

EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

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Nationalism seems to be back in Europe in the age of the Great Recession. In all EU countries, citizens accuse Europe of intruding in their way of life. European identity seems to be in retreat.

In all countries national attachment is by far stronger than attachment to Europe. Yet, in most countries, the majority of citizens identify with both, which suggests multiple identities as well as an integration of Europe into the pre-existing multiple identification structure of other territorial levels. Yet the second most frequent category consists of those who identify solely with their own country. In contrast, exclusive European attachment is very rare. Dual national and European attachment is clearly fostered by pull-factors, namely support for European democracy, institutions, and politics. Push-factors, in the sense of negative evaluations of these political aspects within one's own country, play a minor role. By contrast, in the case of exclusive identification with Europe, the denial of any national identity is the main push factor.

Thus, a European identity is an important factor for the integration of Europe because it implies that individuals and nations within Europe will subordinate parochial interests to achieve a common good based on the beliefs, values, and norms embodied by the identity. The analysis of the construct of European identity demonstrates that the identity exists and but primarily has a cultural dimension. The existence of a European identity is confirmed by the relatively high percentage of the population reporting that they feel European. It is within the power of the EU to foster the development of European identification via democratic and effective policies.

Key words: *European identity, European Union, national identity, nations, collective trust, support.*

Дангуоле Шидлаускене, Живіле Міру. Європейська ідентичність в контексті національної ідентичності.

Націоналізм, здається, повертається до Європи в епоху Великої рецесії. У всіх країнах ЄС громадяни звинувачують Європу у втручанні у свій спосіб життя. Європейська ідентичність, схоже, відступає.

У всіх країнах національна відданість є набагато сильнішою, ніж прихильність до Європи. Проте у більшості країн переважна більшість громадян ідентифікує себе і з власною країною, і з Європою, що передбачає декілька ідентичностей, а також інтеграцію Європи до структури багаторівневої ідентифікації інших територіальних рівнів. Проте друга за частотністю категорія складається з тих, хто ідентифікує себе виключно зі своєю країною. І навпаки, виняткова прихильність до Європи є дуже рідкісним явищем. Подвійній відданості як нації, так і Європі сприяють такі фактори, як підтримка європейської демократії, інститутів та політики. Рушійні фактори, в сенсі негативних оцінок цих політичних аспектів у своїй власній країні, відіграють незначну роль. І навпаки, у випадку ексклюзивної ідентифікації з Європою відмова від будь-якої національної ідентичності є основним рушійним фактором.

Отже, влада ЄС здатна сприяти розвитку європейської ідентифікації через ефективну демократичну політику.

Ключові слова: *європейська ідентичність, Європейський Союз, національна ідентичність, нації, колективна довіра, підтримка.*

Дангуоле Шидлаускене, Живіле Міру. Европейская идентичность в контексте национальной идентичности.

Национализм, кажется, возвращается в Европу в эпоху Великой рецессии. Во всех странах ЕС граждане обвиняют Европу во вмешательстве в свой образ жизни. Европейская идентичность, похоже, отступает.

Во всех странах национальная преданность намного сильнее, чем приверженность Европе. Тем не менее, в большинстве стран подавляющее большинство граждан идентифицирует себя и со своей страной, и с Европой, предусматривая несколько идентичностей, а также интеграцию Европы в структуру многоуровневой идентификации других территориальных уровней. Однако вторая по частотности категория состоит из тех, кто идентифицирует себя исключительно со своей страной. И наоборот, исключительная приверженность Европе является очень редким явлением. Двойной преданности как нации, так и Европе способствуют такие факторы, как поддержка европейской демократии, институтов и политики. Движущие факторы, в смысле негативных оценок этих политических аспектов в своей собственной стране, играют незначительную роль.

И наоборот, в случае эксклюзивной идентификации с Европой отказ от любой национальной идентичности является основным движущим фактором.

Таким образом, в силах власти ЕС содействовать развитию европейской идентификации через эффективную демократическую политику.

Ключевые слова: *европейская идентичность, Европейский Союз, национальная идентичность, нации, коллективная доверие, поддержка.*

What is European Identity?

The development of a European identity in which individuals residing in Europe consider the European Union (EU) as identical to their political, social, cultural, and economic norms and values is critical for the long-term integration of the EU.

The concept of European identity has multiple meanings depending on the specific type of discourse in which it is discussed. In general, the concept refers to the sense of personal identification with Europe and with the EU as the institutional embodiment of European norms, values and beliefs.

The concept of European identity raises two fundamental issues relevant to the EU integration process. The first issue involves the existence of a European identity that transcends the identity of individuals based on more local factors such as national identity or culture group identity. The second issue considers the effect, if any, of European integration for strengthening the development of a European identity [3].

European identity exists that depends on cultural variables related to political culture, common heritage, and common traditions. The analysis also suggests that a European identity remains subordinate to national identity in situations in which the two identities are in conflict, which may create a barrier for integration in the European Union.

As the European community has enlarged and the integration process has reached a deeper level, the progress in European unification is increasingly susceptible to swings in public mood. The growing relevance of public opinion becomes dramatically apparent by the fact that numerous EU projects have been rejected by popular vote: the Maastricht Treaty in Denmark (1992), the accession of Norway (1972, 1994), the Nice Treaty in Ireland (2001), the introduction of the euro in Sweden (2003), the European Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands (2005) and the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland (2008) [7].

There are four main theoretical concepts of European identity:

– *European identity and identification* with Europe. Identity has an individual component of active choice coupled with a collective component where individuals orient themselves to one or more aggregate groups or collectivities. The collectivities to which one orients depend upon context and can be multiple, so it is more accurate to speak of a *mosaic* of situation-specific identity rather than identities being nested one within another. Although few people may have a primary identity as ‘European’, such an identity can become salient in specific contexts.

– *Europeanisation* refers to a hypothesized trend towards national institutions and nationally-based fields of activity or perspectives being supplanted by institutions or fields at the European level. The validity of the concept can be questioned since Europeanisation in reality may be only a peripheral variant of a larger trend of *globalisation*.

– *Transnationalism* is contrasted to permanent migration and refers to ‘cross-border’ living where, thanks to modern infrastructure, a person can maintain a social existence both in their current country of residence and their country of origin.

– *Cosmopolitanism* refers to actively seeking out and appreciating contact with other cultures and

hence coincides with perceived European values of tolerance and equality.

Nine conceptually-distinct dimensions for the expression of European identity are used to structure the presentation of the research projects with the review of each project being placed under the heading of one or more of these dimensions [1]:

– *Multiple social identities and biographical identity;*

– *Transnational intimate relationships;*

– *Collective action;*

– *Standardization and regulation;*

– *Cultural production;*

– *Intercultural translation;*

– *Inclusion/Exclusion;*

– *Structural conditions and opportunity structures;*

– *The public sphere and state-regulated institutions.*

European identity is also influenced by information individuals obtain about the nature of similarities with other Europeans or the legitimacy of the political unit claiming to be a manifestation of European identity. In this general framework, the two primary elements or variables affecting European identity are civic or political and cultural. Economic considerations can be subsumed in the political element because many political decisions have economic consequences. The cultural element can include social factors such as class or age as well as religious and ideological considerations [6].

The cultural element or variable related to European identity involves the cultural and social factors that influence the development of a common identity. Europeans share many common cultural elements including a common history, and common musical and literary achievements.

Modern Europeans also share common political cultural values and ideas such as concepts of the modern nation state, democracy, human rights, individualism, and separation of church and state. These political cultural values are normative and create an expectation that national and supranational institutions will adhere to the principles embedded in these values. Thus, Europeans have a common cultural basis for defining themselves as a group and for defining cultures existing outside of Europe as non-European. At the same time, many cultural elements exist in Europe creating differences among groups including different ethnic groups with separate cultures, the use of multiple languages, and historical enmities between groups. Religious differences also exist between Latin and Orthodox Christianity and between Christians and Muslims living in Europe. The values and norms based on factors such as ethnicity or religion are substantive and have to be considered as important variables affecting the development of a European identity [1].

The analysis of the construct of European identity demonstrates that the identity exists and but primarily has a cultural dimension. The existence of a European identity is confirmed by the relatively high percentage of the population reporting that they feel European. The cultural dimensions of European identity appear consist of political cultural elements such as shared democratic values and traditional cultural elements such as common history and traditions. Despite this evidence, however, the analysis showed that the prevalence and understanding of the meaning of European identity had substantial theoretical and practical variations. Some individuals believe that European identity springs from a shared political culture emphasising democratic norms and values.

The analysis also suggests that European identity is an evolving concept that is responding to the political, economic, and cultural interaction between individual nations and the policies and institutions of the EU. At the current time, a European identity exists but is not as robust as the national identities of the residents of the individual member states. The trend, however, is toward the gradual formation of a European identity shared by all residents of Europe, with the specific elements of the identity likely to focus on common elements of the shared political culture.

National identity. National identity is very complicated and multi-dimensional matter. For this reason every researcher defines and explains this concept by emphasizing its different perspectives. For instance, Breuilly underlines the exclusive character of the national identity by regarding the relations between culture and nationalism distinguishing the nations from each other. On the other hand, Kymlicka refers to the civic nationalism by aiming to pinpoint its inclusive character by respecting the cultural differences. According to Gilroy national identity is a melting pot which has the assimilating character by depending on the notions of citizenship and patriotism. Anderson asserts that national identity is imagined and constructed. Rutherford claims that national identity depends on the uniformity, cultural community and common culture. Calhoun seeks the way to link the national identity to the theory of democracy by means of post-national social formations. Güvenç finds the origins of national identity in the national culture which will be obtained by the socialization processes. Yurdusev establishes a correlation between the national identity and state and he claims that national identity is the yield of nation-building and national ideology. Connor and Smith emphasizes the primordial character of national identity and they use the word 'primordial' in the meaning of its backward looking character seeking the myth of national origin. As a contrary, Bradshaw says that the national

identity has a forward-looking character and this identity emerges with the politicisation of an ethnic group looking to the future destiny by sharing the same soil of the homeland.

National identity is always a shifting, unsettled complex of historical struggles and experiences that are cross-fertilized, produced, and translated through a variety of cultures [4].

The difference between European and national belonging that we adopt in our work was developed starting with the 1970s, representing for a long time an *a priori* in European studies and research surveys. However, this does not mean that what we qualify as a "European identity" develops in the same manner and on the same pattern as national identity but rather that the model we are presently heading to is more complex since it articulates the persistence of national identities and the development of another form of attachment, more individualistic towards the European Union.

Adrian Favell is one of the authors who adopt a more radical position concerning the difficulties encountered when trying to approach the concept of European identity with qualitative methods. Favell suggests renouncing to understand the development of European identity as legitimating the European project: *only their behavior and the manner in which Europeans will assume their own rights and obligations conferred by integration, will strengthen the European Union*. Despite the age of political declarations referring to European identity, sociological analysis of the identification process of European citizens with the European political entity will not be truly realized as beginning with the 2000s. Quantitative analyzes produced then numerous writings discussing the affective dimension—as opposed to the one based on utilitarian consideration—of the attitudes regarding integration. For example, an article by author Céline Bellot, reflects the manner how works converge both in terms of results (multidimensionality of these attitudes, social variables persistence and the importance of national context, identification with Europe maintaining strong ties and complex national identification) and on their limits. Moreover, in the last decade, the all European Commission reports devoted to citizens' views on Europe (Eurobarometer) include a part entitled *European Identity*, taking evidence of the percentage of Union's citizens qualifying themselves as Europeans [2].

Conclusions

1. A European identity is an important factor for the integration of Europe because it implies that individuals and nations within Europe will subordinate parochial interests to achieve a common good based on the beliefs, values, and norms embodied by the identity.

2. The analysis of the construct of European identity demonstrates that the identity exists and but primarily has a cultural dimension. The existence of a European identity is confirmed by the relatively high percentage of the population reporting that they feel European.

3. National identity is always a shifting, unsettled complex of historical struggles and

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experiences that are cross-fertilized, produced, and translated through a variety of cultures.

4. Dual national and European attachment is clearly fostered by pull-factors, namely support for European democracy, institutions, and politics. Push-factors, in the sense of negative evaluations of these political aspects within one's own country, play a minor role.

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