

*Fatih Çalışır*

*Ahi Evran University*

*Kirsehir (Turkey)*

**THE CONCEPT OF EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP IN THE  
EUROPEAN UNION AND A COMMON VIEW ON THE  
PROBLEM OF DEMOCRACY DEFICIT**

This study addresses the question of democratic legitimacy between the European Union and the member states and a general assessment is made on the causes and dimensions of this problem of democracy deficit. The phenomenon of European citizenship emerged in the 1970s as a part and tool of the process of creating European identity. European citizenship is different from nation-state citizenship in classical meaning. The problem of democratic legitimacy is approached from an institutional and social perspective. Debate over the existence of European People's support for integration process and the size of sovereignty between the country's constitutions and the founding treaties of the European Union; It has brought debate about which European people and countries would prefer, and caused great disagreements. "The European Union represents both the greatest hope and the greatest threat to 21st century European democracy". As it is understood from these discourses, the European Union has undergone a change in which there will be great debates and dilemmas. Will it pose a problem for the sovereignty of states under the umbrella of the EU? While membership in the European Union represents hope as a guarantee of democratic stability for the countries of Central and eastern Europe, the questioning of its democratic foundations regarding the structure and functioning of the integration process over the past two decades represents a danger for European democracy. Some of them considered the source of the disease of European integration as a democratic deficit as a set of institutional viruses, while others emphasized the need to look at the problem of legitimacy in a broader perspective, including sociological factors. Social elements have been of great importance in terms of evaluating the problem of democratic legitimacy. According to some, at the core of the democratic shock of European integration lies the lack of consciousness of European identity

in the minds of the Peoples. In this study, these problems will be compared and evaluated, European citizenship and the size of democratic legitimacy will be addressed.

Consequently, the European Union has experienced and will continue to experience the deficit of democracy and the phenomenon of European citizenship at the stage of the political unification process. These two situations cannot be considered separate from each other. The people are at the root of the lack of democracy, and the people are at the root of the concept of European citizenship. The problem of democracy deficit cannot be evaluated without social elements. The underlying reason for the democratic deficiency of European integration is the lack of awareness of European identity and the fact that this idea is not in place. As a result, the people should be informed about the rights of European citizenship, be able to distinguish between national identity and European identity, and be able to participate in the political system and make their voice heard and give direction to the system. The problem of democratic legitimacy needs to be addressed to the public and democracy requires it.