

1 **A Eurocrat's view of Europe**

2 (original at <http://www.economist.com/node/16486755>)

3 Nigel Farage, a British politician with a knack for synthetic outrage, was
4 appalled to learn recently that over 1,000 European Union officials earn
5 more than Britain's prime minister. No wonder Brussels bureaucrats
6 demand "more Europe", he declared. What they really want is "more
7 money" for themselves.

8 The truth is even worse, at least for the voters of Mr Farage's United
9 Kingdom Independence Party. Brussels officials call for "more Europe"
10 because they really want more Europe. The average Eurocrat is not
11 primarily in it for the money.

12 Europe is a faith-based project for its bureaucrats. Even as Eurocrats
13 become more cynical with age most retain a spark of faith. Put simply,
14 they believe that nationalism is the greatest of evils. As articles of faith
15 go, this is not a terrible one. Nationalism has indeed been a European
16 curse. Today, the existence of the EU is a bulwark against fresh horrors.
17 Take the recent tensions between Slovaks and Hungarians. Such ugliness
18 can only go so far: local politicians cannot close the border to traders from
19 the wrong nationality, for example, or sack workers with the wrong
20 background: it would be against EU law.

21 Yet their credo of anti-nationalism carries risks too. At best, EU
22 bureaucrats can be naive about how much integration ordinary voters will
23 bear. At worst, they sound hostile to democracy. The bolder among them
24 argue that the EU had always been an elitist project, with good reason.
25 Why, they said, if German voters had been asked, they would never have
26 given up the Deutschmark for the euro. Nor would French voters have
27 approved EU enlargement in a referendum.

28 Brussels is not full of people who hate democracy. The problem is that it is
29 full of people who equate national democracy with selfishness and
30 populism.

Questions

- 1) What is a Eurocrat?
- 2) To whom does the pronoun 'he' in line 6 refer?
- 3) What was the reason for Mr Farage's shock?
- 4) Explain the phrase 'more Europe' in your own words (lines 6, 9 and 10).
- 5) Paraphrase the sentence 'The average Eurocrat is not primarily in it for the money' (lines 10 to 11).
- 6) What is the main creed of the Eurocrats discussed in the article? What is this article's view of that belief (is it positive or negative)?
- 7) What is the role of the EU in this creed?
- 8) What is the downside of the Eurocrat view of the world according to the article?
- 9) Explain 'with good reason' (line 24)?
- 10) Do you agree with the article or do you think that Eurocrats are totally different than the picture painted here? Do you consider the democracy deficit of the current EU a serious problem? What is your view on referenda? Are they a good way of deciding important political issues or rather the instruments of populist politicians?

Vocabulary

a spark of faith (line 13) – a small amount or trace of hope

put simply / simply put (line 13) – say in a way that is easy to understand

as something goes (line 14 to 15) – as far as something is concerned, as regards something

at best/at worst (lines 21 and 23, respectively) – under the most favourable / least favourable circumstances

You can find additional explanation and more examples to help you understand and use English words and phrases at <http://dictionary.reference.com>, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>, or <http://www.ldoceonline.com/>

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