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**Ser Europeu numa Europa em crise / Being  
European in a Europe in crisis**



**Universidade de Aveiro** Departamento de Línguas e Culturas  
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**palavras-chave****identidade, Europa, identidade Europeia, crise, percepções, símbolos****resumo**

A Europa encontra-se a atravessar um período marcado por uma crise política, económica e social. Esta crise tem repercussões a vários níveis, mas este trabalho analisará, essencialmente, o impacto da crise sobre a questão da identidade europeia. De facto, desde há bastante tempo se discute a problemática da identidade ou identidades da União Europeia e há diferentes perspetivas sobre esta temática. Ao longo desta dissertação abordam-se diferentes pontos de vista de vários teóricos da Europa sobre a questão da identidade. Para além disso, na parte prática desta dissertação analisam-se as representações que cidadãos de diferentes países europeus têm em relação à Europa e em relação a si próprios. Por último, é objetivo desta dissertação avaliar o impacto da crise sobre a percepção dos europeus em relação à Europa e à identidade Europeia.

**keywords****identity, Europe, European identity, crisis, perceptions, symbols****abstract**

Europe is currently facing a period deeply marked by a political, economic and social crisis. This crisis has repercussions at different levels, but this study will essentially address the impact of the crisis upon the question of European identity. In fact, the problematic of identity or identities in the European Union has been an issue for a while now and there are different perspectives on the matter. In this dissertation we will look at different views of several authors about the issue of identity. Moreover, following the field research carried out in the course of the study, we will analyze the representations that citizens from different European countries have regarding Europe and regarding themselves. Lastly, we will assess the impact of the current crisis upon the perception of Europeans about Europe and European identity.

## CONTENTS

### **Introduction**

.....14

### **Chapter 1 - Identity and identity construction**

.....18

#### 1.1 - Identity and identification

.....18

#### 1.2 - “I”, “we” and the “Others”

.....23

#### 1.3 - Individual identity, collective identity, citizenship and multiple identities

.....25

### **Chapter 2 - Towards the creation of a united Europe**

.....34

#### 2.1 – “What is Europe?”

.....34

#### 2.2 – From the notion of a united Europe to the creation of the EU

.....36

##### 2.2.1 - The models of European integration

.....38

#### 2.3 - Integration and identity

.....40



2.4 - Symbols of <i>Europeanness</i>	
2.4.1 - What is a symbol?	48
2.4.2 - The European Flag	52
2.4.3 - The European anthem	54
2.4.4 - Europe's Day – 9 <sup>th</sup> of May	55
2.4.5 - The motto – United in diversity	58
2.4.6 - The currency – The Euro	58
2.5 - The role of the European Union in identity construction	60
<b>Chapter 3 - The crisis and the future of Europe and European identity</b>	66
3.1 – What is the economic crisis all about?	66
3.2 – To what extent is the crisis influencing Europeans' opinions on the EU?	69
<b>Chapter 4 - The perception of Europeans about Europe</b>	73
4.1 – Field study – context and aims	73

4.2 – Methodology and procedures	74
4.3 – The “Opinion Guestbook”	77
4.4 - Questionnaire analysis	85
4.5 - Interview results	98
4.6 – Discussion of results	104
<b>Conclusion</b>	108
<b>Bibliography</b>	111
<b>Appendix 1</b>	117
<b>Appendix 2</b>	119
<b>Appendix 3</b>	121
<b>Appendix 4</b>	138

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1 - Comical cartoon featuring cultural traits of different European peoples</b> .....	73
<b>Figure 2 - Gender of respondents</b> .....	85
<b>Figure 3 - Age range of respondents</b> .....	86
<b>Figure 4 - Nationality of respondents</b> .....	87
<b>Figure 5 - How well do the respondents know European institutions?</b> .....	87
<b>Figure 6 - How often do respondents vote in European elections?</b> .....	88
<b>Figure 7 - What do respondents feel more connected to?</b> .....	89
<b>Figure 8 - Do respondents consider themselves to be European?</b> .....	89
<b>Figure 9 - What does Europe means to respondents?</b> .....	90
<b>Figure 10 - The three main symbols of <i>Europeanness</i></b> .....	91

<b>Figure 11 - Do respondents believe in a united Europe?</b>	91
<b>Figure 12 - Do respondents believe their country to have benefitted from being in the EU?</b>	92
<b>Figure 13 - Do respondents wish their country to remain part of the EU?</b>	92
<b>Figure 14 - Do respondents believe Europe will survive the current crisis?</b>	93
<b>Figure 15 - Who do respondents hold responsible for the current crisis?</b>	94
<b>Figure 16 -Where do respondents feel the crisis to be more significant?</b>	94
<b>Figure 17 - Do respondents distinguish between the Eurozone and Europe?</b>	95
<b>Figure 18 – Do respondents feel Europe can survive without the Euro?</b>	96
<b>Figure 19 - Who is currently in charge of Europe?</b>	96

**LIST OF TABLES**

**Table 1 - Methods used in the field-study and corresponding objectives**

.....77

## INTRODUCTION

The creation and development of a European identity has been a concern of the EU since it is believed it will help attaining more legitimacy for its actions and encouraging complete integration. Accused of being distant from the citizens and having been thought of, developed and ruled by political elites, the EU has progressively realized that it needs citizens' support in order to legitimize its actions and to proceed to further integration. The way of doing it is by developing and promoting a sense of 'we-ness' amongst the different European peoples. Yet, the European reality is a very complex one for it is based upon cultural diversity and plurality and this distinctive situation has made it hard to develop a shared identity within Europe. For a long time the EU has been trying to foment a *unity in diversity* by means of different projects such as the development of symbols like a flag, an anthem, a common currency, common educational and cultural projects, among others, these being expected to create a feeling of communion between the different cultures and peoples that compose Europe. This may be seen as an attempt to develop a collective identity and the use of symbols is thus understood as a way to develop, maintain, preserve and reinforce the countries' shared culture – in other words to foment *Europeanness*. The question of identity reveals itself more pertinent in a period when Europe is facing a deep recession and crisis and is fighting for survival. It proves itself then important to foment cooperation and help between the different peoples that are part of Europe so that the EU can overcome the crisis. The crisis may be seen as a threat to the continuation of the EU as we know it, but it also presents itself as an opportunity to create and reinforce bounds between the peoples and to promote interaction between cultures based on the idea that united they are stronger and more likely to face difficulties with success.

Throughout my life I have had the opportunity of living two very distinct experiences – life before entering the EU and after being part of the European Union and I believe that as a citizen of the EU I have been able to enjoy some privileges granted by EU membership, such as travelling more easily within Europe, not needing to exchange currency as frequently as before and finding a wide variety of products whenever I go shopping, for

instance. I have also had the opportunity of getting to know more about different cultures and different countries both as a student, as a worker and in my daily routine since there are many citizens from other EU-members living next to me. I believe this has changed my perspective of the world for it has shortened distances and at the same time it has made me think of the complexities of this *global village* we all are part of. By interacting with people from different backgrounds and different cultures, I became interested on what connects us and what makes us different from others and also on how people are able to deal with these similarities and differences, especially at the level of the European Union since in this community we are asked to cooperate based on a *unity of diversity*. Furthermore, the crisis that is affecting the whole world is sure to have repercussions on how people identify themselves and on their beliefs and expectations about the European Union. Throughout this dissertation I then hope to gain insight on how Europeans feel and what European identity consists of in the opinion of different Europeans. Moreover, I expect to understand how the current crisis is affecting people's perception of identity and on whether it is bringing them closer to feeling more or less Europeans.

This dissertation is divided into five chapters: in the three first chapters I analyze the theme of identity and focus on the specificities of Europe and of European identity, which seems to be crucial for the future of the Europe Union. In addition, I address the repercussions the current crisis may be having regarding the development of a European identity. In the fourth chapter I describe the field study carried out regarding Europeans' attitudes and opinions towards European identity in a time of crisis and present and analyze the data collected. In the last chapter conclusions are presented. More specifically:

In the first chapter – Identity and identity construction, I outline the concept of identity, which is complex and dynamic and which has been developed in several disciplines. The concepts 'identity' and 'identification' are distinguished and the importance of the notion of 'recognition' by others and the very existence of 'others' to the building and development of an identity is highlighted. I also clarify the notions of individual identity and of collective identity and recognize the existence of multiple identities which are played by the individual according to circumstances.

In chapter 2 – Towards the creation of a united Europe, I present a description of Europe as a continent, distinguishing it from Europe as a political and institutional entity. I focus

essentially on the European Union and its search for a shared identity. A brief description of the creation of the EU is provided and the steps taken by the EU in order to create a sense of union and belonging between its constituents are analyzed. Furthermore, I address the importance of symbols like the currency, the flag, the anthem, the motto and a 'special day' for the promotion of identity and analyze the evolution and relevance of each of these symbols to identity construction. The truth is that many different cultures compose Europe and this fact may present itself as an advantage for the construction of a pluralized shared identity based upon the idea of unity in diversity.

In the third chapter – The crisis and the future of Europe and European identity, I consider the role the current economic crisis has been playing regarding the development of a European identity and its possible repercussions as far as the future of Europe is concerned. The results of Eurobarometer 75 (2011), a survey which aimed to assess to what extent the crisis is influencing Europeans' opinion on the EU, are taken into account.

In the fourth chapter – The perception of Europeans about Europe, I present the results of a field-study carried out over the period of three months: from December 2011 up to February 2012, which aimed at understanding the perception of Europeans about Europe. Hence in chapter 4 the views of representatives of different European and non-European countries are presented regarding the crisis and its influence upon identity: has it promoted the development of a European identity or endangered it? Furthermore, I try to understand what their perception of their own identity is and what they understand being a European means. In order to obtain this data, a mixed methodology was developed which consisted of an "*Opinion Guestbook*", interviews and questionnaires. By means of this methodology, qualitative and quantitative data regarding people's perceptions of the crisis and the role it has been playing upon European identity was collected. Both Europeans and non-Europeans were asked to participate in the research so as to have a broader perspective of what people recognize (or not) as being a European identity.

In the last chapter – Conclusion – the results of the study are outlined and some ideas for future studies regarding European identity are presented.

The layout of the "*Opinion Guestbook*", whose results are discussed in chapter 4, can be found in Appendix 1. A copy of the interview submitted by e-mail, whose results are



discussed in chapter 4, can be read in Appendix 2. In Appendix 3 a copy of the Questionnaire handed out to tourists is made available in four languages – Portuguese, English, German and Italian. The analysis of its results can be found in chapter 4. Appendix 4 includes the statistical results of the Questionnaire.

## Chapter 1

### Identity and identity construction

*“Identity is such a crucial affair that one shouldn't rush into it.”*

David Quammen (Science and nature writer, b.1948)

When approaching the theme of European identity, it is important to understand what the current notion of identity includes.

Identity is a virtual concept and therefore it is hard to be defined empirically. Currently, the concept is used to refer to either a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors, or to socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential or even both options at once as Fearon (1999) puts it. Discussions on identity use the term with different meanings ranging from fundamental and abiding sameness, to fluidity and involve a wide range of disciplines as well. It can be then said that identity is a dynamic process which can be approached by different perspectives, such as the psychological or the sociological ones.

#### 1.1 - Identity and identification

The concept of identity is a complex one for it involves a variety of disciplines, such as psychology, sociology and social psychology, and approaches. Very commonly the term *is used to describe a person's conception and expression of their individuality or group affiliations such as national identity and cultural identity*<sup>1</sup>. Hence, it can be said to be crucial to our self-perception since it helps us to understand who we are. It has indeed been the object of many studies for it is an important part of human life. The truth is that from an early age individuals need to identify themselves with those around them in order to start building their personality and understanding of the world around them. It should be

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<sup>1</sup> In [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity\\_\(social\\_science\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_(social_science))

noted then that individuals do not live on their own, but in groups and communities and these associations will necessarily have consequences for their identities, as defended by Jacobs and Maier (1998: 15).

It is interesting to understand how many different definitions there are of a concept which is so much talked about nowadays. Fearon (1999) collected some of those definitions:

1. *"Identity is people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others" (Hogg and Abrams 1988, 2).*
2. *"Identity is used in this book to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture" (Deng 1995, 1).*
3. *"Identity refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities" (Jenkins 1996, 4).*
4. *"National identity describes that condition in which a mass of people have made the same identification with national symbols and have internalised the symbols of the nation ..." (Bloom 1990, 52).*
5. *"Identities are relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self" (Wendt 1992, 397).*
6. *"Social identities are sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others, that is, as a social object. ... [Social identities are] at once cognitive schemas that enable an actor to determine 'who I am/we are' in a situation and positions in a social role structure of shared understandings and expectations" (Wendt 1994, 395).*
7. *"By social identity, I mean the desire for group distinction, dignity, and place within historically specific discourses (or frames of understanding) about the character, structure and boundaries of the polity and the economy" (Herrigel 1993, 371).*
8. *"The term [identity] (by convention) references mutually constructed and evolving images of self and other" (Katzenstein 1996, 59).*
9. *"Identities are ... prescriptive representations of political actors themselves and of their relationships to each other" (Kowert and Legro 1996, 453).*

10. *"My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose" (Taylor 1989, 27).*
11. *"Yet what if identity is conceived not as a boundary to be maintained but as a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject?" (Clifford 1988, 344).*
12. *"Identity is any source of action not explicable from biophysical regularities, and to which observers can attribute meaning" (White 1992, 6).*
13. *"Indeed, identity is objectively defined as location in a certain world and can be subjectively appropriated only along with that world. ... [A] coherent identity incorporates within itself all the various internalized roles and attitudes." (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 132).*
14. *"Identity emerges as a kind of unsettled space, or an unresolved question in that space, between a number of intersecting discourses. ... [Until recently, we have incorrectly thought that identity is] a kind of fixed point of thought and being, a ground of action... the logic of something like a 'true self.' ... [But] Identity is a process, identity is split. Identity is not a fixed point but an ambivalent point. Identity is also the relationship of the Other to oneself" (Hall 1989).<sup>2</sup>*

Despite the diversity of definitions, there seems to be a common trait in all of them and that may be considered as the key factor in identity – *recognition* – for they all imply both self-recognition and recognition by “others”.

One must also necessarily distinguish between identity and identification for according to some scholars, like Fearon (1999), the idea of identification is related to the fact that identity is perceived as made up of different components that are ‘identified’ and interpreted by individuals. The construction of an individual sense of self is achieved by personal choices regarding who and what to associate with. Such approaches are liberating

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<sup>2</sup>In Fearon (1999). *What is identity? (As we now use the word)*. Stanford: Stanford University

in their recognition of the role of the individual in social interaction and the construction of identity<sup>3</sup>.

One of the authors who has dedicated himself to the study of identity was Bloom who argues that, according to identification theory:

*“In order to achieve psychological security, every individual possesses an inherent drive to internalize – to identify with – the behavior, mores and attitudes of significant figures in her/his social environment, i. e. people actively seek to enhance and protect identity.”*  
(1990: 23)

It seems evident then, as Barata (2009) points out, that identification is a process inherent to human condition, “a psychological dynamic with a biological origin” (Bloom, 1990: 33), which aims at “ensuring psychological welfare and at the physical and social survival of the individual” (Barata, 2009: 5).

*Identity* is, indeed, different from *identification*. Identity is best construed as being both relational and contextual, while the act of identification is best viewed as inherently processual (Rummens: 1993). Hence, when trying to understand identity one needs to approach it from a psychological point of view and from a sociological one. Bloom (1990), quoted by Barata (2009), points out that authors such as Freud or Erikson who defend a psychological approach to the theme of identity consider that it implies at an early stage identification with the ones close to us, meaning our core family, and later on with an ideology, with a collective behavior or with a culture (idem: 5). Every individual will, throughout life, be part of groups and he/she will try to act so as to protect the ideology defended by the group and to ensure its survival. The sociological approach, on the other hand, argues that societies inculcate their ideologies on individuals by means of their agents, for instance, schools, television, books and so on in order to ensure the survival of the common culture. For the present study both approaches are to be taken into account for their complement each other regarding the construction of identity.

Jenkins (1996), cited by Barata (2009:6), claims that one must take into account both perspectives and bear in mind that only through socialization and social interaction can individuals be defined in their individuality. The term is thus essentially comparative in

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<sup>3</sup> Idem

nature, as it emphasizes the sharing of a degree of sameness or oneness with others in a particular area or on a given point<sup>4</sup>.

According to Berger and Luckmann, cited by Szaló (1998: 246):

*“It is necessary to recognize that the identity of social actors is crystallized, reproduced and reshaped by social relations. It emerges from the interplay of body, individual consciousness and the social structure.”*

This is to say that the concept of identity reflects the interaction between the individual and society being therefore the product of human interaction hence revealing its cultural and social character (idem: 248). The idea should be reinforced then that identity is formed in interaction for it involves a process of message exchange between the parties until a coherent image is achieved (Prisacariu; 2007: 10). It is, above all, a dynamic and contextual process and it should never be conceived as a stable, static or complete one even though some aspects of people’s identities may be relatively stable. Being sensitive to context also implies that according to the circumstances, identities may become more or less visible (2005: 44)<sup>5</sup>.

We live in the so called *global village* and are currently subject to many and different influences. Whereas some decades ago we would be born, raised and live in a specific geographical location and would suffer little influence from the outside, nowadays we are constantly on the move and in contact with different people and different cultures. Globalization has favored travelling and mobility and this has had a huge impact on identity. In fact, one may say that the world is constantly changing and thus our identities are constantly readapting and readjusting to the new realities they face and deal with. It is then evident that both identity and identification are dynamical processes since they are never complete; they are always redefining themselves. Easthope argues that we live in a world characterized by the flux of people, money and ideas and hence the construction of identity must be understood as an individual process (2009: 65). The traditional agents of socialization are currently much more dispersed than they were a couple of decades ago and so a new social order emerges somehow breaking with the conventional one.

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<sup>4</sup> idem

<sup>5</sup> Information retrieved from *Citizenship and belonging: What is Britishness?*, Ethnos Research and Consultancy. London.

Individuals are influenced not only by place, memory and continuity in the construction of their identity but also by mobility which increasingly assumes relevance (idem: 78). This happens not only at an individual level but also at a communitarian one, for communities are increasingly subject to outer influences which are basically influences from across their boundaries. Prisacariu (2007) defends that

*“The interrelated processes of industrialization and organization, the dominance of the cash economy and mass production, the centralization of markets, the spread of the mass media and centrally disseminated information, and the growth of transportation infrastructure, and increased mobility all undetermined the basis of community boundaries.”* (2007:10)

The same is to say that nowadays communities have somehow lost their boundaries due to the above mentioned industrialization and migration processes. In Delanty’s point of view (2003), *“societies are becoming more and more pluralized and interpenetrating and less and less discrete wholes anchored in unique cultures and territorial nation-states.”*

## **1.2 - “I”, “we” and the “Others”**

“Through others we become ourselves.”

Lev S. Vygotsky<sup>6</sup>

This quote from Vygotsky points out a crucial aspect of identity which is related to the fact that identity is continually negotiated and it results from the dynamics between *“how we have been represented and how that bears on how we represent ourselves”*, as Hall and du Gay put it (Howarth: 1999). Hence, it seems evident that we create and develop our identities with the help of others for, according to Howarth (1999), *“identities are continually developed and contested through others’ representations of our claimed social groups”*. It is important then to refer that both concepts, namely, identity and identification, must necessarily be associated to the idea of an “Other”, who is not the same as “I” or “We”. In fact, identity is built upon difference, for one is only able to define one’s

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<sup>6</sup> Belarussian psychologist and thinker

identity as opposed to the identity of someone else, of an “other”. The same is to say that only in comparison with an “other” are we able to understand ourselves. The process of identity-formation consists then basically of two other mental processes: the search for the self and the construction of boundaries between one’s own group and that of the others, as recognized by Prisacariu (2007: 5).

The concept of the “other” can be identified as what an individual knows and recognizes but it is not the “I” or “we”. According to Easthope (2009: 68), an individual’s identity is partially built upon what the person is not and by the definition of physical, psychological and social boundaries. These boundaries obviously result from human interaction, for every individual, every group lives in contact with other individuals and other groups. According to some authors such as Barth (1998), cited by Barata (2009: 13), identities are negotiated at these boundaries and generally people only become aware or start thinking of their identity when in contact with difference for they realize what they are not like. It is also important to mention that these boundaries as well as the identities negotiated at the boundaries are fluid for they are constantly changing.

One may add that all identities imply both inclusion and exclusion because if the “other” is different and this helps us identify and attach to ourselves what we perceive to be similar, this also means that the “other” may be perceived as a threat to our identity and its homogeneity, which may in turn lead to practices of exclusion. One must take into account, however, that things do not always result in exclusion for even though an individual positively favors a specific group that does not mean that the individual will be hostile regarding other groups (Barata, 2009: 14).

Furthermore, it should be noted that similarity also plays an important role as far as identity is concerned for it creates a shared sense of belonging to a specific community or group being that this sense of belonging is created and fomented within the group itself as referred by Eisenstadt and Giesen (1996: 74). This means that people that belong to a same community believe that they see things in a similar way which is distinctively different from the way other people from other groups see and understand things, even though that may not really be the case. What counts, however, is the belief in that fact (Jenkins: 1996: 107). To this purpose the concept of an *imagined community*, applied by Anderson (1983) seems to be clarifying. The author argues that nations are imagined communities, that is,



communities that do not really exist *per se* but are invented instead when a group of people in a community imagine themselves to form a nation and behave accordingly. The members of these communities believe they share values and beliefs between themselves even though they have probably never met each other. These communities are imagined as limited because they have finite boundaries that distinguish them from other communities. Moreover, they are imagined as sovereign for they dream of being free and of being directly under God. They are also imagined as a community for they are “*conceived as deep, horizontal comradeships*” even though inequality amongst members may prevail (Anderson: 1983). These imagined communities are the basis of shared national identity and define individuals’ collective perceptions of who they are.

#### **1.4 - Individual identity, collective identity, citizenship and multiple identities**

First of all, it is important to distinguish between individual and collective identity. This doesn’t necessarily mean that we need to put one concept against the other, for, as Jacobs and Maier argue, “*all identity is individual but (...) [it is always] constructed within a field of social values, norms of behavior and collective symbols*” (Jacobs and Maier: 1998: 15). Basically, these authors are arguing that both these identities depend on and influence each other. It is necessary, however, to clarify both concepts. Barata presents the perspective of Hall and du Gay and states that the *individual identity can be defined as the continuous process of subjectivation of the individual, defined not only by practices of discursive and disciplinary regulation but also by performative practices and those of self-definition* (2009: 9)<sup>7</sup>. In other words, the individual identity focuses particularly on the individual’s singularity or uniqueness; it is basically what distinguishes one from everybody else. According to Snow (2001), individual or “*personal identities are the attributes and meanings attributed to oneself by the actor [the self]; they are self-designations and self-attributions regarded as personally distinctive. They are especially likely to be asserted during the course of interaction when other-imputed social identities are regarded as contradictory, as when individuals are cast into social roles or categories that are insulting and demeaning*”. Fearon (1999) also adds an interesting view to the concept of personal or individual identity by stating that:

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<sup>7</sup> Own translation

*“Personal identity is a set of attributes, beliefs, desires, or principles of action that a person thinks distinguish her in socially relevant ways and that (a) the person takes a special pride in; (b) the person takes no special pride in, but which so orient her behavior that she would be at a loss about how to act and what to do without them; or (c) the person feels she could not change even if she wanted to.”(1999:11)*

Different attributes make of a person *that* specific person. Thus one should distinguish between essential attributes of identity and contingent ones. The latter are those which do not represent crucial characteristics of one’s identity. Related to this matter, it is relevant to approach the concept of social category, which consists of:

*“a set of people designated by a label (or labels) commonly given to, or used by, a set of people. The label must be invoked often enough or in sufficiently important situations that people condition their behavior or thinking on it.”(Fearon, 1999:13).*

This term implies two main features, namely the rules of membership and the set of characteristics considered to be typical of the members of that particular category. Social categories are socially constructed and thus liable to change over time but they may also enter into our sense of ourselves as individuals in complex and possibly coercive ways as defended by Fearon (1999).

It is a fact that people in general like to be different from other people and they enjoy their uniqueness, their own identity. However, sometimes people may temporarily neglect this claim so as to attain goals which are related to economic well-being, security or the fulfillment of certain ideals. Hence, for these reasons people may form different alliances and temporarily leave aside tendencies towards separateness (Prisacariu, 2007: 12).

Regarding collective identity, this concept refers to a set of individuals' sense of shared belonging to the group or collective. It is an undeniable fact that group identification is a fundamental part of people’s identity, for sharing a common social identity helps people bind together, as recognized by a study commissioned by Ethnos Research and Consultancy (2005:35) in the UK.

It is not simply the aggregation of different individual identities but the self-understanding of a particular group, because for a collective identity to exist there must be a social group with a collective project, as stated by Delanty (2003). According to Snow (2001), *“Conceptually, the essence of collective identity resides in a shared and interactive sense of “we-ness” and “collective agency.”*<sup>8</sup> The author adds that its essence is *“anchored in real or imagined shared attributes and experiences among those who comprise the collectivity and in relation or contrast to one or more actual or imagined sets of “others”*” (Snow: 2001, 3). This idea is also defended by Anderson (1983) who claims that these attributes, values or experiences may not really be shared by all members of a community but there is a general belief that they are. It implies a shared continuum throughout generations of shared memories, events and historical personalities of a specific collective or group. These tend to be persistent, intense and lasting and are not often subject to constant changes, according to Smith, cited by Barata (2009: 9). These may actually be considered as historical processes and are socially constructed for they rely on a common past, on common shared memories which help to live the present and shape the future as defended by Jenkins (1996: 27). According to the same author, collective identities pass from generation to generation because of these shared memories, for *“individually the past is a memory; collectively, it is history”* (idem: 28). It is important to bear in mind that collective identities often arise in the course of dynamic social protest events and thus

*“the shared perceptions and feelings of a common cause, threat, or fate that constitute the shared “sense of we” motivate people to act together in the name of, or for the sake of, the interests of the collectivity, thus generating the previously mentioned sense of collective agency.”*

Collective identities are, according to Eisenstadt and Giesen (1996: 78), built upon specific codes and in interaction with these same codes, such as the distinction (us/others) code, the civic code, the cultural or sacred code and the primordial code, since all collective identities combine different elements of different codes at different levels. The code of distinction refers to what has already been discussed: that in order to define ourselves we need “others” who we see ourselves as distinct from. The civic code implies rules of

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<sup>8</sup> “Collective identity and expressive forms” in <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2zn1t7bj>

conduct, traditions and social routines which define and demarcate the boundary of the community and are familiar to its members. Of this code, bank holidays, celebrations and the national anthem are good examples. The cultural and sacred code implies cultural and religious traits that can be identified with a specific group. The last code, called the primordial code, is based on gender, generation, parenthood, ethnicity and race and it allows the individual to shape and reinforce the boundary between what is different and what is original. It is important to note that collective identities imply a sense of commonness since different individuals share a belief that the codes are valid and share principles and a historical background, but they also rely on differentiation since they rely on different collective identities to make themselves distinctive. There are then various group memberships based on nationality, ethnicity, religion and so on that contribute to people's definition of who they are both in their eyes and in the eyes of others, being that these may either be compatible or incompatible (2005:38)<sup>9</sup>.

Furthermore, it is important to note that:

*“if the essence of collective identity resides in a sense of “we-ness” associated with real or imagined attributes in contrast to some set of others, then it follows that collective identities can surface among almost any grouping or aggregation in a variety of contexts, ranging from relatively small cliques and gangs to sports fans and celebrity devotees to laborers and occupational groupings to neighborhoods and communities to even broader categories such as sexual and gender categories, religions, ethnic groups, and nations”* (Snow, 2001: 4).

The same author points out an interesting issue which is related to the fact that collective identities seems to emerge in periods of social upheaval. In fact, as defended by Castells (1997), cited by Snow (2001)

*“their emergence and vitality appear to be associated with conditions of sociocultural change or challenge, socioeconomic and political exclusion, and political breakdown and renewal, thus suggesting that they cluster historically in social space. The latter part of the*

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<sup>9</sup> Information retrieved from *Citizenship and belonging: What is Britishness?*, Ethnos Research and Consultancy. London.

*20<sup>th</sup> century has generally been regarded as one such period of collective identity effervescence and clustering, with some scholars characterizing this period in terms of identity crises and collective searches for identity”*(2001:5).

When approaching the concept of collective identity it is crucial to realize the processes by means of which these identities are created, developed and modified. Different authors, such as Eisenstadt and Giesen (1996), believe that *“at its core is the generation, invocation, and maintenance of symbolic resources used to bound and distinguish the collectivity both internally and externally by accenting commonalities and differences”* (cited in Snow, 2001:7), thus helping to determine who belongs to the group and who does not. The authors are here referring to the use of symbols as a way to maintain, preserve and reinforce the group’s culture. In fact, symbols help people to identify themselves with a group and to distinguish themselves from other groups.

There are also different layers and dimensions to take into account when trying to define collective identities for this concept is multi-dimensional, since it involves moral, cognitive and emotional dimensions, and the stronger these dimensions are the stronger the collective identity will be.

As argued before, both concepts, namely *“collective identities and personal [or individual] identities, are obviously different, [but] they are still very much interconnected in the sense that collective identities are predicated, in part, on constituents’ embracement of the relevant collective identity as a highly salient part of their personal identity and sense of self“*, as defended by Gamson (1991), quoted in Snow (2011: 4). In fact, it should be noted that people want to cultivate and develop common tradition and heritage since these make them different from other groups. Yet, when basic needs of security and well-being are satisfied, people tend to look for and individualized way of life and focus more on their differences wishing them to be recognized, maintained and developed, as argued by Prisacariu (2007: 12).

Throughout life, an individual assumes and possesses various identities with regard to family, religion, football, religion and so on. In fact, at the same time in a specific moment, an individual possesses multiple collective identities and these constitute what can be referred to as the individual’s ‘global identity’. One can truly answer the simple question

“Who are you?” in various ways, for one can be, at the same time, a European, a Portuguese, a teacher, a mother, a daughter, for instance, depending on the context which surrounds the question. In fact, Snow (2001), quoting Giddens (1991) and Castells (1997), acknowledges that *“the issue of identity becomes more problematic and unsettled as societies become more structurally differentiated, fragmented, and culturally pluralistic”* (2001:2). Due to this fact, the dominant reference points of individual identity change, since the institutional environment is constantly changing as well. This fact was highlighted by H. Tajfel (1978), quoted by Howarth (1999), over twenty years ago when the author realized that:

*“we live in a world in which the processes of unification and diversification proceed apace, both of them faster than ever before”. As a consequence questions of identity, group membership and representation pervade daily interactions in contemporary societies. Urbanisation, migration, globalisation, new media and modern technologies threaten the stability of (...) identities”*(1999:1).

The more complex societies become the more identities an individual congregates and the truth is that questions of hierarchy arise for not all identities have the same relevance to the individual and in different moments that hierarchy established by the individual may be adapted or changed. There are some identities though that are particularly resistant to change and these are normally the ones placed at a higher hierarchy. One of those identities is the related to the affiliation to a specific social group such as a tribe or a nation, as acknowledged by Elias (1996), cited by Barata (2009: 17). A national identity is the combination of a belief in a common ancestry and origin shared by a group of people and the desire of a cultural homogenization which culminate in a will to acquire a sovereign state so as to protect the integrity and free development of the group’s culture, as acknowledged by Prisacariu (2007: 5).

Another issue may arise as a consequence of the multiplicity of identities and that is conflict of identities. Hence, as defended by Smith (2001), normally individuals are able to live with multiple identities adapting them and moving between them according to the

circumstances. Yet, due to external circumstances these may come into conflict with each other leading to accusations of *dual loyalties* (idem).

When discussing identity, it is also important to shed some light on a very important concept, namely that of citizenship. It is also regarded as a much contested concept and one that is not static and hence changes as society changes. Like identity, it is mainly relational, being at the same time an individual and collective phenomenon that is created and transformed in specific institutional practices. According to Olsen (2011:3), “*in individual terms, citizenship signifies a status of individuals tied to a political unit. In collective terms, citizenship is marked by the fact that it is always bestowed on individuals by specific institutions, and affected in its scope by political practices.*” Fundamentally, citizenship grants rights and obligations to members of a particular social, political, national, or human resource community and it implies three basic elements, namely membership, rights and participation. As far as *membership* is concerned it distinguishes between those who are citizens and those who are non-citizens of a particular political unit. *Rights* are entitlements which citizens can enjoy because they belong to a particular political unit. *Participation* refers to the relationship of the citizen towards the political unit, that is, to the citizen’s commitment to this unit and how he/she lives it, either by actively choosing to participate in it or not.

National identities can be considered to be broad cultural categories or societal identities that comprise concrete collective identities. However and according to Delanty (2003), national identities are changing and becoming more decentred, liquid and more mixed. Regarding European nations, Delanty (2003) claims that currently it is difficult to identify what is national and what is European. For a very long time our social world in Europe was divided on the basis of our national differences and national interests. Yet, the European Union is a good example of an attempt to break away from that perspective. Its goal is that European countries cease to be divided in this way and to work together in the sake of common well-being. Europe is not a nation so to say, but a union of different nations and of different cultures. However, a nation is also a union of different people with their own individual identities so if we are able to relativize our differences and subordinate them to the sake of our nation, will we ever be able to do so to a larger extent at the level of the European Union? A national identity is based upon the sharing of a “*historical territory,*

*common memories and myths of origin, a mass, standardized public culture, a common economy and territorial mobility, and common legal rights and duties for all members of the collectivity*” (Smith, 2001: 60). These values are daily reinforced at school, on TV, by politicians, writers and journalists. In fact the common representation of a particular national identity is organized around dimensions such as geography, people, national symbols, citizenship, values, attitudes, cultural habits, behavior, language and historical achievements (2005:6)<sup>10</sup>. Indeed these are effectively sustained by a variety of daily practices such as national newspapers, weather reports, a national football team and so on, as refer Jacob and Maier (1998). There are also specific situations, in which particular identities come to the fore and are more strongly defended, such as those of international conflict, such as wars or negotiation in Europe; competitions, such as the Olympic Games or even international football matches; travelling abroad, for when immigrants visit their home country they realize they have somehow changed their behavior and attitude; racism or other kinds of discrimination, especially when one is refused a job due to one’s identity; economic and social crisis, especially if people’s well-being is affected; among others.<sup>11</sup>

Will we ever be able to construct that kind of identity as Europeans? Is that desirable? Should a European identity be totally different from a national one? According to Prisacariu (2007: 5), the formation of nation-states can provide useful models so as to understand some of the processes involved in European political integration. Furthermore, authors like Delanty (2003) strongly defend that the idea that a European identity would somehow replace national identities and that this was a threat to them is long due. That is why the same author affirms that there is no longer tension between national identities of member-states and European identity, but complementarity between them for, in different ways, all national identities of member-states contain aspects of a European identity. In fact, a European identity is not something that exists outside national identities. It is already part of them. Smith (2001) adds that a European identity must be located “*between national revival and global cultural aspirations*”. Hence, it can be presented as a bridge between national identities and a globalized world. This is something, however, that this study will try to shed some light on, that is, the study will try to reveal to what extent

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<sup>10</sup> Information retrieved from *Citizenship and belonging: What is Britishness?*, Ethnos Research and Consultancy. London.

<sup>11</sup> Idem



Europeans respond positively to this argument that they have both a national identity and a European identity which complement each other.

Hence, can we truly recognize the existence of a European identity as a social collective identity *per se*? Have efforts been made in order to create a European identity? Are there really common elements that allow us to refer to a European identity? Can we consider the existence of European symbols? That is what is going to be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 2

### Towards the creation of a united Europe

*“Are we all clear that we want to build something that can aspire to be a world power? In other words, not just a trading block but a political entity. Do we realise that our nation states, taken individually, would find it far more difficult to assert their existence and their identity on the world stage?”*

Romano Prodi<sup>12</sup>

*“Eu nunca senti nenhuma contradição em ser peruano, latino-americano e ser espanhol e europeu.”*

Mario Vargas Llosa<sup>13</sup>

#### 2.1 – “What is Europe?”

The term Europe has a long history, but still it is hard to be defined historically, geographically and culturally. By convention, Europe can be defined as a continent which has been deeply marked by a series of conflicts and wars throughout times. It is also a continent with an incomparable geological complexity since it comprises glaciers, tundra, fjords, archipelagos, islands, mountains, fells and semi-tropical seas (Hill, 1992). Yet, even as a continent its borders are somewhat arbitrary for they comprise not just geographical elements, but cultural and political ones as well. Hence European boundaries, as a continent, are not well-defined geographically. The most recent redefinition of Europe’s boundaries is due to a set of events that occurred in the late 1980s, early 1990s, such as the revolutions in Eastern Europe, the break-up of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War and the strengthening of the integration process in the European Community. In fact, these

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<sup>12</sup> Commission President of the European Parliament, February 13, 2001

<sup>13</sup> Contemporary Peruvian writer

events led to a bigger difficulty in terms of borders, for there are no geographical lines that help us to say that Ukraine, for instance, is European and Russia is not or that Moldavia is Europe and Ukraine is not. The truth is that no one can define precisely where the territorial division between Europe and Asia lies. The indefinite borders of Europe as a continent are not just geographical though, having a political and economic incentive as well (Wilson & Van der Dussen, 1996: 201-203). It may be true then that “*Europe is a vague notion with uncertain frontiers*” as Jacobs and Maier (1998: 13) put it. Others, like Barroso (Gil; 2009: 21) claim that Europe is easily recognized but hard to define. The truth is that Europe is unique for “*it offers a richness of cultures and languages unparalleled anywhere else in the world*” (Hill, 1992: 9). It is this diversity that makes it different and somehow special and the interaction of these cultures is basically a process which when compared with the cultures of other continents leaves an impression of homogeneity (idem: 30). Indeed the identity of Europe can only be the result of all of the uncertainties, ambiguities and contradictions that define Europe itself (Jacobs and Maier, 1998: 13). Delanty (2003) points out that European identity cannot be constructed on the basis of a collective “we” against an “Other”, as we mentioned in the previous chapter, for after decades of mixing and cultural diffusion, it is difficult to define who are “we” and who are the “others”. Barroso (Gil, 2009:19) reinforces that idea by saying that it is dangerous to refer to identity because sometimes it has a negative connotation. He adds that “*A identidade europeia que queremos deve ser uma experiência aberta e pluralista. A nossa identidade e o nosso espaço público não podem, nem devem, definir-se por oposição às culturas nacionais ou a qualquer religião ou a qualquer grupo étnico*” (Gil, 2009:20).

Currently the theme of Europe is very much in vogue and Europe and the European Union are concepts which are often confused. In fact, we tend to refer to the European Union (EU) as Europe, limiting the concept. We tend to forget that there are more countries in Europe that are not part of the European Union (EU) and so we use both concepts indifferently. In this work we will be dealing most of all with the theme of European identity but regarding Europe as a political and institutional project. One of the reasons why identity is widely discussed now has to do with the enlargements, for each time a country or group of countries joins the EU, time is necessary for becomes for people to find and assimilate their commonness. Cultural differences can be said to be the core of the classification of the human world into different groups and they are fundamental to the

preservation of one's identity. However, what the EU has been asking from us for a while now is that we forget those differences in order to work together and contribute to the establishment of a European society. Another cause for a growth of interest has to do with the crisis which has been tormenting the world. Indeed, there are many who believe that in times of crisis people tend to accept more the limitations of the reality they know and of the geopolitical system they are linked to. Hence they feel more open to change and to options that may bring them better perspectives and situations of more comfort and wellbeing. People may find similarities with other people that are going through the same problems and they may tend more to believe that if people cooperate and work together, a solution is easier to find. That may, in fact, contribute to the creation or development of a common identity for they start sharing memories, sharing efforts and viewing the future as something they can build together. This is the core of the old proverb that says that *two heads think better than one*. By combining efforts against the crisis, Europeans may be walking towards the definition of a common identity – the ideal of *European identity*. It should be noted though that this identity has at its core the values of pluralism, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination as referred by Barroso (Gil, 2009: 22).

## **2.2 – From the notion of a united Europe to the creation of the EU**

*“We are asking the nations of Europe between whom rivers of blood have flowed to forget the feuds of a thousand years.”*

Winston Churchill

History tells us that for many centuries Europe has tried to create a sense of union between all of its constituents. However, the first attempts to do it implied the existence of a hegemonic state that tried to impose its power upon the others. If we go back in history we cannot disregard the attempts of Charlemagne to bring Europe together. He was in fact capable of extending the Frankish Kingdom to Central and Western Europe but at the expenses of bloodshed. Nowadays, he is considered to be the “*Father of Europe*” for all of his efforts and accomplishments in what regards the unity of Europe. The European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek stated in 2010 that

*“Imagine, if you will, the age of Charlemagne, twelve hundred years ago. Already then, he had a vision of a united Europe. Just think how many wars there have been since then and how much European blood has been spilled. We were devoured by hatred. We were in the grip of our emotions. We were unable to think in common. People had a vision of a united Europe then, but did not achieve it. We must remember, my dear young friends, always to keep this vision in mind.”<sup>14</sup>*

One of these many attempts resulted in what is today known as the World War II. After this devastating war, a European elite decided to take some measures in order to avoid a repeat of this catastrophic situation (Barata, 2009: 44).

So, after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, a group of European leaders from different countries decided to work together against hegemony and extreme nationalism for they understood that the future of Europe depended on cooperation between the different European states<sup>15</sup>. Together they could work in order to ensure security, peace and respect for difference. However, this was really not the first attempt for Europe to combine efforts since, for instance, in 1923 Count Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi, who wrote the Pan Europa manifesto had already spoken of a union of European Nations.

In 1975, and after the creation of a European Community, Leo Tindemans, Belgium’s Prime Minister at the time, still recognized that

*“the aim of the European Union should be to overcome the age-old conflicts which are often artificially maintained between nation States, to build a more humane society in which along with mutual respect for our national and cultural characteristics, the accent will be placed more on the factors uniting us than on those dividing us” (1975:4)<sup>16</sup>.*

The same man claimed that Europe was losing its way for it had already achieved its prior aims and it was thus undergoing a crisis caused by this lack of focus which was affecting its very existence. In fact, as Tindemans claimed:

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<sup>14</sup> Speech given at the award ceremony of the 2010 Charlemagne Youth Prize. In "[europarl.europa.eu](http://europarl.europa.eu)".

<sup>15</sup> They also knew that if they worked together they could achieve the requirements to benefit from the Marshall Plan.

<sup>16</sup> The Tindemans’ report 1975.

*“The European idea is partly a victim of its own successes: the reconciliation between formerly hostile countries, the economic prosperity due to the enlarged market the detente which has taken the place of the cold war, thanks particularly to our cohesion, all this seems to have been achieved and consequently not to require any more effort. Europe today (...) seems to have lost its air of adventure. Our peoples are concerned with new problems and values scarcely mentioned by the Treaties” (1975:7).*

It seems then that although the European idea managed to find success to a certain extent, it continually needs to be reinvented in order to overcome the challenges that globalization and development bring along. But let us first discuss what sort of concept we deal with when we refer to the European Union.

### **2.2.1 - The models of European integration**

*“Someday, following the example of the United States of America, there will be a United States of Europe.”*

George Washington

After World War II, it became obvious that Europe needed to join forces in order to make itself heard in the world and in order to ensure peace and security. However, from the very beginning, the political and economic elites from the member states decided to take the future of Europe in their hands and even though these elites agreed on the goals to attain, the means to achieve these very objectives were a matter of disagreement. Some preferred a federalist option, others a functionalist one. The ones that preferred a federalist model of cooperation intended to create the United States of Europe. The advocates of this model defended the adoption of a European Constitution, similar to the one in the USA since they believed this would help to overcome the sovereignty and democratic problems which were the consequence of the articulation of different decision-making levels and it would ensure the union of the different European states. However, they tended to forget that in the USA the federalist model worked after a series of political disputes between the states

and the central government. What helped the fixation of the federalist model in the USA was the cultural and historical affinity among the population. Yet, in Europe, this affinity between the different people is not so evident.

Another model that was thought of with regard to the construction of Europe was the functionalist one. This vision was the one which proved to be more appropriate to the European reality for it focused more on common interests and needs shared by the states in a process of global integration. It was due to this vision that the European Steel and Coal Community was established through the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1951. Thus the process started with the integration of the coal and steel industries at supranational level. In the opinion of De Gaulle, President of France from 1944 to 1959, European cooperation was necessary for he dreamt of a *European Europe*, one which was strong and prosperous, free from the power of both Russia and America. He recognized, however, that this cooperation could neither affect state sovereignty nor national identities. It should basically enhance the capacities of the European countries (Barata; 2009: 48). He was indeed one of the core players as far as European integration is concerned for, during his presidency, he was involved in the four major European decisions, namely the acceptance of the Treaty of Rome and promotion of the CAP, the Fouchet Plan, the veto of British membership, and the empty chair crisis<sup>17</sup> (Moravcsik; 1998: 5).

The European Union has developed into a complex organization combining elements of intergovernmentalism and elements of supranationalism. The truth is that Community Law overpowers the national one in all areas delegated by the member-states to the EU and it is applied similarly in all member-states. However, the basis of the EU are the treaties and not a real constitution and the member-states don't necessarily need to follow the laws of the Union in all areas, having the opportunity to *opt out*<sup>18</sup>, having their own legal systems and having the chance of establishing bilateral agreements with other states as stated by McCormick, cited by Barata (2009:51). According to the same author, there is a complexity at the level of decision-making since there are competences which are

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<sup>17</sup> This crisis was the result of a proposal of the Commission for the CAP to be financed by the Community's own funds and not by the member states. This meant that the Commission and the Parliament would have their power increased whereas the Council would have its power diminished. As a result, De Gaulle ordered the retreat of the French representation in the Council originating what became known as the empty chair crisis which basically blocked all developments in what regards further integration. This had repercussions in the issue of identity as well. In order to know more about this theme, please consult (Barata: 2009; Moravcsik: 1998).

<sup>18</sup> Just like Britain did with the euro.

exclusive to the European institutions, competences shared between these and the member-states, competences of the member-states collectively coordinated by these at the level of the European institutions and competences that are held by the member-states only (2009:51). The same is to say that the competences are dispersed and thus very difficult to coordinate and to reach a consensus that will please all those who take part. Moreover, these institutions decide on the future of different people and they have been obtaining increasingly more power. Yet, the exercise of this power is far from being democratic since it lacks popular support<sup>19</sup>. As Tindemans referred in his 1975 report:

*“the construction of Europe is not just a form of collaboration between States. It is a rapprochement of peoples who wish to go forward together, adapting their activity to the changing conditions in the world while preserving those values which are their common heritage. In democratic countries the will of governments alone is not sufficient for such an undertaking. The need for it, its advantages and its gradual achievement must be perceived by everyone so that effort and sacrifices are freely accepted. Europe must be close to its citizens (1975: 26)”*.

As a consequence of this report it was understood that the EU needed to make people realize that it brings advantages and more wellbeing and so they would feel able to bear sacrifices in its name. In fact, as Wim Kok<sup>20</sup>, former Dutch Prime-Minister, argued more recently, the success of the EU lies in the belief that *“Europeans better hang together or [most assuredly] they will hang separately”*.

### **2.3 - Integration and identity**

*“We must go back to teach Europeans to love Europe.”*

Jean Claude Juncker<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Quoted by Dinan (2005:2)

<sup>21</sup> Prime Minister of Luxembourg, El Pais, 6-2-2004



As Valentini (2005) has pointed out, the development of a European identity is crucial for the future of the EU: “A *future where a deeper integration exists among the European countries, with a belief in European identity is necessary both to the European Union and Europeans. The former see in this mental construction a way to legitimate its policy and activities, the latter needs to believe in its existence as motivation to participate in its activities* (2005: 17)”. One can then easily understand how important it is for Europeans to find a shared identity so as to ensure the continuation and the development of the European Union. Everything would be easy if Europe possessed a common culture for, as recognized by Guibernau (Barata, 2009: 63), culture is formed by values, beliefs, customs, habits and practices that result in a particular identity which unites those who have been socialized in a specific society. Yet, according to Barata (2009: 63), the cultural unity of Europe results from a mix of ancient, continuous and successive cultural traditions which together represent a unique blend that found expression in organized science, in democratic political institutions and in the institutionalized protection of human rights. Besides, the cultural elements that Europe may share are understood at different levels by different communities and may have different meanings to each of them as well. That is why many believe that a European identity is possible at a political or economic level but more difficult to achieve at a cultural level, since there is no cultural unity.

Furthermore, one must take into account the fact that the issue of identity was not approached from the beginning. The first stages of integration “*focused mainly on restricted spheres of pragmatic, economic integration rather than far-reaching schemes for political or cultural cooperation,*” as stated by Moreira (2001: 45). The same is to say that the EC started off as a very technical community with specific, well-defined goals, and the concept of identity was at first neglected for it played no crucial role in the objectives being pursued. In fact, three of the six countries that initially composed the EC had tight bonds already and Germany and Italy wanted to ensure prosperity and promote peace so they had strong reasons to combine efforts in order to attain their goals. However, the initial success of this economic cooperation gave way to the thought that the European Community could be built by small steps and thus the *spillover*<sup>22</sup> process commenced. This

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<sup>22</sup> Jean Monnet's approach to European integration, which aimed at integrating individual sectors in the hope of achieving spill-over effects to further the process of integration.

meant that when positive integration was reached at one level, subsequently other levels of integration were pursued.

Further and deeper integration started to be a concern particularly after the problems faced by the EC during the 1970s, consequence of the economic and political stagnation Europe was facing. Moreover, the first enlargement, in 1973, included countries that were not so closely related to each other and hence communication problems arose as well as problems in reaching a consensus in terms of common objectives to pursue. The truth is that very different countries and national structures were trying to work together but their differences emerged as an obstacle to the plans drawn. From this point on, European leaders engaged in building what is now known as the EU realized that they would probably need popular support if a more efficient participation of member states was to be ensured and a deeper economic and monetary union was to be a reality (Moreira, 2001: 46). Yet, due to the blockage of the *empty chair crisis* not much was discussed in relation to identity until the 1980s. Even after this period much of the discussion was not intended to be public, for the several layers of integration were conducted by an elite from the several member-states. In fact, the population knew little of what was going on in terms of integration and their participation was not requested. This seemed to result at first but slowly things started to change and when the measures dictated by the community began to affect people's daily life, people realized that much had been done without their consent.<sup>23</sup>

The Maastricht Treaty<sup>24</sup> represented a turnaround concerning the distance between the people and the EC – it was submitted to referenda in three member states. However, the distance problem between the EC/EU and the population was solved with the Treaty for even nowadays the European peoples are not told what is being done in their name in the EU and argue that this organization lacks legitimacy since it does not operate

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<sup>23</sup> One can talk about a silent consent, which is based on the idea that when one does not openly oppose something, one agrees with what is being said or done.

<sup>24</sup> This Treaty was signed in 1992 and it eventually led to the creation of the euro and it created the pillar structure of the European Union. The treaty established the three pillars of the European Union, namely the European Community pillar, the Common Foreign and Security Policy pillar and the Justice and Home Affairs pillar. The first pillar was where the EU's supra-national institutions, i.e., the Commission, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice had the most power and influence. The other two pillars were essentially more intergovernmental in nature with decisions being made by committees composed of member states' politicians and officials.

democratically. The *Monnet Method*<sup>25</sup> was defended by members of the elites for they argued it would be a mistake to consult the population since that would hold back the integration process (Barata, 2009)<sup>26</sup>. Yet, Leo Tindeman (1975) acknowledged in his report<sup>27</sup> that “*public opinion is extremely skeptical on the will to establish a genuine European Union and solve the real problems of the day at European level. It wants results and questions the lack of political will on the part of its leaders*”.

The European Commission, being the supranational driving force of integration has developed several initiatives in order to overcome this problem. One of the first efforts towards trying to bring people closer to the European project and to define a European identity lies in the Copenhagen Declaration of 1973. In order to obtain this goal the nine member-states believed they needed to review their common heritage, interests and special obligations as well as the degree of unity achieved within the Community, assess the extent to which they were already acting together in relation to the rest of the world and the responsibilities which resulted from that cooperation and finally take into consideration the dynamic nature of European unification. The nine member-states recognized that they “*might have been pushed towards disunity by their history and by selfishly defending misjudged interests. But they have overcome their past enmities and have decided that unity is a basic European necessity to ensure the survival of the civilization which they have in common.*”<sup>28</sup> These countries believed that the creation of a common market, based on a customs union, and the establishment of institutions, common policies and machinery for co-operation were crucial elements towards the creation of a European identity. Furthermore, the Declaration stated that:

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<sup>25</sup> Jean Monnet defended that elites should take decisions so as not to hold back the integration process and he was against referenda. In fact, he was against lengthy discussions on policy-making decisions.

<sup>26</sup> The same author acknowledged the fact that population in France and Holland voted negatively in the Constitutional Treaty referendum and that the Irish population did the same with the Lisbon Treaty referendum delayed the integration process a lot (2009: 50)

<sup>27</sup> The Tindemans’ report 1975 was drawn at a time when Europe was severely suffering from a crisis which resulted in high unemployment and economic depression.

<sup>28</sup> According to the Declaration of European Identity 1973 in <http://sociology-europeanidentity.blogspot.com/2010/01/declaration-on-european-identity.html>

*“The European identity will evolve as a function of the dynamic construction of a United Europe. In their external relations, the Nine propose progressively to undertake the definition of their identity in relation to other countries or groups of countries. They believe that in so doing they will strengthen their own cohesion and contribute to the framing of a genuinely European foreign policy”<sup>29</sup>.*

The Declaration contemplated the enlargements as well by inviting all European nations to share the same goals and objectives the nine shared. Moreover, the member-states agreed that in working together they could make themselves heard and play an important role in the world’s affairs. They tried to define the “other”, the non-European, but defended that they needed to work with the “other” and establish a relation of cooperation and friendship so as to maintain peace and ensure prosperity and wellbeing in the whole world. Even though this was a valid attempt to define a European identity (by opposing it to other identities), it basically defined a political identity leaving out cultural aspects which should also be taken into account when building an identity as mentioned in Chapter 1. The population was also asked to participate in the construction of the European identity *“The Nine believe that this enterprise corresponds to the deepest aspirations of their peoples who should participate in its realization, particularly through their elected representatives.”<sup>30</sup>* Notwithstanding, more efforts were developed in order to bring the people closer to the EC. The Tindemans Report of 1975, as stated before, recognized that Europe could not be built by means of a mere cooperation of states for the will of governments alone in democratic countries is not sufficient. It mainly needs people to believe they want to move forward together for they consider they share common values and that they can build a better and common future together. That way, sacrifices will be accepted for there will be advantages in the future. In 1984 the Adonnino Committee<sup>31</sup> was established having as its main goal to encourage Europeans to develop a common identity through common citizenship and the adoption of European symbols such as an EU flag, anthem, passport, car registration plates, symphony orchestra, sports events and so on.

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<sup>29</sup> idem <sup>30</sup> Idem ibidem

<sup>30</sup> Idem ibidem

<sup>31</sup> This Committee was named after an Italian member of the European Parliament, Pietro Adonnino, who headed this working group in 1984.

Moreover, it also presented proposals for wider European co-operation on fields such as education, health, drugs, terrorism and other popular "social" topics that went outside the primarily economic concerns of the original common "market". In fact, these issues were thought to bring people closer to the EC for they were more engaged with people's interests and thus people would more likely develop a sense of connectedness and affection towards the EC, expectedly similar to how many felt towards their very own nation states<sup>32</sup>. Two reports were made by this Committee, one in March and another in June. The March report intended to make the EC more credible and trustworthy to the eyes of common citizens by simplifying the rules and institutional practices. Furthermore, the report suggested, for instance, the acknowledgement and recognition of university diplomas taken in the member-states; the acknowledgement of professional qualifications; the freedom of movement both of people and goods; the right to work and live in any member state and be treated as a citizen of the EC, and the creation of a European passport.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, in the June report, the participation of citizens in the political process was approached, and a uniform electoral procedure regarding the European Parliament was suggested. Furthermore, this last report intended to put forward proposals on the special rights of citizens; on culture and communication; on information; on youth, education, exchanges and sport; on health, social security, drugs, volunteer work; on twinning and on strengthening the EC's image and identity. In this report, the Committee points out the necessity there is for the citizen to be a participant in the political process both of the EC and of the member-states. It also acknowledges the need to simplify Community law, giving priority to those areas of greatest importance to citizens in their daily life. Besides, the report refers to the fact that when European citizens are travelling to another part of the world, they should be treated as European citizens and be aided by a representative of any of the member states even when the citizen's country is not represented in the country chosen for travelling. In order to enhance a European identity, the Committee suggested the creation of a *Eurolottery*<sup>34</sup> and the use of the European flag and anthem (the *Ode to Joy* – Beethoven's ninth symphony) in specific events. Moreover, they also considered culture and sports as integrating aspects with respect to identity and

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<sup>32</sup> Information gathered from <http://en.euabc.com/word/18> and from Barata (2009: 55-56).

<sup>33</sup> March Report - "*A people's Europe*" In [http://aei.pitt.edu/992/1/andonnino\\_report\\_peoples\\_europe.pdf](http://aei.pitt.edu/992/1/andonnino_report_peoples_europe.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> This has been adopted as well, being commonly known as the *Euromillions*, which people from most EU countries can play and win.

thus advised that some measures be put into practice to exploit their potential. Hence, they suggested that the access to museums be eased for young people and students in all member-states and suggested the creation of an Academy of Science, Technology and Arts as well as the organization of European Sports events. This report also mentioned the need for European citizens to learn two other European languages apart from their mother tongue and referred that education could play an important role as far as the building of a common European conscience and identity and the diffusion of information on Europe are concerned. In fact, they considered that a way to bring citizens closer to Europe is to provide them with information on what is being done in Europe and on the “European image and ideal”. The exchange of students, of athletes and sportsmen was also considered for the committee believed that the exchange between schools and universities would favor a more European conscience. The truth is that many of the suggestions made in these reports have already been put into practice and are currently a reality.<sup>35</sup>

During the 1980s much was discussed about identity and several documents were produced with a view to assessing the progress made in the implementation of measures aimed at making of the EC a *People's Europe*. However, no sooner did the debate arise, than problems came to light, since the commitment of the Commission in adopting the measures did not seem to be shared either by the European Council or by the member states who were accused of having delayed the implementation of some measures.

One of the people who pushed integration forward at this time was Jacques Delors who is by many considered as one of symbols of *Europeanness*. Delors presided over the commission that provided a new energy to the process of European integration. Indeed the Delors' commission, which served from 1985 to 1994, was responsible for the completion of the internal market and prepared the way for the introduction of the single European currency to the extent that he and his commissioners are said to be the fathers of the euro. Due to the hard work of the Delors' Commission, both the Single European Act<sup>36</sup> and the Treaty of Maastricht were signed. One should not forget the role the Maastricht Treaty<sup>37</sup> of 1992 played in European integration. Apart from establishing the EU single market which

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<sup>35</sup> June Report - “*A people's Europe*” In [http://aei.pitt.edu/992/1/andonnino\\_report\\_peoples\\_europe.pdf](http://aei.pitt.edu/992/1/andonnino_report_peoples_europe.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> The Single European Act was signed in February 1986.

<sup>37</sup> After signing the Treaty the EU replaced what was commonly known as EC. ([http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/1990-1999/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/1990-1999/index_en.htm))

ensured the free movement of goods, capital, people and services, this treaty enabled the EU to intervene in several aspects of policy-making, in the areas of education, youth and culture, and it aimed at promoting awareness of European integration by means of its education and training programs, namely the *Erasmus*<sup>38</sup>, *Leonardo*, *Socrates* and *Tempus* programs. It may be said that from that point on, it was recommended that a European dimension be included in educational programs and policies. Moreover, it was also this treaty that introduced the concept of citizenship of the EU, stating that “*Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship*”.<sup>39</sup> Nationality is thus still the main criterion for citizenship. It should also be noted that the EU has successively been establishing direct links with European citizens by means of the status of citizenship itself and through the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. Nowadays European citizens can be said to enjoy from direct supranational rights and a set of transnational rights that follow from the principle of free movement and access to rights in other member states, as sustained by Olsen (2005:3)

Several *Europeanization* policies have been put into practice since “*the EU’s very ability to survive, grow, act and succeed in its endeavors rests with whether or not EU citizens actively espouse the spirit of the Union*” (Prisacariu, 2007: 5). Yet, as defended by Valentini “*In order to develop a stronger community, where the citizens legitimate and trust their institutions and policies, the European Union should clarify its responsibilities and should be as transparent as possible (...) citizens’ participation in this process should be encouraged as a method for enhancing transparency and increasing the diffusion of information*” (Valentini, 2005: 19).

Critics of the EU argue that the project to forge a European identity is vain for it has been seen as a threat to national identities and that the passions and loyalty people feel regarding their nations will be difficult to achieve at EU level. Furthermore, statistics of several *Eurobarometers* have constantly revealed that EU citizens still feel very much attached to their national states, but regarding their attachment to Europe, the situation is different for people tend to believe that political decisions may be less transparent at a European level than at national level (idem: 4). In fact, according to Eurobarometer 74 (Autumn 2010),

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<sup>38</sup> The Erasmus Program had already been launched in 1987 though.

<sup>39</sup> Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0001:01:EN:HTML>

citizens of the member states believe that the EU is, above all, a *democratic, modern* and *protective* institution, but even so, only 38% revealed to have a positive image of the EU, 20% affirmed to have a negative image and 40% stated to have a neutral image of the EU. This neutrality may signify distance and lack of attachment between citizens and the EU. The development of *Europeanness* is therefore important to increase the EU's reputation and to create a positive image, as defended by Valentini (2005).

## **2.4 - Symbols of *Europeanness***

*“The euro is far more than a medium of exchange... It is part of the identity of a people. It reflects what they have in common now and in the future.”*

Wim Duisenberg<sup>40</sup>

### **2.4.1 - What is a symbol?**

According to Prisacariu (2007: 41), it has become an accepted truth that people think and express their feelings and thoughts through symbols and that culture is a process of symbolic construction. In fact, it can be said that people live in a symbolic world which they created and which regulates the interaction between the human mind and nature. It must be perceived then that we relate to nature through symbolic thinking and hence that all human constructions, such as language, art, science or religion are based on symbolic thinking. To understand a symbol and its representation or what it stands for is to understand human beings and the culture they are part of, for symbols are prior to language and discursive reason. In fact, symbols are deeply connected with culture for they are interpreted according to culturally established meanings. As Prisacariu (2007: 9) argues, every culture has a cognitive view of the world which enables it to define groups in terms of values, ideologies and stereotypes. This process is possible with the help of symbols

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<sup>40</sup> European Central Bank Governor, December 31, 1998



which contribute to organizing people's experiences and expressing relationships between groups. It is by means of symbols that a group is able to define its cultural boundaries and organize its relationship with the outer-world. Symbols aid people in organizing and classifying their social world. However, it is also the case that the same symbol can have different interpretations according to the culture through which it is analyzed and the meaning which is attributed to that particular symbol. We should also not forget that over time, history may add new meanings and interpretations to specific symbols, and that, as a cultural process, symbols are liable to adaptation and change.

It is necessary, however, to make a distinction between a sign and a symbol. The first is basically something, an object, an idea, a gesture or an image that stands for something else. A symbol is something that represents something else by association, resemblance or convention, and a feeling, thought, an emotion or a value, for example, cannot be represented in any other way. It is something visible that represents something invisible, because we attribute it a specific meaning. A white dove, for instance, is a bird, and if we see it flying we will recognize it as such. However, if we see it in a war context, we will associate it with peace because it is conventional that a white dove is the symbol that stands for peace. It is cultural tradition and social processes that determine the meaning of symbols and that make us realize the differences in conventions between social groups that belong to the same cultural area, or different cultural groups. Hence the same symbol may signify a variety of things to different social and cultural groups. According to Priscariu (2007: 45), the difference between a sign and a symbol is related to the fact that in a sign, both the signifying and the signified belong to the same context, whereas, in a symbol, they belong to different contexts and thus the act of interpretation demands metaphoric transformation of one context into another. Therefore, whenever a word, song, phrase, image, or acronym has an evocative meaning, it is considered to be a symbol and it will certainly evoke a feeling of acknowledgement in the mind of the people who see it or listen to it. Moreover, a symbol always involves emotion, for symbols inspire our thoughts. Thus they are fundamental when discussing identities for they are crucial components of ideas, traditions and events which groups of people share. In fact, each state uses its political symbols in order to promote an identity, and through these, people are shown what is theirs and what they should defend and honor. Symbols help them to acknowledge their uniqueness and what unites them, so that *"when they sing the same anthem, honor the*

*same flag, use the same currency, or celebrate the same public holiday, citizens are all sharing a common sentiment”* (Prisacariu, 2007:53).

Symbols are also important to cultural expression and communication since they help people to recognize others who belong to the same social group and share common values or those who are distant from it. They help people and histories to communicate over time, to send and receive messages, to establish relationships between them. Sometimes it proves to be difficult to convey specific and complex ideas, values or emotions by means of language and through symbols these can be more easily understood, since symbols are short and aesthetically appealing. This way they prove to be a quick and efficient way to communicate and to impel people to act in pursuit of common objectives. Symbols play, therefore, an important role in our lives for they help create, as previously mentioned, a sense of belonging, a sense of identity and can unite people who live together in the same geographical and social spaces, but who may be of different cultures, languages, ethnicities, religions, for they represent something which is shared by all. Symbols thus promote shared values, of peace, cooperation between peoples, cultures and nations and can be said to have a unifying power (Diem, 2004).

Obviously a project such as the European one needs symbols to support and “*enhance the emotional acceptance of the idea of European unity*” (Diem, 2004). Symbols are expected to provide the linking element between the different cultures which co-exist in Europe. Indeed, for a while now we have witnessed the proliferation of symbols of *Europeanness* at the levels of cultural, educational and scientific policies which aim at enhancing a European consciousness, as defended by Delanty (2003). Hence, as proposed in the June Report of the Adonnino Committee, 1985, a flag, a symbol and an anthem were created for the European Community. Furthermore, the Committee considered that the adoption of stamps allusive to the construction of Europe would be beneficial to the building of a European identity. The institution of the 9<sup>th</sup> May<sup>41</sup> as the Day of Europe and the replacement of the frontier signs by other signs with the EC symbol and the country’s name in the middle were other suggestions brought by the Adonnino Committee in order to create and strengthen a sense of belonging to the union which was formerly known as EC. Indeed, through the introduction of symbols and symbolic rituals, the European project

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<sup>41</sup> The choice of this day is due to the fact that it was on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1950 that the Schuman Plan was presented.

aimed to validate its value system and the social structure of its members. With the help of symbols, it has attempted to create and maintain the group identity, at the same time controlling people by organizing their values, thoughts and actions and judging their behavior according to the group's normative system (Prisacariu, 2007: 6). Similarly to a nation-state, the EU is making use of European icons, emblems, mass celebrations, flags, and a European anthem in order to gain its citizens' support. Furthermore it is also using education and the media to fulfill this need for these are crucial institutions for the transmission of values. In fact, education and the media play a very important role at this level, for, as Barroso (Gil, 2009: 24) argues, we are not born Europeans, we are Europeans by education and culture and it is not just in ethnicity that one finds the European character but also in education and culture. Both of these will help us to reinvent a future with memory for Europe.

The EU is trying to create and develop an identity and expects its citizens not to forget their differences but to focus on their similarities so as to act for the common wellbeing and to think of Europe as their home. The attempts which have been made are, according to Delanty (2003), very similar to the ones used by national elites to create national identities, but they are much more fluid and lack a common language.

Dinan (2005) refers to the fact that if we are travelling from a country outside the EU into a member-state, we will surely recognize symbols of *Europeanness*. At the airport, for instance, we will see the gate for EU citizens only. Furthermore, we will need to change money and we will get euro notes and coins if we are travelling to a Eurozone country. We will also be able to travel by car, for example, to other member-states without having to stop at the border, and will just notice the EU flag sign alongside the national flag of the country we are about to enter. He adds that:

*“A curious and discerning visitor would discover that national political systems are alive and well in the EU, but that there is a complementary political system centered on Brussels, meaning in this case not the political capital of Belgium but the locus of EU policymaking”* (Dinan, 2005:1).

Of course, while such symbols seem to help others identify us pretty well, we can ask whether we ourselves identify these symbols as ours, as part of our identity. One thing is clear, however, and should not be forgotten. The EU has proved to be successful to some extent, for, even though it has had to overcome several obstacles and difficulties along its

way, the recent history of the construction of Europe has enabled us to enjoy 6 decades of peace and prosperity in a region characterized previously by war, cyclical destruction and inequality (Carneiro, in Gil, 2009: 130). Perhaps these are its most powerful symbols.

#### **2.4.2 -The European Flag**

The flag is an important symbol as far as national states are concerned for Prisacariu (2007) recognizes that *“the colors and designs of national flags are usually not arbitrarily selected but rather stem from the history, culture, or religion of the particular country. Many flags can be traced to a common origin, and such “flag families” are often linked both by common traditions and by geography”*(2007:57).

Indeed, in Europe, one can admire many flags which bear ancient symbolism such as the ones that present the Christian cross used in the Crusades. Other flags depicted heraldry which was introduced in Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries, being that European royalty adopted coats of arms that soon became the basis of their flags. Even though most of these heraldic symbols disappeared from the national flags, their colors still remain in many of them. Due to historical facts, such as revolutions, some colors became attached to ideologies and to specific values. This way, for instance the Dutch and French flags bear colors intimately related to their quest for freedom, fraternity and equality, values which eventually other nations decided to adopt; whereas other flags such as the Russian and the Chinese present the red color which is connected to communist values. One can say that the flag is the visible sign that represents the union of a group of people. In that sense a flag has been used in diverse activities throughout history such as wars, conquests, and championships and so on. It can be said that a flag is the representation of an ideal and of the followers of that ideal.

Since 1949 the Council of Europe<sup>42</sup> tried to find a flag for Europe which its citizens were able to relate to and everyone would be able to recognize, but it was only in 1955<sup>43</sup> that

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<sup>42</sup> The Council of Europe is an international organization which was established in 1949 and that is responsible for promoting co-operation between all countries of Europe in the areas of legal standards, human rights, democratic development, the rule of law and cultural co-operation. It is independent from the EU.

that goal was achieved. The flag adopted consists of 12 stars in a dark blue background, and it also stands currently as a symbol of the EU. In fact, the EU adopted the flag of the Council of Europe in the 1980s. Indeed after the Council's decision, it was their wish that other European institutions adopted the same flag *in order to strengthen the idea of solidarity between the different organizations in a united and democratic Europe* (idem: 58), but that only happened a few years later when the Council emphasized the need to strengthen Europe's image and identity in the eyes of both Europeans and citizens of the whole world. Hence in 1985 it approved the proposal placed by the Adonnino Committee regarding the adoption of a European flag and in 1986 the flag was adopted by the European Community. After the Maastricht Treaty, it was also considered to be the flag of the European Union (EU). Yet, it cannot be considered as the symbol of the European Union only for it is in a broader sense the symbol of Europe's unity and identity although most people recognize it and relate it to the European Union. The European flag is the only emblem of the European Commission, but other European institutions use both the flag and a symbol of their own institution.

The design of the flag was the responsibility of the German Roman Catholic Arsène Heitz and it should be noted that the 12 gold stars represented in a circle mean to depict the values of solidarity and harmony between the different peoples in Europe. The number of stars is due to the fact that twelve is a number for perfection, unity and completeness; thus in spite of the enlargements the number of stars remains the same. As Peter Diem (2004) states

*“Against the blue sky of the Western world, the stars represent the peoples of Europe in a circle, the symbol of unity. Their number shall be invariably set at twelve, the symbol of completeness and perfection ... just like the twelve signs of the zodiac represent the whole universe, the twelve gold stars stand for all peoples of Europe – including those who cannot as yet take part in building up Europe in unity and peace (2004:13)”.*

The circle represents unity and parity between the different member-states whereas the bright stars under the dark blue sky represent independence, liberty, renewal, hope, unity

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<sup>43</sup> It was chosen on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 1955 by the Parliamentary Assembly and adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> December of the same year by the Committee of Ministers.

and constancy (Prisacariu, 2007: 60). Moreover, as the stars do not touch, that means that the circle is open, as the EU is open to welcome other European states that share its values and goals and it is open to the whole world being an active member in world society. As far as the colors of the flag are concerned, the blue may be said to represent the sky and the universe and it is usually related to the intellect and the spirit. Furthermore, it is the color normally associated to the European continent.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, the blue color is associated with immensity and space and with values of loyalty, fidelity, truth, transparency and religiously speaking with the mantle of the Virgin Mary<sup>45</sup>. The golden color is the color of the sun and it symbolizes the values of glory and enlightenment (idem: 63). Adopted by all EU heads of State and government as the official emblem of the European Union in 1985, the European flag has been in use since 1986. It is used in all types of European events and in many different places such as schools, universities, embassies, among others. It is seen accompanied by national, regional or local flags and it is nowadays widely recognized as a symbol of the EU, with its symbolism that is complex and may lead to many different interpretations.

### **2.4.3 - The European anthem**

According to the Thesaurus definition, an anthem is “*a song of devotion or loyalty (as to a nation or school)*”. An anthem needs to be recognized both by the government and by the people that have patriotic feelings towards a specific nation. The sentiments of national anthems vary, from prayers for the monarch to allusions to nationally important battles or uprisings or even expressions of patriotic feelings. It was in 1959 that the anthem was first sung, when the Choir of St Guillaume of Strasbourg interpreted Beethoven’s Ode to Joy on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Council of Europe. Notwithstanding this was not considered to be Europe’s anthem at the time, and it was only in 1972 that it was officially presented as such in Strasbourg by the Council of European Ministers. It was later released on Europe Day (at the time the 5<sup>th</sup> of May).

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<sup>44</sup> As in the Olympic flag. The blue circle is said to represent the European continent.

<sup>45</sup> The religious factor gave way to a discussion for many of so called “Fathers of Europe” namely, Adenauer, Schuman or Delors were devout Catholics and Thatcher, for instance, who is a Protestant believed that Catholicism was being imposed upon the Community.

The anthem chosen was from Beethoven's *Ninth symphony*, composed in 1823<sup>46</sup>. According to Prisacariu (2007), quoting the Secretary General of the Belgian section of the Council of European Municipalities,

*"The choice of Beethoven's setting of the Ode to Joy has enabled us to avoid the pitfalls of a competition, in which it would no doubt have been very difficult to agree unanimously on the winner. Moreover, the tune is one which was taught in schools long before the Council of Europe was ever thought of (...) [and] it was agreed unanimously that Beethoven's music was representative of the European genius and was capable of uniting the hearts and minds of all Europeans, including the younger generation"*(2007:71).

To this music, Schiller's poem *Ode to Joy* was added. In the poem Schiller expresses his wish for the human race to become brothers. However, the final version is merely instrumental due to the variety of languages in Europe and the desire to respect this variety. This anthem, subsequently adopted by the European Community in 1986, expresses the ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity which Europe stands for and it does not replace the national anthems, combining instead in one anthem Europe's shared values (idem).

#### **2.4.4 - Europe Day – 9<sup>th</sup> of May**

From an early period in history, feasts have been a way of celebrating special events from weddings of monarchs or coronations to achievement of liberty. Nowadays we celebrate special dates on our country's history by means of civil holidays that are related either to the idea of independence or to a patron saint and which are a way of "*preserving memory, and help periodically to naturalize an eclectic heritage, to keep awareness of the past alive and to unify relational networks*" (Prisacariu, 2007:64).

Concerning Europe Day, the 9<sup>th</sup> of May was chosen since it was on that day in 1950 that Robert Schuman announced the creation of the Coal and Steel Community, which was

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<sup>46</sup> It is important to note that Beethoven was considered to be a genius and that he was engaged in the cultural sphere of society in a period of change, namely the French revolution and Restoration. In fact, he tried to depict in music his views and opinion on the problems of his contemporary society for he is said to have been a thinker and not just a musician. Through music he tried to transmit specific ideas, he did not compose music just for the sake of music but instead he had a purpose with it.

considered to be fundamental to the maintenance of peace. According to Schuman:

*“World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it. The contribution which an organized and living Europe can bring to civilization is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations. In taking upon herself for more than 20 years the role of champion of a united Europe, France has always had as her essential aim the service of peace. A united Europe was not achieved and we had war.*

*Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity. The coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany. Any action taken must in the first place concern these two countries.”<sup>47</sup>*

However, this day – 9<sup>th</sup> of May - was not “Europe day” from the beginning. It is a day meant to celebrate not just the foundation of the European Union, but also the achievements attained by Europe and Europeans throughout the years and its values, namely peace, freedom, prosperity and working together.

It represents an opportunity to reflect upon the changes and challenge that Europe goes through on a daily basis. Furthermore, it is a day for Europeans to meet, establishing or reinforcing bonds, and to bring Europe closer to its citizens, diminishing the sense of distance, indifference or lack of affection Europeans may feel towards European institutions and the European ideal in general. Indeed, the significance of Europe Day lay in the opportunity it gave people to stop for a moment *“to think of their common heritage, of their joint interests, their shared hopes and destiny”* (Prisacariu, 2007: 67). It is a day for discussion about Europe-related themes, for information, for events of cultural, institutional and educational scope.

The decision to hold a Europe day was not an easy one since it was not consensual in all member-states. In 1955 public opinion in the various member countries did not appear to support everywhere, to the same degree, the celebration of a “Europe Day”. Discussion arose again in 1960 when the European Conference of Local Authorities adopted a

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<sup>47</sup> Schuman Declaration in [http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/9-may/decl\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/9-may/decl_en.htm)



resolution on the celebration of a "European Day" for progress had been made towards the unity of Europe and that should be recognized. It was recommended that this day was not a random one, but a day which was historically meaningful for Europe. That day was set in 1964 as 5<sup>th</sup> of May, which was the foundation day of the Council of Europe. After the official institution of this date as "Europe Day", letters were sent to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the different member-states so as to support all of those who wanted to be associated with this celebration. However, at the Milan Summit of 1985, "Europe day" was changed to 9<sup>th</sup> May since this day represented the birth of Europe – when Schuman announced the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community. According to Prisacariu (2007: 67), *"9 May is now the date recognized by everyone as being the celebration day of Europe, even so, some Europeans still prefer 5 May, since the Council of Europe was designed to defend human rights, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law, while the Schuman speech was simply proposing a sharing of French and German coal and steel."*

One may argue that the period when Schuman presented his proposal was a complicated one for Europe had survived a war and was playing a secondary role in world affairs at the time of the Cold War between the URSS and the USA. So more than appealing to the creation of the Coal and Steel Community, Schuman was appealing to the establishment of a union of countries in order to maintain peace and cooperation at various levels. In this union, he joined countries that in a recent past had fought against each other and he was proposing to remove the coal and steel industries which are deeply connected to the war industry, from national control thus preventing another war from emerging in Western Europe.

Nowadays, this day is celebrated in the different member-states to different degrees, but it is not easily recognized by everyone, especially because it is not a civil holiday. It is a day for using European symbols and is mainly celebrated by politicians and at schools, indicating that there is still work to be done if this day is to become meaningful to every citizen.

#### **2.4.5 - The motto – United in diversity**

In addition, the EU adopted as its motto “*United in Diversity*” so as to celebrate the fact that Europeans are working together for prosperity and peace despite the differences in cultures, traditions and languages. It is a statement that all this diversity is positive and that it constitutes Europe’s uniqueness and richness. In fact, it relates to European values, to its cultural, religious and humanist heritage. This motto invites Europeans to go beyond their national identities and join a larger community where their uniqueness is accepted and considered fundamental. This unity has, as its goal, a common destiny which is meant to be achieved by common work and cooperation. This goal is only to be achieved with pride in our heritage and with respect for everyone’s rights, taking into account some values which are considered to be common to all member-states namely freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, human dignity and the respect for human rights. These values are to be shared in community, always taking into account the importance of pluralism and tolerance towards difference.

Diversity is thus recognized as a fundamental characteristic of Europe which should be enhanced and not seen as a threat to the unity of the peoples. In fact, there is not a common language, history or religion for all peoples in Europe and that is probably why it is more difficult to set a uniform European identity, but that fact should not be seen as a negative one. It is a challenge, but the goal is not to impose a standard way of living, but to cooperate in order to keep peace and prosperity.

The motto *Unity in Diversity* was officially recognized on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2000 in the European Parliament but it has suffered a slight change to *United in Diversity*. This motto was chosen in a competition that involved young people between 10 – 19 years from the fifteen member-states at the time (Prisacariu, 2007; Diem, 2004).

#### **2.4.6 - The currency – The Euro**

The currency is considered to be an important trait of national and state identity. It should be mentioned that “*every currency reflects the trust of citizens in the role of the state as a guarantor of national cohesion, of the protection of citizens and of the improvement of their standard of living*” (Prisacariu, 2007: 79). That is then the reason why most

banknotes and coins depict well-known historical personalities or monuments that one can relate to a specific nation. In fact, authors like Smith (1971) agree that national currencies are part of a country's national identity. Furthermore, currencies can be considered as the result of common economic history and shared values of society for they are indeed part of life in society and determine economic interactions within society. Hence, a currency is also a means of social interaction which is eased by the use of a common currency. The euro, which was introduced in January 1999<sup>48</sup>, is probably the institution which is closer to citizens for its introduction affected everyone's life and everyone recognizes this to be the European currency. It is currently used in 17 countries<sup>49</sup> of the European Union and in other countries which, in spite of not belonging to the EU, decided to embrace that currency. In fact, it unites Europeans and helps to make them aware that they belong to the same economic and monetary area and is a clear reference for Europe in its search for an identity. It can be said to be a distinctive mark of Europe which distinguishes it from the rest of the world. In order to realize its importance regarding identity construction, one just needs to analyze the investment made by the European Central Bank<sup>50</sup> in campaigns which aimed at increasing public awareness of *The Euro, Our money*<sup>51</sup>. Besides, official ceremonies were held throughout the Euro-zone when the currency was released (Prisacariu, 2007).

The European Commission was the entity responsible for the creation of the euro symbol(€) and it tried to respect three criteria, namely that the symbol would need to be easily recognized and linked to Europe, that it would need to be easily written by hand and that it would need to be aesthetically pleasing. The symbol refers to the first letter of the word – Europe, and the Commission took inspiration in a Greek letter, thus recalling classical times and the ancient European civilization (idem).

As far as the banknotes are concerned, there are seven in circulation, and they all have different colors and sizes. Yet, on the front they all portray windows and gateways which symbolize the openness and cooperation that characterizes the spirit of Europe. The 12

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<sup>48</sup> However, the coins and bank notes have only been released in 2002.

<sup>49</sup> These countries are Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. Andorra, Monaco and San Marino also adopted the euro as their currency, even though they are not part of the EU.

<sup>50</sup> This entity which is responsible for the management of the Euro spent over 800 million euro in advertising campaigns.

<sup>51</sup> Slogan adopted in Euro – awareness campaigns.

stars, on the other hand, represent the solidarity and harmony between all European nations as explained previously when discussing the flag and its symbolism. On the back they reveal a bridge that stands for the cooperation and communication between Europe and the rest of the world. All of the notes display the European flag and a map of Europe and they were inspired by the seven architectural styles in Europe's cultural history, namely the Classical, the Romanesque, the Gothic, the Renaissance the Baroque and Rococo, the Iron and Glass and the Modern 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture period. The eight coins in use also present a common side with different maps of Europe and a side which is specific to the different member-states. Even though each nation has a specific design on the euro coins, they can be used everywhere in the euro zone (Prisacariu, 2007: 82).

This is probably the symbol which most people will refer to when asked to point out symbols of *Europeanness* for it is something they use on a daily basis. Moreover, it implied a huge change in people's lives since they needed to readapt to a new reality and a new monetary system which proved difficult for many who were forced to learn about a new currency and its value and importance. Some years ago, it was often said that the euro was the foreign currency, and thus many were reluctant to accept it. However, nowadays everybody who lives in the Eurozone or travels inside it uses the Euro daily and it has been generally accepted as the European general currency.

## **2.5 - The role of the European Union in identity construction**

*"In America, there's a failure to appreciate Europe's leading role in the world."*

Barack Obama

The creation of the symbols mentioned above aimed at promoting European identity, but one must take into account that several other efforts were made in order to foment this sense of belonging. Hence, as Valentini (2005) acknowledges, strategies at the levels of education, culture, languages, publications, the Internet and the media have also been developed for the same purpose. At the level of education, apart from the mobility programs previously mentioned, common elements regarding history, culture and language of other countries are being introduced in the education system of the various member-states. Furthermore, a recognition system is being developed so as to make the transition

between education systems and programs from country to country easier. Different research projects and programs are also being developed in European universities with the goal of increasing European industrial competitiveness, fomenting job creation and the quality of life of Europeans (Ball, North, Oulds & Rotherham, 2004, cited in Valentini, 2005).

A special attention is being given to languages, too, since the EU is trying to motivate its citizens to learn more languages by means of the educational system, the internet and cultural programs (Valentini, 2005). This way, EU citizens are able to communicate and feel closer to their counterparts in other member-states.

Regarding publications, these are being produced to promote awareness of EU institutions and EU activities in order to enlighten citizens of EU affairs, to disseminate information and to facilitate contact between Europeans. With the same purpose, an Internet website was created and internet-literacy programs were developed (idem).

As far as culture is concerned, the EU is trying to have a close relationship with the media in order to make its actions more credible and to “*integrate a European dimension into all fields of information*” (Valentini, 2005: 17). Moreover, it also sees in the media a good way of disseminating European culture(s) and of informing and educating citizens of what the EU is doing at different levels. This way the EU expects to become closer to citizens thus increasing their interest and participation in different EU’s activities (idem).

According to Fligstein,

*“The European Union has produced a remarkable set of agreements to guide the political interactions of countries across Europe in the past fifty years. These agreements have produced collective rules governing market transactions of all varieties, created a single currency, established a rule of law that includes a European Court, and promoted increased interactions for people who live within the boundaries of Europe.”* (2011: 132)

In fact, all of these measures seem to underline the reality that efforts are being made in order to achieve a closer union since the EU recognizes that the absence of a European identity undermines the legitimacy of the Union’s projects (Valentini, 2005). However, it is probably true to say that after all these years the EU can still be criticized for the lack of

transparency of its policies and its institutions<sup>52</sup>. The more the EU grows, the more difficult it seems to be to account for its actions, since it has to do so to a much wider public. Many argue in fact that the problem with the EU is that it lacks legitimacy; there is a democratic deficit, for all policies and measures implemented in the scope of the EU are agreed upon within a binding constitutional order (Majone, 1998; Valentini, 2005). This becomes a serious issue at a time when more powers are being given to this organization. In its “architecture”, the EU seems to be complicated to analyze and define, for the Parliament plays a secondary role and Europeans do not know what is going on in the Council of Ministers. Hence people become suspicious and here lies the problem of the people’s lack of support in what regards the EU. The EU faces a great challenge ahead which involves the creation and maintenance of democracy in a non-state identity (Prisacariu, 2007: 14). Yet, in the opinion of the same author, “*if some Europeans are to come to identify with a limited vision of Europe, in the form of the EU, then this idea of Europe will need to be broad enough to accommodate a diverse range of cultural experiences.*” (2007: 17)

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<sup>52</sup>There are many different institutions at work in the EU scope, namely:

- the **European Parliament**, which represents the EU’s citizens and is directly elected by them;
- the **Council of the European Union**, which represents the governments of the individual member countries. The Presidency of the Council is shared by the member states on a rotating basis. The EU’s broad priorities are defined by the Council;
- the **European Commission**, which represents the interests of the Union as a whole, being that its members are appointed by national governments;
- the **Court of Justice** upholds the rule of European law
- the **Court of Auditors** checks the financing of the EU’s activities.
- the **European Economic and Social Committee** represents civil society, employers and employees
- the **Committee of the Regions** represents regional and local authorities
- the **European Investment Bank** finances EU investment projects and helps small businesses through the **European Investment Fund**
- the **European Central Bank** is responsible for European monetary policy
- the **European Ombudsman** investigates complaints about maladministration by EU institutions and bodies
- the **European Data Protection Supervisor** safeguards the privacy of people’s personal data
- the **Publications Office** publishes information about the EU
- the **European Personnel Selection Office** recruits staff for the EU institutions and other bodies
- the **European Administrative School** provides training in specific areas for members of EU staff
- a host of **specialised agencies and decentralised bodies** handle a range of technical, scientific and management tasks
- the **European External Action Service** (EEAS) assists the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy who chairs the Foreign Affairs Council and conducts the common foreign and security policy, also ensuring the consistency and coordination of the EU’s external action
- The **European Council** sets the EU’s general political agenda and it deals with sensitive issues which cannot be dealt with at a lower level of intergovernmental cooperation. Yet, it has no power to pass laws.

In [http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/index_en.htm)

Fligstein (2011) argues that, within the EU, some people end up feeling more European than others, and he justifies the fact by arguing that the more contact with people from other European countries one has, the more European one feels. This situation, however, is restricted to a minor part of the population, and these people are the ones to benefit the most from travelling and the ones who are most rewarded at a psychological and financial level from learning and interacting with people from different countries. It is to be noted that European integration brought many positive things to our lives. In fact, it created more employment and the possibility for members of EU states to live and work in another EU state with ‘special benefits’, such as not needing a passport or a permit to work or live there. Moreover, it enabled us to freely travel within Europe both for business and pleasure. It also allowed young people to go to another European country to study and to learn more about other cultures and traditions. The adoption of a common currency has eased the financial interactions of daily life for the truth is that if we travel to an EU state that has adopted the Euro, we do not need to exchange money and we know exactly how much we have and hence we can control more what we spend. All of these situations led some people to get to know their “neighbors” better, to understand their cultures and interact with them. All in all, this interaction created bonds and solidarity between different cultures and people. Fligstein (2011: 134) believes that these interactions are favorable for people to think more of themselves as Europeans for they manage to find common traits and other similarities with different people of EU states.

In the previous chapter, the notion of collective identities was discussed and it was found that these are based in the idea that a group of people accepts a sameness which causes them to feel attachment and solidarity among themselves. This implies that the collective identity is really a social construct created by the interactions one has in society.<sup>53</sup> Basing his study on Karl Deutsch’s work, Fligstein argues that:

*“for a national identity to emerge, a class alliance between elites and members of the middle and working classes has to become framed around a national “story” (...) to explain why everyone who lives within some geographical boundaries is part of a larger*

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<sup>53</sup> As previously explained people live in society and they grow up in families and wider communities. Hence they become identified with the social groups they are emerged in. That is how they start building their identity. Fligstein (2011:135) argues that “*Gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality, social class, and age have all been the basis of people’s main identities and their central relationships to various communities*”. To read more on collective identities and their implications, please refer to chapter 1.

*group (...) whose identity needs reinforcing by a state. The main mechanism by which this story gets told and spreads is through cultural communication.” (2011: 155)*

Groups from different classes meet and interact and view other people as part of their group as well. However, in Europe, only a minor part of the population has access to communicative and interactive situations with other counterparts in other EU states and mostly these people belong to the educated levels of society. These are more likely to feel European because that sense and that status bring them benefits, more well-being and hence they tend to feel more European. Those who have not experienced so many benefits and who do not have frequent interaction with their counterparts in other European countries do not feel so attached to Europe, feeling closer to their nation and their local community instead. In fact, for many people, Europe means just globalization and de-industrialization and belonging to the EU has not meant that they have any benefits whatsoever. Habermas, cited by Fligstein (2011: 139), has already argued that European identity is all about trying to cope with differences peacefully and it is based on respect for difference [*united in diversity*]. This seems to sum up Europe’s contemporary mode of self-understanding that a European identity involves the recognition of differences and the capacity to build upon these. He adds that a European state would be a democratic one and that a civil society should be created. Furthermore, European identity should include the defense of the welfare state and social justice. In his point of view, a European identity would be very similar to a completion of the Enlightenment Project of the 18<sup>th</sup> century which was deeply connected to the rising middle classes [the most favored social class of the time] and to the values of reason and the open discussion of public issues.<sup>54</sup>

In his study, Fligstein (2011) discovered that the ones most liable to feel attached to the EU are generally white-collar workers, managers, owners, travelers, young people<sup>55</sup>, men and

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<sup>54</sup> Jürgen Habermas has influenced thinking on the public sphere. He attempted to understand the social conditions required for Enlightenment ideas to be spread and discussed. His response was the formation in the late 17th century and 18th century of the "bourgeois public sphere", a "realm of communication marked by new arenas of debate, more open and accessible forms of urban public space and sociability, and an explosion of print culture". He pointed out three main elements of the public sphere, namely egalitarianism, reason and the concept of common concern. For brief information on this issue, please consult [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age\\_of\\_Enlightenment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment).

<sup>55</sup> The truth is that older people still remember WW1 and WW2 and many were deeply marked by them. Thus they tend to favor their nation and they are not that interested in knowing their neighbors.



upper and middle class people since they tend to have more interaction with counterparts from other EU states and are more likely to create bonds and find similarities with these people. Staab (Gil, 2009: 34) emphasizes this idea by stating that a person who has lived in different European countries has a very different conception of European identity than one who has never travelled abroad. However, such people represent a minority as stated before and therefore they are not enough to consider the existence of a European identity.

The enlargements of the European Community / Union have always represented a challenge to what may be labeled a European identity for a whole variety of new peoples enter periodically a pre-existing community. This last enlargement to twenty-seven countries has brought more difficulties, particularly because it includes Central and Eastern European countries where even the elites from Eastern countries have never been very attached to their western counterparts, as Fligstein (2011: 157) recognizes. In fact, this author believes that these people are more *Euroscptical*<sup>56</sup> than *Europtimist* for they lack affinity with the project started by the western countries of Europe. According to Barata (2009: 61), the enlargements actually brought some confusion regarding a vague sense of a western identity, characterized by the sharing of a political culture which emerged during the Cold War in opposition to communism. Wilterdink, referred to by Barata (2009: 61), argues that the problem results from the fact that the goal of integration in a geographical Europe was trying to be achieved by reference to shared cultural elements which are also found in areas outside the EU, but which are part of the European territory. That is why the definition of Europe in cultural terms has been somehow complicated.

In this chapter we tried to show what has been done in order to spread the idea of *Europeanness* and to what extent the EU has managed to successfully create a European identity recognized by its citizens and by others. However, as is common knowledge, Europe is undergoing a deep recession and crisis. Thus the next chapter will try to analyze the consequences that this crisis has had upon the notion of identity, if indeed it has had any.

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<sup>56</sup> **Euroscpticism** is a general term used to describe criticism of the European Union (EU), and opposition to the process of European integration, existing throughout the political spectrum. Traditionally, the main source of euroscpticism has been the notion that integration weakens the nation state. Other views occasionally seen as euroscptic include perceptions of the EU being undemocratic or too bureaucratic. Definition of Euroscpticism in <http://thesaurus.babylon.com/euroscpticism#!ARV6FUJ2JP>

## Chapter 3

### The crisis and the future of Europe and European identity

#### 3.1 – What is the economic crisis all about?

In the late 2000s, the USA woke up to discover they were facing a deep recession, the biggest, in fact, since the 1930s. This economic crisis or the Great Recession as it is often referred to soon spread to other parts of the world, Europe being no exception. After a period of relative over-confidence, Europe is now struggling to learn how to deal with the consequences of this crisis in order to be able to survive. Bank failures, declines in stock indexes, decrease in international trade, de-leveraging of financial institutions, reductions in the market value of commodities and equities and the currency crisis have led to high and still climbing unemployment rates and the loss of the ability to pay mortgages and other personal debts. Furthermore, due to the Euro crisis, many investors have transferred their capital to stronger currencies and that has forced many smaller Eurozone economies, such as Greece, Portugal and Ireland to seek help from the International Monetary Fund. This institution is regarded by some Europeans as a ‘big bad wolf’ for its intervention has come to worsen the living conditions they had enjoyed for so many years. Indeed, the IMF has imposed strict rules upon governments so as to try to solve the crisis and these have adopted harsh measures that affect people’s daily lives.

In this worsening situation, Europeans, and particularly Eurozone members, began to realize that for a long time they had not been told the whole story. In fact, as argued before, the European Union was built and developed by elites and most citizens have not known much about what was going on. Many also did not care that much since being part of the EU did not affect their lives negatively, but, on the contrary, it brought them many advantages such as a higher standard of living, travelling abroad more easily, being able to live, work or study in any European member-state without any problems, not needing to exchange currency when going from country to country, and so on. The fact is that membership of the Euro brought the ordinary citizen affluence and privileges, which is what people seek the most. However, the situation changed and, as a consequence of the economic crisis, people started being afraid they might lose everything and thus began

questioning decisions made in Brussels, for they realized these were indeed profoundly affecting their lives. In particular, people started questioning the role of the European Union and its impact on national decisions.

So while people blame the *Troika* for the sacrifices they have been forced to make, the way they understand and deal with the crisis may also depend on how affected they are by it. It is true that, as part of a group, individuals cope better in times of crisis for they work together in order to attain a common goal. Yet, many citizens of member-states that are not being so deeply affected by the crisis do not agree that their nation should help other member-states monetarily in order for them to overcome their financial situation. Citizens of Finland and Germany, for instance, were opposed to helping other countries, such as Portugal or Greece, because of what they considered to be irresponsible conduct regarding sovereign debt. Notwithstanding, their national governments decided otherwise, this way proving that elites are still in control of the EU. We can argue that, instead of bringing European citizens together to achieve success and overcome the crisis, the situation seems to be creating a gap between different member-states, since some of them do not want to pay for other member's irresponsibility and lack of strength to achieve success, or even survive, on their own. In this situation, prejudices arise and fingers are pointed. For example, southern European countries are said to be lazier and more irresponsible than northern and central European countries. In the previous chapter, it was argued that one of the core values of the EU is solidarity. Yet, how are we supposed to understand this, when, in a period in which solidarity amongst member-states is most needed, many Europeans do not feel the moral obligation to help those who are not able to take care of themselves.

Currently, the crisis is in everybody's thoughts and words. The truth is that "*the economic crisis has been monopolizing the entire political, socio-economical and media scenery,*" as argued by Stan (2011: 1). Newspapers, radios, television channels, politicians, economists, church representatives, the common citizen, everyone wants to state their view and their opinion on what this crisis is all about, on how they are suffering from it and on who is to blame.

The truth is that up to 2007, when the economic crisis suddenly alarmed the world, most people were benefitting from what Europe had been giving them over a long period, namely: well-being, peace and stability. Rarely would people discuss the problems of

Europe, because their lives were being positively affected by it. They would travel more frequently and would have no problems with currency exchange or with borders; they would go to the supermarket and find a variety of products which they had not known before entering the EU; they would go to another EU country and easily find a job; jobs were actually being created thanks to EU funds; people would have easy access to credit and hence many bought a house, a car, and so on. The economy seemed to be prospering and, thus, attention was being placed on other aspects of the EU, such as creating a structure that enabled other countries to join or developing an identity that would strengthen the bonds between all citizens of the member-states. Europe was prospering and playing an important role in world affairs. Yet, the crisis did arrive and this may have changed our perception of Europe and more specifically of the feeling of (dis)attachment towards the EU. For example, many people who recognize that the EU brought many advantages as, for instance, the unprecedented climate of peace which has lasted for 60 years, are now scared because that may disappear, *“because we could go back to the way things were before,” (...)* *“each country for itself. The history of Europe is measured by war.” (...)* *“the past 60 years of peace in countries in the European Union is unique in Europe’s history, and (...) the EU and the euro deserve some credit for that.”*<sup>57</sup>

Nicholas Sarkozy’s, former French President, recently declared that if the euro vanished, nothing would remain of Europe. This statement scared many Eurooptimists, because most of what people benefitted on joining the EU may suddenly disappear. Despite all the efforts of Brussels to make European citizens realize that they are part of a larger community, one which is not restricted to their countries, by launching projects that promote a sense of *Europeanness*, Europe seems more divided than ever, Mario Monti, Italian Prime Minister, recognized that *“the sovereign debt crisis is turning the euro into a divisive tool driving Europeans apart”*.<sup>58</sup>

It was also argued in the previous chapter that the Euro is one of the recognized and most successful symbols of the EU, since it is being used by most European citizens and it is widely acknowledged and accepted as Europe’s currency. In fact, the euro was intended to

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<sup>57</sup>The Eurozone crisis and European identity in <http://www.theworld.org/2011/12/the-eurozone-crisis-and-european-identity/>

<sup>58</sup> Idem

both symbolize and foster European unity, since euro coins and bills are covered in images and mottos from European history. However, and due to the crisis, citizens of the most affected countries are starting to blame the euro for their situation. As stated by Gadden (2011), “*The euro didn’t cause the Greek crisis, but many Greeks now see the euro as a symbol of the devastating austerity measures dictated by Europe.*”<sup>59</sup> The same thing is happening in Spain and in Portugal. Strict austerity measures are being put into practice and these are deeply affecting people’s lives, causing unemployment rates to rise and the impoverishment of middle classes. This obviously makes Europeans forget the benefits the euro has brought and is still bringing. As argued by Karel Jannoo, with the Brussels-based think tank, the Center for European Reform, “*people forget that, before the crisis, the euro had made Europe richer making trade and travel across the eurozone easier. It also gave Europe more might in dealing with big trading partners like the US and China.*”<sup>60</sup> Jannoo actually believes that this is the result of the fact that politicians and leaders have failed to make people realize that the euro enabled them to have social security, schooling and unemployment benefits for everybody. The same author believes that, if the euro fails, then there will be a step backwards concerning the development of a European common collective identity.

### **3.2 – To what extent is the crisis influencing European’s opinion on the EU?**

The economic and social crisis is influencing people’s opinions and perceptions of Europe and it is surely playing an important role in the capacity of the EU to build a sense of its own identity. Hence it is interesting to analyze the data gathered from the Eurobarometer 75 survey, which was conducted during the Spring of 2011 which aims at examining the crisis and its influence upon people’s perception of the EU and its role during the crisis. It should be noted that, according to the Eurobarometer 75 (2011), Europeans seem to trust the EU more to solve the financial problems of Europe than their own national governments. In spite of the fact that the “*economic problems faced by the new member states along with the Greek and Irish financial collapse made some academics and politicians doubt the future of the EU (...), the Eurobarometer suggests a greater support from EU citizens for a more active contribution of EU institutions in bearing the economic*

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<sup>59</sup> Idem ibidem

<sup>60</sup> Idem ibidem

*crisis*” (Stan, 2011). Yet, regarding trusting the EU altogether, only 41% of Europeans answer positively, according to this survey. Furthermore, the same report reveals that most Europeans seem to still identify themselves more with their nation-state than with Europe, for 45% refer to themselves as national citizens and 41% mention that they are national and European. When questioned about what the EU means to them, 32% respond freedom to travel and to work; whereas 38% mention the Euro. What’s more, 24% hold a negative view claiming it is nothing but a waste of money. 22% point out peace, 21% a stronger say in the world, 21% bureaucracy and 20% say that it is all about cultural diversity. Economic prosperity is only mentioned by 14% of respondents. This seems to indicate that Europeans recognize most of the benefits the EU brought them, but they are also aware of the excess of bureaucracy it carried along. The same report reveals that citizens in 22 of the 27 member states believe that their country has benefitted from entering the EU, one of the exceptions being the UK since 54% of British respondents believes their country did not profit from this entry.

Still according to data from this survey, countries such as Portugal, Greece and Ireland, which are suffering more from the crisis, are among the ones who believe the peak of the crisis has not yet come and that the unemployment rate will continue to rise. Due to this fact, in fourteen member states people answer that their current situation does not enable them to make plans for the future. The people who feel they can still make future plans are mainly found in northern countries which have been suffering less from the crisis. When asked which is the best institution to solve the crisis, most Europeans agree that the EU is the most effective institution to cope with the situation, this one coming ahead of national governments or other institutions such as the IMF or the G20. In fact, the EU is considered to be the institution that has reacted the most effectively to the crisis, and national governments are pointed out as ineffective by 57% of respondents. This seems to imply that people do not believe that their national governments are able to stand alone against the problems of a globalized world. It should be mentioned, however, that in Greece, most respondents are more critical of the Union’s actions than they were in the beginning of the crisis, with 75% of Greek respondents declaring that the EU has not responded effectively to the problems caused by the crisis. However, they do not seem to trust their national government either, for 90% of Greek respondents think its actions in face of the crisis have been ineffective.

Eurobarometer 75 reports that the more educated you are, the more you support the EU and your national government, which seems to confirm Fligstein's theory (2008) that the future of Europe lies in education for European citizenship since the more educated you are, the more you can benefit from what Europe has to give you. Furthermore, the better status you have, the more you support the EU, given that managers and self-employed people tend to agree more with the effectiveness of EU measures against the crisis than unemployed people do, for instance, which similarly seems to suggest as Fligstein (2011) argues that white collar workers and managers are able to accept stricter measures because they are not as affected by the crisis as other people are. The same report reveals that the younger you are, the more you support the EU, and this seems to indicate that the educational policies put into practice by the EU are starting to bear fruit for young people are more likely to recognize the need for a European Union.

It is also interesting to point out that, besides believing that the EU is the most capable institution to face the crisis, most Europeans (63%) agree that this very institution has the power and means to face up to international economic competition, and that, in order to succeed, it should place emphasis on education, training, entrepreneurship and restoring order to public finances.

As far as the measures for combating the crisis are concerned, most Europeans seem to defend that the most effective ones are those which try to strengthen the coordination of the economic policy within the EU, and those which imply the supervision of the financial services. The truth is that Europeans seem to firmly think that cooperation between member-states is a powerful means to succeed, even though that is not what we constantly hear on the news, as mentioned earlier. Interesting also is the fact that 80% of respondents surveyed agree that it is necessary to make sacrifices now so as to benefit future generations, but only 50% are ready to reduce their living standards so as to guarantee living standards for future generations, which seems to indicate that, as argued in the previous chapter, people are not comfortable when asked to lose some of the privileges they are used to having. The data reveals that the citizens who are more willing to make sacrifices for future generations are those who were already part of the EU prior to the 2004 enlargement, which may indicate that the countries which joined the EU more recently joined it in order to achieve better conditions and better living standards and they

are not keen on giving up these conditions so soon. Furthermore, it may also indicate that these countries have not yet developed strong ties with the EU and their fellow member states, from whom they were separated for many decades.

An important finding is that, even though people realize that the public deficit of their home country should be reduced, 45% still support the idea that the deficit should be increased so as to create more jobs.

In general, Europeans reveal themselves to be in favor of more transparency on EU matters and that is perceptible when discussing the measures most defended to reform the system. Thus, 89% of Europeans supported the application of tougher rules on tax avoidance and tax havens; 88% defended increasing the transparency of financial markets, and 82% the regulation of wages in the financial sector and the introduction of a tax on profits made by banks. Two other measures to be taken into account are the closer supervision of hedge-funds and the introduction of a tax on financial transactions, defended by 76% and 65% of the respondents, respectively.

One can say that nowadays Europe is fighting the biggest battle of all – the battle for survival.

In the next chapter we will try to demonstrate what view tourists in Portugal from different European and non-European countries have regarding the crisis. Who do they blame for it? Who do they believe will be able to overcome the crisis with fewer difficulties? We will also try to understand what their perception of their identity is. Do they feel European? What do they understand being European means? What does being a European in a period of crisis really mean? Has the crisis promoted or endangered the development of a European identity?



## CHAPTER 4

### The perception of Europeans about Europe

#### 4.1 – Field study – context and aims



**Figure 1** – Comical cartoon featuring cultural traits of different European peoples<sup>61</sup>

In the cartoon above, we can recognize traits that are often attributed to specific people from specific European countries. It seems that we all tend to categorize nationalities and identify them according to these and other cultural traits. According to what has been argued before, Europe comprises many and different cultures and the creation of a European identity must take into account these differences and positively bind them. It may be utopic, however, to try to create the “Perfect European” as suggested in the

<sup>61</sup> “Europe Great Continent” in <http://members.virtualtourist.com/m/1cd25/1/>

cartoon, for this would be an exaggeration of a European identity. It is interesting, however, to note that the diversity of cultures and cultural traits are taken into account when depicting the image of a European individual (even when it is, as in the cartoon above, comical). There are characteristics which we associate with specific nationalities and all of them need to be considered when trying to foment and develop a European identity. As established before, a European identity should be developed, taking into account and accepting the differences of the people that are part of the EU, and interesting it would be to evaluate how Europeans see themselves and how other peoples see Europeans. However, due to the limited scope of this study, we will focus mainly on the perceptions of Europeans about the EU and on how attached or not Europeans feel to the EU. The economy is in recession, Europeans' living standards are being negatively altered and people are constantly asked to make sacrifices. Does this enhance or diminish Europeans' views on Europe and a possible European identity?

The main goal of this study is to try to understand whether Europeans from different member states consider themselves to be European and what that means to them in general and in this time of crisis. Furthermore, it aims to shed some light on what Europeans think about the economic crisis and who is to blame, whether they believe Europe will be able to survive it and whether they would like their country to remain in the EU.

#### **4.2 – Methodology and procedures**

To meet these aims and objectives, field research was carried out in a tourist location in the city of Vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal, using questionnaires, interviews and an "Opinion Guestbook". These instruments were made available to tourists from different nationalities that visited Vila Nova de Gaia, more specifically the Kopke Port Wine House, between December 2011 and February 2012, collecting qualitative and quantitative data. This location was chosen because I work there and it is a place frequently visited by tourists from all over the world who wish to know more about Port Wine. There I am in contact with tourists from many nationalities and decided this would be a more convenient and suitable setting for gaining access to the opinions of Europeans and non-Europeans regarding my research questions as well as allowing me to observe and talk to the research

population in an informal and natural setting. The fact that I am in contact with tourists from different parts of the world and with different backgrounds enabled me to collect different views and to understand tourists' perspectives on their identity.

As far as the "Opinion Guestbook" (Appendix 1) is concerned, this was made available at the beginning of December, 2011, and collected at the end of February, 2012. It consisted of an incomplete sentence which people were asked to complete according to their perception<sup>62</sup>. It was expected that people would express what they think of Europe in a non-directed way, and that the opinions given would be more sincere and trustworthy since people could freely write their thoughts. The "Opinion Guestbook" was made available to those tourists, Europeans or from any other part of the world, who decided to sit down and enjoy a Port Wine tasting so that they could express their views on Europe, when willing to do so.

The questionnaire (Appendix 2) consisted of 18 closed questions and it was handed out between January and February 2012 to tourists of different European countries, namely Portugal, Italy, Germany, Austria, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and Hungary. These nationalities were chosen because they represent, on the one hand, countries which, according to the information we hear and read in the media, are suffering more from the crisis (Portugal and Italy), countries that are not as deeply affected (Germany, UK and Austria) and countries in central and eastern Europe, which were more recently integrated in the EU. The aim was to ascertain whether the crisis influences people's perspective on the EU and on their citizenship identity. The questionnaire was conceptualized, taking into account the objectives of the study and having as background a deep recession which is news every day. The choice of a closed questionnaire was due to the fact that it was going to be handed out to tourists who were enjoying their free time and might not want to spend a lot of time providing more extensive answers. The nationalities of respondents were previously defined so as to have a sample of respondents from a range of countries as described above. The questionnaire was translated into Portuguese, Italian, English and German so as to facilitate the respondents' comprehension of the questions asked. The questions presented were direct ones and for each question a scale of 4 possible answers was provided. Some questions, however,

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<sup>62</sup> The sentence was: "For me Europe is..."

presented more answer-options for these implied more comprehensive data. The first section was constituted by three questions aimed at gathering biographical data. The following nine questions were elaborated in order to assert the relationship Europeans have with European institutions and so as to understand the idea people have of the EU and the benefits it may have brought to their home countries. The last set of questions regards the respondents' opinion on the crisis and on how it is affecting Europe and its work, their vision of Europe and its future.

The interview (Appendix 3) consisted of 5 open questions in which people were asked to give their view on the issue of European identity, on the crisis and on how the crisis is affecting the creation and/or development of a European identity. The interview was conceived so as to be recorded and analyzed at a later stage. Most of the tourists who were asked to contribute to the study by answering the interview requested the questions be submitted to them by e-mail, so as to answer the questions calmly and after giving some thought to the matter. This method presented some advantages for volunteers, allowing them to respond in their own time, and the interview schedule was subsequently sent to 12 e-mail addresses and 9 answers were received and analyzed. The respondents were from different European nationalities: 1 was Portuguese, 2 were Italian; 1 was Lithuanian and 5 were British.

No tourist was invited to participate in more than one method which means that if one was asked to complete the sentence in the "Opinion Guestbook", he/she would not be invited to cooperate by answering the questionnaire or the interview.

In the following table the methods used and the objectives of each are presented:

METHOD	OBJECTIVES
“Opinion Guestbook”	To gather different perspectives of people on Europe: what is Europe for Europeans and for non-Europeans?
Questionnaires	To analyze whether European citizens consider themselves to be European; To assess the impact of the crisis on European identity; To evaluate whether European citizens have knowledge of the situation of crisis other Europeans are facing; To analyze citizens’ relationship with Europe.
Interview	To analyze different perspectives on what European identity consists of; To evaluate whether European citizens consider themselves to be more or less European due to the economic crisis.

Table 1 – Methods used in the field-study and corresponding objectives

### 4.3 – The “Opinion Guestbook”

The “Opinion Guestbook” was displayed at the counter of the Port Wine House where the study was carried out. When tourists entered and specified they would like to sit down and have a Port Wine tasting, they were invited to write a few words on what Europe meant for them, no matter what their nationality was. It was explained to them that they could freely write their views and opinions and they could express themselves in their own mother tongue so as to be easier for them to write their opinions.

Altogether, 30 tourists wrote in the “Opinion Guestbook”. Their nationalities were diverse: 7 were Portuguese; 7 were American; 6 were British; 2 were Dutch; 3 were Italian; 1 was Colombian, 1 was Argentinean; 1 was Latvian and 2 were Canadian. The opinions of the

Portuguese, the British, the Dutch, the Italians and the Latvian are presented as the opinions of Europeans about Europe; the remaining ones are referred to as the visions of non-Europeans about Europe.

The “Opinion Guestbook” allowed a more comprehensive interpretation of what people consider Europe to be. Opinions on Europe seem to be very different depending on whether you are a European or not. It is then interesting to note that non-Europeans are able to point out some historical data on Europe and that they have a somewhat romanticized vision of Europe. Non-Europeans tended to refer to Europe and its rich history and the richness of cultures it comprises. Hence, for non-Europeans, Europe is...

*“A liberal set of countries that are consistently the same but constantly at war.”*  
(Jacquelyn, USA)

In this statement Europe is defined as a group of countries which share similarities but that seem to always be fighting against each other.

*“It’s all about diversity and history. As an American / Canadian living in the UK, I’m always amazed at how old everything here is and how many different cultures / types of people coexist in what feels like such a small area. And the relationships between countries and attitudes towards the different populations seem so very engrained in everyone. It’s fascinating! To be completely honest I still romanticize Europe a lot but my naïve ideas haven’t been proved wrong yet (...)”* (Ingrid, Canada / USA)

Diversity of peoples and cultures is hereby being pointed out, but in a positive sense since there is an idea that different European people and cultures manage to coexist and respect each other in a limited space.

*“(...) a daily contradiction. It’s home and a foreign land; what I know and a constant discovery of new things; daily security and a battle to feel safe; an adventure and overwhelming effort; the most life-changing four years of my life and a reminder of what I miss at home; the land of opportunity away from the cliché “Land of opportunity” , i.e. America.”* (Anonymous, USA)

Europe is also seen as a mixture of feelings and experiences, being presented as an adventure which holds surprises along the way and thus it is interesting to be discovered. It

is referred to as a land of opportunities which was a cliché previously attributed to the USA.

*“We love Europe. It is so old. The USA is a young country and it doesn’t have the history as Europe does.”* (Buzzie, USA)

*“Europe today for me is an unexpected pleasure. I lived here as a child before the EU and I love that each country has maintained their unique identity. There is so much culture to experience!”* (Chrissie, USA)

*“For my wife and me, Europe is our new home. The lifestyle, pace and people are what we are looking for. We have now lived here for 2 years – life is good.”* (M. & S., Canada)

*“For me, Europe is a mystery, enveloped in history. It is the land of my ancestors. It is thousands of years older than where I live. There is history in every cobblestone – a history I work to discover and understand. It holds the secrets to my understanding of my past and human nature.”* (Lara, USA)

From these four statements one can understand how other people admire Europe’s cultural and historical background and how they find it extraordinary the fact that each European component has been able to keep its differences and identity.

*“For me, Europe is wake up in Italy, have breakfast in France, have jogging in Greece, have lunch in Spain, watch TV in Germany, have a shower in Finland, have dinner in England and go to bed in Denmark.”* (Michele, USA)

Europe is also recognized by the freedom of movements as depicted in the statement above.

*“Europe is an amazing place to travel. Compared to the USA which is one huge melting pot lacking in any one singular identity. Every European country has its own original flavor, feel, taste and texture. Each nation has its own struggle and history, own food and drink, each nation is unique and distinct. As an American I am not so absorbed in the economic and political identity of Europe and so I can appreciate the feel of each country and compare it to the USA.”* (Anonymous, USA)

Non-Europeans are able to enjoy the diversity of Europe and experience what each European culture has to offer. People seem to be able to identify “Europe” as a whole, but also to distinguish each country it comprises by its history and its uniqueness. According to the statement above, Europe is very different from the USA which does not seem to have a distinctive character, the latter being presented as a melting pot which lacks identity.

*“Sorprendente, calida, triste, alegre, simple, compleja, grande y diversa. Bella, bella, bella, dificil, extensa, calida y con nieve. Sabia y con historia pero principalmente es mi nuevo hogar.”* (Kiki, Argentina)

*Paz, diversidad, complejidad, solidaridad e inigualdad. Simultaneamente belleza, tristeza, dificultades y oportunidades. Musica, comida y lugares. Lugares para volver.”* (Tomas, Colombia)

These last two statements refer once again to the complexities and variety of Europe, presenting it as “*un hogar*”, i.e., a home.

All in all, most people acknowledge Europe’s diversity and complexity and consequent potentiality. They also point out history and culture as strong characteristics that attract people to Europe and that define Europe’s identity. Furthermore, it is interesting to see that people enjoy the fact that countries are not all the same because they are part of Europe but instead managed to keep their identity and uniqueness. Non-Europeans also mentioned the fact that even though the set of countries that compose Europe are very similar or share similar values, these countries tend to be constantly fighting against each other which reminds us of the period prior to the European Union when peace was a goal that seemed unattainable. In fact, it seems that people acknowledge that the EU fulfilled at least one of its goals, namely the peaceful coexistence in a limited area between different peoples and cultures. According to the data collected, for some people, Europe is also seen as the land of opportunities, for others a place in which you have to struggle for survival. Thus, its complexity and mystery.

The opinion of Europeans about Europe tends to be much more practical and these tend to have a more critical point of view since they live in Europe and experience *in loco* its benefits and contradictions.



Hence, they define Europe as...

*“Um continente.”* (Glória & Xavier, Portugal)

*“Um encontro de desencontros: séculos de guerras e rivalidades e poucos decénios de paz com uma tentativa de uniformizar a diversidade: o Sul pelo Norte, o Leste pelo Oeste...o tradicional pelo multinacional.”* (Cristiano & Helena, Portugal)

While some Europeans think of Europe as a continent, there are others who think of it as a complex idea, as an attempt at globalization by means of which differences are somehow blended.

*“...é algo positivo, porque unidos somos mais fortes na tentativa de equilibrar a economia mundial em confronto com outros países como os EUA, a China ou a Rússia.”* (Mariana, Portugal)

*“A Europa é uma comunidade de povos que partilha uma história e cultura comuns, cada um com as suas particularidades e que se tornou uma referência mundial em termos sociais, económicos e políticos.”* (Sofia, Portugal)

*“Uma oportunidade de estar juntos e unidos para ultrapassar desafios difíceis os quais penso serem inultrapassáveis se estivéssemos ‘sozinhos’. Acredito que da união vão sair soluções para vencer da melhor forma esta situação.”* (Anonymous, Portugal)

*“(...) fazer parte de um conjunto de países que utilizam a moeda única (euro) para fazer transacções comerciais com o objectivo de facilitar a importação e exportação, trazendo benefícios para a economia.”* (Rui, Portugal)

In the four commentaries above, Europe is presented in a positive way. It is seen as a union of people which united has a role to play in the world economy. Europe is considered to be stronger as a union than if countries were facing adversities on their own.

*“For me Europe is lots of cultures together. We should see the beauty of that, learn from it and enjoy it.”* (Marianne, Netherlands)

*“I like the fact that I can travel freely within Europe as European. But I got a very strong feeling that Europe is bad for our identity. Many things we believed in are going to*

*change. Things like the agrarian rules and drug laws worked for us but seem not to be right for other countries. And now we, as Europe, get problems by getting employees from eastern countries as well.”* (Jacco, Netherlands)

There are Europeans who believe that the free movement of people and goods enabled by the union is positive to a certain extent, but they do not like the fact that decisions are being made uniformly for very different countries.

*“L’Europa ha la fortuna di essere tante cose che come per miracolo si riconosce in un patrimonio comune.”* (Anonymous, Italy)

*“L’Europa rappresenta un insieme di popoli che seppur di origine comune non è riuscita attraverso i secoli a riomogeneizzarsi a causa delle guerre politiche e di religione. (...) L’Euro ha tentato questa unificazione ma senza un’ unità finanziaria e politica rischia un fallimento ed un attacco delle grande potenze finanziare emergenti.”* (Marco, Italy)

*“Per me l’Europa è qualcosa da scoprire e conoscere.”* (Santi, Italy)

*“An opportunity to learn and grow individually.”* (Tracey, UK)

*“A celebration of diversity of cultures. In my lifetime we have made enormous progress in learning to understand each other after decades or even centuries of conflict. As the union continues to expand we have new opportunities to get to know people from countries of which we previously had little knowledge and I look forward to this continuing through my children’s and grandchildren’s lifetime.”* (Robert, UK)

*“Europe for me is one continent with lots of different attitudes, beautiful old cities and great heritage. We are all one, but all very different.”* (Anonymous, Latvia)

In the previous statements, a vision of diversity is passed again, and this fact can make us all learn from each other and make us avoid mistakes from the past which led to conflicts and wars.

*“Europe for me is continental Europe. Although the UK is part of Europe, it doesn’t feel like we are.”* (Paul, UK)

*“When I think of Europe, I think of places outside the UK. I look forward to different architecture, sounds, colours, voices. The Euro makes travel easier, but loses some of the identity. It doesn’t feel like a community, but I think it is good. Vive la difference! (Carolyn, UK)*

*“Coming from England, for me Europe is a family from which I frequently feel estranged. But I would never completely abandon. Whenever I walk through the streets of Barcelona, Porto or Marseille or down the boulevards of Paris, I feel like I am in a foreign country, yet strangely at home. The English have always been the awkward partners in Europe’s history, but it is a part of Europe nonetheless and I feel richer for it. With regards to political and monetary union, that is what many of the English are skeptical of, rather than being anti –Europe per se. for me, European political union is a union of elites trying to impose a dream on its people. As that dream has soured, the rhetoric of many of those elites (Germany and France) have become more nationalistic and self-interested, playing to the suspicions many of the English always had.” (Anonymous, UK)*

*“A collection of countries, with political leaders desperately trying to amalgamate them as one union. Many of the populous of these countries do not agree with the union, preferring to have their own individual control of their destiny and currency. For Europe to continue to exist as a ‘nation’ or ‘union’ it requires the countries to be ‘states’ of a federal union – giving central control to budgetary control, financial authority and central government. It commenced as a ‘Common Market’ which most countries were happy to endorse – it has evolved through political pressure into its present state – which is unworkable – hence the present problem with the euro. When E.E.C was born no provision was written allowing withdrawal – any withdraw will now be painful to Europe and the countries involved. (...) England is an example of a country that wishes to have its own currency, parliament and control of its destiny but is quite happy to be part of Europe – it is our major trading country.” (Anonymous, UK)*

These last visions of Europe reveal a more negative opinion of it since these respondents consider themselves estranged from Europe for fear of losing their independence and identity. In fact, they tend to be happy about being part of Europe but would like to maintain their decision-making power and control over their fate which they would not like to leave in the hands of the political and economic elites that rule Europe. Through these

statements it can be understood that these people feel that Europe is somehow distant, for it is controlled by elites and this situation creates discomfort and mistrust in relation to these elites.

To sum up these ideas, Europeans seem to consider that the diversity which characterizes Europe is positive and enriches it. Some people seem somewhat indifferent to Europe since they identify it as a continent and nothing else. The lack of attachment to Europe is evident in those cases. In other cases, people are able to recognize the benefits that Europe gives them, namely the possibility to travel freely within Europe and to use a common currency – the Euro. Furthermore, people also acknowledge the fact that by working together, Europe is stronger for it would be difficult for most countries to make themselves heard if standing alone. Thus, as a group, these countries are considered to be stronger and more able to overcome difficult situations. Most British people that wrote their opinion stated that Britain was somehow an “awkward partner”, for it likes to keep its difference by insisting on keeping its currency and not being willing to give away its decision-making powers. These people are still suspicious of a political and monetary union for they believe stronger countries like Germany or France would impose their will upon others and that situation would affect British identity. Moreover, they think that, by accepting the Euro as their currency, they would be denying their identity. However, they are quite happy to be part of Europe provided that they can keep their difference and that that brings them benefits.

One could say that everyone seems to agree that Europe is characterized by diversity and that is an enriching factor. Furthermore, most of the Europeans who gave their opinion seem to agree that working together and being able to freely travel around different European countries are positive aspects of Europe. Yet, for some Europeans, namely the British, Europe is more continental Europe and hence they do not consider themselves as truly Europeans. Yet, they would not like to abandon Europe as long as they manage to keep their own identity and political and monetary independence.

#### 4.4 - Questionnaire analysis

200 questionnaires were delivered to tourists of different nationalities, all of which were handed in, and 133 were validated. The remaining 63 were invalidated since they lacked several answers. The distribution of the questionnaires was not made randomly. Tourists of specific nationalities who entered the Port Wine House where the study was being carried out were asked to participate, namely Portuguese, Italians, British, Germans, Austrians and people of Eastern countries, namely the Czech, Polish, Slovenians, Slovaks and Hungarians. These people were representatives of countries that are experiencing the crisis in different ways, that is, some are said to be suffering more from it, as for example Portugal and Italy; others less, as, for instance, Britain and Germany. Information regarding central and eastern European countries was also considered to be important, because they are newcomers into the EU and it would be interesting to analyze their perception of European identity.

As far as the biographical data of the respondents is concerned, it is relevant to mention that from the 133 questionnaires gathered, 70 respondents were female (53%) whereas 53 were male (47%).

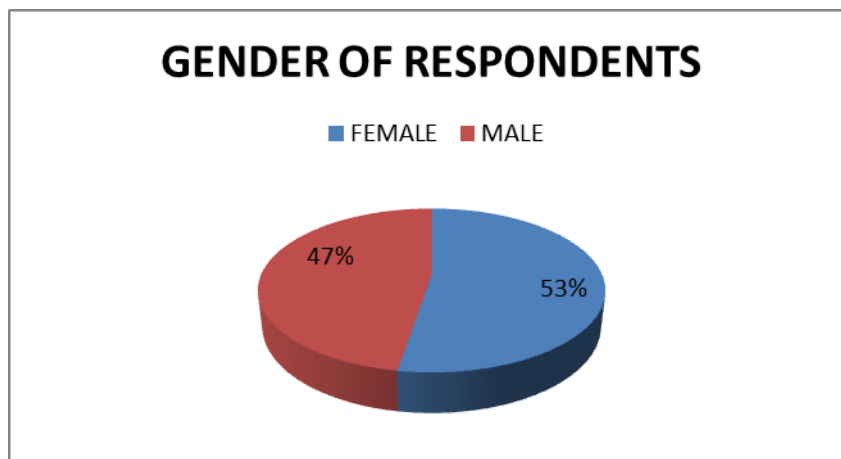


Figure 2 – Gender of respondents

The age-range varied between 18 and 87 years old, as can be seen in the following figure:

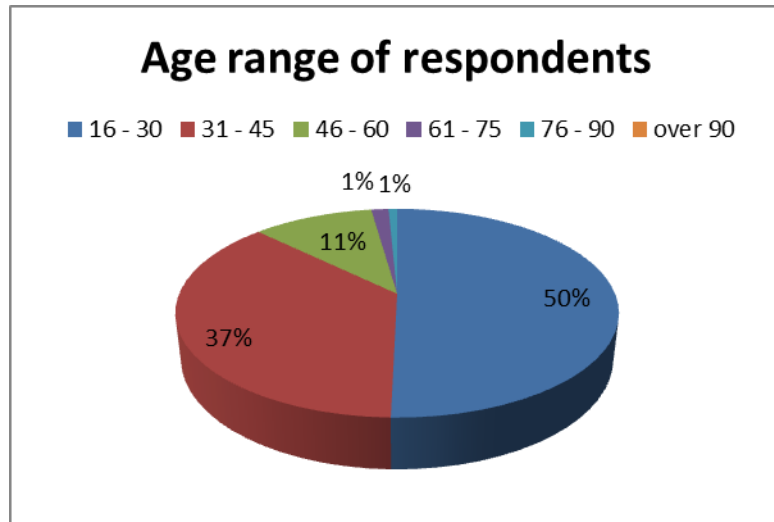


Figure 3 – Age range of respondents

In figure 3, we can see that half of the respondents were people whose age range was between 16-30 years old (50%), whereas 37% of respondents were aged between 31-45 years old, 11% were between 46-60 years old. Only 1% refers to people aged 61-75 years old and a similar percentage was aged between 76-90 years old. There were no respondents over 90 years of age. This means that most of the respondents were young adults who have been in contact with the European Union for a large part of their lives.

Respondents were from different member states of the EU, namely Portugal (27 respondents), United Kingdom (18 respondents), Italy (29 respondents), Germany (27 respondents), Austria (4 respondents), Hungary (3 respondents), Czech Republic (3 respondents), Hungary (3 respondents), Poland (15 respondents), Slovakia (4 respondents) and Slovenia (3 respondents) (Figure 4).

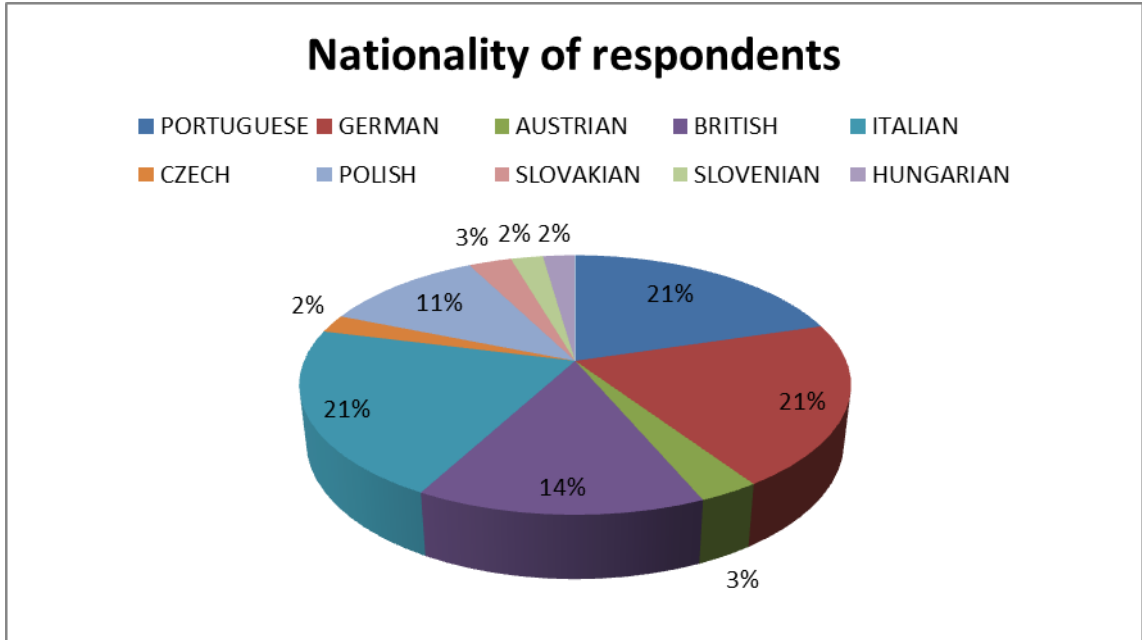


Figure 4 – Nationality of respondents

The second part of the questionnaire was meant to provide information regarding the relationship that Europeans have with European institutions and with the EU itself. Then, when asked how well they knew European institutions, 56% of respondents believe they know them well, 28% admit to having poor knowledge of these institutions and the remaining 16% are divided in half between those who know European institutions very well and very badly as can be seen in Figure 5. According to the data gathered, the respondents seem to be divided between those who know EU institutions very well and those who have poor knowledge of the work and functioning of these institutions.

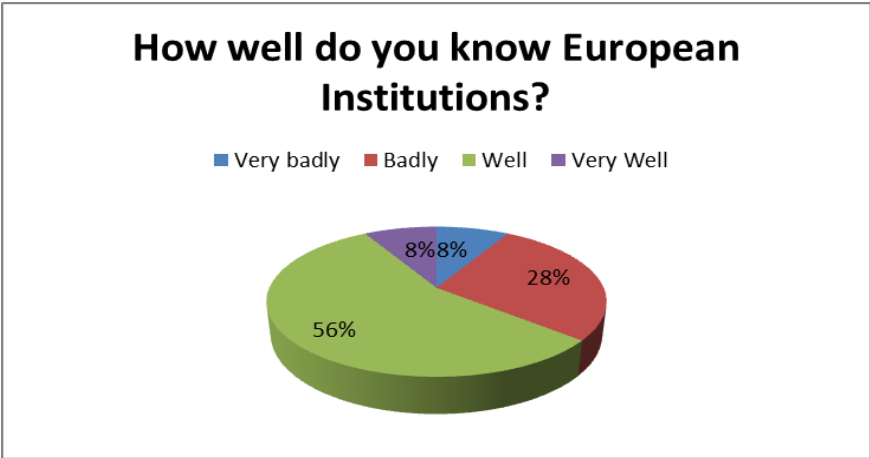


Figure 5 –How well do respondents know European institutions?

Another question asked was related to the voting frequency of respondents. 44% of respondents stated they always vote in European elections, 20% mentioned they sometimes do, 13% answered they rarely vote and 23% admit never to have voted in European elections. Once again extreme answers seem to be the chosen ones. Thus, there are those who claim to have always voted in EU elections and then a considerable percentage who admits never to have voted in these elections. One factor should be taken into account and that is, as most of the respondents were very young, most likely they have only had to vote once or twice in such elections and this may influence the information retrieved.

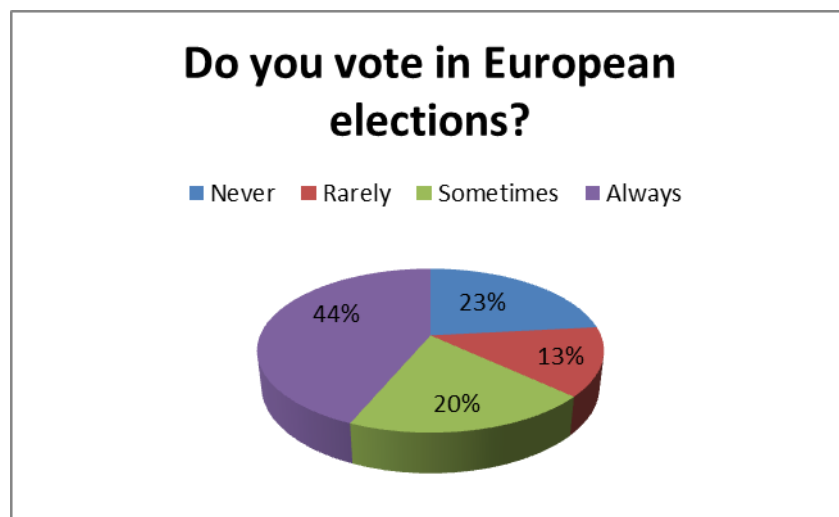


Figure 6 –How often do respondents vote in European elections?

Question 6 tried to assess people's connection to the different communities they are part of. The results obtained reveal that 35% of people feel more connected to their country; 20% to their city, town or village; 19% to their continent; 17% to their region and 9% do not feel attached to any of these. This result may suggest that people still tend to be more attached to their country, since this seems to incorporate most of the values and beliefs people are more willing to adopt and defend. It should be noted though that a significant number of respondents also reveal they feel attached to a larger community which is their continent.



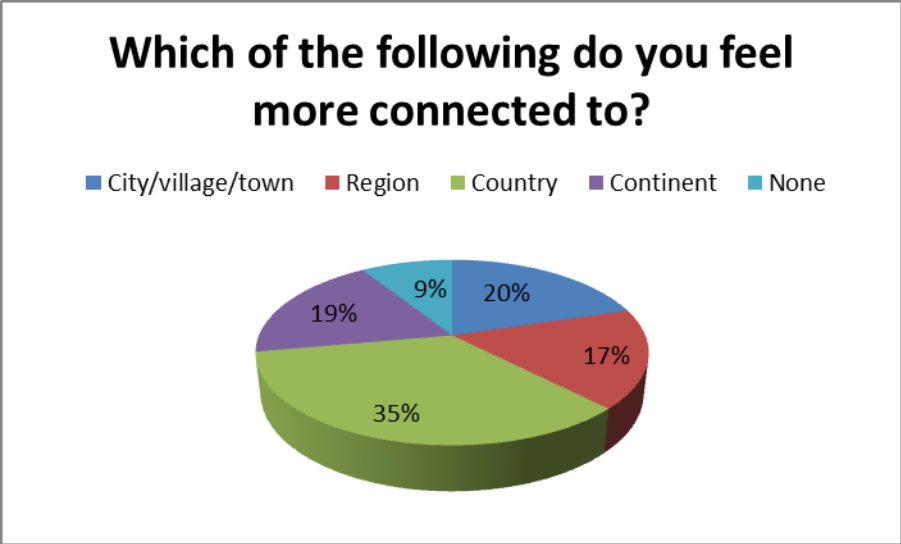


Figure 7 – What do respondents feel more connected to?

Question 7 tried to evaluate whether people consider themselves to be European at all. The answers gathered reveal a tendency for people to consider themselves as Europeans, for 41% consider themselves to be totally European and 38% consider themselves in a large part Europeans. Only a minority of 3% answered that they do not consider themselves as Europeans and 18% that they are a little European. One can state that positive answers regarding seeing themselves as Europeans were given by a large majority of respondents.

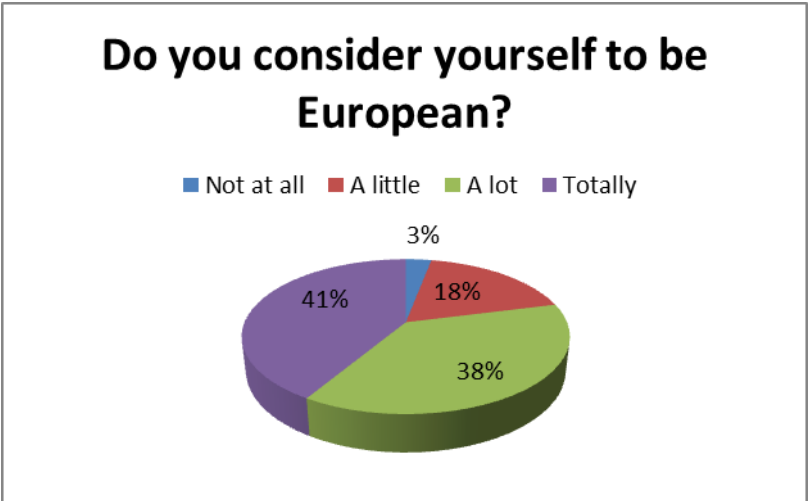


Figure 8 – Do respondents consider themselves to be European?

Even though the answers given to the previous question revealed that most people consider themselves as Europeans, when questioned what Europe meant for them, 39% said it was a

continent and 30% considered it to be an ideal. Only 26% believe that Europe is their actual home. Hence one can say that there is a divergence in the answers given to these two questions. In fact, whilst in the previous answer people tended to consider themselves as Europeans, most of them think of Europe as a continent and not something closer like their home.

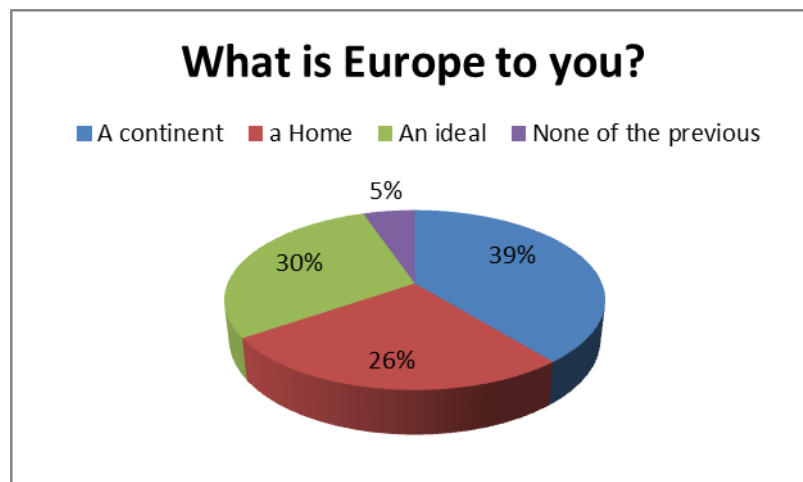


Figure 9 – What does Europe mean to respondents?

Respondents were also asked to choose three main symbols of *Europeanness* out of the eight provided. There was no consensus in the answers, and the answers were similarly divided between the given options. Hence, 23% mentioned the euro, 19% chose multilingualism as an important symbol, 18% referred to freedom, 16% the European Parliament, 11% chose peace, 11% mentioned the logo “United in Diversity” and only 2% referred to the anthem. It seems that people tend to point out the symbols they are more in contact with, like the currency, different languages, freedom or the European Parliament, which people tend to hear about a lot because of the media coverage. On the other hand, symbols like the motto, the anthem or even peace seem to be less recognized by respondents. There is an interesting contradiction here for, even though one of the main goals of Europe is to ensure peace between all member-states and that peace has endured in Europe for a longer period than ever, people fail to point it out as one of the three main symbols of Europe. Here it should once again be mentioned that, as most of the respondents were young, most likely they have not lived through a period of war in Europe and thus may tend to neglect the importance of the maintenance of peace.

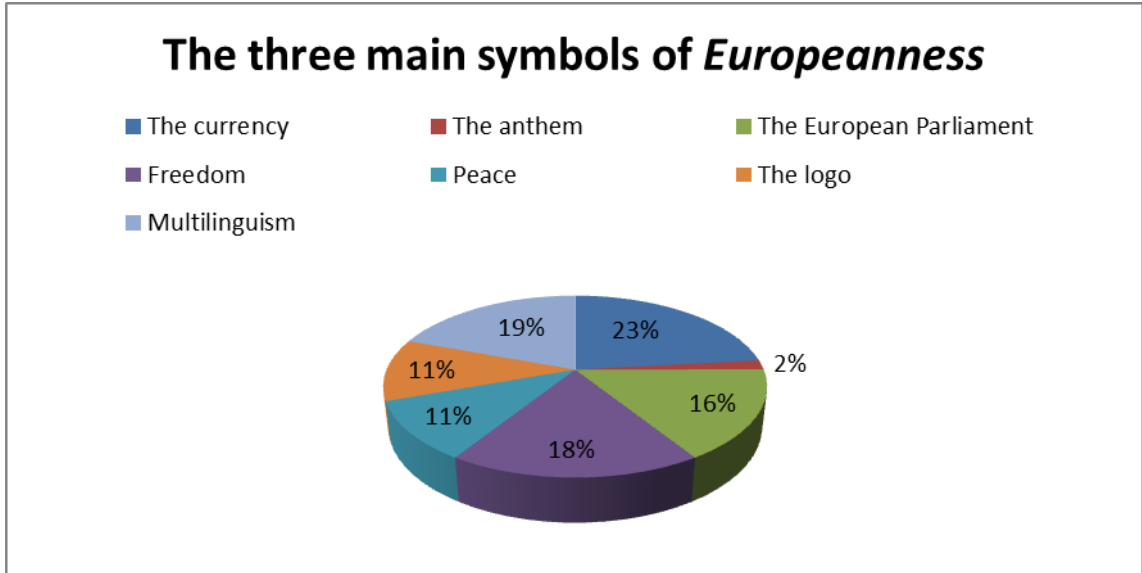


Figure 10 –The three main symbols of *Europeanness*

When asked whether they believed in a united Europe, answers were once again not consensual. Thus people tend to be divided between those who believe a lot in a united Europe (40%) and those who believe a little (36%) in a united Europe. 15 % totally believe in a united Europe and only 9% do not believe in it at all. One can then infer that people are not completely confident that Europe can really be united, for opinions are mostly divided between middle options.

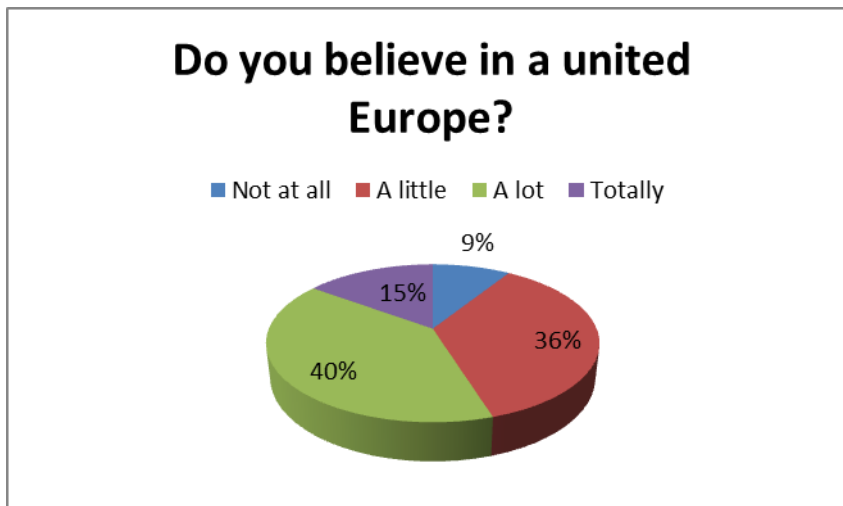


Figure 11 – Do respondents believe in a united Europe?

Question 11 tried to assess people's opinion regarding the benefits their country has enjoyed from being part of the EU. 40% of respondents referred that their country had

benefitted a lot from being in the EU, 32% recognized their country had benefitted a little from participation, 22% felt that their country had completely benefitted from the EU and only 6% thought that their country had not benefitted at all from participation. It seems that people largely understand that the EU brought some benefits to their home country, since mostly positive options were chosen by most respondents.

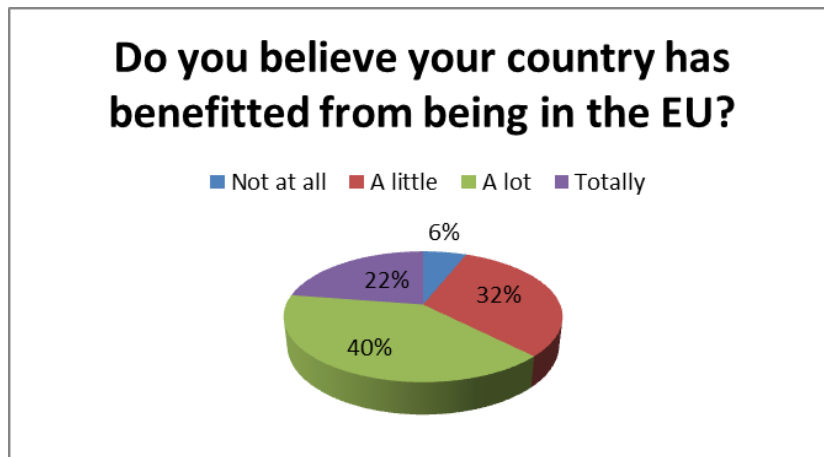


Figure 12 - Do respondents believe their country to have benefitted from being in the EU?

There does not seem to be disagreement regarding the continuity of participation of different countries in the EU. In fact, a large majority wishes their country to remain part of the EU. 54% of respondents wish it completely, 31% wish it a lot, 8% a little and a minority of respondents (7%) would not like it at all. It seems that, although people may not completely feel European, they understand that being part of the EU is still positive for their country and brings them benefits. Hence they wish to remain part of the EU.

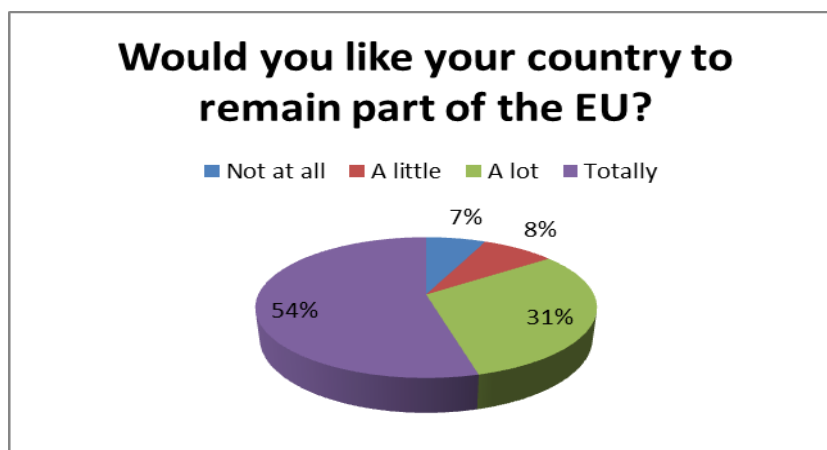


Figure 13 – Do respondents wish their country to remain part of the EU?

As far as the current crisis is concerned, people seem to be optimistic that Europe will be able to survive it. In fact, 56% have a strong belief in that, 20% believe it completely, 19% believe it a little and only 5% do not believe in it at all. Results seem to confirm the conclusions of Eurobarometer 75 which reflected that Europeans trusted Europe to successfully overcome the crisis, as argued in the previous chapter.

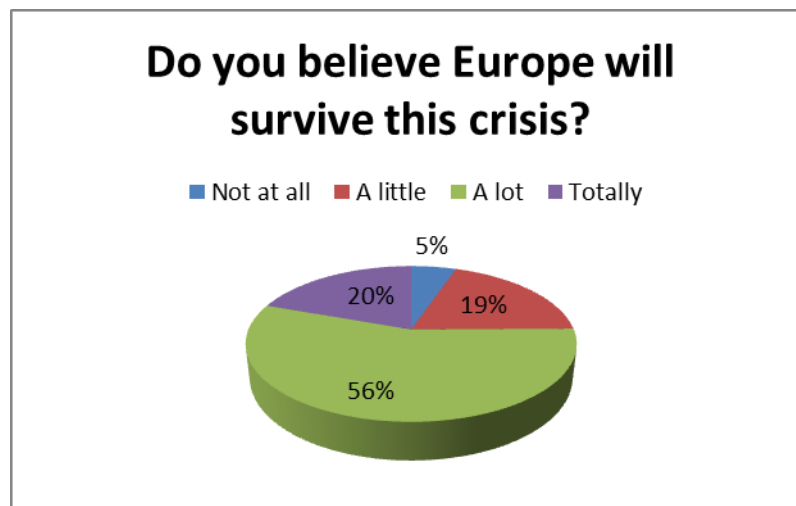


Figure 14 – Do respondents believe Europe will survive the current crisis?

The answers are consensual regarding who to blame for the current crisis. Most respondents pointed fingers at politicians (48%), 28% blamed bankers, 12% the markets, 8% blamed Europeans themselves and 4% referred to others which they did not specify. This could mean that the elites that have ruled Europe are now accused of being responsible for the crisis probably because of the lack of transparency regarding policies adopted and their action in Europe. That is probably the reason why only a minority of respondents recognized Europeans to be the ones to blame for the crisis.

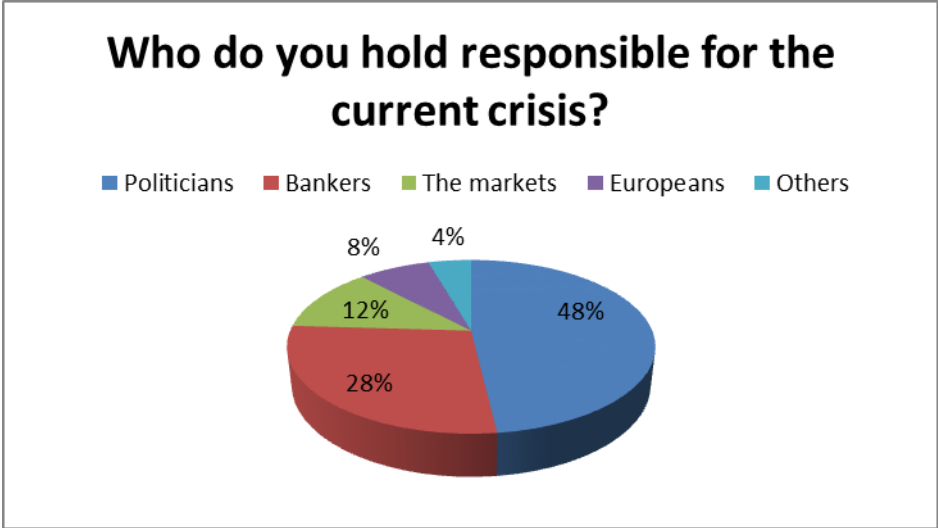


Figure 15 – Who do respondents hold responsible for the current crisis?

Respondents were also requested to mention where the crisis was more significant. 49% of respondents referred to Greece, 20% mentioned Portugal, 14% answered Italy, 12% Spain and 5% Ireland. Other countries mentioned but with little frequency were Austria, Hungary and Slovakia. Data seems to confirm that people are well aware of the countries which are suffering the most due to the economic crisis which is affecting the world.

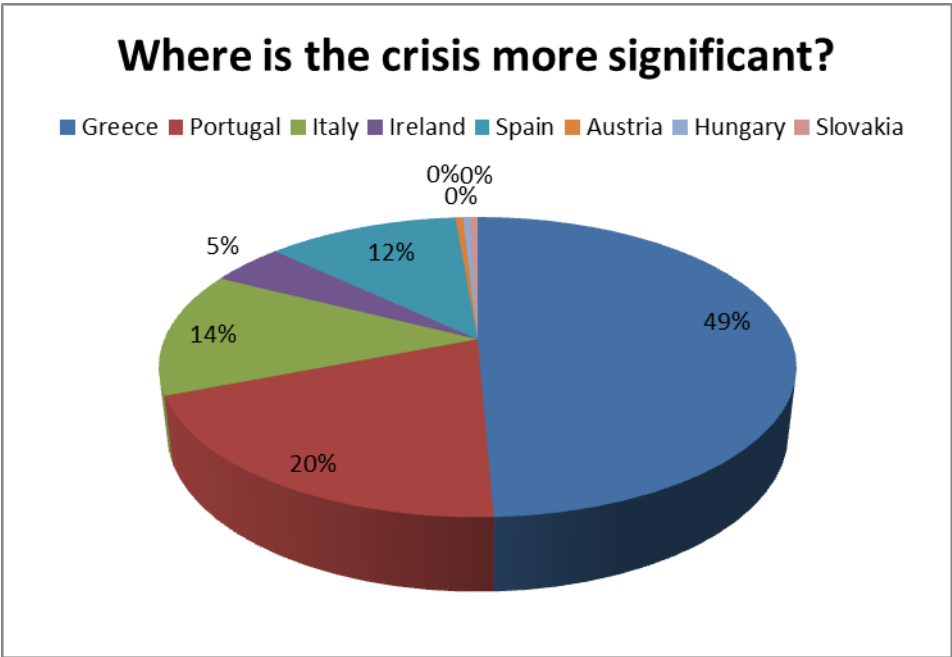


Figure 16 – Where do respondents feel the crisis to be more significant?

People were asked to say if they distinguished between the Euro (currency) and Europe. The two following questions meant to assess the Euro's importance to the EU since it has been argued by economists and politicians that Europe is not able to survive without the Euro.

A majority of respondents believe they are able to distinguish between the euro and Europe. Thus 32% said they totally distinguish between them, 31% distinguish them a lot, 26% distinguish between these a little and 11% believe they are the same. Most people seem to be able to make a distinction between both which may signify they are aware that the Euro is just a part of Europe and it should not be confused with it.

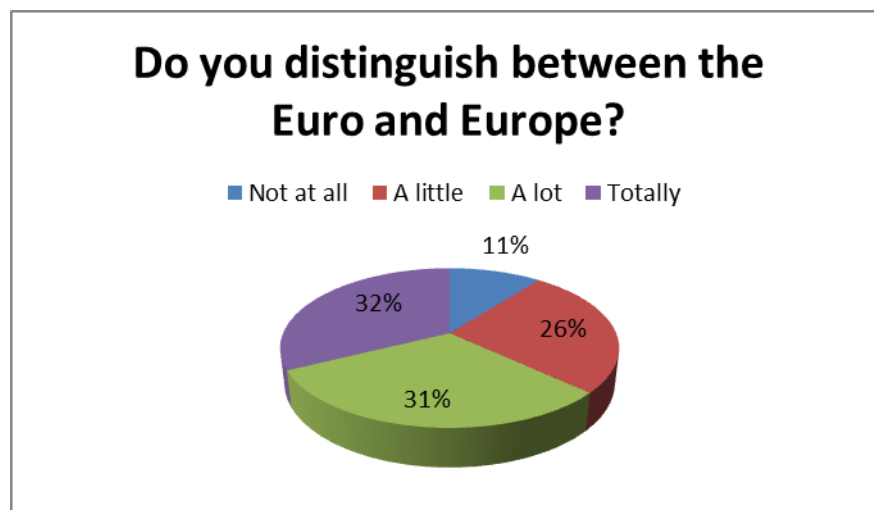


Figure 17 – Do respondents distinguish between the Euro and Europe?

33% of respondents said they barely believe Europe would survive without the Euro, 29% do not believe it at all, 21% strongly believe it would and 17% totally think Europe could survive without its currency. This may signify that Europeans recognize that the Euro plays an important role in European affairs and it seems to be seen as a sign of stability.

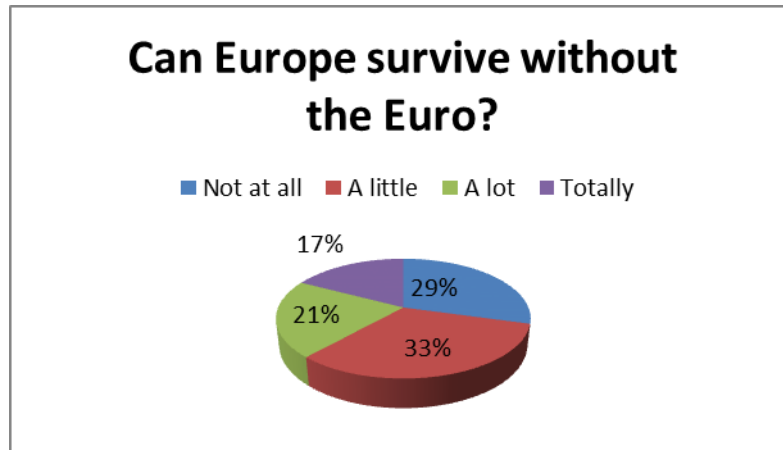


Figure 18 – Do respondents feel Europe can survive without the Euro?

As argued in the previous chapters, Europe was built by elites and they tended to be in charge of Europe. The answers gathered to the question “Who is in charge of Europe?” seem to confirm that fact. Thus 50% of respondents believe that politicians are in command of Europe, 20% mentioned bankers, 18% the markets and only 4% believe Europeans to be in charge of Europe. 8% answered “others” and pointed out names like Angela Merkel and Nicholas Sarkozy, these being two representatives of stronger European partners, namely Germany and France, who have influenced a lot the decisions of Europe concerning the crisis and the measures to be taken in order to overcome it. Furthermore, those who mentioned “others” specifically named Germany and/or France and the rich and powerful countries.

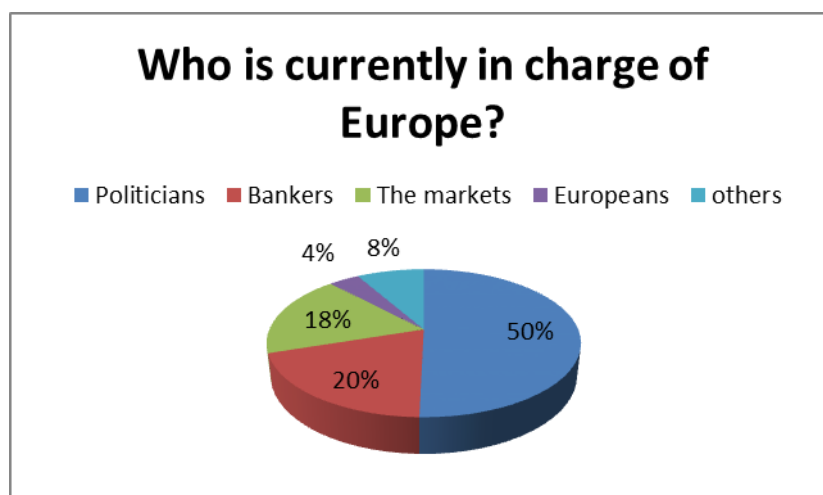


Figure 19 – Who is currently in charge of Europe?



All in all, the following conclusions can be withdrawn from the results obtained:

- There is still a tendency for Europeans to feel more connected to their country or to smaller communities closer to them than to Europe;
- 56% of respondents claim to have a good knowledge of European institutions, but a significant percentage (28%) also states not to know EU institutions that well;
- 44% of respondents claim to have always voted in EU elections, but due to the age range of respondents, it is difficult to infer a clear conclusion from this data since most of them only had the chance of voting once or twice in such elections. Moreover, a relatively high percentage (23%) also claims never to have done it.
- Most respondents think of themselves as totally or largely Europeans which may indicate people are willing to assume a broader European identity or to assume themselves as Europeans;
- For 39% of respondents Europe is just a continent, 29% see it as an ideal and 26% consider it as “home”;
- The three symbols of *Europeanness* most often mentioned by respondents were: the currency (63%), multilingualism (53%) and freedom (49%). This seems to imply that people widely accept the Euro as part of European identity. Moreover, the diversity of languages is also recognized as typically European. Respondents recognized freedom as one of the main values or symbols of Europe;
- As far as the unity of Europe is concerned, opinions are divergent, for even though 40% of respondents strongly believe in a united Europe, 36% have difficulties in believing in it. This may suggest that Europeans are not as yet convinced that the unity of the cultures that compose Europe is to be achieved;
- 40% of respondents consider their country to have benefitted from participation in the EU, whereas 32% recognizes that it has at least partly benefitted from entering the EU. Only a small percentage (9%) considers that their home country has not benefitted at all from joining the EU. This seems to imply that people are aware of the benefits Europe brought them and thus they are more willing to consider themselves as Europeans as revealed previously;
- Also interesting to point out is the fact that a large majority of respondents (85% altogether) agree with their country’s continuation in the EU;

- As far as the crisis is concerned, 56% of respondents strongly believe Europe will be able to overcome and survive the current crisis which seems to confirm results from the Eurobarometer 75 in which it was argued people trusted the EU to be the abler institution to cope with the crisis and its difficulties;
- Most people seem to believe that politicians and bankers are the ones to be held responsible for the current situation. Another interesting point is related to the fact that only a small minority of respondents (8%) blames Europeans for the crisis;
- Greece is widely recognized as the country which is suffering the most from the crisis, being followed by Portugal, Italy and Spain, respectively. One can then positively state that people from different European countries are somewhat aware of what is going on in Europe and of what is going on in other European partners;
- Even though 32% of respondents are able to distinguish between the Euro and Europe, a similar percentage states they are aware that Europe would have difficulties surviving without it. This implies that people attribute a lot of importance to the common currency and they are conscious of the role it plays in the world's economy. It may suggest as well that people think it crucial regarding the definition of a European identity;
- Politicians and bankers are the ones considered to be in charge of Europe which means that respondents are well aware that elites are commanding the future of Europe and thus their very own future.

#### **4.5 - Interview results**

As previously explained, the interview questions were sent to the tourists by e-mail due to time constraints that prevented most of them from answering the interview on site. From the 12 interviews schedules sent out, 9 were answered. Of the 9 respondents, 5 are British citizens, 1 is Portuguese, 1 is Lithuanian and 2 are Italian. The interview questions were designed to solicit open answers so people could freely state their opinion about what European identity really means for them and how the crisis is affecting their view of Europe.

Firstly, people were asked whether they considered themselves to be European. Answers varied. In fact, between positive and negative answers, there are those who consider

themselves Europeans, “*denn Lituanen ist der geographische Mittelpunkt Europas*”<sup>63</sup> (Interview 1, Lithuania). This is to say that the interviewee considers herself to be European for her home country is geographically located at the center of Europe. Moreover, this idea was reinforced by interviewee 2 who claimed to consider herself European “*only due to geographical location, [but] not culturally.*” (Interview 2, Rachel)

People who answered negatively argued they did not consider themselves to be Europeans for they are “*probably more likely to say that [they are] British.*” (Interview 3, Jessica) Another reason raised for not considering themselves Europeans was that people “*were brought up in an era that encouraged people to be proud of their British heritage*” (Interview 4, Barry).

Geography seems then to play an important role as far as European identity is concerned for people who tend to consider themselves European do it because they live in a European country. Yet, one of the interviewees mentions the fact that that identity does not extend itself to culture. The reasons provided for not seeing themselves as Europeans are related to the fact that people were not educated to be Europeans and hence they find it difficult to assume that identity. This seems to be congruent with the notion that identity is taught and thus education plays a significant role in the transmission of values and norms which will help people to create affiliations as discussed in chapter 1.

People were also asked what it meant for them to be European. There are also different views on this matter. Hence Europeans are those “*born and raised in mainland Europe.*”(Interview 4, Barry) This idea was reinforced by interviewee number 2 who argues that to be Europeans means “*to live in mainland Europe, to speak a language other than English, [and] to use the Euro*”(Rachel). The notion of belonging to a European country was referred by several other interviewees:

“*A resident and national of one of the countries in Europe*” (Interview 5, Laura);

“*(...) come from a country that is part of the continent called Europe. It means (...) travel within Europe easily; (...) work and live in European countries.*” (Interview 3, Jessica)

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<sup>63</sup> Translation: “*because Lithuania is the geographical center of Europe.*”

“(…) to live freely in 27 different countries without borders and sharing the same currency.” (Interview 6, João)

In the quotes above, one can also understand that the ability to move freely within the member – states and to live and / or work there is also pointed out as a characteristic of being European. People seem then to be aware of the benefits that European citizenship grants them.

Other views of European identity were also presented. Thus, “*Ser europeu significa pertencer a uma comunidade que soube - até o presente - colocar as suas diferenças e ultrapassar os diferendos históricos existentes, construindo um projecto comum onde é possível a partilha de várias culturas, povos e conhecimentos num contexto de respeito mútuo*” (Interview 7, Alessandra). According to this conception of European identity, to be European means to be part of a common project by means of which the sharing of knowledge and of several cultures is possible since it is based in mutual respect. It means that people have been able to set aside differences and past conflicts in order to create a different future in which they can work and grow together. The idea is reinforced by interviewee number 9 who claims that “*Essere europei significa essere multiculturali, abbracciare le diversità storiche e fare parte di un’identità unica*” (Interview 9, Chiara).

This vision of identity is similar to the notion of collective identity defended by Jenkins (1996) which was presented in chapter 1 in which he argued that in order to pursue common interests people are able to neglect divergences and cooperate for the common good.

Another interesting notion of what being a European is all about is presented by interviewee number 8 who claims that “*It means to come from /live in a country within Europe and / or engage positively with its European identity to the extent of feeling “at home” in Europe.*” (Interview 8, Chris) This adds the idea of *home* and of the sense of belonging. Thus, in order to be a European, people need to feel they are part of this community and wherever they are in Europe to really feel *at home*, that is, to feel secure and safe, not to feel like strangers or visitors. This view is different from the ones in which people are considered to be European just because they are born or live in a member state. On the contrary, it implies the person take a more active role , and that they wish to be part

of the community and to assume a European identity because they feel affinity with it, believe and share the same values.

Interviewees were then asked to identify symbols of *Europeanness*. The symbol that was mentioned the most was the European flag, which was referred to as “*the symbol we would recognize is the blue background with the gold stars*” (Interview 4, Barry). Then came the European Union as an institution, the currency (Euro), the European Parliament and multilingualism. These were identified by most of the interviewees and this may seem to indicate that there are symbols that people immediately associate with and attribute to the EU and the existence of symbols is crucial for the definition of an identity as defended in chapter 2. It also seems to confirm that the creation of symbols was a positive step towards the creation and development of *Europeanness*. Other symbols that were mentioned but less frequently were the European anthem, the Central European Bank, the European Commission and Christianity, the latter being considered to represent the roots of *Europeanness* by one of the interviewees: “*Europäische Stiftung im lateinischen Christentum, in der westlichen Rechtstradition und die liberale Demokratie basiert. So sollte die neue europäische Einheit auf den alten europäischen “Wurzeln”, die alle Europäer erst basieren*”<sup>64</sup> (Interview 1, Lithuania). This would, however, tend to limit the scope of identity for religion is usually a matter of disagreement instead of conciliation, and it would most likely lead to divisions between the member states.

When questioned about the possibility of the current crisis affecting or stimulating the construction of a European identity, interviewees agreed that one way or the other the situation is playing a role in the construction or development of such an identity. On the one hand, more optimistic points of view present the crisis as a stage in which differences between cultures are left aside and everyone works together in order to cooperate with others and to survive. For instance, interviewee number 6 believes that “*the crisis will stimulate the union and the help intentions between the 27 different countries*”(João). Furthermore, this is seen as an opportunity to “*bring countries together to unite as Europe*” (Interview 5, Laura). To reinforce this idea, one of the interviewees states that the crisis is the result of the fragilities of the European project. However, at the same time, it

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<sup>64</sup> Translation: “*Europe should be based upon Christianity, Western tradition and liberal democracy. Hence, the European unification should base itself upon the old European roots.*”

represents a chance for analyzing these fragilities so as to correct them, always bearing in mind the basic principles of the EU. This may then be seen as a turning point, as a period of change which can be thought of as a stimulus for the development of a stronger European identity: *“A actual crise, como qualquer crise, traz mudanças nos seus intervenientes. No caso da Europa, numa 1ª fase veio evidenciar as fragilidades que o projecto europeu tem no contexto económico e na partilha de uma moeda comum. Neste momento, me parece que estamos numa fase de análise, debate e/ou estudo das mudanças que devem ser introduzidas para continuarmos numa construção consistente de identidade europeia, mas verifica-se, na minha opinião, um défice de liderança entre os responsáveis dos vários países que poderá afectar os alicerces inicialmente defendidos e alterar no futuro o contexto que hoje conhecemos de união europeia. Se este défice for ultrapassado sem alterar profundamente os valores implícitos de harmonia, comunidade e paz da união europeia, acho que esta crise poderá ser entendida como um estímulo para a construção de uma identidade europeia mais forte.”* (Interview 7, Alessandra).

On the other hand, less optimistic opinions see the crisis as a threat to a European identity, claiming that *“Conflict between member countries regarding financial bailout is likely to put pressure on the concept of a European identity. Conversely, those countries that are more financial stable may feel more united to help member countries. Countries may become resentful of those countries requiring financial support.”* (Interview 2, Rachel) So, even though this is an opportunity to bind countries together, it may lead to the creation of divisions between countries which are more stable and those which are facing more difficulties. Moreover, according to one of the interviewees, differences are being highlighted due to the crisis and people are becoming aware of the fact that they do not want to blend: *“The current crisis in Europe has highlighted the differences between many of the European countries and it seems that the common man does not want to join a collective as the cultures are so diverse”* (Interview 4, Barry). Two other interviewees referred to the fact that the crisis will only make people turn to their perceived national interests for these interests are the ones they believe to affect their lives most. In fact, as interviewee number 3 puts it, *“Many countries are now turning away from Europe as they have to concentrate on the problems within their own countries. Certain countries are bitter about the changes they made to join the EU (...)”* (Interview 3, Jessica). Furthermore, *“(...) it will drive people to be concerned about perceived national interest*

*above European interest and therefore to support politicians or policies which they perceive as promoting individual countries' agendas and interests, at the expense of the construction of a European identity"* (Interview 8, Chris).

It may be said that, as far as the influence of the crisis upon the construction or development of a European identity is concerned, opinions are divergent, for while some consider it as a stimulus for cooperation and help, others believe it will highlight the differences and make some countries resentful of other countries' attitudes and , making them turn to their countries' national interests so as to protect them. While conducting the research, this resentment was already somehow present for some tourists who were discussing the matter with me presented the countries which are more unstable as PIGS (Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain). I often found the same acronym as an answer to question 15 of the questionnaire<sup>65</sup>.

Finally, opinions regarding the need for a European identity for complete European integration seem to be to some extent convergent, for most of the people interviewed admit that it would be necessary at many levels but difficult to achieve, particularly at this point. In the opinion of one of the interviewees though, all *"would depend on the level of integration proposed. For political integration I do not believe that a European identity is necessary. The introduction of the Euro has demonstrated that integration can be maintained even when member countries do not agree on all policies. Individual countries identities are just as important for European integration as European identity"* (Interview 2, Rachel). It should be noted though that not all the people interviewed agreed with complete European integration. They seemed to agree that in order to fulfill this integration, a European identity is crucial. *"It perhaps is something that is required for complete European integration; however I don't believe this will happen as I think people identify more with their own country's identity/nationality. I don't really believe that many people identify themselves as European at the moment"* (Interview 5, Laura). As interviewee number 3 mentioned, *"it [European identity] is seriously lacking (...) integration will only be possible when the many nations decide they want it, I do not believe they do at this time"* (Interview 3, Jessica). There are even those who believe that a complete European integration is not possible for this implies a common shared language

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<sup>65</sup> "Where is the crisis more significant?"

and banking system and people are not ready for that nor willing to have it, since “(...) most people want to keep their unique identity and complete European integration will not happen until there is a common language and banking system” (Interview 4, Barry). Although difficult to achieve, it is considered by others to be valuable but at the same time a very delicate issue, for “A European identity amongst the people - as in for individuals to perceive themselves and their societies as European as well as e.g. British, French, German etc. is valuable. However a universally-applicable definition of European-ness which can be uniformly applied to all countries/cultures/individuals is not necessary, and is possibly counterproductive as it will create a sentiment that differences of identity are being suppressed, and therefore resentment against Europe will grow” (Interview 8, Chris). The development of a European identity can then be said to be Europe’s biggest project, but a very controversial and difficult one for it is a project which must be built upon difference: “L’Europa é il continente piú antico del mondo, almeno cosí si dice. Si parla di secoli di storie, si parla di una trentina di paesi (...) con cultura, storia, tradizioni diverse. Creare un’identità europea non é un affare semplice, ma senza dubbio é necessario affinché ci sia un’integrazione Europea” (Interview 9, Chiara).

As interviewee number 8 stated, probably there is no one universally applicable definition of *Europeanness* because of the diversity of peoples and cultures that compose Europe. Furthermore, as argued before, identities are subject to change since they are not static and the crisis is certainly imprinting its mark and helping to define the European identity.

#### **4.6 – Discussion of results**

By analyzing the data collected, we can say that most people, both Europeans and non-Europeans seem to agree that Europe is based on diversity. In fact, in a limited space, different cultures and different peoples seem to coexist. History tells us that that coexistence has not always been peaceful, but the creation of the EU has fulfilled the goal of maintenance of peace between all member-states. The analysis of the “Opinion Guestbook” makes us realize that people are aware of the EU mainly as far as their lives changed due to it. Hence people are able to recognize the fact that EU brought them the free movement of goods and people within Europe, the ability to live and work in any of



the member states being protected by EU laws, not needing to exchange currency in most of European countries, and so on. Most people that wrote their opinion in the “Opinion Guestbook” are favorable to the existence of the EU since it is easier for all countries to work together in order to have a role to play in the world and to face the current economic crisis. There were some, however, that referred to the crisis as a result of the debilities upon which the EU was built, arguing that it is positive that some countries opt out as far as some policies they do not agree with are concerned. They would not like to leave the EU though, for they recognize its benefits and its strength in world affairs. This last set of people state that they do not feel themselves to be completely European, considering themselves reluctant partners for they prefer to maintain their uniqueness and believe that the EU and the elites that command it may disregard their difference in name of further integration.

According to the analysis of the questionnaire results, we can conclude that most Europeans still think of themselves first and foremost as citizens of their home country, but they also see themselves as Europeans, which may mean that both identities are complementary and each is highlighted according to the situation being faced. Furthermore, a majority of respondents affirms they have good knowledge of EU institutions and most of them also say they usually vote in EU elections, which may indicate people believe they must have a say in Europe’s affairs and future. The fact that they know the institutions and participate in elections also reveals interest in EU affairs. As stated before, however, this is also a result that needs some attention for most respondents were young people who may have had to vote only once or twice in EU elections during their lives. Europe is seen as a continent, as an ideal, but also as a home by most respondents, which may signify they do not feel distant from Europe at all. Moreover, people were able to identify symbols of *Europeanness*, with the currency, multilingualism and freedom being the ones mentioned the most. These characteristics can then be said to be part of a shared European identity. Respondents seemed reluctant to completely believe in a united Europe, since 40% of respondents strongly believes it to be possible and 36% has difficulties in believing it. This may suggest that Europeans are not as yet convinced that the unity of the cultures that compose Europe is to be achieved. Only a small percentage of respondents (9%) claims that their country has not benefitted from participation in the EU, and a large majority defends that they have either largely or

partially benefitted from being part of the EU. People seem aware that participation brought benefits and that is one of the reasons why they are more likely to consider themselves Europeans. The questionnaires revealed that most respondents would like their country to remain part of the EU, with 56% believing that Europe will be able to survive the crisis. In fact, as revealed by Eurobarometer 75 (2011), despite the difficulties, Europeans think that the EU is the institution with more resources to overcome the financial crisis. Another conclusion which can be drawn from our analysis is that Europeans do not believe the financial crisis to be their fault, but that of political and economic elites which command Europe. Respondents seemed to easily name a few countries where the crisis is being more difficult to cope with and they named Greece the most. Besides Greece, also Portugal, Italy and Spain were often mentioned. This may mean that people are informed to some extent about the situation different member states are facing. Even though the Euro was not the most mentioned symbol of *Europeanness*, a reasonable percentage of respondents (32%) recognized its importance and claimed it would be difficult for Europe to survive without the common currency. It is important to mention that 14% of respondents are from a member state which is out of the Eurozone (Britain), so that may also have influenced answers which involved the acknowledgment of the Euro's relevance for the future of Europe.

The interviews helped to understand a little better the extent to which people define themselves as Europeans. Hence, geography was the most mentioned factor in order for people to define themselves or not as Europeans. Those who did so was because their country was part of Europe, but, culturally speaking, they do not feel that attachment. Important as well was the fact that education was mentioned in order to explain why people did not describe themselves as European – they were brought up with people teaching them to love their home country and were not educated towards *Europeanness*. For most interviewees, to be a European means to come from a European country or to live in Europe, it means to travel freely throughout Europe, to live and work in any of the European countries. Basically European identity was defined, taking into account the notion of citizenship and the benefits enjoyed from it. As far as the symbols of *Europeanness* are concerned, the ones mentioned were mainly the same as the one obtained from the analysis of the questionnaires, with the addition of the European flag, mentioned by most interviewees.

Opinions were somewhat divided regarding the crisis which some considered to unite different countries in order to help each other overcome the situation. Others referred to it as a step backwards away from the definition of a European identity, for countries are likely to start thinking more of their own interests and resenting the inability of other countries to cooperate or to overcome the crisis on their own. In the event that this last situation happens, it will be a problem and it may impede the concretization of a complete European integration, for most people admit that the recognition of a European identity is crucial for a complete integration.

## CONCLUSION

The notion of identity involves a wide variety of disciplines and approaches and several different definitions can be provided according to the field of study. However, the fact is that the concept of identity is ambiguous, hard to be defined empirically and dynamic, for it is the product of social interaction and thus affected and influenced by social changes. Even though it is a complex concept, it is an important one, since it represents the necessity of an individual to know who he/she is. It implies the existence of 'others' who are different, for identity is built upon difference. In fact, we are able to identify ourselves in comparison with others and that fact also helps us to connect to those who share similarities with us, that is, to those who, to some extent, share similar beliefs, values and / or goals. As a social being, the individual needs to establish connections with those s/he feels share common values and beliefs; s/he needs to feel part of a community (or of several communities). According to Anderson (1983), these communities do not necessarily need to exist *per se*. They are *imagined communities* which are based on a belief that a group of people shares similar values and defends similar purposes and beliefs (even though this may not necessarily be the case). Throughout life, an individual is able to aggregate multiple identities, adopting or bringing to the fore specific identities according to the situation s/he is facing.

The creation and development of a community, namely the EU, which aimed to achieve common goals, such as the maintenance of peace and economic growth, was put into practice by a political and economic elite which initially paid little attention to the issue of identity. For a while, this elite was making decisions which affected millions of people and were not involving citizens in the EU. Yet, the situation reached a point at which, in order to pursue further integration, the creation and promotion of a shared identity became fundamental. This was needed in order to provide legitimacy for the actions of the elite and to involve citizens more in the EU's affairs. It was clear that the EU is only able to survive if citizens believe that, by working together they will achieve success and will be able to cope better with difficulties. The data gathered from Eurobarometer 75 (2011) and from my field study seems to confirm this, for most citizens believe the EU has a future and that

it is the entity that is best prepared to deal with the crisis the world is currently facing (see Figure 14).

So as to promote a shared identity between a diversity of peoples with different cultures and different backgrounds, several symbols were developed, namely a common currency, an anthem, a flag and common cultural and educational projects all under the motto *Unity in Diversity*. These symbols intend to celebrate diversity and to create unity and cooperation between peoples. According to the data collected from the field study, these symbols proved to be effective, for many are those who recognize them and point them out as symbols of *Europeanness* (see Figure 10). Moreover, these symbols are recognized by non-Europeans as well, and non-Europeans seem to consider the diversity of Europe an enriching and appealing factor which should be preserved.

The economic and social crisis that is affecting the world has had deep implications for the EU, and more specifically for the issue of identity. In fact, for several years, people were benefitting from their country's participation in the EU and living standards increased in general. Many people are able to recognize that their country benefitted to some extent from entering the EU (see Figure 12) and hence would not like to leave it (see Figure 13). Now people are being called to cooperate and to help those countries which are suffering the most from the crisis. The present situation proves itself to be an opportunity to evaluate people's willingness and readiness to cooperate with those they were willingly sharing benefits with. Another interesting point is that, even though people are still very connected to their country and their roots (see Figure 7), it seems that people are willing to be called Europeans and to identify themselves as such (see Figure 8).

In an era of globalization and of constant change, it is important that Europe and Europeans realize that, only by working together and by cooperating, will they be able to achieve their goals and to have a strong voice in the world. Alone, each constituent is small; as a whole, Europe is recognized and respected. For this purpose, it is important that a shared identity is reinforced, so that people can feel affinity with 'others' and understand that, even though they may share a different history, religion or culture, they also share common beliefs, values and goals. Only by focusing on these shared aspects and by respecting their differences, will they be able to succeed and will Europe be able to win this battle for survival. Indeed, as Barroso (2009), quoted by Gil (2009: 23), states

*“Ganharão a batalha da globalização aqueles que mostrarem maior capacidade de lidar com a diferença exigida por um mundo mais complexo”.*

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## **APPENDIX 1 – Layout of the Opinion Guestbook**



**Thoughts on  
Europe**

**For me, Europe is...**



**APPENDIX 2 – INTERVIEW SENT BY E-MAIL**

## **Interview**

Dear Sir/Madam, my name is Andreia Almeida and I am a student of the Masters in Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the University of Aveiro. In order to complete the practical part of my thesis I will request your cooperation. Hence I organized a set of questions which you will be kindly asked to answer. Bear in mind that this interview is part of the Masters in Languages, Literatures and cultures of the University of Aveiro. The title of the masters is *To be European in a Europe in crisis* and it is being supervised by Professor Gillian Moreira.

Please note that the interview is due to be recorded and that all data will be transcribed and analysed by me as a student of the masters previously mentioned.

I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Do you consider yourself to be European?
2. In your point of view what does it mean to be European?
3. What symbols of European identity are you able to point out?
4. In what way do you believe the current crisis may affect or stimulate the construction of a European identity?
5. In your opinion is a European identity necessary for a complete European integration?

**APPENDIX 3 – QUESTIONNAIRE**

**VERSION 1 – PORTUGUESE**

**VERSION 2 – ENGLISH**

**VERSION 3 – GERMAN**

**VERSION 4 – ITALIAN**

## QUESTIONÁRIO

Este questionário faz parte de um projeto de pesquisa que está a ser levado a cabo no Departamento de Línguas e Culturas da Universidade de Aveiro. Este tem por objetivo compreender a ligação dos europeus relativamente à Europa. Por favor, tenha em consideração que a informação obtida é estritamente confidencial e que todos os dados serão analisados por mim, uma estudante do Mestrado em Línguas, Literaturas e Culturas na Universidade de Aveiro.

Obrigada por participar nesta pesquisa. É-lhe pedido que siga as indicações dadas para cada pergunta quando estiver a responder ao questionário.

### 1. Sexo

M \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Idade: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nacionalidade: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Conhece bem as instituições europeias? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua situação numa escala de 1 a 4)

**1 = muito mal; 2 = mal; 3 = bem; 4 = muito bem**

1 2 3 4

### 5. Vota em eleições europeias? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua situação numa escala de 1 a 4)

**1 = nunca; 2 = raramente; 3 = às vezes; 4 = sempre**

1 2 3 4

**6. Relativamente a qual das seguintes opções de sente mais próximo/a? (Escolha apenas uma resposta)**

À sua aldeia/cidade/vila \_\_\_\_\_

À sua região \_\_\_\_\_

Ao seu país \_\_\_\_\_

Ao seu continente \_\_\_\_\_

A nenhum em particular \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Considera-se europeu? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua opinião numa escala de 1 a 4)**

**1 = não; 2 = um pouco; 3 = bastante; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**8. O que é a Europa para si? (Assinale apenas uma resposta)**

Um continente \_\_\_\_\_

Uma casa \_\_\_\_\_

Um ideal \_\_\_\_\_

Nenhum dos anteriores \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Quais são, na sua opinião, os três símbolos principais da *Europeanness* (identidade europeia)?**

A moeda \_\_\_\_\_

O Hino \_\_\_\_\_

O Parlamento Europeu \_\_\_\_\_

Liberdade \_\_\_\_\_

Paz \_\_\_\_\_

O mote: "*Unidos na diversidade*" \_\_\_\_\_

Multilinguismo \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Acredita numa Europa unida? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua opinião numa escala de 1 a 4)**

**1 = não; 2 = um pouco; 3 = bastante; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**11. Acredita que o seu país tem beneficiado por ser parte da União Europeia? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua opinião numa escala de 1 a 4)**

**1 = não; 2 = um pouco; 3 = bastante; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**12. Gostaria que o seu país continuasse a fazer parte da União Europeia? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua opinião numa escala de 1 a 4)**

**1 = não; 2 = um pouco; 3 = bastante; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**13. Acredita que a Europa vai conseguir sobreviver à crise atual? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua opinião numa escala de 1 a 4)**

**1 = não; 2 = um pouco; 3 = bastante; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**14. Quem responsabiliza pela crise atual? (Escolha apenas uma resposta)**

Políticos \_\_\_\_\_

Banqueiros \_\_\_\_\_

Os mercados \_\_\_\_\_

Os Europeus \_\_\_\_\_

Outro \_\_\_\_ Quem? \_\_\_\_\_

**15. Onde é a crise mais significativa? \_\_\_\_\_** (Nomeie um ou mais países)

**16. Distingue entre o euro e a Europa? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua opinião numa escala de 1 a 4)**

**1 = não; 2 = um pouco; 3 = bastante; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**17. Conseguirá a Europa sobreviver sem o Euro? (Assinale com um círculo a resposta que melhor descreve a sua opinião numa escala de 1 a 4)**

**1 = não; 2 = um pouco; 3 = bastante; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**18. Quem está atualmente a comandar a Europa? (Escolha apenas uma resposta)**

Políticos \_\_\_\_\_

Banqueiros \_\_\_\_\_

Os mercados \_\_\_\_\_

Os Europeus \_\_\_\_\_

Outro \_\_\_\_ Quem? \_\_\_\_\_

**Obrigada pela sua colaboração!**

## QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is part of a research project being carried out at the Department of Languages and Cultures of the University of Aveiro. It aims at understanding the attachment of Europeans towards Europe. Please note that all the information gathered is strictly confidential and all data will be analysed in the course of this research project.

Thank you for participating in this survey. You are asked to follow the indications given for each question while answering this questionnaire.

**1. Gender**

M \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_**

**4. Do you know European institutions well? (Circle the answer that best describes your situation on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = very badly; 2 = badly; 3 = well; 4 = very well**

1 2 3 4

**5. Do you vote in European elections? (Circle the answer that best describes your situation on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = never; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = always**

1 2 3 4



**6. Which of the following do you feel more connected to? (Choose just one answer)**

Your town/city/village \_\_\_\_\_

Your region \_\_\_\_\_

Your country \_\_\_\_\_

Your continent \_\_\_\_\_

None in particular \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Do you consider yourself to be European? (Circle the answer that best describes your opinion on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a lot; 4 = totally**

1 2 3 4

**8. What is Europe to you? (Tick just one answer)**

A continent \_\_\_\_\_

A home \_\_\_\_\_

An ideal \_\_\_\_\_

None of the previous \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Which of the following are, according to you, the three main symbols of Europeanness?**

The currency \_\_\_\_\_

The anthem \_\_\_\_\_

The European Parliament \_\_\_\_\_

Freedom \_\_\_\_\_

Peace \_\_\_\_\_

The logo: "United in diversity" \_\_\_\_\_

Multilingualism \_\_\_\_\_

- 10. Do you believe in a united Europe? (Circle the answer that best describes your thought on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a lot; 4 = totally**

1 2 3 4

- 11. Do you believe your country has benefited from being in the EU? (Circle the answer that best describes your opinion on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a lot; 4 = totally**

1 2 3 4

- 12. Would you like your country to remain part of the EU? (Circle the answer that best describes your opinion on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a lot; 4 = totally**

1 2 3 4

- 13. Do you believe Europe will survive this crisis? (Circle the answer that best describes your thought on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a lot; 4 = totally**

1 2 3 4

- 14. Who do you hold responsible for the current crisis? (Choose just one answer)**

Politicians \_\_\_\_\_

Bankers \_\_\_\_\_

The markets \_\_\_\_\_

Europeans \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_ Who? \_\_\_\_\_

15. **Where is this crisis more significant?** \_\_\_\_\_ (Name one or more countries)

16. **Do you distinguish between the Euro and Europe? (Circle the answer that best describes your thought on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a lot; 4 = totally**

1 2 3 4

17. **Can Europe survive without the Euro? (Circle the answer that best describes your opinion on a scale from 1 to 4)**

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a lot; 4 = totally**

1 2 3 4

18. **Who is currently in charge of Europe? (Choose just one answer)**

Politicians \_\_\_\_\_

Bankers \_\_\_\_\_

The markets \_\_\_\_\_

Europeans \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_ Who? \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your cooperation!**

## FRAGEBOGEN

Dieser Fragebogen ist Teil eines Forschungsprojektes, das im Rahmen des Masterstudiums von Sprachen, Literaturen und Kulturen an der Abteilung für Sprachen und Kulturen an der Universität von Aveiro durchgeführt wird. Dieses Forschungsprojekt hat als Ziel das Verständnis der Verbindung von den Europäern mit Europa. Wir versichern Ihnen dass sie ausschließlich für wissenschaftliche Zwecke verwendet werden.

Danke für Ihre Unterstützung bei dieser Umfrage. Bitte folgen Sie alle Hinweise die bei jeder Frage angegeben werden

### 1. Geschlecht

W \_\_\_\_\_

M \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Alter: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nationalität: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Wie gut kennen Sie die europäischen Institutionen? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort, die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)

1 = sehr schlecht; 2 = schlecht; 3 = gut; 4 = ganz gut

1 2 3 4

### 5. Wie oft nehmen Sie an der Europäischen Wahlen teil? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort, die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)

1 = nie; 2 = selten; 3 = manchmal; 4 = immer

1 2 3 4

### 6. Zu welcher der folgenden Optionen fühlen Sie sich näher? (Nur eine Antwort wählen, bitte)

Zu Ihrem Dorf/Ihrer Stadt/ \_\_\_\_\_

Zu Ihrer Region \_\_\_\_\_

Zu Ihrem Land \_\_\_\_\_

Zu Ihrem Kontinent \_\_\_\_\_

Zu keinem Spezifischen \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Fühlen Sie sich als Europäer? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)**

**1 = nie; 2 = ein bisschen; 3 = genug; 4 = voll**

1 2 3 4

**8. Was bedeutet Europa Ihrer Meinung nach? (Nur eine Antwort wählen, bitte)**

Einen Kontinent \_\_\_\_\_

Ein Heim \_\_\_\_\_

Ein Ideal \_\_\_\_\_

Keine der oben genannten Optionen \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Ihrer Meinung nach, welche sind die drei Hauptsymbole der *Europeanness* (Europäische Identität)?**

Die Währung \_\_\_\_\_

Die Nationalhymne \_\_\_\_\_

Das Europäische Parlament \_\_\_\_\_

Freiheit \_\_\_\_\_

Frieden \_\_\_\_\_

Das Motto: "*In Vielfalt geeint*" \_\_\_\_\_

Mehrsprachigkeit \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Vertrauen Sie einem geeinten Europa? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)**

**1 = nie; 2 = ein bisschen; 3 = genug; 4 = voll**

1 2 3 4

**11. Glauben Sie, dass Ihr Land als Teil von der Europäischen Union profitiert hat? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort, die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)**

**1 = nie; 2 = ein bisschen; 3 = genug; 4 = voll**

1 2 3 4

**12. Möchten Sie, dass Ihr Land weiterhin Teil der Europäischen Union bleibt? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort, die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)**

**1 = nie; 2 = ein bisschen; 3 = genug; 4 = voll**

1 2 3 4

**13. Glauben Sie, dass Europa die aktuelle Krise überleben kann? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)**

**1 = nie; 2 = ein bisschen; 3 = genug; 4 = voll**

1 2 3 4

**14. Wer ist verantwortlich für die aktuelle Krise Ihrer Meinung nach? (Nur eine Antwort wählen, bitte)**

Politiker \_\_\_\_\_

Bankiers \_\_\_\_\_

Die Märkte \_\_\_\_\_

Europäer \_\_\_\_\_

Andere \_\_\_\_ Wer? \_\_\_\_\_

15. **Wo ist die Krise am bedeutsamsten?** \_\_\_\_\_ (Schreiben Sie ein oder mehr Länder auf)

16. **Unterscheiden Sie zwischen dem Euro und Europa? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort, die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)**

**1 = nie; 2 = ein bisschen; 3 = genug; 4 = voll**

1 2 3 4

17. **Kann Europa ohne den Euro überleben? (Kreisen Sie die Antwort, die am besten Ihre Meinung auf einer Skala von 1 bis 4 beschreibt)**

**1 = nie; 2 = ein bisschen; 3 = genug; 4 = voll**

1 2 3 4

18. **Wer führt derzeit Europa? (Nur eine Antwort wählen, bitte)**

Politiker \_\_\_\_\_

Bankiers \_\_\_\_\_

Die Märkte \_\_\_\_\_

Europäer \_\_\_\_\_

Andere \_\_\_\_ Wer? \_\_\_\_\_

**Vielen Dank für Ihre Unterstützung!**

## QUESTIONARIO

Questo questionario fa parte di una ricerca ad essere fatta nel Dipartimento di Lingue e Culture della Università di Aveiro. Il suo obiettivo è la comprensione del rapporto tra gli Europei e l'Europa. Per cortesia, fatte attenzione al fatto che tutta l'informazione è strettamente confidenziale e che tutti i dati saranno analisati per me, una studentessa del Masters in Lingue, Literature e Culture nella Università di Aveiro.

Grazie per partecipare in questa ricerca. Le chiedo che legga gli istruzioni fornitti davanti ad ogni domanda mentre risponde al questionario.

### 1. Genero

M \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Età: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nacionalità: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Conosce bene gli istituzioni europee? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio describe la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)

**1 = molto male; 2 = male; 3 = bene; 4 = molto bene**

1 2 3 4

### 5. Vota alle elezioni europee? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio describe la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)

**1 = mai; 2 = raramente; 3 = a volte; 4 = sempre**

1 2 3 4

### 6. Da quali delle seguenti opzioni si senti più vicino? (Scelga solo una risposta)



Al suo villaggio/città/paese \_\_\_\_\_

Alla sua regione \_\_\_\_\_

Al suo Paese \_\_\_\_\_

Al suo continente \_\_\_\_\_

A nessuno in particolare \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Si crede europeo? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio descrive la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)**

**1 = no; 2 = un po'; 3 = abbastanza; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**8. Cosa significa l'Europa per Lei? (Scelga solo una risposta)**

Un continente \_\_\_\_\_

Una casa \_\_\_\_\_

Un ideale \_\_\_\_\_

Nessuno dei precedenti \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Quale sono, secondo lei, i tre simboli principali della *Europeanness* (identità europea)?**

La valuta \_\_\_\_\_

L'inno \_\_\_\_\_

Il Parlamento Europeo \_\_\_\_\_

Libertà \_\_\_\_\_

Pace \_\_\_\_\_

Il motto: "*Unità nella diversità*" \_\_\_\_\_

Multilinguismo \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Crede in una Europa unita? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio descrive la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)**

**1 = no; 2 = un po'; 3 = abbastanza; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**11. Crede che il suo Paese beneficia di essere parte dell'Unione Europea? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio descrive la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)**

**1 = no; 2 = un po'; 3 = abbastanza; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**12. Le piacerebbe che il suo Paese continuasse a far parte dell'Unione Europea? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio descrive la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)**

**1 = no; 2 = un po'; 3 = abbastanza; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**13. Crede che l'Europa sopravviverà alla crisi attuale? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio descrive la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)**

**1 = no; 2 = un po'; 3 = abbastanza; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

**14. Chi è responsabili per la crisi attuale? (Scelga solo una risposta)**

Politici \_\_\_\_\_

Banchieri \_\_\_\_\_

I mercati \_\_\_\_\_

Gli europei \_\_\_\_\_

Altro \_\_\_\_\_ Chi? \_\_\_\_\_

15. **Dov'è la crisi più significativa?** \_\_\_\_\_ (scegla uno o più Paesi)

16. **Distingue tra l'euro e l'Europa? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio descrive la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)**

**1 = no; 2 = un po'; 3 = abbastanza; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

17. **L'Europa potrà sopravvivere senza l'euro? (Cerchi la risposta che meglio descrive la sua opinione in una scala 1-4)**

**1 = no; 2 = un po'; 3 = abbastanza; 4 = totalmente**

1 2 3 4

18. **Chi comanda l'Europa? (Scelga solo una risposta)**

Politici \_\_\_\_\_

Banchieri \_\_\_\_\_

I mercati \_\_\_\_\_

Gli europei \_\_\_\_\_

Altro \_\_\_\_\_ Chi? \_\_\_\_\_

**Grazie per la Sua collaborazione!**

## **APPENDIX 4 – QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS**

<b>1. GENDER</b>	RESPONDENTS	%
FEMALE	70	53%
MALE	63	47%
TOTAL	133	100%

<b>2. AGE</b>	RESPONDENTS	%
16 - 30	67	50%
31 - 45	49	37%
46 - 60	14	11%
61 - 75	2	2%
76 - 90	1	1%
over 90	0	0%
TOTAL	133	100%

<b>3. NATIONALITY</b>	RESPONDENTS	%
PORTUGUESE	27	20%
GERMAN	27	20%
AUSTRIAN	4	3%
BRITISH	18	14%
ITALIAN	29	21%
CZECH	3	2%
POLISH	15	11%
SLOVAKIAN	4	3%
SLOVENIAN	3	2%
HUNGARIAN	3	2%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 4	RESPONDENTS	%
Very badly	11	8%
Badly	37	28%
Well	74	56%
Very Well	11	8%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 5	RESPONDENTS	%
Never	31	23%
Rarely	18	14%
Sometimes	26	20%
Always	58	44%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 6	RESPONDENTS	%
City/village/town	27	20%
Region	23	17%
Country	46	35%
Continent	25	19%
None	12	9%
total	133	100%

QUESTION 7	RESPONDENTS	%
Not at all	4	3%
A little	24	18%
A lot	50	38%
Totally	55	41%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 8	RESPONDENTS	%
A continent	52	39%
a Home	35	26%
An ideal	39	29%
None of the previous	7	5%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 9	RESPONDENTS	%
The currency	84	63%
The anthem	6	5%
The European Parliament	58	44%
Freedom	65	49%
Peace	38	29%
The motto	40	30%
Multilingualism	70	53%
TOTAL	361	

QUESTION 10	RESPONDENTS	%
Not at all	12	9%
A little	48	36%
A lot	53	40%
Totally	20	15%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 11	RESPONDENTS	%
Not at all	8	6%
A little	42	32%
A lot	53	40%
Totally	30	23%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 12	RESPONDENTS	%
Not at all	9	7%
A little	11	8%
A lot	41	31%
Totally	72	54%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 13	RESPONDENTS	%
Not at all	7	5%
A little	26	20%
A lot	74	56%
Totally	26	20%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 14	RESPONDENTS	%
Politicians	64	48%
Bankers	37	28%
The markets	16	12%
Europeans	10	8%
Others	6	5%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 15	RESPONDENTS	%
Greece	110	83%
Portugal	44	33%
Italy	30	23%
Ireland	10	8%
Spain	26	20%
Austria	1	1%
Hungary	1	1%
Slovakia	1	1%

QUESTION 16	RESPONDENTS	%
Not at all	14	11%
A little	35	26%
A lot	41	31%
Totally	43	32%
TOTAL	133	100%



QUESTION 17	RESPONDENTS	%
Not at all	39	29%
A little	43	32%
A lot	28	21%
Totally	23	17%
TOTAL	133	100%

QUESTION 18	RESPONDENTS	%
Politicians	67	50%
Bankers	26	20%
The markets	24	18%
Europeans	5	4%
others	11	8%
TOTAL	133	100%