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The European Identity Survey – a Bridge between Political Science and Psychology

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Abstract

At the heart of this article is the question of how we can measure European identity more accurately to answer some of the fundamental questions that are starting to emerge in times of populism and disintegration: is there a single European identity? Or are there many? In order to do so, the article first summarises the dominant discourse on collective identities in political science literature, before gauging insights from psychological approaches. Subsequently, new methods of measurement that bridge both fields are considered. Finally, all three are combined into a comprehensive and interdisciplinary European Identity Survey. This survey is designed to construct a multi-dimensional index on civic and cultural European identity. Rather than assuming some answers to be 'more European' than others, it gauges the convergence of different groups along multiple dimensions that are considered to constitute an identity. In doing so, the paper endeavours not only to introduce a new way of measuring European identity but also to contribute to analysis on the assumed growing polarisation of identity narratives and its societal and political implications.

Keywords

European identity; survey methodology; Implicit Association Test; attitudes

Current times are in many respects trying for the European Union: the financial crisis questions the social fabric of the Union, the refugee crisis undermines it and the likelihood of Great Britain leaving the Union fragments it. As such, the voices of those asking for solidarity, a sense of community, a shared identity become louder – on both sides of the political spectrum. When rising right wing parties across Europe protest and demand protection of 'their' Europe at the same time that heads of state claim to accomplish just that, it becomes evident that we can say or identify the same goals but mean fundamentally different things. For some, defending Europe might mean maintaining the white Christian status quo, while for others it might mean strengthening the liberal values and social rights enshrined in the treaties of the European Union (see Holmes 2009). Such a contestation of dominant identitarian narratives might not be atypical, after all, the European Union is a relatively young project and its history so recent that much of it is still open for emotive interpretation (Quintelier, Verhaegen and Hooghe 2014: 1114). More concerning is the emotional intensity and ideological hardening with which this discussion is led, as both factors make it more difficult to find compromise. Moisi (2009), for example, addresses the increasing role of identity and emotions in today's politics. In his book, he contends that 'if the 20th Century was [...] "the century of ideology", I think there is strong evidence that the 21st Century will be [...] "the century of identity"' (Moisi 2009: 14). He explains, 'the primary reason that today's globalizing world is the ideal fertile ground for the blossoming or even explosion of emotions is that globalization causes insecurity and raises the question of identity' (Moisi 2009: 12). Put differently, globalization and interdependencies force societies to be more in contact with one another. Through this contact with a great number of differing 'others', the 'self' is repeatedly questioned and re-evaluated. This can also have consequences for how the different identities of any one person interact. Haller and Ressler (2006), for example, find that today,

in an era of increasing interconnection between all countries of Europe and the world, citizens of a single state may feel themselves more and more as Europeans

at the same time as they also become aware of their specific characteristics as Norwegians, Germans, or Italians, or even as Bavarians, Piedmontese or Catalonians (25).

In order to investigate the potential for identitarian conflict within and between individuals, a precise and multidimensional measure is needed that captures the meaning and intensity of an identity.

In the past, literature on an emerging European identity has often depended on the measures available to it. These measures primarily consisted of mere – often binary – measures of existence: do you feel European or not? They failed, however, to probe into the content of such an identity. Fligstein, Polyakova and Sandholtz (2012) or Roose (2013), for example, only use the Moreno question of the Eurobarometer: ‘In the near future, do you see yourself as (1) European only, (2) European and [nationality], (3) [nationality] and European, or (4) [nationality] only’. Even though they go into detail about how different segments of a society answer this question, they do not include the possibility of different interpretations of the same question. Iserna, Fiket, Serricchio and Westle (2012) add intensity of identifications to their analysis but do not deal ‘with the questions of which meanings citizens associate with their identity’ (111). Duchesne and Frogner (2003) focus on whether European citizens consider themselves members of a political community and do not ‘examine all the dimensions or components of what constitute a European identity’ (2). However, even though the authors consciously seek the delimitation between the meaning and extent of an identity, they run into trouble when discussing the implications of their findings. Hence, Duchesne and Frogner (2003) note that ‘[u]nfortunately, this question does not express different intensities as between one level and another’ (13). Van Mol de Valk and van Wissen (2015) are concerned by similar limitations, admitting that their ‘results are based on a rather narrow measure of identification, which does not allow to investigate whether individuals refer to Europe as a cultural community or a political project of the European Union’ (484). That both the intensity and meaning of an identity matter when evaluating it can be seen by the rare studies that include both elements in their design. Schrödter, Rössel and Datler (2015), for example, find that Swiss and EU citizens share a similar meaning of Europe, but the dimensions of such an identity vary in importance for each group (164).

It is such an analysis that this paper hopes to contribute to, by proposing a new European Identity Survey that draws from recent advances in the political science and psychology literature. To do so, the paper will, first, summarise and draw from identity concepts frequently used in political science literature. It will then add recent psychological advances in defining and measuring different aspects of identity. The relevant findings in political science and psychology are thus summarised and brought together on the metaphysical level. From this level, the paper will subsequently design and explain a European Identity Survey. Finally, the article will discuss the next steps to be taken and how these steps can contribute to future research. After all, if successful, the survey can effectively bridge political science and psychology. As Schwarz (2007) points out,

much as psychology’s shift from behaviourism to information processing has made psychologists interesting partners for survey methodological work, psychologists’ growing interest in the socially and culturally situated nature of cognition may eventually make survey researchers interesting partners for basic psychological work (284).

But crossing that bridge when we come to it, let us first turn to the different identity concepts frequently used in political science literature.

CONCEPTS OF IDENTITY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Although arguing that there are just as many theories on identity as there are identities themselves would certainly go too far, the extensiveness of identity theories is vast. In fact, contributions to what a collective identity is are so numerous that by and large the greatest problem of the existing literature on European identity is its divergent definitions of the concept. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) thus argue for pulling the concept apart into three main dimensions: (1) identification and categorisation; (2) self-understanding and social location; and (3) commonality, connectedness and groupness. They fear that the 'identitarian language and groupist social ontology that informs much contemporary political theory occludes the problematic nature of 'groupness' itself and forecloses other ways of conceptualizing particular affiliations and affinities' (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 31). Such a rigorous dispute on the taxonomy behind collective identities is as necessary as it is helpful because it helps better define and grasp the dimensions hidden within the latent construct – it should not, however, be used to pull apart what belongs together. After all, all three dimensions can be seen to form part of the same construct and the authors themselves struggle to delineate clear lines between the categories they find.¹ That is why Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) rightfully call for a better articulation rather than an abandonment or severe restriction of 'collective identities' (82). They see it as 'productive, and indeed [...] essential, to articulate the various dimensions of the concept' (Ashmore et al. 2004: 109). This section will do just that by briefly reviewing the main dimensions found in political science literature and discussing their relevance where necessary.

Political scientists use multiple dimensions of 'collective identity', which at first sight might seem like a cacophony of terminology, but at a second glance actually resemble more of a symphony on identity composed of several movements. Starting at the individual level, Lengyel (2011) states that 'personality traits, on the one hand, and belonging to societal categories and groups on the other, are the two major dimensions of identity' (1033). Karolewski (2011) agrees when writing, 'the notion of collective identity can be seen as consisting of two dimensions: an individualistic dimension and a collectivistic one' (937). Both these dimensions are themselves constructed by different sub-dimensions. The latter especially, the collective dimension, is captured well by political scientists. Focusing on the national identity, Haller and Ressler (2006) differentiate between the self-image (cognitive component), an attachment to the nation (emotional component) and the readiness to act on behalf of the nation (the action component). Along similar lines, Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott (2010) distinguish between the content of an identity and its contestation. They further divide the content of an identity into constitutive norms, social purposes, relational comparisons and cognitive models. This content is later on further separated into cultural and civic components (Lengyel 2011) and can be informed by a 'sense of shared *continuity* on the part of successive generations of a given unit of population, and shared *memories* of earlier periods, events and personages in the history of the unit' (Smith 1992: 58). The contestation, on the other hand, measures how much the members of the identity group agree about the content of it. That is to say, surveys might find that 'religious freedom' matters to nearly all Europeans. Contestation would add how disputed the meaning of this value is. If most Europeans agree to see it as it is defined by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, for example, contestation is low. If, however, interpretations vary considerably, contestation is high. Whether this agreement or disagreement is also relevant is captured by Castano. He further develops the concept of 'entitativity' that measures how 'real' the EU is in the lives of its citizens, by analysing shared cultural values, a perceived common fate, increased salience and boundedness (Castano 2004). How this collective identity then relates to the wider context is also discussed by Risse (2005), who investigates how various identities are interrelated and arranged. In a similar effort, Schrödter et al. (2015) confine a European identity to national

openness, European closure and relative Europeanization – all three of which posit a European identity against either a national or a global identity.

In political science literature, a collective identity thus consists of two parts: (1) the self, which is characterised by personality traits; and (2) the collective identity. The latter is differentiated by its content, its contestation, its salience or attachment and its potential to trigger action. The content is further divided into constitutive norms, social purposes, relational comparisons and cognitive models that vary along cultural or civic dimensions. Both, the self and the collective identity, are then placed into (3) a larger context of other identities that influence their relationship. This summarises the current state of political science notions of a collective European identity.

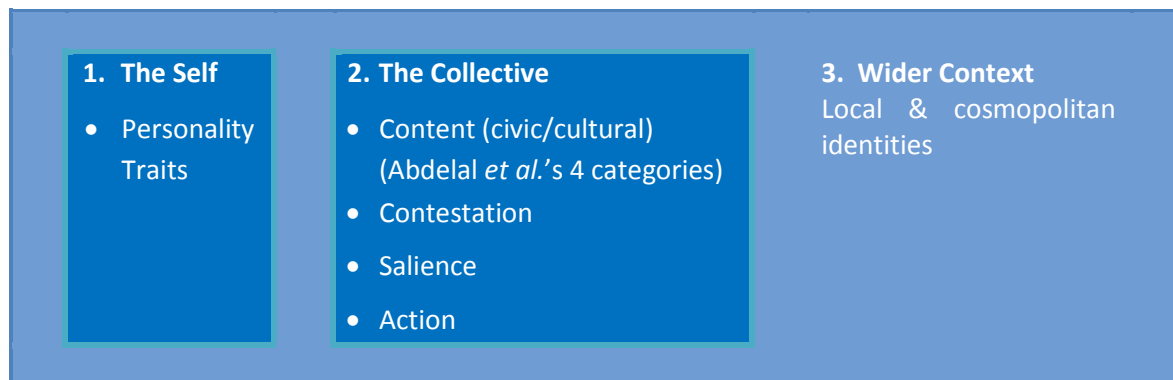


Figure 1: Extensive Definition of European Identity

Especially promising here is the differentiation between civic and cultural identities because it can harbour potential for the polarisation of identitarian narratives. Bruter (2005) was one of the first to define and empirically test this division. For him, the source of differentiation came from whether citizens defined and prioritised commonalities along agent or structure-based groups. In his words,

The first, a *'cultural'* perspective, would analyse political identities as the sense of belonging an individual citizen feels towards a particular political group. This group can be perceived by him to be defined by a certain culture, social similarities, values, religion, ethics or even ethnicity. The second, a *'civic'* perspective, would see political identities as the identification of citizens with a political structure, such as a State, which can be defined as the set of institutions, rights, and rules that preside over the political life of a community (Bruter 2005: 12).

Later scholars have amended the list. Cultural group members were also assumed to value a shared language, traditions (Fligstein et al. 2012: 112) and history (Verhaegen and Hooghe 2015: 129); while the set of rights and rules valued by those with a predominantly civic group-conception were also extended to rights and duties of the individual citizen (Verhaegen and Hooghe 2015: 129). Put differently, for this group citizenship is seen as a 'legal status obtainable by anyone willing to accept a particular legal, political and social system' (Fligstein et al. 2012: 112; see also Reeskens and Hooghe 2010).

If these two categorisations are seen as two sides of the same coin – if, in other words, the 'two components of political identities exist in parallel in citizens' minds and should simply be differentiated conceptually and empirically whenever possible' (Bruter 2005: 12) – it is clear on

which side the coin will predominantly land when tossed. Stavrakakis argues that European identity remains a 'dry, institutional, symbolic conception' (2007: 216), which has not yet reached the 'hearts and the guts of the peoples of Europe (2007: 226). This is largely the case because of a self-enforcing logic. Many authors have found that the highly educated and better-off are significantly more likely to hold a predominantly civic identity (Sklair 2001; Fligstein 2008; Mau 2009; Delhey, Deutschmann and Cirlanaru 2015). This is partly due to the fact that 'higher education furthers cognitive mobilization (Inglehart, 1970) and thereby increases the taste for variety, as research on cultural omnivores argues' (Delhey et al. 2015: 2, 72; see also Peterson 1992; van Eijck 2000). In part, it is also due to the ability of those with higher incomes to engage in transnational experiences (Kuhn 2015). Since tertiary education is a hurdle requirement for any administrator post at the European Union (European Commission 2017) – that is a post in the higher grade of civil service – it follows that most of its senior staff will hold a principally civic world view. Subsequently, their policy output will also largely be of a civic nature. Indeed, the policy outputs that can more easily be associated with a cultural worldview, like the European flag, the holiday 'Europe Day' or the European anthem, have been conceptualised and endorsed by either the Heads of State or the European Parliament. However, given that the competence for suggesting new laws or regulations rests with the Commission, most of the outputs of the European Union are of a civic nature and hence stimulate a civic identification amongst the European population. This means that those who hold a civic identity would start to identify with Europe much sooner as European integration progresses than those with a cultural identity. Put in terms of strata, Delhey et al. carefully postulate that 'while all social strata become more transnational as the national standard of living rises, the upper strata do so at a faster pace than the lower ones' (2015: 285). If this finding was tested with a more precise measure of civic and cultural identities and found the same correlation, this could have large implications for the future of the European Union. In the end, those segments of a society who hold stronger cultural identities, could feel left behind – the 'losers' of transnationalization (Kuhn 2015: 8; Kriesi and Frey 2008; Kritzingner 2005) – and scared of further changes to the political structure. Such sentiments would make them vulnerable to extremist discourse that pledges a return to old times, to the nation, to sovereignty. Yet, only a small number of studies have been conducted that distinguish in their research design between cultural and civic concepts of nationality. This avenue thus seems complicated, but promising.

Referring back to Figure 1, the content of a collective identity should thus be explored further. When looking at the contestation of an identity, simple questions regarding the controversy of certain beliefs or values can be added to the survey. In order to evaluate the salience of certain issues sliding scales can be used to capture individual replies. For the remaining parts, insights from other disciplines and their recent technological advancements are pivotal. After all, personality traits and action behaviour have frequently been studied by psychologists.

IDENTITY CONCEPTS BEYOND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Even though political science can give great insight into European identity, other disciplines can also contribute to the issue. That is why Checkel and Katzenstein (2009) advocate a multidisciplinary approach to study identity, and Leach, van Zomeren, Ouwerkerk, et al. (2008: 485) describe it as a multidimensional construct. In order to get a better understanding of these multiple dimensions, findings from sociology and psychology might be of help in two ways. First, they can help clarify the categories of identity established so far. And second, they identify additional categories.

Starting with the clarification of concepts that have been established thus far, psychology can help in understanding the importance of personality traits. After all, authors of this discipline find that ‘personality domains are among the most important predictors of individual differences in identity formation’ (Klimstra, Luyckx, Goossens, et al. 2013: 214). Bridging political science with psychology, Tillman (2013) argues that ‘future research should seek to develop a fuller understanding of the sources of perceptions of social identity and to understand their effects on EU attitudes independently and in combination with personality traits’ (585). While previous studies (Curtis 2016; Duckitt and Sibley 2016) have already examined the role of the ‘Big 5’ – that is openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability – in identity formation and consolidation, little attention has been paid to the role of optimism. Yet, Aspinwall, Richter and Hoffman (2001) argue that optimists process information differently from pessimists and hence interact differently with identity stimulators, while I have found elsewhere (2017) that as European integration progresses, the chasm between optimists and pessimists in their level of European identification widens. That is why a revised LOT-R test for optimism will be included in the survey to test the importance of personality traits in a more comprehensive measure of European identity. Furthermore, Phinney and Ong (2007) shed light on the ‘action’ category in Figure 1. They look at ethnic (cultural) identities and find that ‘ethnic identity is an internal structure that can exist without behavior’; that is why they advocate that

for conceptual clarity, behaviors should be considered separately from identity. Research results are likely to be more parsimonious if ethnic behaviors are included as discrete measures in studies of ethnic identity, so that results can be analyzed separately, to distinguish the implications of identity per se and the associated behaviors (Phinney and Ong 2007: 272f).

Thus, both personality traits and action-related behaviour will be included and studied as separate categories.

Apart from adding to the established categories, psychology and sociology also help to unveil another important aspect of identity. ‘Traditional social identity models describe how people divide the social world into in-groups and outgroups, identify with the in-group, and enhance their identity by comparing the in-group favourably with the outgroup on a valued dimension’ (Shapiro 2010: 636f; also Haslam 2004; Tajfel and Turner 1979). But how do these groups come into existence? Denzin (1984) finds that ‘it is through emotionality, imagination, sympathy, fellow-feeling, and revealed self-feelings that persons come to know themselves and one another’ (245). ‘Emotions thus serve as signals to the self, regarding the quality and acceptability of one’s identity claims and performances, and emotions can lead to changes in role behaviour, network memberships, and ultimately, social structure’ (Thoits 1989: 332). Taking a more macro structural-functional approach, Thoits (1989) argues that ‘emotion norms are produced by and function to sustain dominant institutional arrangements’ (336). Reddy (1997) agrees and maintains that emotions ‘must be regarded as the very location of the capacity to embrace, revise, or reject cultural or discursive structures of whatever kind’ (331). Emotions are, therefore, vital to understanding or measuring identity. After all, they form part of Kant’s independent mental faculties and Hilgard’s (1980) *Trilogy of the Mind*:

cognition, the mental representation of reality through perception, attention, learning memory, and thought; *emotion*, the subjective experience of arousal, pleasure and displeasure, and their expression in behaviour; and *motivation*, the activation of behaviour and its direction toward a goal. All three of these mental states affect the determination of behaviour (Eich, Kihlstrom, Bower et al. 2000: 36) (emphasis added).

In summary then, collective identity is largely composed of three features. First, it is to close the gap between the 'self' and the outside world or the 'other' (Mummendey and Waldzus 2004: 60). Second, it consists of cultural and civic components. Third, as argued by Tajfel (1981), 'European identity is that part of the individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership' (255). In a way, collective identity formation is thus about how one relates the self to the in-group and distinguishes it from the out-group using different modes of discrimination (civic or cultural) to arrive at diverse emotional intensities that yield that identity significant or not. What is new from this very brief literature review is the equation of salience with emotional activation. Thus, when measuring salience, an affective measure could strengthen and cross-validate the instrument. Based on recent methodological advances, just what might such an instrument look like?

Methodological Advances

Recent advances in the methodology of measuring identity have mostly focussed on capturing the implicit aspects of parts of the extensive definition of identity provided above. Two developments especially seem worth noting. First, Maier, Maier, Baumert et al. (2015) complement explicit attitudes (i.e. stated opinions through survey-like questions) with implicit attitudes. The latter are measured through the Affective Misattribution Procedure, where participants see either a picture of the EU or Germany, or a neutral image for a split second before they see a picture of a Chinese character. They are then asked to indicate on the computer whether they feel positively or negatively about said character. After their evaluation, they see grey noise before the test continues.

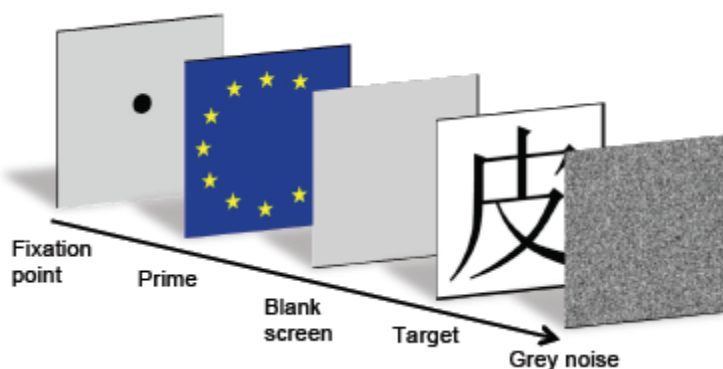


Figure 2: 'Example for a single AMP trial (here with EU prime picture)' (Maier et al. 2013: 10)

Unfortunately, the study was limited to Germany and focussed mostly on voter preference and the potential for right-wing party success at the next European election. Furthermore, it encountered difficulties in interpreting its results given the challenges of subliminal messaging. Perhaps more established tests like an Implicit Association Test (IAT) can be used instead to capture implicit cognitive patterns and biases. This would have the advantage of being able to tap into a vast literature on IATs, while at the same time introducing a new comparative pair: the European Union and one's country.

Another development is the project *How European Do you Feel? The Psychology of European Identity* by Bruter and Harrison (2012). The authors have also combined survey questions with psychological measures. These include, inter alia, asking British respondents what the first three

words were that came to mind when either seeing a picture of the European flag or simply hearing the word 'Europe'. Here the results are fairly unimaginative with 'union', 'euro', 'stars', 'continent' and 'Brussels' or 'France' among the top answers. Their second psychological approach was slightly more revealing, where the researchers asked their respondents what images (colours, animals, drinks, paintings or flowers) they associated with the European Union. For the majority of the sample, the EU would be a spring daisy if it were a flower, classical music or an opera if it were a musical genre and blue if it were a colour. For the younger cohort, the EU would be a lion if it were an animal and a coffee or a glass of wine if it were a drink; for the older age cohort, the EU would be an elephant or a glass of water (Bruter and Harrison 2012). These similes might seem playful at first but do disclose emotional attitudes through active abstraction when analysing the results on a psychological level. Bruter and Harrison, furthermore, found that there is indeed a difference between civic and cultural identity; and that 'the more citizens criticise the EU, the more they favour increased EU citizenship rights' (Bruter and Harrison 2012), showing that Euro-sceptic populations are not necessarily lacking a European identity, as is often assumed. Although this study goes an astounding step toward better understanding and measuring identity, it has two limitations. First, it focuses its innovative design only on the United Kingdom, making cross-country comparison impossible. And second, even though it does include novel ways of measuring identity, it does not include measures, such as SemDs, for interpreting the results. Are elephants or lions more positively connoted? Are the attributes always interpreted to be the same or similar? Nonetheless, these type of affective questions hold great promise.

Endeavouring to include implicit attitudes, the survey will thus comprise an Implicit Association Test and affective questions similar to those of Bruter and Harrison (2012). But what will it look like exactly?

NEW SURVEY

The survey has previously been tested in a trial run with selected European and American PhD students and is divided into seven sections.² Each section has its own focus on one part of European identity but at the same time cross-validates other aspects of it. Thus, the first part uses direct questions from the political psychology literature to identify the content of an identity. At the same time, it also captures the importance attributed to the identity and its contestation. The second step, an Identity Drawing, relates this identity to other spheres of influence and cross-validates its importance. In a third step, affective questions measure a degree of emotional involvement and salience of the identity, while cross-validating the content of the identity. The fourth step is an Implicit Association Test that endeavours to capture frequent thought patterns and thus also cross-validates salience. During the fifth step, respondents are asked personality questions and their degree of optimism is evaluated. Finally, the sixth and the seventh steps capture past actions and commonly used Eurobarometer questions to control for content validity. In detail, this looks like the following.

Direct Questions

The first and most important step in revising the measure of identity is creating a set of questions that stem from political psychology. When formulated correctly, they can test assumed and actual divergence of attitudes within various faculties (norms; purpose; relational comparisons; or cognitive models). This section is thus comparable to other attitude tests, although it introduces a

unique composition of dimensions: assumed – actual; norms – purpose – relation comparisons – cognitive models; and cultural – civic notions of identity; where

constitutive norms refer to the formal and informal rules that define a group; social purposes refer to the goals that are shared by members of a group; relational comparisons refer to defining an identity group by what it is not – that is, the way it views *other* identity groups, especially where those views about the other are defining part of the identity; cognitive models refer to the worldviews or understandings of political and material conditions and interests that are shaped by a particular identity (Abdelal et al. 2010: 19) (emphasis in original).

Constitutive Norms

What is your opinion regarding the following statements?

- Q1.1: (Cultural) The values of the European Union are closely tied to those of Christianity.
 Q1.2: (Civic) Being European is closely tied to European citizenship.
 Q1.3: (Cultural) No one shall be condemned to the death penalty or executed.
 Q1.4: (Civic) Everyone has the right to the protection of personal data concerning him or herself.
 Q1.5: (Cultural) Welcoming those in need into Europe is a natural act of mercifulness.
 Q1.6: (Civic) Countries need robust safety nets in their welfare programmes to help those in need.
 Q1.7: (Cultural) Looking at torture, the end, if necessary, justifies the means.
 Q1.8: (Civic) Politicians should not be coerced into party lines.
 Q1.9: (Cultural) Europe preserves and strengthens local traditions.
 Q1.10: (Civic) Being European means adhering to democratic values.
 Q1.11: (Cultural) The dignity of the individual is inviolable.
 Q1.12: (Civic) Women and men should enjoy equal rights.
 Q1.13: (Contestation) European values and norms are commonly known.

The response option for Q1.1 to Q1.13 is a sliding scale, which ranges from 0 to 100 and has the following indications: Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Disagree.

Q1.14: Have you ever done something profoundly European? [Yes / No]

If so, what? [OPEN].

Q1.15: (Contestation) Which European values matter to you most?

Human rights / equality / individual liberty / grace of charity / fairness / rule of law / tolerance / solidarity / diversity.

[Respondents are asked to rank the values by re-ordering them from left to right.]

Q1.16: Amongst citizens in the EU, do you think that this response [to Q1.15] is [Uncontested / contested / don't know].

Purpose

In your opinion, **whose** goals are the following? Please note that multiple answers are possible.

- Q2.1: (Civic) Promote the rule of law.
 Q2.2: (Cultural) Fighting poverty and social exclusion.
 Q2.3: (Civic) The abolition of torture or inhuman punishment.
 Q2.4: (Cultural) Respect for cultural diversity.

- Q2.5: (Civic) Peace and prosperity.
 Q2.6: (Cultural) Respect for linguistic diversity.
 Q2.7: (Civic) Equal rights between men and women.
 Q2.8: (Cultural) Respect for religious diversity.
 Q2.9: (Civic) Promote democratic principles.
 Q2.10: (Cultural) Good neighbourly relations.

The answer categories for Q2.1 to Q2.10 are: Myself / Country / the European Union / the West. Respondents can select multiple answers.

- Q2.11: (Contestation) European goals are commonly known.
 [Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Disagree].

Relational Comparison

What is your opinion regarding the following statements?

- Q3.1: (Civic) It is possible to feel European and [National] at the same time.
 Q3.2: (Cultural) It is possible to feel Muslim and European at the same time.
 Q3.3: (Civic) It is possible to feel cosmopolitan – that is, not limited to just one part of the world – and European at the same time.
 Q3.4: (Cultural) It is possible to feel part of a local community and European at the same time.
 Q3.5: (Civic) The European Union upholds human rights more than other regions or countries.
 Q3.6: (Cultural) The European Union shows more solidarity with those in need than other regions or countries.
 Q3.7: (Civic) People have more equal opportunities in Europe than elsewhere.
 Q3.8: (Cultural) Europe is the biggest melting pot of cultures worldwide.
 Q3.9: (Civic) The European Union upholds human rights more than [country].
 Q3.10: (Cultural) The European Union shows more solidarity with those in need than [country].

The response option for Q.3.1 to Q3.10 is a sliding scale, which ranges from 0 to 100 and has the following indications: Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Disagree.

- Q3.11: (Contestation) Please rank the following list of actors according to their divergence from European values. The actor ranked **first** adheres **least** to European values, the actor ranked last adheres the most to European values.

[‘Islamic State’ or DAESH / multinational corporations / Russia / banks / Turkey / the richest 1% / Muslims]

- Q3.12: (Contestation) Would you say that you have more in common with a [police officer / PhD student] in another European country than with a manager in [country].³
 [On a sliding scale with indications: Much less in common with police officer or researcher / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Much more in common with police officer or researcher].

Cognitive Models

What is your opinion regarding the following statements?

Q4.1: (Cultural) European history, particularly the overcoming of two World Wars, should motivate a more pacifist foreign policy of the European Union?

Q4.2: (Civic) The European Union strengthens democracy in Europe.

Q4.3: (Cultural) European integration leads to an increase in security.

Q4.4: (Civic) European integration leads to an increase in freedom to travel.

Q4.5: (Cultural) More European integration causes a loss of [country's] traditions.

Q4.6: (Civic) More European integration leads to more bureaucracy.

Q4.7: (Cultural) More European integration causes tensions with Russia.⁴

Q4.8: (Civic) More European integration creates more opportunities for lobbying.

Q4.9: (Cultural) A shared history creates the basis for more solidarity.

Q4.10: (Contestation) There is a shared European public opinion on most issues.

The response option of Q.4.1 to Q4.10 is a sliding scale, which ranges from 0 to 100 and has the following indications: Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Disagree.

In order to avoid a primacy effect, answer categories in Q1.15 and Q 3.11 are set to shuffle randomly. Furthermore, check-all-that-apply items were not included, since they are known to increase satisficing – a strategy used by respondents to give satisfactory but not optimal answers in order to reduce the time and effort spent on the survey. Finally, even though Q1.14 might be criticised for being completely open to individual interpretation, this was exactly intended to be so. As Schwarz (2007: 279) describes:

When asked, 'What have you done today?' respondents will certainly understand the words – yet they may nevertheless not know on which behaviours they are to report. [...] To provide a meaningful answer, respondents need to infer the questioner's intentions, that is the pragmatic meaning of the question. To do so, they rely on the tacit assumptions that govern the conduct of conversations in daily life (Grice 1975) and draw on the context of the utterance to infer the intended meaning.

This intended meaning is what the question aims to measure.

The answer categories were largely based on existing literature, which found that religious beliefs mattered (Garcea 2001). Previous studies have also looked at what 'typically European' can connote (Gnutzman, Jakisch and Rabe 2014; Habermas and Derrida 2003) or what aspects respondents associate the EU with (Schrödter et al. 2015). Given that this section is rather long and text-heavy, the next section will be of a more visual nature.

Identity Drawing

In the next step, participants are encouraged to locate themselves in different spheres of influence. This helps, among other things, to establish the inter-identity relations: how do the participants relate to the in-group and how to the out-group? How do these groups correlate or merge? For this, a new screen will appear that bears similarity to the windows programme 'Paint' and gives exact instructions about what respondents need to do and what each shape means. It looks like the following:

Please position yourself first, by selecting 'Me' and drawing a rectangle. Subsequently, choose the circles that matter to you and draw them around your 'Me' in a way that feels most appropriate to you. Note that this means that you do not need to use all of the shapes available. The shapes can vary in position and size. You can use the keyboard to move them.

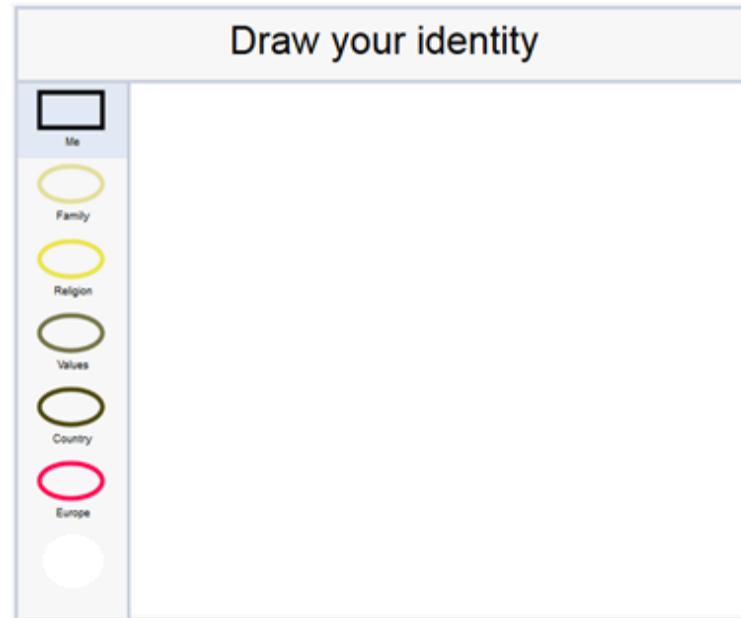


Figure 3: Identity Drawing

The size, position and overlapping of the different spheres of influence, as well as the self, can then be evaluated using psychological standards (see Tropp and Wright 2001 or Schubert and Otten 2002). For example, the European identity could encompass all other identities, meaning that there is little personal contestation between the national and the supranational identity.

Affective Questions

In the third step, respondents are asked affective questions, similar to those of the Bruter and Harrison (2012) project, to test previous answers and open a new category of abstraction. The following questions are currently included:

For the next section, please imagine that the European Union was a person. In a few words, how would you answer the following fictitious scenarios?

These questions require a fair bit of imagination, should be given spontaneously and ideally be fun. If a question is too difficult or requires a lot of time, feel free to skip it.

Constitutive Norms

Q5.1: If the European Union were a school teacher, what kind of behaviour by students would be punished?

Q5.2: If the European Union were a father, what virtue would he teach his son?⁵

Purpose

Q5.3: If the European Union were an athlete running a marathon, what would motivate it during a dry spell and keep it going?

Q5.4: If the European Union were a person, what would make it so mad that it would immediately spring into action?

Relational Comparisons

Q5.5: If the European Union were a hypochondriac, what would be its biggest fictitious type of fear?

Q5.6: If the European Union were a person, whom would it most likely marry and why?

Cognitive Models

Q5.7: Imagine that the European Union is an old man, who five years from now dies. What is most likely to have caused his death?

Q5.8: Imagine that the European party is a person who has just invited all of his/her friends and neighbours to a giant celebration. What could be the occasion for this celebration?

These questions have two purposes. On the one hand, they invite respondents to reflect indirectly on their previous questions and validate them on an abstract level. On the other hand, they maintain an indirect emotional state with the participants without being too obvious about it. That way, respondents are already indirectly more prepared to answer the following four questions:

Please select the options that most accurately reflect your emotions. Note that several answers per question are possible.

Q5.9: The history of the European Union makes me

Q5.10: The abolition of borders under the Schengen Agreement in 1995 makes me

Q5.11: The introduction of a common currency, the Euro, in 1999 makes me

Q5.12: The imminent exit of the United Kingdom from the EU – the Brexit – makes me

The answer categories are based on the seven base-emotions and include: happy, sad, angry, disgusted, afraid, surprised, and indifferent.

Although a rather crude measure of emotional involvement (either indifferent or feeling an emotion), these questions can lead to interesting comparisons regarding whether historic moments of European integration were interpreted the same way across societal groups and across three member states. After all, a shared interpretation of history is the basis for a shared memory. To increase the gamification aspect of the survey and counter high drop-out rates, the answer categories are additionally given commonly known emojis, as can be seen in Figure 4.

The history of the European Union makes me feel...



Figure 4: Example of a question with the 'happy' category being selected

Implicit Association Test

In a fourth step, an experiment will open that closely resembles the Implicit Association Test from Harvard University. This is because even if the survey measures identity more fully than previous surveys, there still remains one serious pitfall: what if subjects answer true to their feelings but feel differently in a real-world setting? This is where an experiment that tests latent identity is beneficial. Although quite a variety of experiments on identity have been conducted, most have focussed on sexual or race-related identities. A 'European experiment' in the form of an IAT would thus be quite unique.

In the original test, implicit attitudes toward African-Americans were captured by measuring the time it took respondents to place pictures and words into two categories: black and white patient; and good or bad. Through layering the two categories on top of each other, researchers could measure latent racism, if participants, for example, took longer to move words into the 'good' category, if it was also the 'black patient' category. The assumption here is that respondents resort to previously established thought-patterns. If their reactions are significantly faster when associating 'good' with 'white' than they are when associating 'good' with 'black', it is assumed that they will have thought of white as good more often.

A similar test is conducted regarding latent European identities, using the following items:

Positive: happy, joyous, love, peace, win, triumph, success.

Negative: sad, despair, war, hate, lose, defeat, terror.

Country: images of flag, national currency, football fans, capital and government buildings.

European Union: images of flag, Euro, football fans, Brussels and EU institutions.



Figure 5: Example of the European Identity Implicit Association Test

In order to control for learning effects, the participants are given a test round. The composition of the test is the following: (1) sort only country and EU images into the two categories; (2) then sort only adjectives into the 'good' and 'bad' categories; (3) a practice run with 20 items and all four categories is given; (4) an actual test with 40 items is run. Then the test rebuilds itself with reverse categories – if the EU was previously layered on top of 'bad' it will now be layered on top of 'good'. This is done in the following sequence: (5) sort only country and EU images, which have now reversed sides; (6) this is followed by another practice run with 20 items; and (7) concludes with an actual test of 40 items. To control further for learning, the order in which the EU is either

associated with 'good' or 'bad' is randomised for the sample. Overall, such a test cross-validates previously found answers on an implicit level and ideally is fun for the respondents.

Personality Questions

In the fifth section, respondents take a short LOT-R optimism test. This includes one personality trait in the analysis and tests whether such traits truly impact identity. The test looks like the following:

Please be as honest and accurate as you can throughout. Try not to let your response to one statement influence your responses to other statements. There are no 'correct' or 'incorrect' answers. Answer according to your own feelings, rather than how you think 'most people' would answer.

Q7.1: In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.

Q7.2: It's easy for me to relax.

Q7.3: If something can go wrong for me, it will. (R)

Q7.4: I'm always optimistic about my future.

Q7.5: I enjoy my friends a lot.

Q7.6: It's important for me to keep busy.

Q7.7: I hardly ever expect things to go my way. (R)

Q7.8: I don't get upset too easily.

Q7.9: I rarely count on good things happening to me. (R)

Q7.10: Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.

The answer categories for all questions of this test are the same 5-point Likert scale: Agree a lot, Agree a little, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree a little, Disagree a lot. Items 3, 7, and 9 are reverse scored (or scored separately as a pessimism measure). Items 2, 5, 6, and 8 are fillers and should not be scored. Scoring is kept continuous – there is no benchmark for being an optimist/pessimist.

Behavioural Questions

Based on the assumption that identity predetermines behaviour, questions that capture behaviour can be used to measure the content validity of the instrument. Thus, the survey includes the following questions:

Q8.1: There was a European election between the 22nd and 25th of May 2014. For one reason or another, many people in [country] did not vote in that election. Could you please think back to [exact date for country]: did you yourself vote in the European election?

[I am absolutely certain I did vote / I am fairly certain I voted / I don't think I voted / I am

certain I didn't vote / I don't remember whether I voted / I was not allowed to vote at the time]

Q8.2: Since the last European Parliament elections, have you read about members of the European Parliament on the internet?

[Yes / No / Don't know]

Q8.3: Supposing a general election were being held in [country] tomorrow, can you tell me on a scale of 1 to 100 how likely it is that you would vote in that election? [On a sliding scale with indications: Would definitely not vote / Would definitely vote]

Q8.4: And supposing there was a European Parliament election being held tomorrow, can you tell me on a scale of 1 to 100 how likely it is that you would vote in that election? [On a sliding scale with indications: Would definitely not vote / Would definitely vote]

Q8.5: Which, if any, European Union countries have you visited or travelled through this past year (2016)?

Please click on the name of the country or countries you visited or travelled through. Note that you can select multiple countries.



Figure 6: Answer Map for Question 8.5 with four example countries already selected

The questions of this section have been copied from previous Eurobarometer surveys to facilitate internal validity testing. The wording and answer categories have consequently only been adjusted minimally to reflect the current date. The answer map is added though, since a list of 28 countries might be too tiresome for respondents. Also looking at a map might trigger memories and improve reliability of the answers given. A language filter installed at the beginning of the survey will change the map to German and Dutch when respondents from Germany or the Netherlands take part in the survey.

Personal Information

Finally, in the last step, individuals are asked about their personal information relevant to the analysis, as well as the Moreno question to test the content validity. In order to allow for comparisons with Eurobarometer data, these questions again use the Eurobarometer wording and look like the following:

Finally, just a few demographic questions. Please take one final minute to answer the following questions, as they are much needed for later analysis. We will explain on the final page why these answers really matter to our study.

Q9.1: In political matters people talk of 'the left' and 'the right'. How would you place your views on this scale?

[On a sliding scale with indications: Left / Right]

Q9.2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?

[open text field]

Q9.3: What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

[open text field]

Q9.4: What is your gender?

[Male / Female / Other]

Q9.5: How old are you? [open]

Q9.6: Would you say you live in a...?

[Rural area or village / Small or middle sized town / Large town / Don't know]

Q9.7: In the near future, do you see yourself as

[European only / European and [nationality] / As [nationality] as European / [nationality] and European / [nationality] only / Don't know]

Upon completion, respondents are thanked for their time and given the opportunity to leave their e-mail address on a separate page (storing the information independently due to data privacy concerns) should they wish to be informed about the outcome of the study. Throughout the survey, respondents are informed about the structure of the test, their personal progress in it and how the results will be used, to increase rapport. The average time needed to complete the survey in trial runs was 25 minutes. Minor details of gamification are included to maintain the interest of respondents during this time. The survey has been tested on the three major internet browsers (Edge, Firefox and Google Chrome), two operating systems (Windows and Apple) and on mobile devices such as tablets or phones.

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION

Having designed the survey, the next step consisted of defining and reaching out to the survey population. Two groups were found: researchers and police officers in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Whereas the first group has already conducted the survey, the police officers have yet to do so. The two groups were selected since a previous analysis of Eurobarometer data over a time span of 21 years has indicated that as European integration increases, a European identity increases as well – especially for the highly educated (doctoral studies) and the less educated (high school degree) who are nonetheless exposed to European integration (travel and work).

For the first group, doctoral and post-doctoral students were the natural choice. Given their high attention spans, the rather long survey was run for this group in the spring of 2017. The survey achieved a response rate of 83.34 per cent and a completion rate of 48.75 per cent (n=995), whereby 21.8 per cent dropped out on the first two pages that simply asked respondents which country they were from and introduced the project. Afterwards, a confirmatory factor analysis, similar to one used by Bruter (2005), was employed to test concept validity and determine which items discriminate well and explain civic and cultural identities best across countries.

In a next step, the survey will be shortened and repeated for the second group. It is anticipated that this survey will be run in the autumn of 2017. Here, police officers are interesting respondents, as they often hold high school degrees but – as part of the executive branch of government – are frequently confronted with European issues. Given that the first group predominantly encounters the advantages, while the second group also encounters many of the disadvantages of European integration, a cross-group comparison is particularly promising to determine the effect of integration on identity. For this, an identity index will be built out of the remaining items and regressed against the economic integration index developed by König and Ohr (2013). Further, the index will be used to predict political behaviour as captured in the survey and cross-validated against the Moreno question. Their age and socio-economic status, as well as the field in which they work and the area in which they live will be controlled for. Having a more accurate and elaborate measure of identity allows for better group comparisons from which very different interpretations can emerge of what a European identity actually is. The distance between these interpretations will be vital to understanding polarising tendencies in Europe today. Do Europeans have fundamentally different notions of what it means to be a European? And if so, which groups are most likely to clash? How will this impact voting behaviour and consequently the political landscape in the years to come?

Apart from this one application though, the survey will also be able to add to the literature on European identity by discerning the internal validity of some of the measures used thus far. If, for example, the survey holds more content validity than previous measures (like the Moreno questions, see Q9.7 above), results based on such previous measures would have to be revised. Furthermore, it connects questions from political science to methods from psychology, bridging both disciplines. Through this interdisciplinary synapse, new questions can be asked: how important are personality traits in the development of a European identity? Who belongs to the European in-group and who to its out-group? Are these groups contested amongst EU citizens and what does it mean for Europe if they are? If for one group of citizens all Christians belong to their European in-group, whereas all Muslims belong to their European out-group, this group will demand fundamentally different tasks from its Europe than a group who might identify all citizens of the EU as their in-group and all legal foreigners as their out-group.

This process is particularly relevant in current times of heightened communication. If the 'self', as postulated at the beginning of this paper, is continuously questioned and re-evaluated through contact with a great and growing number of differing 'others', can this help us understand tectonic shifts in the political landscape? To an extent, this could explain the re-emergence of right-wing parties in many Western countries that are more mired in global interactions through their liberal economic policies and where citizens react to a great number of 'others' by fortifying the 'self'. The causal connection drawn here would have to be tested with new measures like the European Identity Survey. The survey thus promises to open and hopefully also answer questions targeting the social fabric and the future of the European project.

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ENDNOTES

¹ For example, 'self-understanding' is proposed to abrogate the presumed juxtaposition of a deep, individualistic understanding of self with the idea of collective 'sameness' (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 17f). Yet, Brewer already showed in 1991 that both concepts belong to a person's identity: the personal and the social. Rather than forcefully separating interrelated concepts, this article develops a measure that includes the interplay between different identities to find out where the 'European self' is located in relation to them.

² A few minor grammatical and stylistic changes have been introduced into the survey since it was run, in response to comments from the editor.

³ This survey will first be tested with PhD students and police officers in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. This is done because multi-level regression analyses of Eurobarometer data have found that both groups show heightened levels of European identification and the countries vary in their degree of European integration.

⁴ Future surveys might choose to differentiate between the deepening and widening of European integration. In this section, such a distinction was not considered because it primarily focusses on measuring the similarity of thought patterns based on similar contextual interpretations.

⁵ For this survey, gender effects were not controlled for. Future research should consider testing the variation in responses when using female anthropomorphisms or pay attention to gender neutral personifications.

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