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NATIONAL REFERENDUMS AND COMPETING EUROPEAN LEGITIMACIES

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SOURCES OF EU LEGITIMACY

ABSOLUTE VALUES (In weber's terms: *Wert*)

LEGAL-RATIONAL

EU treaties and supremacy of EU law

Validated by processes conforming to EU law

EU institutions a means not an absolute end

INSTRUMENTAL (*Zweck*)

Collective action to deal with problems of interdependence

Taken by collection of Elites, not We the people

No longer Peace, Security as in 1950s, 1989

Today: Effectiveness of Economic outputs (Scharpf)

SHIFTING SOURCES OF NATIONAL LEGITIMACY

DECLINE IN ABSOLUTE TRADITIONAL VALUES

Elites no longer free to make treaties with permissive consensus

Corporatist elites can't deliver church members, classes, interests

DECLINE IN INSTRUMENTAL TRUST IN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Party leaders not trusted to deliver party policies

Politicians no longer trusted as agents of voter preferences

Outputs don't match promises (cf. David Easton)

DEMOCRATIC INPUTS INCREASINGLY VALUED

Opinion polls report what people want

Politicians' rhetoric reflects what people want

SALIENT EU POLICIES CREATE BOTH WINNERS & LOSERS

MACRO-ECONOMIC VALUES HAVE MICRO IMPACT

Eurozone: Stable prices. Unemployment, especially youth

Single market: + Global market: more competition

Macro-economic values produce some micro-losers

MACRO-SOCIETAL CHANGE IMPACTS TRADITIONAL VALUES

Free movement mixes peoples from 28 national societies

Extra-European migration increase mixtures

National societies become multi-cultural, not European

PRIME MINISTER HAS A GOLDONI PROBLEM: SERVES 2 MASTERS

Elected by and accountable for policies to national electorate

Ex officio member of European Council making collective EU policies

Council has legal-rational legitimacy to act

Median PM represents 2 percent of EU population;

Council has 21 small states

Accountable for decisions to 27 other PMs + Treaties

REFERENDUMS: A DIRECT DEMOCRACY INPUT TO POLICY

About a single policy, not a package of issues in a party programme

Directly decisive without politicians, parties as untrusted intermediaries

Available at national level in 26 member states; not at EU level

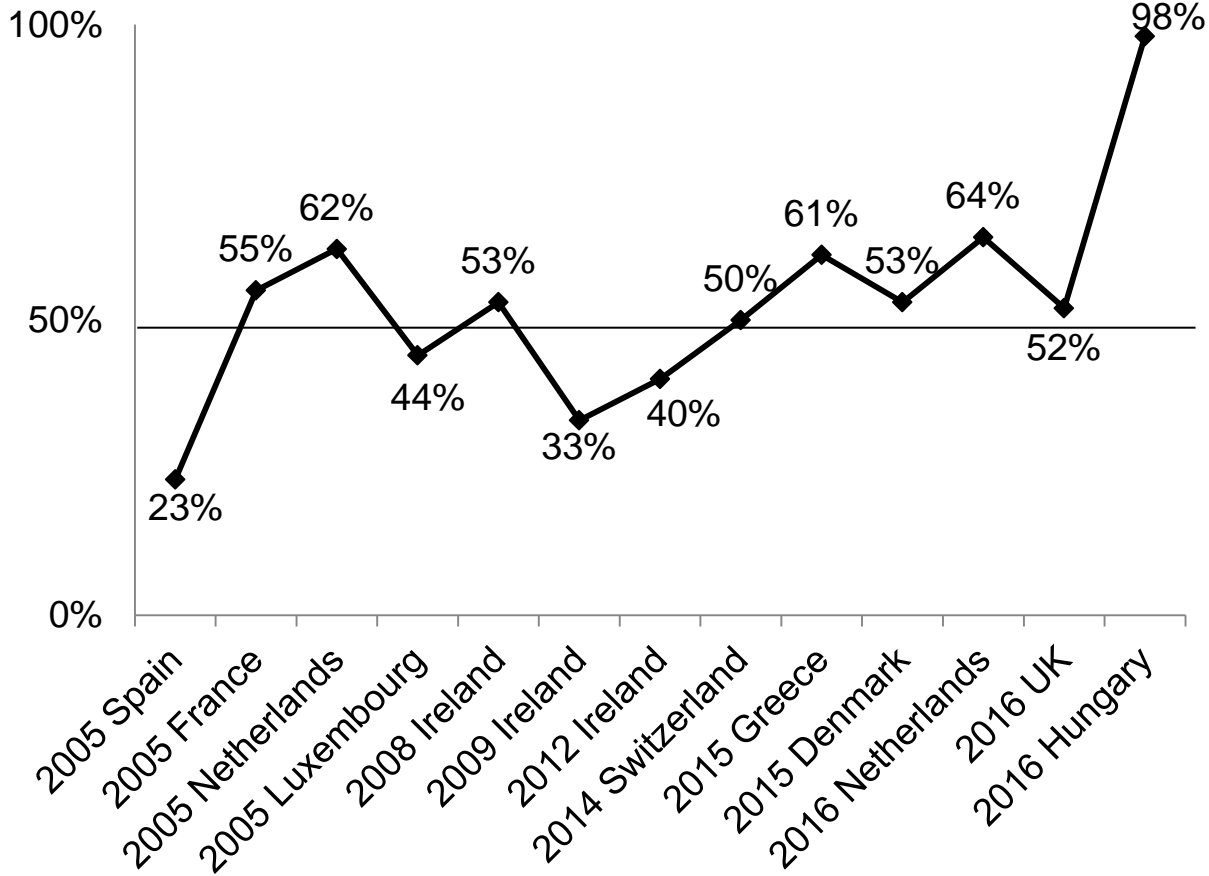
Binary choices divisive not consensual

Anti-EU campaigners can invoke simple absolute values

Pro-EU campaigners may invoke macro benefits

NATIONAL REFERENDUMS WITH EU CONSEQUENCES SINCE 2004

% anti-EU policy

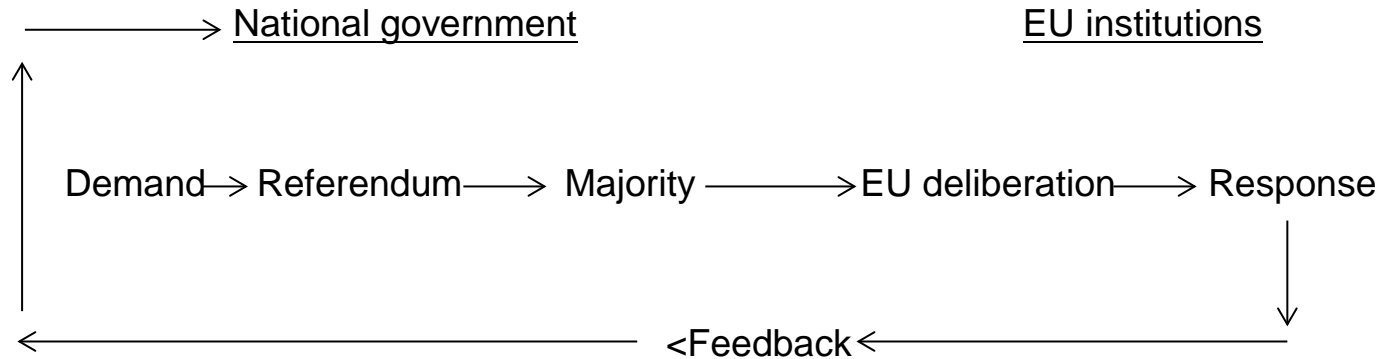


Mean anti-EU vote without Hungary: 56 per cent

Since 2014 all six votes reject closer EU integration

National democratic legitimacy challenges EU legitimacy

REFERENDUMS AS INPUTS TO AN INTERDEPENDENT PROCESS



Votes count, resources decide. Stein Rokkan

EU LEGAL-RATIONAL LEGITIMACY LIMITS REFERENDUM IMPACT

EU STRATEGIES

1. AVOID policies triggering referendum
No Turkish membership

Differentiated integration: Fiscal Pact not subject to veto

2. CONCEDE

Beforehand in preparation for Lisbon Treaty

After referendum defeat:

Think again 2nd referendums Ireland, DK
Dutch vote on Ukraine

3. POSITIVE RESPONSE

Risk averse: Avoid challenge, kick the euro down the road

Link policies: Orban's Hungary

Sanction by using legal-rational powers: Switzerland, UK

IMPLICATIONS

- * Member states have a democracy surplus and an effectiveness deficit
- * EU has a democracy deficit but legal-rational effectiveness
- * In a global system of interdependence member states and EU have effectiveness deficit

(See R. Rose: "Responsible Party Government in a World of Interdependence",
West European Politics, 2014, 37,2, 253-269).