

## EUROPEAN STUDIES

### Are Referendums a simple cure for the EU's democratic deficit?



"It is often argued that national referendums on EU matters can be a cure for the democratic deficit of the EU and its policies. But what can we learn from a country like Switzerland about how and when direct democracy works? Eva Thomann (University of Exeter), Isabelle Stadelmann-Steffen (Universität Bern), and **Eva G. Heidbreder (Universität Magdeburg)** conclude that referendums in the EU usually lack the necessary institutional and administrative links between direct and representative decision-making to have legitimacy-enhancing effects."<sup>1</sup>

› Referendums are not a simple cure for the EU's democratic deficit.

(<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/10/02/referendums-are-not-a-simple-cure-for-the-eus-democratic-deficit/>)

*Would you agree?*

You can read all about the discussion in Eva Heidbreder's paper:

Heidbreder, E. G., Stadelmann-Steffen, I., Thomann, E. and Sager, F. (2019) 'EU Referendums in Context: What can we learn from the Swiss Case?'. *Public Administration* Vol. 97: 2, pp. 370-83.

Or check out › **this interesting blog post by LSE**(<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/10/02/referendums-are-not-a-simple-cure-for-the-eus-democratic-deficit/>) on the topic.

<sup>1</sup> Quote taken from › <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/10/02/referendums-are-not-a-simple-cure-for-the-eus-democratic-deficit/>  
(<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/10/02/referendums-are-not-a-simple-cure-for-the-eus-democratic-deficit/>)