

## **Editors' note**

This special issue grew out of the Jean Monnet Project “Making Multi-level Governance Work: Helping to Overcome the Democratic Deficit”, (620951-EPP-1-2020-1-AU-EPP JMO-PROJECT), led by the European Union Centre of Excellence at RMIT University, Australia.

The project's aim was to explore the conditions under which Multi-level Governance (MLG) succeeds and whether and how it might affect citizens' support for and engagement with democratic processes. The project utilised European and Australian case studies, examined at roundtables and workshops which brought together experts and practitioners from Europe and Australia.

The articles in this special issue provide a cross section of matters that came to the fore over the course of the experts' engagement with the concept of MLG, its application, and its relationship to democracy.

In “Observations on Multi-level Governance and democracy” Klein and Xhaferi attempt to navigate the history and scope of the approach, its (theoretical) relationship with democracy and the possibility of citizen support for and engagement with democratic processes.

Armillei, Goedegebuure and Richards in “Multilevel Governance and Smart Specialisation Strategy: The case of the Swifts Creek District in Gippsland” provide a case study of an MLG-type approach, Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3), which has been successfully used in Europe, applied in regional development in Australia and its advantages and disadvantages.

Mascitelli's article “Governance during a time of crisis: Addressing the waste crisis in Naples, Italy” provides a fascinating example of governance failure, exacerbated by appropriation of an issue for political expediency over pragmatic approaches.

Vasilakakos' contribution “In sovereignty's shadow: The limitations of decentralisation under federalism and multilevel approaches to governance” draws attention to systemic issues faced in governance systems that favour decentralisation of authority.

Editors of the Special Issue

Maren Klein and Perparim (Rimi) Xhaferi

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