, to create a EU-wide communication, and a EU wide roof structure.

Such a strategy, of course, bears the responsibility of emphasising the fact that “political” aspects of the European integration process are more strategic, and more important than its technical aspect”, as the roots of the unevenness have more to do with the political aspect of integration where the political units do negotiate the distribution and re-

distribution of the sources, having tangible consequences for the welfare of their citizens, while all this negotiation process is labeled as technical in nature, thus leaving the question of European Integration out of the scope of political intervention by such citizen groups. The success in influencing the decisions of the EU commission, and in promoting the significance of the arenas such as the EU parliament, could also make it possible for such groups to become more credible at the national level, while the “national programs” suggested by the EU commission, are formulated.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to say that current mobilisations, motivated by similar concerns, (as exemplified by the Social Platform headed by Anne-Sophie Parent) follow such a politically determined path. After the recent revisions in the Lisbon Strategy, in the first week of February 2005, Parent declared that

The new Social Agenda should be designed to regain citizens' confidence in the ability of the EU to manage change. If the Commission is fully committed to the modernisation and development of the European social model as well as the promotion of social cohesion, as stated in the Social Agenda communication, it should propose strong social policies to complement and support the growth and employment objectives...But the new Commission has abandoned the social pillar of Lisbon, and the result is the weak Social Agenda being published today. ...

We agree with the Commission that we are facing huge social and economic challenges across Europe. But we feel that the Commission should have the confidence to promote social policies as an essential productive factor in creating a Europe, which combines economic growth, jobs, and social cohesion. Growth and employment will not deliver greater social cohesion unless there is real political commitment behind it. You only need to look at the American model to see that there is no automatic link between a strong economy and a cohesive and inclusive society. We still believe in the inclusive vision of our European social model - are we meant to believe the Commission still does too? (Social Platform, 2005)

As the quote clearly indicates, “the Lisbon Strategy’s ignorance of the social pillar” is criticised, and the need for an effective engagement with social policies are justified on the grounds of the citizens’ confidence in the ability of the EU to manage change, and the need to complement and support economic policies, rather than questioning the nature of the economic policy objectives in the first place. Despite the best intentions, such an approach would leave the initiative to the political determination of the *policy makers*, whose actions re-produce some of the problems such mobilisations are struggling against.

One final point to make, in this context is that, the EU integration process tend to sharpen / fuel the regionalist and / or nationalist

identities (Keating, 2003). Hence, any strategy of co-ordination across the “alternative citizen mobilisations” should also develop counter strategies about the re-definition of their community identities. In other words, such a “scale jumping” (Smith, 1992; Rousseau, 1999) strategy requires a re-definition of the space of “dependence” as well as the “space of engagement” (Cox, 1998), for such groups. Sensitiveness to the dangers of regional/local/national chauvenisms does not mean a position to be taken for a European identity. What we mean is that, this is not a matter of being for or against the ideal of a Europe, which in either way would fetishise this imagined community. Such an imagined community could provide a source of solidarity (ie being European) across such groups², but always bear the danger of turning into a rather violent form of identity definition, that had found its expression earlier in the “nation” on whose behalf sacrifices have been demanded from working classes.

IV - Summary

In this paper, we concentrated on the question of citizenship in the context of the European Union. The main thrust of our discussion was that the policy schemes, especially in the case of social cohesion, relied on a specific understanding of citizenship. We argued that this

² Of course, it should be noted that identity of ‘Europe’ (as an idea or community) remains contested. (Ben Rosamond, 158-159)

assumption ignores, and suppresses the tension between what is formally offered to the citizens of the member (territorially identified) political units, and what the excluded groups actually get; and that policies built upon this assumption do not solve the policy problems as set before the EU, if not making them worse.

We also observed that this recognition of the failure of previous policies led the EU to re-define the scale of action, but not touching upon the source of problem. Especially of interest to us is the fact that the distribution and re-distribution of sources (of various sort) are arranged by these political units, even though the EU policies have been formulated on technical grounds. We emphasised that the EU's very construction is a political process which negotiated by the constitutive political units, and thus that the "technical" policy decisions of the EU do have political consequences, tangibly felt in the lived experience of the citizens.

Following this analysis, we proposed that the alternative citizen mobilisations challenging the gap between the formal and substantive aspects of citizenship should re-scale their field of action, and work to politicise the European union, if they are to be successful in addressing the problems, which the EU formulates as the question of Social Cohesion. We finally suggested that such an attempt requires a re-

understanding of the spaces of dependence and engagement for such groups.

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