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European Union's 'Participatory Turn'. An appropriate approach for youth?

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Abstract: The White Paper on Governance (2001) outlined five good governance principles to lead EU rules, processes and behaviour to a path of enhanced legitimacy. These principles are openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. The study is aimed at analysing its normative synergies and tensions in terms of 'input', 'output' and 'throughput' legitimacy. In doing so, it examines the normative foundations of EU's 'participatory turn' and tests them against a sectoral proposal of enhanced dialogue between citizens and EU policymakers: the White Paper on Youth (2001). The analysis relies upon an interpretative content analysis of both policy documents. As a matter of results, important discrepancies appear as regards both the saliency and the framing of participation: while the Governance Paper gives scarce attention to this good governance principle and focuses on EU's effectiveness, the Youth Paper develops a more input-oriented strategy. Nonetheless, this comes at the cost of softening the 'political' lines of the term by blurring the link between 'participation' and the EU policy-making process.

Keywords: European Union, Governance, Youth, Participation, Input Legitimacy

Introduction

In recent years, liberal political systems have run into turbulence in terms of citizen satisfaction with democracy. Among other implications, this situation translates into growing mistrust in political leaders and institutions, weakening party loyalties, increasing disengagement, and declining electoral turnout (Hetherington, 2005; Torcal & Montero, 2006; Wattenberg, 2002). Public disillusion with

democracy is a common pattern of liberal political regimes, but cynical evaluations rise even more severely as regards the distant and complex structure of supra-national entities such as the European Union. The many-sided legitimacy 'puzzle' affecting the EU (see Höreth, 1999) translates into stronger perceptions of 'democratic deficits' and jeopardises public acceptance of the decisions taken. According to a study of the Pew Research Centre developed on eve of European Parliament Elections in 2014, only 52% of the respondents saw the EU favourably and more than 65% endorsed the expressions 'my voice does not count in the EU'; 'the EU does not understand the needs of its citizens' (2014: 4).

As shown by data as such, the 'democratic deficit' of the European Union is, at present, not only affecting the public endorsement of its policies but also the legitimacy of its institutions. So as to enhance the democratic nature of the EU, in recent years institutional reforms have focused on opening-up the policy-making procedures and strengthening citizen participation, thus catalysing a shift towards a 'better' form of governance. This so-called 'participatory turn' (Saurugger, 2008) was initially developed through European Commission's White Paper on Governance, a policy document approved in 2001 under the auspices of Romano Prodi's administration. *The initial objective of this study is to scrutinize how the good governance principles aimed at underpinning EU governance are conceptualized.*

Political alienation, albeit affecting all the population, is especially intense among youth (Bouza, 2014; Horvath & Paolini, 2013). The European Commission was aware of the disconnection between its institutions and the European young citizens when decided to initiate, simultaneously with the adoption of the White Paper on Governance, a profound reform of the European cooperation framework in the youth policy field. The White Paper "A new impetus for European Youth" was presented in 2001 as a great opportunity to test the 'new' participatory orientation of the EU. *Although the initial pages of the text incorporated an explicit commitment to Governance Paper's normative principles, the second goal of this research is to examine the extent to which this was actually the case.* Results show that important discrepancies appear as regards the saliency and framing of par-

ticipation in both documents, as well as in relation to other governance principles such as openness or coherence.

The paper is structured as follows: the first two sections introduce the theoretical claims and the context of the research. Section III develops upon the methodology and the data gathering process. The fourth and fifth sections present the results of the study, and in the closing section the main conclusions of the study are offered.

From 'Government' to 'Governance'. The Crisis of EU Legitimacy

The discussion upon European Union's democratic deficit has been vibrant and intense in both the academic and the political fields especially since the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty (Scharpf, 1997: 19). More than twenty years after transforming the economic community of European States into a political Union, there is not yet a common understanding on which are the ingredients of the democratic malaise affecting the EU. Nevertheless, the different viewpoints on the subject agree to put the emphasis on the fact that a complex and multi-tier entity such as the European Union cannot escape from imposing substantial challenges to democratic representation (see Bartolini, 2008: 19).

As a consequence of the ins and outs of the integration process, European Union's political power and legitimacy don't emanate from a single political unit but they are being progressively reallocated among the multiple levels participating in policy-making (cf. Bartolini, 2005). From this viewpoint, there is not a well-delimited space for a European government to act, but a polycentric decision-making system in a rather transnational and multidimensional polity (see Knodt et al., 2011: 353-355). Such complexity made scholarly reflections upon the dynamics of 'government' shift towards a broader understanding of the EU in the form of 'governance'.

With the approval of the Treaty of Maastricht and the Single European Act, the transition from 'government' to 'governance' took a European scale. The culmination of the integration process and the Europeanization of policy sectors that belonged to the core of the state sovereignty transformed the 'permissive consensus' of the population towards the Union into a general withdrawing of public support (Höreth, 1999: 252-53). Whereas in early years citizens largely ignored the EU and its outcomes, with the post-Maastricht status quo they not only adopted a much more politicized view upon the EU but Euro-sceptic attitudes spread all around the continent (Shmidt, 2012: 13). Since then, EU's efforts to increase the legitimacy of its institutions have been focused on enhancing public support by 'democratizing' policy-making (cf. Kohler-Koch & Quittkat, 2013).

The reasoning behind this stance is that enhancing the link between those who govern and those who are governed would contribute to raise general acceptance of EU policies, thus guaranteeing regime stability. This is a classical premise within political science. As described by Lipset in his seminal article on the "social requisites of democracy" (1959), all political systems need to combine both effectiveness of policy-making with legitimacy of the decisions taken. According to Lipset (1959: 71) the former entangles in the ability of governments to resolve political problems, whereas the latter involves "the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society" (1959: 86).

By means of a similar normative dichotomy, Scharpf (1997) established an influential analytical framework to assess the legitimacy of the European Union that have inspired abundant scholarly research. To Scharpf, the potential (in)stability of the Union relies upon a tension between two types of legitimizing mechanisms. On the one hand, 'input legitimacy' or "EU's responsiveness to citizen concerns as a result of participation *by* the people". On the other hand, 'output legitimacy' or "the effectiveness of the EU's policy outcomes *for* the people" (Schmidt, 2013: 2).

EU's normative adjustments aimed at strengthening 'input' legitimacy were subject to in depth discussions during the Convention on the Future of the European Union and found a place, after the constitutional process, into the Lisbon Treaty (2007). Scholars such as Lindgren & Persson (2011), Kohler-Koch & Finke (2007) or Quittkat & Kotzian (2011) support that participatory democracy has found fertile soil in scholarly and political discussions about the transformation of the Union. However, they also state that other than being explicitly recognized in the Treaty there is not a consensus on the real impact of this 'participatory turn'-to use Saurugger's (2008) words- in EU's policies and institutions.

Before its recognition in the Lisbon Treaty, the normative bases of the Union's 'participatory turn' were established some months after the Convention in 2001 in the policy document "European Governance. A White Paper" (hereafter, the Governance Paper). This soft-law endeavour was a key contribution of the European Commission around which the administrative reform of the EU was structured (Smismans 2003: 489). The paper was a policy initiative developed by the 'Forward Studies Unit', an ad hoc epistemic community that worked under Romano Prodi's presidency with the objective of delivering a new governance strategy to guarantee EU's transition towards a genuinely democratic system.

The adoption of participation as a fundamental pillar of EU governance informs about Commission's strategy as regards 'input' legitimacy, so does effectiveness in relation to 'output' legitimacy. Nevertheless, the implications of 'input' and 'output' legitimacy for EU policy-making cannot be scrutinized without taking into consideration the other good governance principles presented in the paper (i.e. openness, accountability and coherence). Although their inference with Sharp's dichotomy is less straightforward than participation and effectiveness, they do relate with both aspects of EU legitimacy. In an effort to update Sharp's (1997) framework and include these other concepts in the governance equation, Schmidt (2012) integrated them into a third dimension of legitimacy, what she calls 'throughput legitimacy'. To put it in the author's words, "throughput legitimacy covers what goes on in between the input and the output [...] It refers to different mechanisms of legitimation such as efficacy, accountability, transpar-

ency, openness and inclusiveness” (2012: 14). So as to better scrutinize EU’s ‘input’ and ‘output’ legitimacy, this paper also digs into EU’s ‘throughput’ legitimacy by analysing the three good governance values that inform Commission’s reform.

The ‘participatory turn’ of European Cooperation in the Youth Policy Field

The governance reform proposed by the European Commission in the Governance Paper underlined its ambition to strengthen the legitimacy of the Union by connecting European citizens with *their* institutions. One of the first attempts to implement the so-called ‘participatory turn’ of the EU after approving the Governance Paper was the development of a new framework for European cooperation in the field of youth. Targeting the alienation of youth towards the integration project, the Commission developed a policy proposal of enhanced dialogue between youth and policy-makers in line with the ‘participatory turn’ of the whole EU governance system. The purpose of the new EU youth strategy was to intensify active citizenship, foster social integration and ensure citizen engagement with EU institutions following the momentum generated by the Governance Paper. The first steps towards this new strategy were initiated via a public consultation launched in 2000. This initiative was aimed at defining new modes of governance as regards the youth policy field. At the end of the process in 2001, a White Paper on Youth was presented under the title: “A new impetus for European Youth” (hereafter, the Youth Paper).

One of the central purposes of the youth reform was to develop non-legislative instruments to complement the Community method from a bottom-up approach (European Union, 2001b: 4). By developing a White Paper on Youth, an opportunity was offered to the EU for rehearsing this experimental governance mode within an area that was not fully integrated in the EU system yet and was very sensitive to the ‘legitimizing’ interests of the Union. Similarly to employment, immigration or social policy, the Commission proposed an “open method of coordination” as a different path from the Community method (European Commission, 2001a: 22). Aimed at turning the EU into “the most competitive and dynam-

ic knowledge-based economy in the world” (European Council, 2000), this new mechanism was actually firstly introduced by the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997. Expectations were high from both policy-makers and commentators on the suitability of this “working method” (Boussaguet et al., 2011: 190) to pursue common European concerns without further compromising the political authority of national institutions (Hemerijck & Berghman, 2004).

The impact of the OMC upon EU governance has been often characterised as a potential contribution in terms of enhancing deliberation and democratic practice, hence potentially responding to the requirements of EU ‘participatory turn’. From this view, Cohen & Sabel (2003: 347) emphasise the fact that with the OMC not only are expert contributions and assessment taken into account but also civil society in a much broader sense is expected to be consulted throughout the process, thus strengthening EU responsiveness through political participation. Despite the high expectations on this ‘working method’, the literature that positively identifies the democratizing potential of the OMC does also acknowledge that its ‘de facto’ implications remain an open question (Zeitlin & Trubek, 2003).

The adoption of the Youth Paper in 2001 was the cornerstone and founding act of a new framework for European cooperation in the youth policy field based on the OMC. The paper was adopted only few months later than the Governance Paper and made explicit its compromise with the five good governance principles established by the Governance Paper (2001b: 4). This has been evaluated and interpreted by scholarly literature in manifold occasions since its adoption in 2001 (see, for instance, Armstrong, 2002; Kohler-Koch, 2010; or Smismans, 2003). Even so, this has never been done through a systematic interpretative content analysis of its premises, principles and ideas. And foremost, it has never been opposed to and compared with Youth Paper’s parameters. By transforming both documents into quantifiable data, this research contributes to the analysis of EU’s ‘participatory turn’ with a focus on its implications on European youth.

Methods and Data

Commission's White Paper on Governance and White Paper on Youth have been analysed through a mixed method approach. The first part of the analysis conceptualizes qualitatively the five good governance principles by identifying their normative attributes in both texts. The paper incorporates a quantitative analysis aimed at complementing the information on their framing and saliency. The data has been obtained through interpretative content analysis. In that regard, sentences (when appropriate, quasi-sentences) have been taken as measurement units. Although the Governance Paper more than doubles the Youth Paper in terms of length and number of analytical units -916 units in the first case and 437 in the second-, the statistical distribution of the sentences appears to be very much alike in both cases, a fact that maximizes their comparability and the significance of the results (see Figure 1).

(Insert Figure 1 about here)

Each unit has been coded according to a codebook developed for the occasion. The codebook builds upon the main characteristics of the good governance principles (see Table 1). These are: Openness, Participation, Accountability, Effectiveness and Coherence. So as to assign a value to each unit, it has been followed a deductive, interpretative logic (concept-driven). That is, a code has been given to a sentence/quasi-sentence based on the meaning of the sentence but not the appearance of a specific keyword. Those sentences that were not or could not be related with any of the five governance principles were coded as non-applicable (NA), and consequently they have not been taken into consideration in the final results. In the Governance Paper, the 28% of the text could not be attributed a governance value and has not been coded. In the Youth Paper, this has been true for the 32% of the sentences. So as to guarantee a suitable level of inter-coder reliability, several samples of the texts have been re-coded.

(Insert Table 1 about here)

Other than informing about the visibility of the governance principles, the research incorporates an additional category of framing. In view of that, the units have been coded according to an analytical dichotomy of “dependency”: that is, identifying when a principle is expressed as a ‘means to an end’ or as an ‘end in itself’. The interaction between the five principles has been established, thus offering another dimension of their normative significance. This second-level coding has also been interpretative. Additional variables have been developed so as to better characterize the five different foundations of European governance. These refer to the actors the document mentions in each unit. For analytical purposes, they have been divided into three categories: EU political actors, national political actors and non-political actors (see Table 2). In this case, they had to be explicitly mentioned, thus the coding has not been interpretative but literal.

(Insert Table 2 about here)

Commission’s definition of good governance: setting a normative standard

‘Input’ Legitimacy: Participation

Public participation is one of the five conceptual pillars of the reform proposed by the Commission in the Governance Paper. The text makes it explicit when saying: “The White Paper proposes opening up the policy-making process to get more people and organisations involved in shaping and delivering EU policy” (2001a: 3). This opening sentence captures Commission’s basic understanding of participation and establishes what differentiates it from the other good governance principles. Briefly, its normative power relies upon one word: ‘involvement’. Thus, offering more and better mechanisms for political involvement is acknowledged by the Commission as a crucial aspect so as to “connect Europe with its citizens” (2001a:3). Participation is further developed in the document with a short paragraph that reads as follows:

“The quality, relevance and effectiveness of EU policies depend on ensuring *wide participation throughout the policy chain* – from conception to implementation. Improved participation is likely create more confidence in the end result and in the Institutions which deliver policies. Participation crucially depends on central governments following an *inclusive* approach when developing and implementing EU policies” (European Commission, 2001a:10 emphasis added).

The definition itself provides other important elements with normative significance. The text directly connects participation with the policy-making process. That implies the outputs of the process are to be somehow determined by the outcomes of participatory governance. The Commission, when establishing a direct link between the political processes and participation it disentangles ‘input’ legitimacy from ‘throughput’ legitimacy, or policy-making dynamics from opinion-formation (see the section on openness for further explanation).

The Governance Paper, by connecting Union’s ‘input’ legitimacy with direct participation in the policy-making, it makes the concept equivalent to *political* participation. However, in the Youth Paper a different logic prevails. When incorporated in the youth field, so when talking about participation within the OMC, the political significance of the term is less obvious. The Paper on Youth, similarly than the Paper on Governance, provides a short definition of the concept at the first pages of the document. In that case, the definition reads as follow: “Ensuring young people are consulted and more *involved in the decisions* which concern them and, in general, *the life of their communities.*” (2001b:8 emphasis added).

When defining participation as youth involvement in “the life of their communities”, the Youth Paper bypasses the criteria of the Governance Paper and broadens the principle so as to include those actions aimed at fostering ‘active citizenship’ in different spheres than the political, thus those that are not directly connected with EU policy-making. The different conceptualization of participation in the Youth Paper implies that the incorporation of EU’s ‘participatory turn’ into

the institutional dynamics could be less structured in the youth policy field than in other political areas of the European Union.

Another fundamental aspect of EU's 'participatory turn' is to determine the subjects of participation. The initial paragraph in the Governance Paper offers two expressions from where to start developing the concept. These are "wide" and "inclusive". When framing participation with those two terms, the Commission emphasises its willingness to counter criticism on elitist policy-making, a complaint it had received in the years before initiating the governance reform (see Kohler-Koch & Quittkat, 2013). The Commission made that point clear by saying the new EU governance should "reduce the risk of the policy-makers just listening to one side of the argument or of particular groups getting privileged access on the basis of sectoral interests or nationality, which is a clear weakness with the current method" (2001a: 17).

To understand the implications of 'inclusiveness' in terms of participatory governance, the document offers more details on what kind of actors are expected to participate in EU policy-making. The Commission understands that organized expressions of the European civil society are the main tool for guaranteeing good governance from a participatory dimension (2001a: 14). From Commission's perspective, through civil society the EU has a chance to "get citizens more actively involved in achieving the Union's objectives and to offer them a structured channel for feedback, criticism and protest" (2001a: 15). Hence, in the Governance Paper political participation is mainly conceived as the *political* mobilization of the *associative* European society.

On the contrary, the Commission understands participation in the youth sector via different subjects. The Youth Paper identifies foremost the whole European youth as the fundamental subjects of 'participatory governance' and gives much less entrance to collective actors or to expert contributions (see Figure 2). In the Youth Paper, the organized expressions of civil society have a much less relevant role, and the need to incorporate other voices is underlined in several occasions:

“Participation must be encouraged, without exception, which means making it easier for those who have the greatest difficulties and providing greater access to existing structures for young people who are not members of organisations” (European Commission, 2001b: 12).

(Insert Figure 2 about here)

Hence, for the implementation of the OMC in the youth policy field, participation is conceptualized significantly different from the standard set in the Governance Paper. When referring to EU’s agency towards youth, the Commission puts the focus of its ‘participatory turn’ into generating ‘active citizenship’ for the sake of youth local communities and not so much into the value of their contributions to EU policy. By being less connected with the policy-making, CSOs and expert participation are not the main interlocutors of the EU but the aim of the Youth Paper is to develop a strategy for the European youth beyond the political structures.

‘Throughput’ Legitimacy: Openness, Accountability and Coherence

As expressed in the Governance Paper, the Commission not only relies upon the sources of ‘input’ and ‘output’ legitimacy to underpin EU good governance but also upon additional principles than participation and effectiveness. These are openness, accountability and coherence. By linking the changes proposed in the document to the implementation of these three values, the Commission aims at reinforcing EU democratic governance (2001a: 10). Starting with openness, at the beginning of the Governance Paper its definition reads as follows:

“The Institutions should work in a more open manner. Together with the Member States, they should actively *communicate* about what the EU does and the decisions it takes. They should use *language* that is accessible and understandable for the general public. This is of particular importance in order to improve the confidence in complex institutions” (European Commission, 2001a:10 emphasis added).

This is the first and basic explanation that the text provides on openness. The Commission mostly relies upon 'active communication' to define the term. From this perspective, European governance would be 'open' when properly communicated to the citizens. To achieve this purpose, the Paper acknowledges that a two-directional communication dynamic should happen between citizens and institutions. On the one hand, access to "reliable information on European issues" and to "Community documents" should be guaranteed (2001a: 11). On the other hand, the Commission considers EU institutions should pro-actively deliver information to citizens on EU matters, as highlighted in the paragraph above. Commission's two-sided understanding of openness can be linked to 'transparency' as long as this concept is understood not only as a passive principle of 'information access' but also as an active responsibility on 'information provision'. Scholars such as Braman (2006: 147) have already described 'transparency' in those terms.

By adopting this twofold approach, the Commission stimulates opinion formation on EU matters and fortifies citizens' European identity (2001a: 11). The Governance Paper underlines that efforts need to be made in improving communications "at national and local level" through the use of "networks, grassroots organisations and national, regional and local authorities" (European Commission, 2001a: 11). The communicational side of multilevel governance is therefore at the core of Commission's understanding of openness, thus stressing the need to reach citizens through their closest social and political institutions.

So as to achieve these goals, the White Paper emphasises the "important role" that new technologies have in the development of the 'openness' side of EU governance (2001a: 11-12). Overall, the Governance Paper refers to the potential of ICTs in five occasions, from which three of them are linked to its impact on EU's openness capacity (the other two refer to the Interactive Policy Making initiative, a participatory platform to launch online consultations at the EU level). In the Youth Paper, the potential of ICTs towards EU governance is only connected with the 'openness' side of EU governance. The three references to ICTs that appear in the document are linked to that good governance principle. The reason is that,

similarly than the normative standard defined by the Governance Paper, the Youth Paper emphasises the communicative aspect of openness when characterizing the term. The definition of the principle in the Youth Paper reads as follows: “providing information and active communication for young people, in their language, so that they understand the workings of Europe and of the policies which concern them” (2001b: 8). Being this the strategy, the relevance of ICTs is recurrent, since communication with young people was already in 2001 a preferential job for the Internet-based technologies.

When conceptualizing ‘throughput’ legitimacy, the Governance Paper not only stresses the ‘communicative’ effort of their institutions to strengthen openness but also to improve the accountability chain between European citizens and the EU. In the descriptive paragraph provided by the document, accountability is defined with the following words:

“Roles in the legislative and executive processes need to be clearer. Each of the EU Institutions must explain and take *responsibility* for what it does in Europe. But there is also a need for greater *clarity* and responsibility from Member States and all those involved in developing and implementing EU policy at whatever level” (European Commission, 2001a: 10 emphasis added).

The definition provides information on several normative aspects. As regards the substantive understanding of accountability, there is one term with which the Commission clearly differentiates the concept from the other good governance principles: that is ‘responsibility’. From this view, if political mandates are well established and every intervening actor assumes its responsibilities in relation to that, answers could then be provided to those constituencies from which the political power emanates. By doing that, the Commission is aiming at avoiding traditional practices of scapegoating and shame-switching between EU institutions and Member States, which in Commission’s view would reinforce the trusteeship relation between the ‘principles’ and the ‘agents’ (2001a: 7).

However improving this link though enhanced accountability is not only a matter of strengthened trust from citizens to institutions but also of higher 'responsiveness' of EU political action. That is, when political institutions shape policies not *on* but *in* behalf of the citizens they 'represent', thus transferring their preferences into political action (see Pitkin, 1967: 126-27). In consequence, both dynamics of 'trust' and of 'responsiveness' are the substantive components of enhanced 'responsibility', which in its turn is the fundamental expression of the Governance Paper's accountability.

When applied to the youth policy field, no significant discrepancies appear in the way the Youth Paper defines and interprets the concept. Its definition emphasise coherently the responsiveness of the European Union towards citizens' priorities, and like it has been mentioned in the participation section, it identifies the inter-institutional cooperation between European, national and sub-national institutions as an indicator in that regard. The definition reads: "Developing a new and structured form of cooperation between the Member States and the European institutions, in order to find ways, at the appropriate level of accountability, of meeting the aspirations of young people (European Commission 2001b: 8)"

Finally, EU's 'throughput' legitimacy is expressed through the 'coherence' of its governance strategy. According to Oxford's British and World English Dictionary (2015), coherence is "the quality of forming a unified whole". In its turn, Oxford's Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2015) defines the concept as "the situation in which all the parts of something fit together well". If there is something all academic visions on the Euro-polity have in common, that is the recognition of its complexity. In spite of that, the EU is committed to ensure that coherence lay in the foundations of its political agency:

"Policies and action must be coherent and easily understood. The need for coherence in the Union is increasing: the range of tasks has grown; enlargement will increase diversity; challenges such as climate and demographic change cross the boundaries of the sectorial policies on which the Union has been built; regional and local authorities are increasingly in-

involved in EU policies. Coherence requires *political leadership* and a strong responsibility on the part of the Institutions to ensure a *consistent approach* within a complex system” (European Commission 2001a: 10 emphasis added).

The normative value of this definition is noticeably scarce. Although extensive, it foremost contextualizes EU governance and reviews some core elements of the other good governance principles. The prescriptive significance of the paragraph mainly relies upon its final sentence, which stresses the responsibility to guarantee a consistent approach across EU institutions. What this clause indicates is that no contradictions should emerge in the deployment of this White Paper. Content-wise, coherence cannot be isolated from the other governance principles. Its *raison d'être* is to ensure they are consistently validated across the EU. Differently than openness, participation, accountability or effectiveness, coherence has no substantive muscle other than guaranteeing the other four principles are consistently implemented.

The initial paragraph also informs about whose responsibility is it to assure coherence in such a complex political system such as the EU. The text argues a strong “leadership” is needed so as to safeguard a consistent line of action across the Union. In that regard, the “executive” and “coordination” powers conferred to the European Commission by the Treaties (Article 17 TEU) are also endorsed by the document. Despite coherence concerns the EU as a whole, the Commission is expected to fulfil a steering role in EU governance. But Commission’s leading function is not similarly expressed in the Youth Paper. According to that document, coherence means “developing an overview of the various policies which concern young people and the different levels at which intervention is useful” (2001b: 8). The document certainly attributes this responsibility to the Commission, but due to the specific characteristics of this policy field, its authority over Member States is less significant and thus its leadership is reduced. For the youth policy sector, ‘throughput’ legitimacy mainly relies upon two principles (i.e. openness and accountability). The subsidiary role of the Commission in that field translates in the way coherence is established in the Governance Paper.

'Output' Legitimacy: Effectiveness

The new governance paradigm established by the White Paper had in the characterisation of effectiveness his greatest pillar. Although the Paper put the bases of a more democratic policy-making, its main goal was to ensure the EU would respond with efficacy to the political challenges of the integration project. According to the Governance Paper, Union's 'output' legitimacy lies, above all, in the clarity of the objectives and the appropriateness of the policy-making mechanisms. The initial description of effectiveness reads as follow:

“Policies must be *effective* and *timely*, delivering what is needed on the basis of *clear objectives*, an evaluation of future impact and, where available, of past experience. Effectiveness also depends on implementing EU policies in a *proportionate manner* and on taking decisions at the most *appropriate level*” (European Commission, 2001a: 10 emphasis added).

From Commission's perspective, effectiveness is linked to EU institutional capacity of achieving the policy goals, so of delivering the 'right' policies. From a normative point of view, 'right' policies mean they have to be timely (i.e. occurring at a favourable or useful time); targeting at clear objectives; proportionate; and taken at the appropriate level. These are indicators of efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness all together since they aim at resource optimization for the sake of a policy output. It is, thus, the quality of the output what validates the process rather than the nature of the process itself (2001a: 28).

In addition, the text underlines decisions are to be taken “at the most appropriate level”, thus advocating for the rationalization of multi-level governance and embracing the concepts of 'subsidiarity' and 'proportionality'. These two principles, which have traditionally underpinned the functioning of the EU (Article 5 TEU), are also incorporated in the document. Their description reveals a substantive link with 'output' legitimacy, thus with effectiveness of EU governance (2001a: 10-11). The White Paper allocates an entire section on “better application at national level” (2001a: 25), focusing on EU rules transposition and en-

forcement. The connotations of effectiveness are especially salient to that level of administration, thus identifying a primary governance flaw to be corrected.

Normatively, the Youth Paper does not fully embrace the definition of effectiveness provided by the Governance Paper. Instead, it offers a rather ambiguous description of the term that links the quality of policies to the contributions of 'young people'. From this view, the Union has to focus on "making the most of what young people have to offer so that they can respond to the challenges of society, contribute to the success of the various policies which concern them and build the Europe of the future" (European Commission 2001b: 8). Taking into consideration the broadly conceptualization of participation by the Youth Paper, to achieve effectiveness of EU policies in the renewed youth policy field implies the general mobilization of the European Youth across the Member States.

Different governance guidelines for the youth policy field

As seen thus far, Governance Paper structured EU action around five different principles aimed at maximizing three different channels of political legitimacy: participation is developed so as to contribute to the 'input' legitimacy of the system; effectiveness is expected to enhance the 'output' legitimacy of EU policies; and openness, accountability and coherence are those values which dialogue with one sphere and the other and ensure the 'throughput' legitimacy of the Union. Together, these principles are presented as crucial to the democratization of the European Union and to raise the public acceptance of its policies.

When assessed the relevance of this governance approach in a certain domain such as the youth European policy field, some contradictions or tension have appeared as regards the normative conceptualization of the five principles. Nevertheless, not only its definition but also its relative saliency diverges between documents (see Figure 3). European governance, according to the Governance Paper, is foremost oriented towards maximizing the effectiveness of its policies, a principle that receives almost the 28% of the attention compared to the 10% of

participation. Hence, when conceptualizing the governance principles that had to guide the action of the European Union in the new millennium, the European Commission put the 'output' legitimacy of the system at the core of its strategy. Nevertheless, when that same year 2001 the Commission defined a new framework for European cooperation in the field of youth, the strategy lessened its predominance and gave the principle the same relevance than participation, thus rebalancing 'input' and 'output' legitimacy by assigning both around 18% of the attention. By doing that, the Youth Paper was attributing to the voices of youth a greater visibility than the prescribed by the Governance Paper, thus reinvigorating, on the paper, EU's 'participatory turn'.

(Insert Figure 3 about here)

Other differences appear between both documents as regards the visibility of the 'throughput' legitimacy principles. While the accountability side of EU governance is significantly salient in the Governance Paper, with 17% of the attention, openness only captures the 6,8%. This trend changes in the Youth Paper, which raises the importance of openness by placing the visibility of both principles at the 11%. By altering the priorities of 'throughput' legitimacy in that direction, the Youth Paper considers 'active communication' of EU action at least as urgent as ensuring the 'responsiveness' of youth policies and clarifying the responsibilities of EU institutions. Finally, in relation to the third branch of 'throughput' legitimacy, coherence is similarly endorsed in both documents and captures the 10% of the attention. That makes the distribution of the 'throughput' principles completely balanced in the Youth Paper, thus correcting the hierarchical salience of the Governance Paper.

When defining each principle, the Commission not only reflects upon their normative implications but also indicates whose responsibility is it their implementation. In more than the 63% of the coded sentences of the Governance Paper at least one political institution is identified. Nonetheless, this concretion falls drastically in the Youth Paper, where only 32% of the sentences link their normative considerations with one European or national institution. This is another indica-

tor of diffusion or lack of precision, which together with the definitions of participation, effectiveness and coherence implies that the main flaw of the Youth Paper lied in its *de facto* capacity to structure EU's 'participatory turn'.

As revealed by the sentences in which the Governance Paper attributes institutional responsibilities, the European Commission is the political institutions with a biggest (or at least, the clearest) role in the development of EU governance. This is especially true as regards responsibilities towards EU effectiveness and coherence, where the role of the other institutions is very limited (see Figure 4). According to the Governance Paper, the roles of the Council and the Parliament are not as specific or important in most of the cases, but they mostly relate with the accountability side of EU governance, so dealing with the 'responsiveness' of EU policies. In those cases where political action is required in a different level of governance, the Member States are attributed a very similar pattern of responsibility than the Commission (mainly linked to the effectiveness of policies), and also following a very similar logic than the Council and the Parliament, local and regional actors are mainly linked to accountability matters (see Figure 5). Due to the lack of institutional definition of the Youth Paper, the distribution of responsibilities at both the EU and the national level cannot be quantitatively indicated *a priori*, but decided upon in *ad hoc* bases.

(Insert Figure 4 and Figure 5 about here)

The disentanglement of the good governance principles in the Governance Paper implies different parts of the text focus their attention into the main characteristics and political implications of each term. Nevertheless, in several occasions the Commission underlines their interdependency and connects the existence of one concept to the implementation of another, and vice versa. By way of example, the Governance Paper sets the interaction between participation and effectiveness as follows: "The quality, relevance and effectiveness of EU policies depend on // ensuring wide participation throughout the policy chain" (2001a: 7). While the Governance Paper indicates casual links between 'input', 'output' or 'throughput' principles in 199 occasions (the 30% of the coded sentences), the Youth Paper

does the same in 122 instances (the 41% of the coded sentences). In both cases, effectiveness is by far the main 'dependent' variable of the other four principles in the Governance Paper and in the Youth Paper (see Figure 6 and Figure 7).

There is, though, one significant alteration as regards openness. The governance paper mainly explains the purpose of the three 'throughput' legitimacy principles via its impact upon 'output' legitimacy. In the Youth Paper, accountability and coherence are as well determinants of effectiveness in a very high percentage but openness, so the active communication of the EU towards youth, is defined so as to determine 'input' legitimacy rather than 'output' legitimacy. In consequence, the causal relation between 'communication' and 'participation' is not a general pattern of EU governance but appears as a crucial aspect in the European cooperation framework in the field of youth.

(Insert Figure 6 and Figure 7 about here)

Conclusions

In 2001, European Commission's 'Forward Studies Unit' established the normative foundations of a governance reform aimed at democratizing the European Union and ensure the future stability of the integration project. The proposal crystallized in a White Paper, whose basic structure orbits around five good governance principles: openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. The document prioritizes effectiveness and assigns nearly one third of the attention to the trigger of 'output' legitimacy. By doing that, the Governance Paper cooled down the expectations on EU's 'participatory turn', whose main precept was to place 'input' legitimacy at the core of EU policy making. However, the Governance Paper expected participation to have a direct impact upon EU policy-making and to involve, foremost, CSOs and individual experts.

In an attempt to put into action EU's governance reform to a scarcely europeanized and highly decentralized policy-field, the European Commission presented only some months after the adoption of the Governance Paper a new framework for cooperation in the field of youth. The document acknowledged that European young citizens were a priority social group with which to start implementing EU's new 'legitimizing' strategy. The Youth Paper, by explicitly assuming the parameters of its Governance equivalent, set a strategy from which to guide EU institutions in the provision of policy outputs in that particular field. But despite the foreseeable coordination between both documents, significant normative discrepancies appear between them.

In the youth policy field, participation was significantly more visible than in the governance paper. Hence, the effectiveness of policies was not a priority but the 'input' legitimacy derived from youth participation. However, in order to transform that ambitious political intention into concrete action, the Youth Paper offers very scarce indications on the institutional responsibilities involved, the intervening territorial levels of governance, nor the role of non-political intermediaries, which are poorly integrated in the strategy. Although capturing most of the attention in the document, EU's participatory governance in the youth policy field appears to be a complicated endeavour for such diffused parameters. So as to test the appropriateness of the strategy, this study could be complemented in the future by analysing whether the governance principles have evolved across time in the follow-up documents of the Youth Strategy; which responsibilities have ended up assuming the different institutions and CSOs in the implementation of the strategy during its first decade; or to which extent has it impacted the opinion of the participating youth in relation to EU institutions and policies.

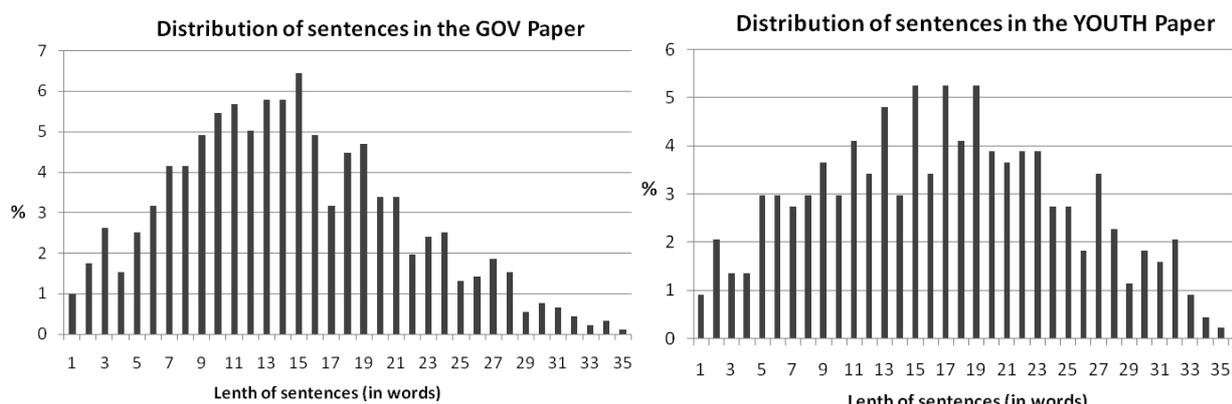
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Fig1. Statistical distribution of sentences



Source: own

Table 1. EU Good Governance - Codebook

Legitimacy	Principle	Code	Definition
<i>Input</i>	participation	1	a. To open-up the EU policy-making process to get more people and organisations <i>involved</i> in determining the outcomes.
<i>Throughput</i>	openness	2	a. To guarantee <i>access</i> to reliable information and documents b. To actively <i>communicate</i> on what the EU does and decides
	accountability	3	a. To <i>clarify</i> the roles in the legislative and executive process b. To increase the <i>responsiveness</i> of the decisions made
	coherence	5	a. To ensure <i>governance principles</i> are consistently endorsed. b. To guarantee <i>leadership</i> and steering capacity in the EU
<i>Output</i>	effectiveness	4	a. To improve the capacity of achieving policy <i>goals</i> b. To maximize the <i>impact</i> of EU regulation on the ground

Source: own

Table 2. EU Good Governance – Category of Actors

Type	Code	Definition
EU political actors	1	The Union (general) / The institutions / Brussels
	2	European Parliament
	3	European Commission
	4	Council of the European Union
	5	European Council
	6	Consultative bodies (CoR & EESC)
National political actors	1	National actors (general)
	2	Member States
	3	National Parliaments
	4	Regional Administrations
	5	Local Administrations
Non-political actors	1	General Public / Citizens / The people
	2	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
	3	Individual Outside Experts
	4	Market (e.g. Unions, Professional Associations, Corporations)

Source: own

Fig2. Non Political Actors Involved in Participation (% of attention)

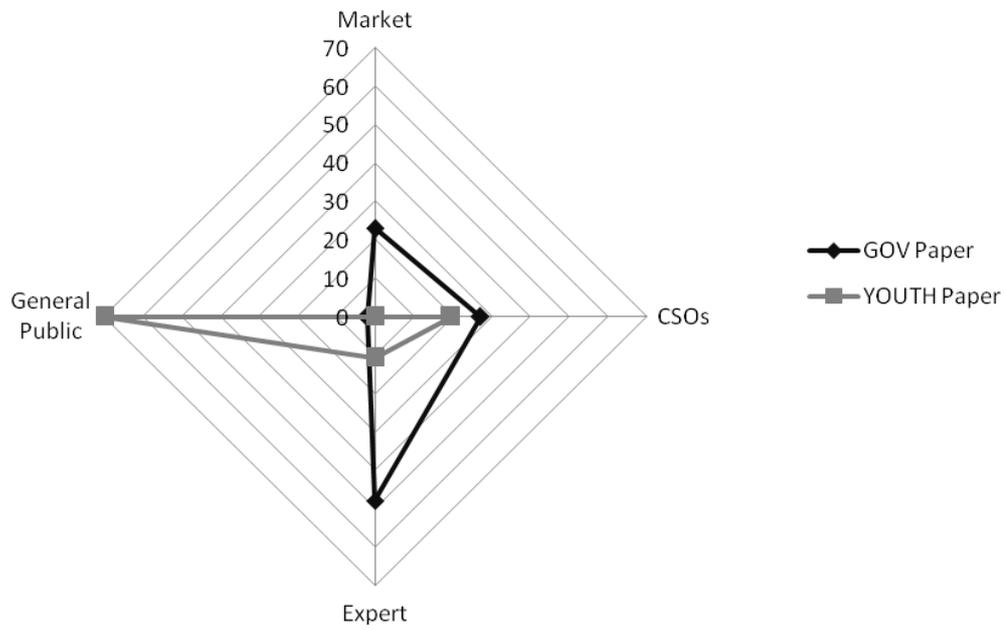


Fig3. Saliency of Good Governance Principles (% of attention)

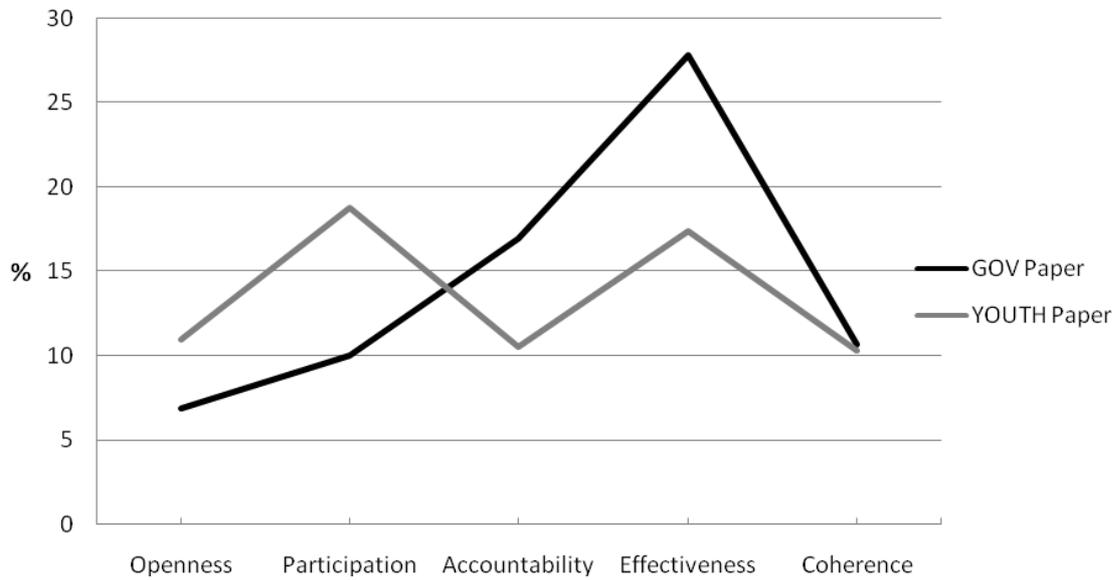


Fig4. Effects of the Governance Principles upon EU institutions (GOV)

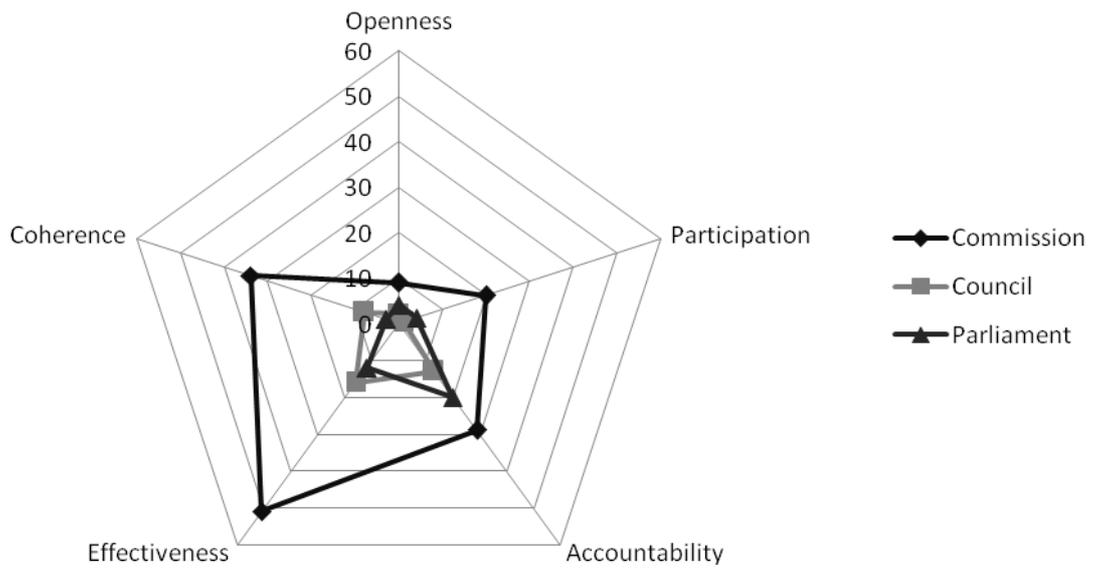


Fig5. Effects of the Governance Principles upon the Member States (GOV)

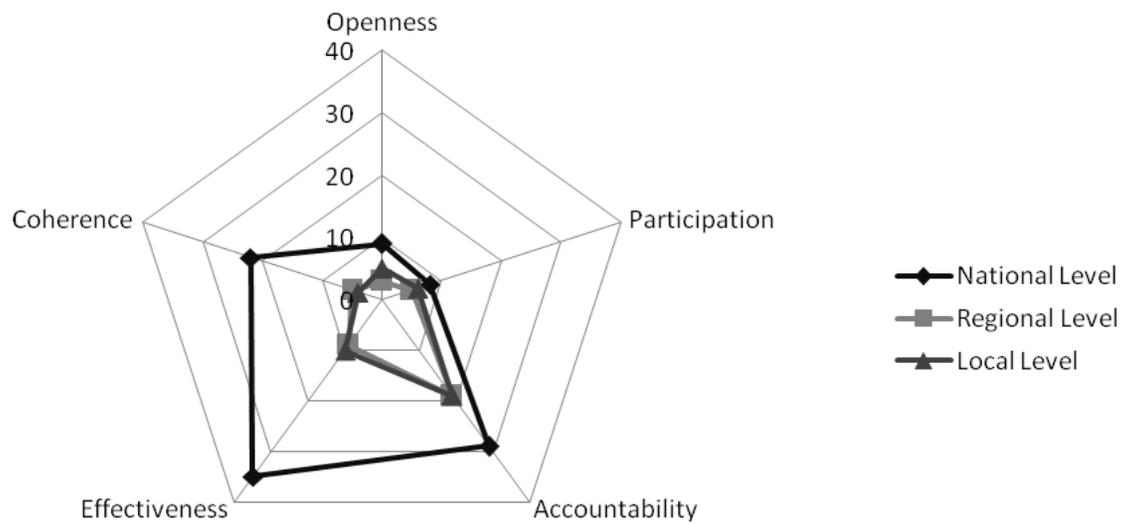


Fig6. Interdependence of the Good Governance Principles (GOV)

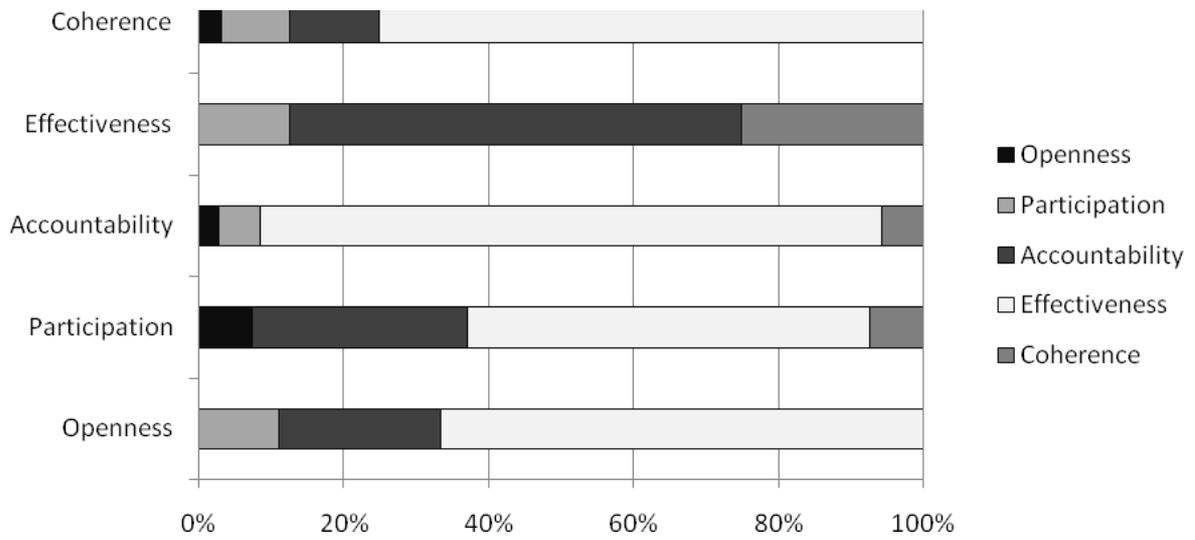


Fig7. Interdependence of the Good Governance Principles (YOUTH)

