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***Cultural, Instrumental, Civic and Symbolic
Components of National and European Identities
in Old and New European Union Member States***

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Cultural, Instrumental, Civic and Symbolic Components of National and European Identities in Old and New European Union Member States

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Introduction

In this article we empirically test three of the most significant theories about the emergence of a European identity (as a special case of trans-national or supra-national identity), paying special attention to the dimensions of cultural diversity that may conform it.

Research into European identity has evolved recently in two quite different directions, with very limited contact between the two strands.¹ On the one hand, we find a number of theoretical and normative approaches which focus on the definition of the concept of European identity, but which have rarely been subjected to empirical testing with attitudinal data (Orchard 2002). On the other hand, there are a number of empirical approaches, mainly developed by sociologists and social psychologists, but which, most of the time, lack the necessary theoretical and methodological underpinning.² The analysis of European identity presented in this chapter cuts a middle path between these two dominant approaches to the subject. We introduce a number of existing theories about the potential emergence of a European identity and test them by using the most appropriate empirical data to answer the questions each poses. Our contribution to the field lies not, therefore, in the development of new theories or the presentation of unexpected empirical findings, but rather in the way this analysis empirically tests existing theories. Such a test is, of course, necessary if our knowledge of European identity is to go beyond the mere “history of a concept and a discourse” (Stråth 2002:288).

Greatly simplifying existing theories about the emergence of a European identity, we have identified three main tendencies in the literature, distinguished by the different possible sources of European identification they defend. The three approaches considered here are: a “cultural” theory, which understands identities as being based on ethno-cultural factors generated through a long-term (historical) process; an “instrumental” theory, which conceives of identities as being based on self-interested calculation (whether economic or political); and “civic” theory, which understands identities as being based on agreement over rules for peaceful political co-existence.

A general common preoccupation within these theories is the relation between European citizens and national identities. Similarly, this has not been the object of systematic

^o A first draft of this article was presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops held in Edinburgh from 28 March to 2 April 2003: Workshop 2, “European Culture(s) and European Integration”. I would like to acknowledge the collaboration of Jaroslaw Józef Górniak, Ankira Kossic, Paszkal Kiss and Maren Kandulla in that previous draft. I must thank the participants in that workshop for their helpful insights and observations. A reviewed version of that ECPR paper was published in EIoP in July 2004 (<http://eiop.or.at/eiop/>). The anonymous reviewers of that publication greatly contributed to the improvement of this article. I would like to thank specially professor José I. Torreblanca for his valuable comments and criticism. Finally, my gratitude to the European Commission V Framework Program for their financial support (EURONAT project, contract no. HPSE-CT2001-00044).

¹ See the review of existing studies produced by Geetha Garib and Michael Braum for the European project PIONEUR (Working paper 4 – July 2003). http://www.obets.ua.es/pioneer/documentos_public.php

² For an up-to-date survey and review of the main approaches, see the literature review by Stephen Gibson for the project Youth and European Identity. http://www.sociology.ed.ac.uk/youth/docs/Gibsons_lit_rev.pdf

empirical research. When at the end of the 1980s the European Union launched a number of policies aimed at creating a European identity, the member states responded by incorporating into the Maastricht Treaty a clause stating that the Union should respect the member states' respective national identities (article F, point 1). This reaction revealed that many member states saw the creation of a European identity as a potential threat to their own national identities and their citizens' national loyalties (see Højelid 2001).

More optimistic visions do not conceive European identity as incompatible with national identity (Cowles, Caporaso and Risse 2001; Kersbergen 1997). Some authors believe that the increasing globalization of communications and the economy is weakening popular interest in national and domestic concerns to the benefit of stronger identification with issues beyond national borders (Cerutti 1992). Other analysts conclude that EU integration actually strengthens the nation-state, making it more effective and strengthening governments' capacity to tackle global and multidimensional problems which require complex coordination, regulatory and enforcement institutions (Millward 1992; Moravcsik 1998).

Those who remain skeptical about the potential development of a European identity reject the notion that citizens can possess more than one identity simultaneously, whereas other authors have noted that people can hold multiple identities, each deriving from the same source of human attachment (conceptualized as "concentric circles" with different levels of intensity), or feel simultaneously attached to multiple identities based on different subjective factors of identification. Although little empirical research has been carried out on these topics, there is some evidence to support the hypothesis that attachments to multiple identities draw on different sources.

We have used these debates to select the different items and dimensions to be examined in this chapter. We provide empirical information relevant to each of the debates and hypotheses, which are then brought together and discussed in more detail in the final section of the chapter. Our empirical test of these theories exploits quantitative (*Eurobarometer*) as well as qualitative data (long interviews).

Our results provide only partial support for the theories mentioned above. We find that national and European identities are compatible. This is, in part, because while national identities are largely "cultural", European identities are primarily "instrumental". However, we also find that there is a sufficient European common "cultural" ground for a European identity to emerge. In contrast, we find little support for the development of a European identity based on "civic" factors. We have also confirmed that, because national and European identities are different, the development of a European identity does not necessarily imply the transfer of loyalties from the national to the supranational level as suggested by the "cultural" and "instrumental" theories. In all the countries analysed here, attachment to the nation remains strong, and certainly greater than attachment to Europe. We also show that it is harder for a European identity to develop in countries with a strong sense of national pride.

Theories and Empirical Implications

The group of scholars that we identify with the "cultural" theory argue that if a European identity were to emerge, it would not, and should not, be based on the same elements (such as a common cultural heritage, language, myths, symbols and emotional bonds) which form the foundations of national identities (see Smith 1992, 1995, 1999; Østerud 1999). According to

Østerud (1999), a EU identity could be established in two ways. One would emulate “classical” nation-building of the type seen during the 19th century, but now developing at the European level and including an attempt to construct a stronger European identity. However, such a process might be more problematic than in the case of nation-states, due to a number of cultural, linguistic, economical and geopolitical factors. Cultural diversity and structural differences are deeply rooted in Europe and, as a result, expectations of the emergence of a European identity should be regarded as rather utopian. While it may be possible for such an identity to emerge, this would certainly take a long time and would ultimately lead to the substitution of national identities.

For a second group of scholars, who we have identified as proponents of the “instrumental” theory, European identities would be consciously decided on, and are thus based on calculated individual self-interests (Brass 1979; Cinnerella 1997). The perception of the potential gains or losses that might result from membership of a given social group may influence peoples’ identification with it. From this “instrumental” perspective, the better the citizen’s evaluation of the results of European policies (compared to the results of policies pursued by national governments), the more likely s/he is to feel European. This cost-benefit understanding of identities implies that low welfare spending, poor economic performance, and low-quality national-level democracy would all make citizens more likely to feel more European (Gabel 1998; Eichemberg and Dalton 1993; Gabel and Palmer 1995; Kaltenthaler and Anderson 2001; Olsen 1996; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2001).³

Finally, a third line of analysis, which we have labeled the “civic” theory, stresses the development of identities around agreement over rules for peaceful political co-existence, shared cultural norms, and common beliefs (Mancini 1998:8; Weiler 1999: 346; Kersbergen 1997). From this perspective, the substance of EU membership (and European identity) lies in a commitment to the shared values of the Union as expressed in its constituent documents, a commitment to the duties and rights of a civic society covering specific areas of public life, a commitment to membership of a polity which promotes the direct opposite of classic ethno-nationalism (Weiler, Haltern and Mayer 1995: 23). Drawing on deliberative theories of democracy and Habermasian conceptions of communicative rationality, the emergence of a European public sphere would be crucial for the emergence of a European identity (Eriksen and Fossum 2001).

Empirical hypotheses

1) “Cultural” elements or dimensions do not play a role in the configuration of European identities.

This is a general hypothesis derived from the three theories mentioned above. The “cultural” theory explicitly rejects the possibility that a European identity would be based on ethno-cultural elements similar to those that gave rise to national identities, such as common language, religion, ancestry, customs and traditions etc. The “instrumental” and “civic” theories also reject it, implicitly though, giving more relevance to “instrumental” or “civic” elements respectively.

³ The authors in this group are more empirically driven than those from the other two schools discussed here. Moreover, some of them focus on the variable “support for the European integration”, which is quite different from a “European identity”. Nonetheless, these two variables can also be treated as measuring different aspects of the same reality: they are, in fact, highly correlated. It is, therefore, reasonable, to assume that any findings about the reasons for support for European integration may also tell us something about why people hold a European identity.

2) European identities are either “instrumental” or “civic”.

This hypothesis is complementary to the one above, which is also derived from the three theories taken together. This is also a way to say that European identities are rational, while national identities would have an “emotional” or irrational component.

3) Lacking a “cultural” basis, European identity would be weaker than national identities (which have a “cultural” dimension).

This hypothesis is derived from the “cultural” theory. Because “cultural” elements are considered the basis for identities, and because there are no ethno-cultural elements common to all the European citizens, their European identities will be necessarily weaker than their national identities.

4) National and European identities are exclusive.

This hypothesis is derived from the “cultural” and “instrumental” theories. Both assume a kind of fixed quantity of identity that each individual would split between multiple identities, so what is given to one is necessarily subtracted from the other/s (zero-sum game). In both theories, the emergence of a European identity would mean a weakening of national identities.

This hypothesis can be tested on two levels. First, on an individual level, we may test if citizens can be, in fact, attached to national and European identities at the same time; if they are more strongly attached to one identity than the other; or if those citizens with weaker national identities develop stronger European identities. Second, on an aggregate level, we can test if the feeling of strong attachment to the nation is weaker in those countries with the higher percentage of dual, or European, identity holders.

5) National and civic European identities are inclusive

This hypothesis is derived from the “civic” theory, which states that civic identities can be agreed upon by rational citizens without eroding national loyalties or identities, based on either ethno-cultural, instrumental or civic considerations.

Data, Definitions and Measurement

This analysis is based on the *Standard Eurobarometer 57.2*. This *Eurobarometer* is particularly well-suited to test the theoretical debates discussed above. It contains one battery of questions measuring closeness to different in-groups and out-groups (including the nation, the EU, Europe and Central and Eastern Europe) and two batteries of questions measuring the dimensions held to be most relevant for identification with the nation and Europe.

National samples were taken of the resident population aged 15 or over in each country (see table 1).⁴ Before proceeding with the analysis, we eliminated non-nationals from the country samples. The analysis refers, therefore, exclusively to citizens of the countries in question. We applied weighting for the member states and accession countries, so each sample totals 1,000 respondents, thereby making the same contribution to the

⁴ Details about the participants and questions can be found in the *Standard Eurobarometer 57.2* codebook (http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/ <http://www.nsd.uib.no/cessda/europe.html>).

aggregate analysis. When carrying out some analyses we also centered the data. Finally, we have imputed missing values.

We use the battery of questions asking about the “closeness to different groups of people” to measure identity. We consider that it has advantages over the indicators used in other *Eurobarometers* to assess European identity, such as “citizenship”, “support for European integration” and “pride in being European”. The question of the relative importance of different elements as the source of European and national identification, and whether they constitute a single or several dimensions, is a matter of empirical investigation that we will analyze in this article. “Closeness” is, therefore, the indicator we will use to measure identity. “Citizenship” can be understood as being more closely related to rights and duties (and the “civic” theory), and “support for integration” as more closely connected to economic (as well as perhaps political) costs and benefits (and the “instrumental” theory). In this sense, “closeness” is a more neutral notion. This is not meant to imply that any of the possible components of identity mentioned in the previous section are more important than others. “Pride”, on the other hand, could be defined as the positive effect that results from feelings of identity (not identity itself).

The two batteries of questions measuring the elements perceived as most significant for identification with the nation and Europe, include a set of 14 items, each related to different components of identity mentioned in the section above. The inclusion of items in the questionnaire responded to the following hypothesized groupings. In the case of national identities, common culture, customs and traditions, common language, common ancestry and common history and destiny are related to the “cultural” conception of identity; common rights and duties and common political and legal systems are linked to the “civic” theory; a common system of social security/welfare is associated with the “instrumental” theory about identities, as are, probably, national economy, national army and common borders.⁵ We have also included some other items which, although not manifestly related to any of these three theories, could be termed “affective-symbolic” components of identity; these include national independence and sovereignty, national pride, national character and national symbols.

We suggest a similar grouping of items with respect to European identity. Common civilization, membership of a European society with many languages and cultures, a sense of common ancestry and common history and destiny pertain to the “cultural” theory as applied to a European identity; an emerging common political and legal system and common rights and duties are more closely related to the “civic” conception of European identity; and a common system of social protection and the right to freedom of movement and residence are linked to the “instrumental” vision of identity, as are, probably, the future European defense system, common borders and a single currency.⁶ We also included pride in being European, in the EU or in a set of European Union symbols as more closely related to an “affective-symbolic” conception of identities.⁷

⁵ These items could have also a significant affective-symbolic dimension.

⁶ These items could also have an important affective-symbolic dimension. Particularly, a single European currency may have a strong symbolic value “because a country’s money is a symbol of its sovereignty. Support for EMU and the euro, provides, therefore, a crucial test case for whether and why European citizens may be willing to transfer power from the nation-state to European institutions, and it has important implications for the future direction of institution-building within the European Union” (Kaltenthaler and Anderson 2001: 141).

⁷ In these last two batteries of questions the respondent had the option to answer “I do not feel national/European”. In these cases, the interviewer did not proceed with the remaining questions in each battery. Except in Great Britain, this option was not offered as a prior filter, but only recorded if the respondent spontaneously mentioned the idea. This poses a problem for comparative analysis, since we found that as many as 62 percent of British respondents did in fact state that they did not feel European. Since we attributed the missing values, this could distort the validity of the results for Great Britain. However, in order to test for this we ran some of the analyses shown below first with, and then without, input for the British case, and obtained

Table 1. National survey samples and number of qualitative interviews

Country	Eurobarometer 57.2 net sample size	Qualitative interviews
Germany (East)	1023	
Germany (West)	1016	30
Greece	1002	36
Spain	1000	24/3 focus groups
Italy	1002	24
Austria	1018	24
Great Britain	1038	36
Czech Republic	1013	24
Hungary	1027	24
Poland	1000	33

Eurobarometer's fieldwork was carried out between April and June 2002. Interviews were given between December 2002 and May 2003 depending on the country.

This survey data is clarified, illustrated and complemented with qualitative data from long interviews carried out in each country (see Table 1). A minimum of 24 interviews were conducted in each of the member states, paying attention to respondents' gender, age, size of habitat, professional profiles and educational level with the aim to maximize the possibility of different discourses. We work in this chapter with national reports instead of the original interviews, since they were given in nine different languages.⁸

One shortcoming of our analysis is the fact that it is essentially static, while both individual and collective identities are in fact dynamic, changing over time. In light of this, we have opted to compare and analyze the differences between countries. This kind of analysis can be considered dynamic to the extent that it shows differences among countries. Nonetheless, the reader should remain aware that the data simply constitutes a snapshot in time and depicts identities as being more stable than they really are.⁹

Analysis

Let us consider the question of the exclusiveness or inclusiveness of national and European identities in the first place. To that end we have calculated, for each country, the proportion of the population expressing simultaneous attachment (closeness) to both the nation and Europe, as well as various measures of the strength of their attachments to each of these identities. This data is included in table 2.

virtually the same results on both occasions. Therefore, even in the British case we opted to attribute the missing values, as doing so does not seriously disrupt the analysis.

⁸ The qualitative analysis of surveys is based on the EURONAT WP6 national reports produced by Spohn (Austria and Germany), Kiss, Somogyi and Pohl (Hungary), Worek (Poland), Ichijo (Great Britain), Triandafyllidou (Italy), Kokosalakis (Greece), Voříšek (Czech Republic), Ruiz Jiménez, González Enriquez and Biencinto (Spain). These reports, and more information regarding the methodology followed in each report can be found in the EURONAT web page: <http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/EURONAT/Projects.shtml>.

⁹ This is also a methodological limitation deriving from the techniques and kind of data used to measure identities through the administration of a single questionnaire and the temporal concentration of long interviews. As social scientists we were confronted by the well-known trade-off between more detailed and sophisticated case studies or simplified comparison among countries.

Table 2. Dual Identities and Attachment to the Nation and Europe

	Percentage of population with dual identity: national and European (a)	Net percentage of population with dual identities (national and European) (b)	Comparative attachment to national and European identities (c)
GERMANY WEST	47	-6	.715
GERMANY EAST	45	-10	.792
AUSTRIA	51	2	.689
GREAT BRITAIN	36	-28	.758
ITALY	64	28	.669
SPAIN	61	22	.718
GREECE	40	-20	1.099
HUNGARY	54	8	1.043
POLAND	46	-8	1.012
CZECH REPUBLIC	54	8	.748

(a) Computed from contingency table. This is the percentage of those who are very close or quite close to their nation and who simultaneously feel very close or quite close to the EU.

(b) Computed from contingency table. This is the percentage of the population with dual identities (they are very close or close both to their nation and the EU) minus the percentage of population with only national identity (very close or close to their countries but not very, or not at all, close to the EU). A negative value indicate that most of the population in the country hold only national identities. A positive value indicates that the percentage of those with dual identities outnumbers the percentage of population with only national identification.

(c) Independently of the percentage of the population holding only national or dual identities, this column measures the relative strength of attachment to both identities. It is the median value of subtracting median identification with the EU from median identification with the nation. A positive value indicates that attachment to the nation is stronger than attachment to the EU (that is, closeness to the nation is closer).

The first point to be highlighted from this table is that national and European identities do not, in fact, seem to be incompatible (that is, exclusive). The percentage of respondents expressing dual identities (those who feel close to both their nation and Europe, (shown in the first column) is quite high in all the countries. Nonetheless, this figure ranges from 36 and 40 percent of the total in Great Britain and Greece, respectively, to 64 and 61 percent in Italy and Spain. Looking at the same data from a different perspective (subtracting the percentage of people with exclusively national identities from the percentage of dual identity holders, shown in the second column), exclusively national identities are still held by a significant number of citizens of Great Britain and Greece, above all, but are also common in Germany (East and West) and Poland. Therefore, from the first two columns in Table 2 we could conclude that national and European identities are inclusive, to some extent, in all countries (backing, in part, hypothesis number five). Our conclusion from qualitative interviews is coincident. Many citizens, in most countries, would acknowledge that they hold more than one identity, or different identity levels (local, regional, national, European...). Quite interesting, however, from the small number of qualitative interviews in each country, we have found some variations pointing in the same direction as the survey data. That is, citizens from Great Britain, for example, find it more difficult to combine these two identities

than citizens in Spain and Italy. Thus, the second column in Table 2, and these qualitative interviews, do also pose a question: is the variation in the compatibility between these two identities caused by the different importance of “cultural”, “instrumental” and “civic” elements of attachment in each country? We will answer this question later.

Before, and equally significant, even in those countries where more citizens have dual than exclusively national identities, attachment to national identities is still stronger than attachment to European identities (the median value of subtracting median identification with the EU from median identification with the nation is always favorable to the nation, shown in the third column of Table 2). In other words, there is no correlation between a higher proportion of the population with dual identities and a relatively lower attachment to the nation. In some countries, qualitative interviews have also shown that citizens express stronger feeling of attachment to their nation than Europe, even if acknowledging the compatibility of both. This data is informative on the individual level, but we cannot conclude anything on the aggregate level, since we have just too few cases.

In terms of our hypotheses, the data in Table 2 would back partially hypothesis number three (European identities are weak in comparison to national identities, although we cannot yet assure if that would be the consequence of the European identity lacking “cultural” foundations) and hypothesis number five (European and national identities are compatible, although we cannot yet assure if that would be a consequence of the European identity being based on “civic” elements). However, the evidence in the table would reject hypothesis number four, since the emergence of a European identity does not weaken the strong attachment to the nation. In fact, stronger attachment to the nation is a feature common to all the countries (see that all of the figures in the third column in Table 2 are positive). Furthermore, the strength of the bonds to the nation is similar in Great Britain (0.758), where exclusive national identities are predominant, and in Spain (0.718), where dual identity holders outnumber exclusive national identity holders.

Dimensions/Elements

Having established the apparent compatibility of national and European identities, we should ask whether this compatibility is a result of the two identities having different meanings? This question is easier to answer with the survey data, but our result might be also more artificial. That is, our main findings from qualitative interviews show the difficulties that respondents in each country encounter to define what it is to be European. The administration of close-ended questionnaires in the survey might have artificially eliminated much of these ambiguities. However, the data is not contradictory, so it might be possible to obtain a quite complete picture using both the survey and the qualitative interviews as complementary data.

A first interesting finding, not captured in the survey, is the fact that European identities are contextual. European identities are always defined in relation to other continents or cultures and, especially, in contrast to the United States.¹⁰ This also reflects the fact that identities are much more fluid than our survey data would suggest. Citizens do not feel European or national one hundred percent of the time, only punctually would one of these two identities become salient, depending on the specific context.

Coming back to the survey data, Table 3 lists the five items identified as the most important grounds for national and European identification in each country. We have included some data from Table 2 which should also be taken into account in this context (net percentage of dual identity holders and comparative attachment to national and European

¹⁰ Inner identity levels (national, regional, local...) are also contextual.

identities). This table makes it possible to begin exploring the dimensions of identification, and hence to gain a deeper understanding of the compatibility or otherwise of national and European identities. A first vague impression is that attachment to the nation is largely defined in “cultural” terms (language and culture happens to be mentioned among the five most important items for national identity in virtually all the countries), while attachment to Europe is mainly based on “instrumental” considerations (the common currency – economy in the table- and the right of free movement and residence is a recurrent element among the five most important items of European identity in virtually all countries). This is even more clearly shown in Tables 4 and 5, which are simpler summaries from Table 3 to make it more easily understandable.

Table 4 shows the five items that were most frequently mentioned among the five most important for national identification (we ranked the items according to their average importance and selected the five highest averages in each country). Some of these items were selected in all countries, while others were only relevant for a few or even a single country. The table also shows the number of times the item ranked first in the list of items. All countries mentioned a common language among the five most important elements for national identification, eight mentioned common culture, customs and traditions and common ancestry and seven referred to a common history and a common destiny. All the first-placed items mentioned correspond to the “cultural” theory of identities. Therefore, we can conclude that national identity is largely defined in “cultural” terms. This finding is largely supported also by our qualitative interviews. Table 5 provides the same information, but in this case for European identities. The right to freedom of movement and residence in any part of the EU and a single currency (economy in the table) were mentioned in nine and eight countries respectively. Other items such as language and culture or civilization were also identified as important. That is, the most frequently mentioned items include those that belong to the “instrumental” conception of identity, while others corresponding to the “cultural” theory are also mentioned. That the “instrumental” (mainly economic) dimension of European identities was also present in qualitative interviews comes as no surprise, but we did not anticipate to what extent the “cultural” elements also appeared as relevant, quite spontaneously, without being specifically asked for in most cases. We shall develop in a separate section below the specific meaning that respondents gave to this “cultural” dimension. It is possible that what we consider as “a European identity” has really two dimensions, one (“instrumental”) expressed by the respondents as citizens of the EU, and another (“cultural”) one expressed as inhabitants of Europe.

Table 3. Most Important Items for National and European Identification

GERMANY EAST			GERMANY WEST		
Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility	Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility
LANGUAGE	MOV./RES.	Net inclusiveness	CULTURE	MOV./RES.	Net inclusiveness
CULTURE	ECONOMY	-10	LANGUAGE	ECONOMY	-6
ANCESTRY	CIVILIZATION	Comparative	RIGHTS	CIVILIZATION	Comparative
HISTORY	LANG./CULT. BORDERS	attachment ,792	ANCESTRY	LANG./CULT. BORDERS	attachment ,715
HISTORY	RIGHTS		HISTORY	BORDERS	
AUSTRIA			GREAT BRITAIN		
Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility	Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility
LANGUAGE	MOV./RES.	Net inclusiveness	LANGUAGE	MOV./RES.	Net inclusiveness
CULTURE	CIVILIZATION	2	BORDERS	LANG./CULT.	-28
BORDERS	LANG./CULT.	Comparative	CULTURE	ECONOMY	Comparative
RIGHTS	BORDERS	attachment	ANCEST./PRIDE	CIVILIZATION	attachment
HISTORY	RIGHTS	,689	SOVEREIGNTY	RIGHTS	,758
ITALY			SPAIN		
Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility	Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility
LANGUAGE	ECONOMY	Net inclusiveness	LANGUAGE	ECONOMY	Net inclusiveness
CULTURE	MOV./RES.	28	CULTURE	MOV./RES.	22
ANCESTRY	LANG./CULT.	Comparative	BORDERS	LANG./CULT.	Comparative
SYMBOLS	ARMY	attachment	RIGHTS	RIGHTS	attachment
RIGHTS	RIGHTS	,669	CHARACTER	BORDERS	,718
GREECE			POLAND		
Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility	Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility
SYMBOLS	MOV./RES.	Net inclusiveness	LANGUAGE	CIVILIZATION	Net inclusiveness
LANGUAGE	ECONOMY	-20	SYMBOLS	MOV./RES.	-8
ANCESTRY	BORDERS	Comparative	ANCESTRY	LANG./CULT.	Comparative
PRIDE	SOVEREIGNTY	Attachment	HISTORY	ECONOMY	attachment
HISTORY	ARMY	1,099	BORDERS	ARMY	1,012
HUNGARY			CZECH REPUBLIC		
Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility	Five most important for nation	Five most important for Europe	Compatibility
LANGUAGE	CIVILIZATION	Net inclusiveness	LANGUAGE	CIVILIZATION	Net inclusiveness
CULTURE	LANG./CULT.	8	CULTURE	LANG./CULT.	8
HISTORY	ECONOMY	Comparative	SYMBOLS	MOV./RES.	Comparative
ANCESTRY	HISTORY	Attachment	ANCESTRY	BORDERS	attachment
SYMBOLS	PRIDE	1,043	HISTORY	PRIDE	,748

Measures of compatibility between national and European identifications are taken from Table 4.
SOURCE: Standard Eurobarometer 57.2 (2002).

Regarding the survey data, our findings partially support hypothesis number two, since European identities seem to be based mainly on “instrumental” considerations. Nonetheless, the role played by “cultural” elements cannot be considered minor, especially in Central and Eastern European member states, where they rank higher than instrumental considerations. However, the important finding here, if we take the results shown in Tables 4 and 5 together, is the varying degrees of emphasis placed on instrumental items. In fact, this constitutes the main difference between national- and European-level identities. The evidence does not support hypothesis number one, since “cultural” elements also play a role in the configuration of European identities together with “instrumental” considerations.

**Table 4. National Identification:
Items mentioned among the five most important**

LANGUAGE	Total mention	10: All
	Mention in the first place	8: G.E., A, G.B., IT, SP, P, H, CZ
CULTURE	Total mention	8: G.E., G.W., A, G.B., IT, SP, H, CZ
	Mention in the first place	1: G.W.
ANCESTRY	Total mention	8: G.E., G.W., G.B., IT, GR, P, H, CZ
	Mention in the first place	0
HISTORY	Total mention	7: G.E., G.W., A, GR, P, H, CZ
	Mention in the first place	0
SYMBOLS	Total mention	5: IT, GR, P, H, CZ
	Mention in the first place	1: GR
RIGHTS	Total mention	5: G.E., G.W., A, IT, SP,
	Mention in the first place	0
BORDERS	Total mention	4: A, G.B., SP, P
	Mention in the first place	0
PRIDE	Total mention	2: G.B., GR
	Mention in the first place	0
SOVEREIGNTY	Total mention	1: G.B.
	Mention in the first place	0

**Table 5. European identification:
Items mentioned among the five most important**

MOV./RES.	Total mention	9: G.E., G.W., A, G.B., IT, SP, GR, P, CZ
	Mention in the first place	5: G.E., G.W., A, G.B., GR
LANG./CULT.	Total mention	9: G.E., G.W., A, G.B., IT, SP, P, H, CZ
	Mention in the first place	0
ECONOMY	Total mention	8: G.E., G.W., G.B., IT, SP, GR, P, H
	Mention in the first place	2: IT, SP
CIVILIZATION	Total mention	7: G.E., G.W., A,, G.B., P, H, CZ
	Mention in the first place	3: P, H, CZ
BORDERS	Total mention	6: G.E., G.W., A, SP, GR, CZ
	Mention in the first place	0
RIGHTS	Total mention	3: G.B., IT, SP
	Mention in the first place	0
ARMY	Total mention	3: IT, GR, P
	Mention in the first place	0
PRIDE	Total mention	2: H, CZ
	Mention in the first place	0
SOVEREIGNTY	Total mention	1: GR
	Mention in the first place	0
HISTORY	Total mention	1: H
	Mention in the first place	0

While this pattern applies in all the countries, we find that the two identities are more compatible in some countries than in others. This can be seen in Table 3 and introducing in the analysis the information extracted from Table 2. Looking at the net percentage of the population with dual identities, we perceive that it varies in different countries, even when they share similar sources of national (“cultural” elements) and European identification (“instrumental” elements). Take Great Britain and Italy as an example; “cultural” elements are important for the national identity of citizens in both countries (both have language and culture among the five most important items for national identification), while “instrumental” elements are equally important in both countries for the European identity of their citizens (common currency and the right of free movement and residence are mentioned among the five most important items for European identity), however exclusive national identity holders outnumber dual identity holders in Great Britain by 28 points, while in Italy the situation is exactly the contrary: dual identity holders outnumber exclusively national identity holders by exactly 28 points.

Moreover, Eastern European countries (and Central European countries to a certain extent) diverge from the general pattern described here, in that “cultural” (as opposed to “instrumental”) considerations are important both for their European and national identifications. The cases of Hungary and the Czech Republic, in particular, suggest that even if attachments to multiple identities derive from the same “cultural” sources, national and European identities may still be compatible. Furthermore, if we take into account that in both countries dual identity holders (as measured by the net inclusiveness) outnumber exclusive national identity holders by eight points and that the bonds to the nation and Europe (as measured by the comparative attachment) still favor the nation, we would conclude that the emergence of a European identity based on “cultural” elements similar to those of national identity does not endanger or weaken national loyalties (as the “cultural” theory suggests).

What, therefore, makes identities compatible or incompatible? We can rule out differences in the relative importance of “cultural” elements of attachment to the nation, an explanation suggested by Goldmann and Gilland (2001), since this is a pattern which is more or less common to all the countries while the net percentage of dual identity holders varies considerably among them. Accordingly, one way of attempting to answer this question is by focusing on the countries with the highest and lowest level of compatibility between the two types of identities. The countries where identities are least compatible are Great Britain and Greece, while the countries in which the two identities are most compatible are Italy and Spain. What do each of these two pairs of countries have in common which makes them different from the rest? Great Britain and Greece are the only two countries where pride is mentioned among the five most important items for national identification. Great Britain is the only country that mentions sovereignty, and where we find the lowest level of compatibility between national and European identification (see Table 3). Italy and Spain are the only two countries in which rights and duties figure among the five most important items for both national and European identification (see Table 3). This suggests that a strong feeling of national pride and attachment to national sovereignty may hinder the development of a European identity, but it does not presuppose that the national identity in those countries is more “culturally” based. Furthermore, the relation between national pride and European identities is not explored in any of the three theories posed above. However, there might be some interesting correlations: a recent investigation by Belot (2003) points exactly in the same direction regarding the importance of national pride (how it is constructed and the elements it lays on) to explain the European identity of young British and French people. Finally, our findings in this last part of the section back hypothesis number five, since in those countries (Spain and Portugal) that give importance to civic elements both at the

national and European identity levels, the measure of compatibility is the highest among the countries studied.

The Cultural Dimension of European Identities: Deep Historical Roots, Rich Cultural Diversity, Christian-humanistic Values

The fact that the countries in Europe have deep, long-lasting historical roots was usually brought up in the interviews as one important element in the definition of what it is to be European. As we also said, European identities are contextual. In this sense, Europe is defined in contrast to the United States and the “new world” at large (including also Canada and Australia), and their short historical records. Only British respondents were less happy about the definition of Europe in cultural terms, but those elements were also present. According to two recent surveys carried out in one case by the German Marshall Fund and the Chicago Council of Foreign Relations, and in the other by the Pew Research Center, the United States may be, in fact, playing the role of Europe’s significant other, since anti-Americanism is increasing in Europe.¹¹

(...) We are more cultured than the Americans are, we have a wider choice of food, a greater sense of history, a more socially imbedded approach; and somehow there’s a European ideal that Americans are somehow just too money oriented; or insular to understand (Interview 7, Great Britain).

What I feel is a European culture in the sense... of history, this is the thing that I feel [we Europeans have] in common (Interview 5, Italy).

[When I was outside of Hungary in Japan], that is when I felt that I am Hungarian and European. Not Japanese, not American, not anything else, however attractive they may be, but... in other words, that I am Hungarian and that I love Hungary and Europe (Interview 17, Hungary).

It is interesting to note, however, that in this contextual definition of Europe, there was no mention of “cultural” identities in Asian or African countries with historical records older than the Europeans, such as Egypt or China, for example. Even more so, some respondents seemed to equate the European culture, with the culture of Western Europe (Great Britain, for example). On the other hand, the relative importance given to deep long-lasting historical roots, does not imply that the informants understood that all European countries shared only one common history or culture. On the contrary, there was a recognition of high levels of internal European cultural diversity, but this was positively evaluated (also, again, in contrast to the United States).

Among the elements relevant in this “cultural” dimension, we must mention the understanding of Europe as a community of Christian and humanistic values. In this sense, Europe was defined mainly against Muslim cultures and countries. In some cases, there was not just the existence of a different confession per se, but the negative characteristic ascribed to Islam as opposed to the European tradition of freedom, equality and respect for human rights. Intolerance, fanaticism and the discrimination against women would not be accepted as European defining characteristics.

Religion is one of the basic characteristics of European civilization... let’s not forget that religion is a huge part not to say the most basic in the formation of that which we call Europe (Interview 21, Greece).

¹¹ See *The Economist*, 4-10 January 2003, pages 10-20. Apparently, it seems that the Czech respondents did not put much emphasis on these contrasts between Europe and the United States, although they distinguished North American citizens by their consumerism, greed or lack of traditions at times.

[In India] when I travelled to the north, there were the Muslims... I don't know, it was the matter I was a woman and there... just rules... the discrimination and... It's moments that... strike you a bit (...) if they kick you off the Mosco just because you're a woman then... you just aren't used to this as a European, are you? (Interview 22, Czech Republic).

Finally, it seems plausible that the importance of cultural elements is more related to a (European) continental identity than to a EU identity. We cannot test this hypothesis because we did not anticipate the possible existence of these two dimensions of a European identity in the survey or in the long interviews. However, in some countries, respondents to the long interviews seemed to differentiate between both realities.

Europe and the EU are not the same thing, you know? Because Europe is a broader concept. The EU, well, somehow, it has more economic connotations, and, if you say "Europe", I think more of the people than in..., well, in some similarities among people, even though they live in different countries and all that. (...). Historically Europe consists of more countries than the EU now has (...). (Interview 19, Spain).

The existence of these two dimensions would explain why both "instrumental" and "cultural" elements appear as relevant within European identities in our survey. First, we did not distinguish between Europe as a continent and the EU; and second, we included cultural elements in the list of elements relevant for European identification. However, we cannot be sure if respondents answered as citizens of the EU or as inhabitants of Europe. An interesting clue, though, is provided by the most recent member states (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic), which at the time of the survey fieldwork still held the category of accession countries. Citizens from these countries, therefore, would have answered about their European identities mainly as European inhabitants, since they lacked experience as EU citizens. It is interesting to note that it is precisely in these countries where the "cultural" elements of European identity are most important.

In summary, our qualitative interview data also show that in most of the countries respondents considered "cultural" elements as relevant in the definition of European identities: the existence of deep and long-lasting historical roots, cultural diversity and a Christian religion make Europeans different from others. These others are mainly North American citizens and citizens from Muslim countries. In this sense, the qualitative interviews give us a more dynamic picture of identities. We get the idea that identities become salient depending on the context they are discussed or considered. People are not aware of their local, national or European identity one hundred percent of the time. Only in specific circumstances would they become aware of them. In these cases, citizens see their national and European identities as compatible most of the time.

We do not have the time, or the space, here to discuss the possible implications of this finding. We shall mention, however, that some scholars fear that a European identity based on "cultural" elements may develop into a "racist" and exclusive identity against non-EU citizens or non-Europeans. Maybe the parallelism between nation-state formation and the emergence of a European identity is present again in that reasoning. We just can say that race, as such, did not appear in our interviews, but maybe religion, on the other hand, could substitute for it as the basis for such an exclusive identity.

Conclusions

At the beginning of this article we discussed a number of theories and hypotheses regarding the possible sources of European identification and the relation between European and

national identities. We will now discuss the plausibility and validity of these hypotheses in the light of the empirical data and analysis presented above.

First, and most important, we must reject hypothesis number one regarding the low importance of cultural elements for the emergence and development of a European identity. The cultural dimension is not absent from the notion of European identity; cultural elements are mentioned among the five most important items in most of the countries analysed (in Table 5, “language” is mentioned by nine out of ten countries, and a “common European civilization” by seven of them). It should be remembered that authors such as Smith (1999) and Østerud (1999) hypothesised that it would be extremely difficult for a European identity to emerge, given a) the strength of national “cultural” identities and b) the simultaneous lack of European “cultural” elements shared by all Europeans. However, not only has a European identity emerged in all countries, as measured by the percentage of dual identity holders (in Table 2), but in most of them this European identity includes “cultural” elements (among the five most relevant), in a similar vein to national identities (Tables 3 and 5). Hence, on the one hand we find that national identities are still stronger and primarily “cultural”; but on the other hand we find that “cultural” attachment to a European identity is also relevant (above all in Eastern and Central European countries, but also in other members states). So there is also much more common “cultural” ground among the European countries on which to build up a European identity than this theory would suggest. Our qualitative interviews also confirmed the large importance of the “cultural” dimension, and allowed us to specify the content or understanding of it. As we said deep and long-lasting historical roots, cultural diversity and Cristian-humanistic values are the elements that contribute the most to differentiate Europeans from others. Those others are important in the definition of Europeaness, since European identities are contextual (as well as local and national identities). North American and Muslim countries’ citizens are the most relevant others against who the Europeans define themselves in these cultural terms.

Regarding the second hypothesis, that European identities are either instrumental or civic, we have in part disconfirmed it by rejecting also the first hypothesis and having shown that European identities bear a cultural dimension. However, we have brought more specific information for discussing this hypothesis. Tables 3 and 5 have revealed that European identities have also a quite important “instrumental” dimension. In most countries this dimension is more important than the “cultural” one (although cultural elements are not absent), and much more important than in the configuration of national identities. On the other hand, our analysis suggests that we are unlikely to see the emergence of a European identity based primarily on civic considerations. According to our data, only in three out of nine countries did rights and duties figure among the five most important items for citizens’ European identifications (Table 5).

The fact that European identities are based mainly on “instrumental” considerations has further important implications. It may favor the possibility of the EU being able to create European identities by intensifying the perceived (economic or political) benefits of membership. However, it should be noted that in countries which stand out for their strong sense of national pride, such as Greece or Great Britain, European identification might actually weaken as the perception that the EU is working effectively intensifies. Although this hypothesis has yet to be tested, we have found that in these two countries, both of which mentioned pride among the five most important components of national identification, identities are less compatible even though, as in other countries, instrumental considerations were mentioned as grounds for European identification. Accordingly, the perception that the EU performs better than the nation-state could be perceived as a threat to citizens’ national pride (in order for national pride to remain high, citizens must believe that their own country functions better than the EU).

Our third hypothesis stated that, lacking cultural basis, European identities would be weaker than national identities. We have found some support for this hypothesis. That is, attachment to the nation remains stronger than attachment to Europe (Table 2, third column). However, European identities are not weaker than national identity because they lack a cultural basis. We observe countries (Hungary and the Czech Republic, in Table 3) that base both their national and European identity on cultural elements, in which dual identity holders outnumber exclusive national identity holders, and yet the bonds to the nation continue to be stronger than bonds to Europe.

The fourth hypothesis spoke about the exclusiveness of national and European identities. Our data have shown, however, that it is not true that citizens with weaker national identities develop stronger European identities or that in those countries with the higher percentage of dual identities, or European identity holders the attachment to the nation is weaker than in countries with a higher percentage of exclusive national identity holders. It is clear from the data in Table 2 that the bonds to the nation have remained stronger than the bonds to Europe even in those countries where the large majority of citizens are dual identity holders.

As regards hypothesis number five, about national and European identities being more compatible when European identities are civic, we have already mentioned the minor role of civic elements in the configuration of contemporary European identities. Nevertheless the cases of Italy and Spain tend to back this hypothesis. That is, those two countries show that the coexistence of “civic” elements of attachment both to the nation and Europe favors the compatibility of national and European identities (Table 3). The implication from this second finding, is that it might be possible for European identities (dual identities) to spread even in those countries with strong national pride, increasing the perception of shared norms and values common to all Europeans and particularly common to nationals in each country and to Europeans.

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