



## Supraordinate identity integration in childhood: Intergroup implications of ethno-national and supraordinate identification in three divided societies

Nic Craith, I., Corbett, B., Tomašić Humer, J., Tomovska Misoska, A., Maloku, E., Dautel, J. B., & Taylor, L. K. (2023). Supraordinate identity integration in childhood: Intergroup implications of ethno-national and supraordinate identification in three divided societies. *JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY & APPLIED SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY*, 1-17. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2754>

[Link to publication record in Ulster University Research Portal](#)

**Published in:**  
JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY & APPLIED SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

**Publication Status:**  
Published online: 15/11/2023

**DOI:**  
[10.1002/casp.2754](https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2754)








**Document Version**  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

**General rights**  
Copyright for the publications made accessible via Ulster University's Research Portal is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

**Take down policy**  
The Research Portal is Ulster University's institutional repository that provides access to Ulster's research outputs. Every effort has been made to ensure that content in the Research Portal does not infringe any person's rights, or applicable UK laws. If you discover content in the Research Portal that you believe breaches copyright or violates any law, please contact [pure-support@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:pure-support@ulster.ac.uk).

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Supraordinate identity integration in childhood: Intergroup implications of ethno-national and supraordinate identification in three divided societies

Isabelle Nic Craith<sup>1</sup>  | Bethany Corbett<sup>2</sup>  |  
Jasmina Tomašić Humer<sup>3</sup>  | Ana Tomovska Misoska<sup>4</sup>  |  
Edona Maloku<sup>5</sup>  | Jocelyn B. Dautel<sup>6</sup>  | Laura K. Taylor<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

<sup>2</sup>Ulster University, Ulster, Northern Ireland, UK

<sup>3</sup>University of Osijek, Osijek, Croatia

<sup>4</sup>University American College Skopje, Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia

<sup>5</sup>Ministry of Education, Prishtina, Kosovo

<sup>6</sup>Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK

## Correspondence

Laura K. Taylor, Department of Psychology, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.

Email: [laura.taylor@ucd.ie](mailto:laura.taylor@ucd.ie)

## Funding information

Enterprise Ireland, Grant/Award Number: R23442; Tackling the UK's International Challenges, Grant/Award Number: IC4/100159; UCD Seed Funding, Grant/Award Number: SF2025

## Abstract

An overarching, supraordinate identity (e.g., European identity) can enhance intergroup relations if individuals recategorize ingroup and outgroup members into one, unified group. Yet, in conflict-affected societies, ethno-national identities may promote negative intergroup attitudes and behaviours. The effects of European and ethno-national identities in combination have yet to be explored in childhood. If they can be integrated, the inclusivity of a supraordinate European identity may be felt despite the divisiveness of ethno-national identities in post-accord societies. This research assesses supraordinate identity integration in relation to quality intergroup contact and cross-group friendships among the post-accord generation in Croatia, Kosovo and Republic of North Macedonia (RNM). These sites have relatively recent conflicts, but varying relationships to the EU. Data were collected from 382 children aged 7–11, split evenly by minority and majority status (Croatia  $n = 90$ ; Kosovo  $n = 107$ ; RNM  $n = 185$ ). Children across all three sites had integrated ethno-national/European identities. Levels of identity

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) License, which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

© 2023 The Authors. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

integration varied by site, but not group status. Identity integration was positively and significantly associated with quality of outgroup contact and number of cross-group friends, and this relationship varied by site. Integrated supraordinate identities have promising implications for intergroup relations and the future of peacebuilding in Europe. Please refer to the Supplementary Material section to find this article's [Community and Social Impact Statement](#).

#### KEYWORDS

children, conflict, ethno-national identity, European identity, intergroup contact, peacebuilding

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Being raised in societies divided by conflict has negative implications for children's outgroup attitudes and behaviours, potentially perpetuating intergroup hostility (Ajduković & Čorkalo Biruški, 2008). However, positive early experiences with outgroups also shape children's cross-group interactions in later years (Killen, Crystal, & Ruck, 2007; Tropp, White, Rucinski, & Tredoux, 2022), which could help to break the cycle of violence (Taylor, 2020). Thus, intergroup contact can enhance relations between former contact rivals in post-accord societies, sowing the seeds of peace among children (Tropp et al., 2022). In post-conflict settings, supraordinate identities may promote inclusive contact behaviours through recategorizing conflict rivals into a broader ingroup (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993). The current study extends this literature by examining supraordinate identity integration, or the extent to which European and ethno-national identities overlap, in relation to children's intergroup contact with a conflict rival.

### 1.1 | Three divided societies

This study focuses on the post-accord generation in three societies with recent histories of intergroup conflict (Dautel, Maloku, Misoska, & Taylor, 2020; Taylor et al., 2023; Appendix A): Croatia, Kosovo and the Republic of North Macedonia (RNM). Although the conflicts officially ended in 1995 (Croatia), 1999 (Kosovo) and 2001 (RNM), hostilities persist between the two salient ethnic majority/minority conflict rivals (Croatia: Croats/Serbs; Kosovo: Albanians/Serbs; RNM: Macedonians/Albanians). Consequently, children from these groups are raised in divided societies, with separate languages, school systems and neighbourhoods (Ajduković & Čorkalo Biruški, 2008; Maloku, Derks, Van Laar, & Ellemers, 2016; Tomovska-Misoka, Taylor, Dautel, & Rylander, 2020). In each setting, there are also other diverse ethnicities (Pehar, Čorkalo Biruški, & Jelić, 2022) that interact with the primary conflict groups in complex ways, but are beyond the scope of the current study.

Given the relevance of European Union (EU) status to children's European identification in conflict-affected societies (Philippou, 2005), it is useful to consider these sites' relation to the EU. Though all geographically located in Europe, the three societies differ in their EU status. Croatia has been an EU member state since 2013. RNM have been a candidate since 2005; they submitted an application, were granted candidate status (European Union, 2022), and are preparing to introduce EU laws and standards (European Commission, n.d.). Kosovo have potential candidate

status; they are involved in the stabilisation and association process, in which they work towards adopting EU standards, but are not yet regarded as an EU candidate (European Council, *n.d.*). Comparing across these cases with relatively recent conflict, but varying relationships to the EU, may help shed light on the potential for European identity to address past violence.

## 1.2 | The role of supraordinate identities

An overarching, supraordinate identity (e.g., European identity), can enhance intergroup relations if individuals recategorize ingroup and outgroup members into one, unified group (Gaertner et al., 1993). This is particularly important in post-accord societies, wherein conflict has contributed to the development of binary identities among the primary conflict groups. The primary conflict groups in each setting have differing conceptualisations of nationality, defining it in terms of their distinct ethnic and cultural heritage. They are thus referred to as ethno-national groups (Connor, 2015).

In post-conflict Croatia, Kosovo and RNM, binary ethno-national identities remain a source of intergroup tension and are highly salient (Ajduković & Čorkalo Biruški, 2008; Dautel et al., 2020). For example, in the city of Vukovar (Croatia), as early as kindergarten children are divided based on their ethno-national group (Čorkalo Biruški & Ajduković, 2007). This division of schools influences who children will interact with, the language they will speak, and how they learn about the history of conflict in Croatia (Barrett & Oppenheimer, 2011; Čorkalo Biruški & Ajduković, 2007).

Even when children have opportunities to interact with the outgroup, they experience social norms discouraging them from doing so. For example, in Croatia, Croat and Serb 11–15-year-olds describe a desire not to interact with outgroup members, a condemnation of ingroup peers who associate with the outgroup, and intergroup conflict when contact occurs (Reidy et al., 2015). However, some children do form cross-group friendships, rejecting the status quo (Reidy et al., 2015). Identifying predictors of children's decisions to have positive interactions and relationships with outgroup peers is key to enhancing intergroup relations in divided societies.

Supraordinate identities may help to overcome the divisiveness of ethno-national identities. In peaceful societies, national identity can unify ethnic and cultural groups within a country, promoting social cohesion (Gaertner et al., 2008). However, due to the intricacies of intergroup relations and strong ethno-national identities in Croatia, Kosovo and RNM, nationality is unlikely to be a unifying category across conflict groups. In Croatia, the label associated with the majority ethno-national group (Croats) converges with that associated with the overarching, national identity (Croatian), labelling Croats as the national group by default and limiting the potential for a Croatian identity to be perceived as including both Croats and Serbs. The RNM has been reconstituted as a country of the Macedonian people and other national minorities (Rohdewald, 2018), but here, again, the name of the dominant ethno-national group is the same as that of the country, and minorities (e.g., Albanians) may not collectively identify with a Macedonian label. In Kosovo, a Kosovar supraordinate identity and associated flag have been promoted. However, empirical evidence suggests that for Albanians, processes of ingroup projection occur, with a Kosovar category perceived as representing Albanians and excluding Serbs, limiting its reconciliatory potentials (Maloku et al., 2016). A broader supraordinate category may more effectively unify people in these contexts, where a collective nationality is unlikely to represent the identities of both the majority and minority ethno-national categories.

One such supraordinate category is European identity, which encompasses a diverse range of groups. Among youth aged 13–30, European identity is associated with positive attitudes towards fellow Europeans, European allies (Lam & Katona, 2018) and immigrants (Landberg et al., 2018). While research among children is more limited, European identity develops across middle childhood (i.e., ages 7–11; Barrett, 2007) and promotes more inclusive attitudes among children (Taylor et al., 2023). As they construct an understanding of European identity, children draw on salient information within their local and national contexts. For example, children aged 9–12 in Ireland and the UK demonstrate awareness of Europe through reference to symbols, including sports teams, flags, other European

countries, the Euro, and European cuisines (Healy & Richardson, 2017; Lennon Malbasha, Dautel, & Taylor, 2022). Due to the enlargement process, under which countries in the Western Balkans move towards EU membership, the EU is in everyday discourse in these settings. Thus, given children's knowledge of and exposure to the EU, and the EU's goal of peace, this could act as a unifying category.

An important consideration in the relationship between European identity and inclusive outcomes, however, is whether it is perceived as threatening ethno-national identities. If a European identity is viewed as undermining the identities which a group have fought to protect during a conflict (e.g., through overshadowing a group's language and customs), it may be perceived as threatening, and rejected (Amiot, de la Sablonnière, Terry, & Smith, 2007; Dovidio, Gaertner, Pearson, & Riek, 2005). If an ethno-national identity can remain salient when children are considering European identity, this may maximise its likelihood of serving as an inclusive category.

### 1.3 | Supraordinate identity integration

The present study focuses on supraordinate identity integration, operationally defined as the degree to which children consider two social identities (i.e., ethno-national and European) to be compatible and overlapping. If this can be achieved, the inclusivity of a supraordinate European identity may be felt without it threatening subordinate ethno-national identities. Among children in Belgium, positive correlations between children's European and national identities have been demonstrated, illustrating that they can be compatible (Agirdag, Phaet, & Van Houtte, 2016). If children's ethno-national and European identities can be similarly integrated in post-accord societies, more positive behaviours may be extended towards those who fall under the broader 'European' category, including historical conflict rivals (Gaertner et al., 1993). In other words, if children's ethno-national identities are perceived as compatible with a more inclusive European identity, and can retain their salience, children's behaviours towards former conflict rivals may be more inclusive.

Greater degrees of supraordinate identity integration may allow European and ethno-national identities to be salient at the same time, allowing the inclusive, supraordinate identity to influence intergroup behaviours. Previous research on cultural identities suggests that when identities are perceived as compatible, they can be combined in one, integrated identity; when they are not, individuals switch between the two, with one identity becoming more salient depending on the context (Huynh, Nguyen, & Benet-Martínez, 2011). This has implications for ethno-national/European identity integration and its association with intergroup relations. Even in the absence of phenotypical differences between ethno-national groups, salient markers of ethno-national identity are often present in post-accord societies (e.g., flags, language, neighbourhoods, religious symbols; Taylor, Dautel, & Rylander, 2020). Thus, children's ethno-national identities are likely salient when they interact with the outgroup, and are known to be associated with more exclusive behaviours (O'Driscoll, Taylor, & Dautel, 2018). If children's ethno-national and European identities are integrated, it may be possible for their European identities to be salient at the same time, promoting more inclusivity. Thus, it is plausible that the more identities overlap (i.e., the more linked an ethno-national category is with the broader, European category), the more these inclusive benefits can be felt (Cameron, Rutland, Brown, & Douch, 2006).

The concept of supraordinate identity integration builds upon research focusing on the integration of different ethnic and cultural identities (Amiot et al., 2007; Croucher & Kramer, 2016), particularly bicultural identity integration (Huynh et al., 2011). This draws on concepts of harmony (i.e., whether factors such as cultural distance cause the two identities to come into conflict, preventing them from being integrated), and blendedness (i.e., the *degree* to which the identities are integrated; Huynh et al., 2011). Extending this research, this study focuses on the relationship between supraordinate identity integration and intergroup relations in divided societies; to our knowledge, this has not been extensively investigated. Moreover, to our knowledge this study is the first to use a pictorial scale to assess the integration of supraordinate identities. This scale has been used with success with children (Reese & Whitehouse, 2021) and has been used to assess the overlap between the self and another individual, and the overlap between the self and a group (Schubert & Otten, 2002; Swann, Jetten, Gómez, Whitehouse, & Bastian, 2012).

## 1.4 | Intergroup contact theory

Seven decades of scholarship have established intergroup contact as a powerful tool for peacebuilding (Paolini et al., 2021; Stathi & Vezzali, 2021). Meta-analyses suggest that the effect of intergroup contact on attitudes is stronger for children and youth than adults (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), and for younger children than children over 11 (Ülger, Dette-Hagenmeyer, Reichle, & Gaertner, 2018; cf. Beelmann & Heinemann, 2014). Positive contact with outgroup members, which meets at least some of the conditions for successful contact outlined by Allport (1954) and Pettigrew (1998), enhances intergroup relations among children aged 8–15 in post-accord societies (Berger, Benatov, Abu-Raiya, & Tadmor, 2016; Turner, Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy, & Cairns, 2013). Negative contact exacerbates divisions among early adolescents (Bagci, Baysu, Tercan, & Turnuklu, 2022). Cross-group friendships constitute a ‘gold standard’ form of positive contact among children (Aboud & Spears Brown, 2013), as they epitomise Allport’s conditions (Turner & Cameron, 2016), enhancing outgroup attitudes of children aged 7–11 across a range of contexts (Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011).

In post-accord societies, wherein intergroup relations are characterised by tension, hostility and sporadic conflict, identifying the factors which are associated with more high-quality contact and cross-group friendships can help to identify what factors may help the post-accord generation break the cycle of violence (Taylor et al., 2023). Previously identified predictors among children aged 7–13 in peaceful societies include confidence in contact (Turner & Cameron, 2016), extended contact (Wölfer et al., 2019), peer norms (Jugert, Noack, & Rutland, 2011) and self-efficacy (Bagci et al., 2020). This study assesses how supraordinate identity integration relates to positive contact and cross-group friendships.

## 1.5 | Current study

In this study, we hypothesize that greater overlap between European and ethno-national identities, or integration of these identities, will be linked with higher-quality interactions and more cross-group friendships with members of the outgroup. We explored if the relationship between supraordinate identity integration and positive contact would be moderated by site, due to between-site differences such as the recency of the conflict and EU status. More recent, intense conflict may re-ignite intergroup tensions and increase the salience of minority/majority relations. A country’s relation to the EU may increase the complexity of the relationship between European identification and intergroup behaviours. Thus, supraordinate identity integration may be less effective in countries like Kosovo, which have more recent conflict, or RNM, which have more complex relations to the EU, than Croatia. We also considered whether the relationship would be moderated by group status. Retaining the salience of subordinate identities is particularly important for minority groups, whose identities have been strengthened by experiences of oppression (Dovidio et al., 2005). However, in post-accord societies wherein both minority and majority identities are contested, retaining salience may be important for both groups.

As such, we had two aims:

Aim 1: Examine whether children’s European and ethno-national identities are integrated, and whether the degree to which they are integrated differs as a function of site and minority/majority group status.

Aim 2: Examine the associations between children’s ethno-national/European identity integration and positive intergroup outcomes, specifically quality contact and cross-group friendship.

## 2 | METHODS

### 2.1 | Participants

Data for the current study were collected between December 2020 and January 2021 (Kosovo, RNM) or between February and June 2021 (Croatia), as part of a larger study with ethical approval (EPS20\_190) from Queen’s

University Belfast. The pre-registration and full list of measures administered can be found at <https://osf.io/cnk37>. Analyses for the present paper were not pre-registered. The authors declare no conflicts of interest. Participants were 382 children (Appendix B) aged 7–11 ( $M = 9.01$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ , 51.9% female), split evenly by minority and majority status: 90 from Croatia (52.22% Croats, 47.78% Serbs), 107 from Kosovo (50.47% Albanians, 49.53% Serbs), and 185 from the Republic of North Macedonia (53.51% Macedonians, 46.49% Albanians). For Aim 1, for two-tailed correlations within each site, we had 83% power to determine a medium effect size ( $r = .50$ ) for Croatia, 89% power for Kosovo, and 99% power for RNM. Moreover, for an ANOVA including main effects and interactions across the whole sample of 382, we had power of 95% to detect a medium effect ( $f = .25$ ). To test Aim 2, for a two-tailed test and five predictors within each site, we had 77% power to detect a medium effect ( $f^2 = .15$ ) for Croatia, 86% power for Kosovo and 99% power for RNM.

## 2.2 | Procedure

Children were recruited via social media (Croatia), snowball sampling (Croatia, Kosovo) and local schools (Kosovo, RNM). They completed the procedure online using video conferencing and Qualtrics, and were led through the session by a trained researcher using the local language. Full data collection procedures are detailed in Appendix C. Among several other measures, described at <https://osf.io/cnk37>, the strength of European identity items were administered first, followed by the ethno-national/European identity integration measure; the strength of ingroup identity and contact measures were presented next, in a randomised order.

## 2.3 | Measures

*Strength of European identity.* Two strength of European identity items (modelled after Cameron et al., 2006) were asked in a fixed order, exploring (1) how much children liked being European and (2) how much children [would] like being part of the European Union. Four response options representing strength of identification were presented alongside a pictorial scale with corresponding pictures of thumbs, ranging from a thumb pointing fully down ('I do not like being European at all') to a thumb pointed fully up ('I like being European a lot'; Appendix D).

*Ethno-national/European identity integration.* The identity integration measure was adapted from Swann et al. (2012). Children were asked: 'For the item below, please select which of these 5 images best represents your [ETHNO-NATIONAL: Croatian/Serbian, Albanian/Serbian, Macedonian/Albanian] and European identities'. The five possible response options represented ethno-national and European identities overlapping to varying degrees. Higher scores indicated higher degree of identity integration.

*Strength of ingroup identity.* A single item assessed strength of ingroup identity, 'How important it is to you that you are [INGROUP: Croatian/Serbian, Albanian/Serbian, Macedonian/Albanian]?' Response options (0–4) were: 'not at all', 'a little bit', 'quite', 'very', 'extremely'. A pictorial scale involving balloons of various sizes was presented alongside these options; larger balloons corresponded to greater importance.

*Quality of outgroup contact.* A single item assessed quality of outgroup contact: 'How good or bad are your experiences with [OUTGROUP] children?' (Tausch, Hewstone, Kenworthy, Cairns, & Christ, 2007). Responses options (0–3) were: 'always bad', 'sometimes bad', 'sometimes good', 'always good', accompanied by corresponding pictures of thumbs, from pointed fully down ('always bad') to pointed fully up ('always good').

*Cross-group friendship.* A single item assessed cross group friendship, 'How many close [OUTGROUP] friends do you have?' (Reimer et al., 2022). Response options (0–3) were: 'none', 'some', 'most', 'all'. A pictorial scale depicting

groups of stick figures was presented alongside these options; larger groups corresponded to more cross-group friends.

### 3 | RESULTS

#### 3.1 | Preliminary analysis

Age was unrelated to identity integration,  $r_s(283) = -.06$ ,  $p = .294$ , or quality of outgroup contact,  $r_s(284) = -.04$ ,  $p = .533$ . There was a small, positive, significant association between age and number of cross-group friends,  $r_s(294) = .12$ ,  $p = .030$ . Gender was not related to identity integration,  $r_s(295) = .012$ ,  $p = .835$ , number of cross-group friends,  $r_s(309) = -.012$ ,  $p = .832$ , or quality of outgroup contact,  $r_s(298) = -.06$ ,  $p = .307$ . Age and gender are not considered further in subsequent analyses. Means, standard deviations and correlations for the study variables, broken down by site, are presented in Table 1; these correlations are further discussed below.

#### 3.2 | Aim 1

Bivariate correlations between the study variables provide insight into whether children had integrated ethno-national/European identities (Table 2). There were moderate, positive associations between children's extent of identity integration and how much they reported liking being European or in the European Union. The relationship between children's strength of ethno-national identity and supraordinate identity integration was not statistically significant. The absence of a negative correlation between these constructs potentially indicates that children did not find ethno-national and European identity to be incompatible. Correlations between strength of ethno-national identity and identity integration were explored between the minority and majority, within each site (Table 3). There were no statistically significant differences in correlation coefficients between minority and majority children within each site, with the exception of Kosovo. This indicates that European and ethno-national identity were not more or less incompatible in either group in Croatia and RNM.

The next set of analyses examined differences in children's ethno-national/European identity integration as a function of group status and site. A 2 (group status: minority/majority)  $\times$  3 (site: Croatia, Kosovo, RNM) between groups ANOVA was performed to examine the variance in children's ethno-national/European identity integration. The main effect of group status was not statistically significant,  $F(1, 367) = .32$ ,  $p = .57$ . However, there was significant main effect of site,  $F(2, 367) = 5.59$ ,  $p = .004$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . Pairwise comparisons with Bonferroni adjustment revealed that children in Croatia ( $M = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ) reported significantly more

**TABLE 1** Means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations for dependent variables by site.

	Ethno-national/European identity integration (a)	European identity (b)	Ethno-national identity (c)	Quality of contact (d)	Outgroup friendships (e)
	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )
Croatia	2.98 (1.21) <sup>a,d</sup>	2.33 (0.81) <sup>b,d,-e</sup>	3.39 (0.84) <sup>c</sup>	2.47 (0.69) <sup>a,b,d,e</sup>	0.94 (0.69) <sup>-b,d,e</sup>
Kosovo	2.5 (1.40) <sup>a,b</sup>	2.16 (0.77) <sup>a,b</sup>	3.92 (0.31) <sup>c</sup>	1.83 (0.80) <sup>d</sup>	0.17 (0.56) <sup>e</sup>
RNM	2.31 (1.55) <sup>a,b,c,d</sup>	2.16 (0.91) <sup>a,b,e</sup>	3.61 (0.70) <sup>a,c,d</sup>	2.22 (0.82) <sup>a,c,d,e</sup>	0.88 (0.63) <sup>b,d,e</sup>

Note: Matched superscript letters indicate significant correlations between factors within each site (accepted at  $p < .05/.01/.001$ ); negative superscripts indicate a negative correlation.



**TABLE 2** Bivariate correlation matrix ( $r_s$ ) of main study variables ( $N = 382$ ), collapsed across three sites: Croatia, Kosovo and Republic of North Macedonia.

	Age	Gender	Ethno-national/ European identity integration	How much do you like being European?	How much do you like being in the EU?	How important is it to be [NATIONAL INGROUP]?
Age	-					
Gender	.06	-				
National/European identity integration	-.06	.01	-			
How much do you like being European?	.04	.07	.37***	-		
How much do you like being in the EU?	-.06	-.01	.34***	.60***	-	
How important is it to be [NATIONAL INGROUP]?	-.12*	.002	.11	.04	.05	-

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

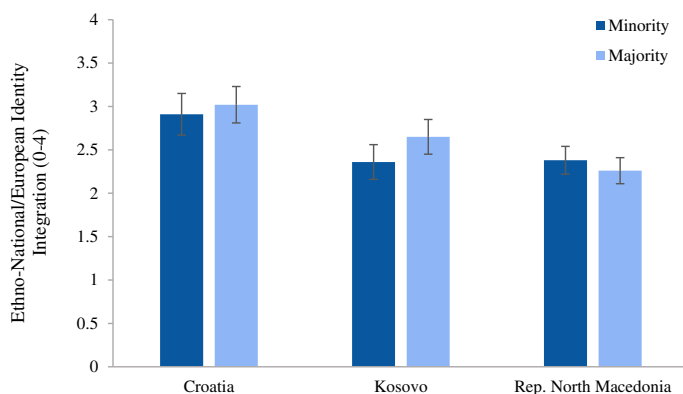
**TABLE 3** Correlation coefficients ( $r_s$ ) between strength of ethno-national identity and degree of ethno-national/European identity integration ( $N = 382$ ), as a function of site and group status; difference in effect sizes examined with Fisher's  $r$  to  $z$  transformation.

	Croatia		Kosovo		Rep. North Macedonia	
	Minority	Majority	Minority	Majority	Minority	Majority
$r_s$	.19	.09	-.20	.02	.17	.20
$z$ -score	.44		-1.10		-.20	
$p$	.66		.27		.84	

identity integration than children in the RNM ( $M = 2.32$ ,  $SD = 1.55$ ),  $p = .003$ . No other site differences were statistically significant. The site  $\times$  status interaction was not statistically significant,  $F(2, 367) = .67$ ,  $p = .50$  (Figure 1).

### 3.3 | Aim 2

Examining the implications of an integrated ethno-national/European identity, diagnostic statistics confirmed that the assumptions associated with regression analysis for each variable had been met. Residuals followed an approximately normal distribution, errors were independent (Durbin-Watson test statistic,  $p > 0.05$ ), and there was no evidence of heteroskedasticity, outliers (95% residuals were within  $\pm 2$ ), influential points (Cook's distance  $< 1$ ), or multicollinearity (average VIF  $< 1$ ; Field, Miles, & Field, 2012).



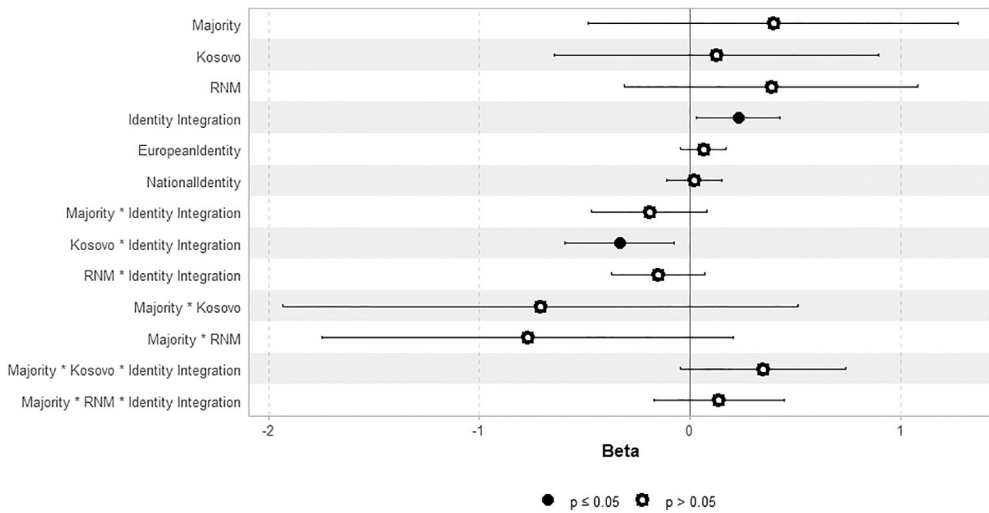
**FIGURE 1** Children's ethno-national/European identity integration as a function of group status and site: Croatia ( $n = 82$ ), Kosovo ( $n = 104$ ), Republic of North Macedonia ( $n = 182$ ).

**TABLE 4** Hierarchical regression results (unstandardized Beta coefficients and  $p$ -values) for models predicting quality of outgroup contact ( $N = 341$ ).

	Model 1 B (se)	Model 2 B (se)	Model 3 B (se)
Intercept	2.67 (.10)***	2.18 (.28)***	1.70 (.40)***
Majority	-.31 (.08)***	-.30 (.08)***	.40 (.45)
Kosovo (vs. Croatia)	-.75 (.12)***	-.72 (.13)***	.13 (.39)
RNM (vs. Croatia)	-.020 (.10)**	-.26 (.10)*	.39 (.35)
Identity integration		.04 (.03)	.23 (.10)*
Strength European identity		.09 (.05)	.06 (.05)
Strength Ethno-National Identity		.04 (.07)	.02 (.07)
Majority $\times$ identity integration			-.20 (.07)
Kosovo $\times$ identity integration			-.33 (.13)*
RNM $\times$ identity integration			-.15 (.11)
Majority $\times$ Kosovo			-.70 (.62)
Majority $\times$ RNM			
Majority $\times$ Kosovo $\times$ identity integration			
Majority $\times$ RNM $\times$ identity integration			
$n$	341	341	341
$R^2$	.11***	.12	.14***
$R^2$ change	.11***	.01*	.02*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

A first hierarchical regression was conducted to examine the effects of group status and site (model 1) on children's quality of outgroup contact, in addition to ethno-national/European identity integration, strength of European identity, and strength of ethno-national identity (model 2), as well as all two- and three-way interactions between identity integration, site, and group status (model 3). The final model explained a significantly greater proportion of the variance in quality of outgroup contact (see Table 4), than the prior models, and therefore was retained (see Figure 2). The key finding was that the extent of children's identity integration was positively, and significantly, related to quality of outgroup contact in the final model. This relation did not differ between the minority and



**FIGURE 2** Plot of unstandardized Beta coefficients and 95% CI, for final model predicting quality of outgroup contact ( $N = 341$ ).

majority for any site. The only other statistically significant effect to emerge was an identity integration x site interaction, such that the effect of identity integration on quality of outgroup contact was less positive for children in Kosovo, than in Croatia (see Figure 2).

A second hierarchical regression was performed to examine the effects of group status and site (model 1) on children's number of cross-group friends, then adding ethno-national/European identity integration, strength of European identity, and strength of ethno-national identity (model 2), and then all two- and three-way interactions between identity integration, site, and group status (model 3). The final model explained a significantly greater proportion of the variance in number of cross-group friends relative to the prior models (see Table 5), and therefore was retained (see Figure 3). The key finding was that the extent of identity integration was positively, and significantly, associated with number of cross-group friends, when also accounting for European and ethno-national identity. This association did not vary by group status for any site. There was also a statistically significant effect of site, such that children in Kosovo reported having fewer cross-group friends than children in Croatia (the reference category) (Figure 4).

## 4 | DISCUSSION

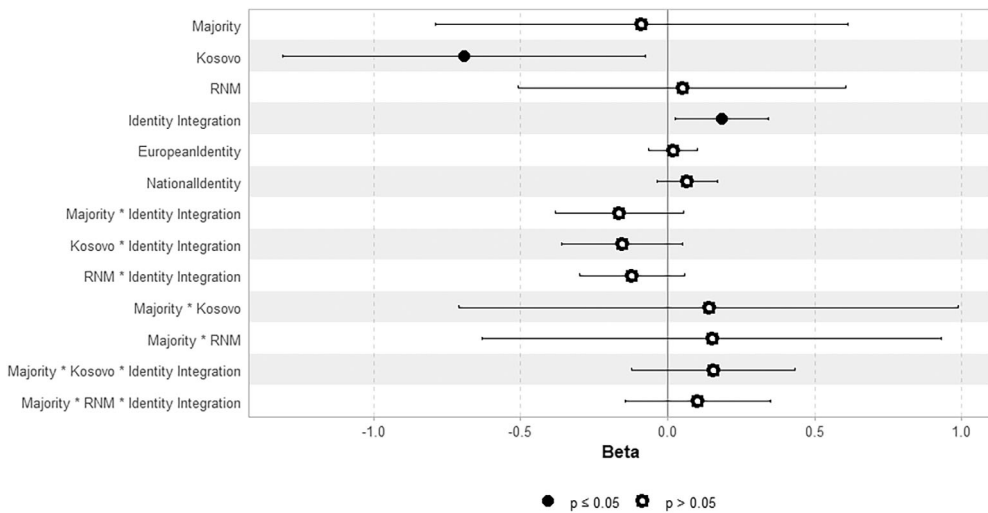
We examined the relationship between supraordinate identity integration and intergroup contact among children in three settings of intergroup division: Croatia, Kosovo and RNM. Addressing Aim 1, we examined whether children's ethno-national and European identities were integrated, and differences in the degree to which they were integrated as a function of site and minority/majority group status. Addressing Aim 2, we examined the associations between children's ethno-national/European identity integration and quality contact and cross-group friendships.

With regard to Aim 1, for all groups but the minority in Kosovo, ethno-national identity was not *incompatible* (i.e., negatively associated) with identity integration, implying that supraordinate identity integration is possible for children in these contexts. The negative correlation for minority Serb children in Kosovo may be linked to more recent intergroup disputes, with Serbs refusing to recognise Kosovo's independence from Serbia, and their continuous protest contributing to heightened tensions in recent years (BBC, 2022). Given the recency and intensity of conflict in Kosovo, and the fact that most EU member states recognise Kosovo's independence (AJLabs, 2023),

**TABLE 5** Hierarchical regression results (unstandardized Beta coefficients and *p*-values) for models predicting number of cross-group friends (*N* = 364).

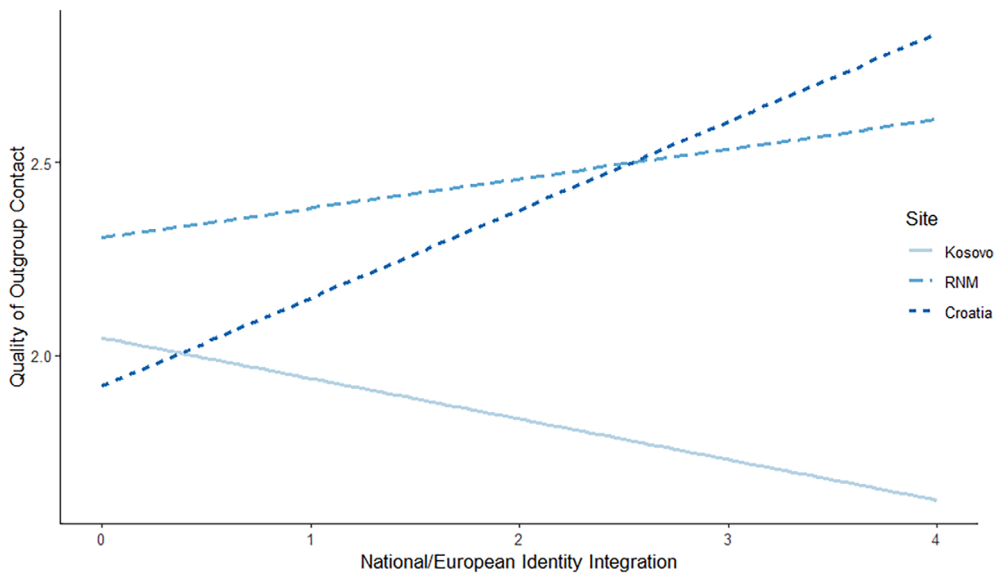
	Model 1 B (se)	Model 2 B (se)	Model 3 B (se)
Intercept	1.04 (.08)***	.74 (.22)***	.46 (.31)
Majority	-.17 (.06)**	-.16 (.06)*	-.09 (.36)
Kosovo (vs. Croatia)	-.08 (.09)***	-.81 (.09)***	-.69 (.31)*
RNM (vs. Croatia)	-.06 (.08)	-.04 (.08)	.05 (.28)
Identity integration		.04 (.02) <sup>-</sup>	.18 (.08)*
Strength European identity		-.00 (.04)	.02 (.04)
Strength Ethno-National Identity		.05 (.05)	.07 (.05)
Majority × identity integration			-.16 (.11)
Kosovo × identity integration			-.15 (.10)
RNM × identity integration			-.12 (.09)
Majority × Kosovo			.14 (.43)
Majority × RNM			.15 (.40)
Majority × Kosovo × identity integration			.15 (.14)
Majority × RNM × identity integration			.10 (.13)
<i>n</i>	364	364	364
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.25***	.25***	.27***
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> change	.25***	.00	.02*

\**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01; \*\*\**p* < .001; <sup>-</sup>*p* < .08.



**FIGURE 3** Plot of unstandardized Beta coefficients and 95% CI, for final model predicting number of cross-group friends (*N* = 364).

European identity may threaten Serb ethno-national identities in Kosovo, limiting their compatibility. Ethno-national identity and identity integration were not more or less incompatible for other majority or minority groups. These findings suggest that European identity is an inclusive identity which does not usually undermine or threaten ethno-national identities. However, as one would expect, contextual factors may temper this relationship.



**FIGURE 4** Interaction between identity integration and site on quality of outgroup contact.

Despite variance in the correlations between ethno-national identities and identity integration, the degree to which children's European and ethno-national identities were integrated did not differ based on group status in any context. There was variance by site, such that children in Croatia reported more identity integration than children in RNM. This finding is consistent with the fact that Croatia is the only site in this study which has EU status, in line with assertions that EU status relates to children's identification with Europe in conflict-affected societies (Philippou, 2005). The relatively lower identity integration evidenced in RNM could also relate to rising EU scepticism due to blockages to EU accession (Jovanovski, 2011).

For Aim 2, greater European-ethno-national identity integration was significantly, positively associated with children's quality of contact and number of cross-group friends. This, in combination with previous literature (Reidy et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2023), suggests that European identity can act as an inclusive identity, overcoming divisive ethno-national identities to create a sense of unity in the European context, and creating an overarching group to which inclusive behaviours can be extended (Gaertner et al., 1993). The finding that neither European nor ethno-national identity were significantly associated with quality of contact or cross-group friendships implies that the *integration* of these identities is key, perhaps because it reduces the degree to which children switch between their ethno-national and European identities. Thus, while children's ethno-national identities are likely salient during intergroup encounters (Taylor et al., 2020), identity integration may mean that European identity can also be salient, allowing the benefits of a supraordinate identity to be felt.

Our finding that the relationship between identity integration and positive intergroup outcomes was not as strong for children in Kosovo as in Croatia reinforces the idea that contextual factors are important. In the same way that the recency and intensity of conflict may temper the degree to which ethno-national and European identities can be integrated, it may also limit the degree to which the benefits of identity integration can be felt. More tense intergroup relations in Kosovo (BBC, 2022) may explain the fact that the relationship was not as strong in this context. Thus, while supraordinate identity integration has promising implications for children's intergroup contact behaviours in post-accord societies, in settings with more recent tensions, more time may be needed for supraordinate identity integration to further improve the quality of interactions among former conflict rivals.

## 4.1 | Limitations and future directions

The current findings should be considered in light of the limitations of the study. First, analyses were sufficiently powered to detect medium effects; to detect smaller effects, a follow-up study with a larger sample would be necessary. Second, due to questions being part of a larger study, the scales used to measure strength of European identity and strength of ethno-national identity differed slightly. European identity was measured in terms of how much children *liked* being European, and ethno-national identity was measured in terms of how *important* children's ethno-national identities were to them. While these dimensions of identification have been shown to be highly correlated (O'Driscoll et al., 2018), future studies might use both liking and importance measures of identity to compare across constructs (Cameron et al., 2006). Moreover, this study employed several single-item measures. While this afforded benefits in that it minimised participant attrition and fatigue, the use of single-item measures means that the internal validity of constructs cannot be assessed (Ang & Eisend, 2018). Studies replicating the present findings should endeavour to employ multiple-item measures to fully tap into the constructs in question.

Third, data collection for this project occurred while COVID-19 restrictions were in place. Thus, restrictions and school closures might have influenced children's reasoning about contact with other peers more generally, both the ingroup and the outgroup (Appendix C). Limited opportunities for contact during the data collection period may have clouded participants' responses about the number of cross-group friends they have. However, questions about intergroup contact were not limited to the school context, and allowed children to reflect on their contact experiences prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a similar vein, while this study focused on the *quality* of children's intergroup contact, in terms of how good or bad their cross-group interactions were and their number of cross-group friends, rather than the *quantity* of contact, it is noteworthy that children in RNM attended a school where they were educated under the same roof (but in separate classes) as their outgroup peers, whereas children in Croatia and Kosovo were educated in separate schools. Thus, children in RNM may have had more opportunities for contact.

Fourth, this study was cross-sectional in nature. Thus, while we hypothesised that supraordinate identity integration could be associated with greater quality of contact and cross-group friendships, having more positive cross-group contact and friendships could also cause children to view a European identity, which includes the outgroup, as compatible with their ethno-national identity. Future experimental and longitudinal investigations could shed light on the direction of relationships. Future research should also extend the study of supraordinate identity integration to other settings of intergroup division and polarisation, to elucidate how supraordinate identity integration functions across different contexts (Agirdag et al., 2016; Taylor, 2020). Moreover, future studies should assess supraordinate identity integration across a range of age groups, exploring differences in its effects across development (Gaertner et al., 2008).

A final caveat is that the construct of supraordinate identity integration and scale used to measure it are reminiscent of identity fusion (Swann et al., 2012); it is important that these two constructs are distinguished. Identity integration refers to the overlap between two *social* identities, whereas identity fusion refers to the overlap between a *personal* and a social identity.

## 5 | CONCLUSION

Even a decade after conflicts in Croatia, Kosovo and RNM were officially resolved, schools and communities remain divided (Ajduković & Čorkalo Biruški, 2008). This study investigated factors which may aid the post-accord generation in breaking the cycle of violence, focusing on the role of supraordinate identity integration in promoting positive intergroup contact and cross-group friendships. Findings indicate that an integrated ethno-national/European identity relates to more positive intergroup contact behaviours among children. These behaviours have implications for intergroup relations in divided societies, laying the groundwork for further

reconciliation in post accord societies (Moran & Taylor, 2022). Future studies should assess the contextual factors which may contribute to greater supraordinate identity integration; for example, the dominant narratives in children's environment may shape the degree to which they feel their identities can be integrated. Thus, in societies affected by conflict, investigating supraordinate identity integration may be a promising way forward for peacebuilding.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Helping Kids! data collection in Croatia, Kosovo, and the Republic of North Macedonia was supported by the British Tackling the UK's International Challenges Programme to Taylor (IC4/100159) and our excellent project coordinator Risa Rylander. The authors would like to thank the numerous research assistants in each setting for their contributions in data collection. We would also like to thank members of the Group Processes and Social Inclusion stream in UCD School of Psychology for their feedback on this manuscript. While working on this manuscript, Isabelle Nic Craith was supported by funding from Enterprise Ireland (R23442) and UCD Seed Funding (SF2025) to Laura K. Taylor. Open access funding provided by IReL.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There are no known conflicts of interest.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

## ETHICS STATEMENT

Ethics approval to Taylor from Queen's University Belfast (EPS 20\_190) and pre-registration available at <https://osf.io/cnk37>.

## ORCID

Isabelle Nic Craith  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5080-2405>

Bethany Corbett  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7277-6823>

Jasmina Tomašić Humer  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3605-740X>

Ana Tomovska Misoska  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2018-1606>

Edona Maloku  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5961-8671>

Jocelyn B. Dautel  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9953-8211>

Laura K. Taylor  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2353-2398>

## REFERENCES

- Aboud, F. E., & Spears Brown, C. (2013). Positive and negative intergroup contact among children and its effect on attitudes. In G. Hodson & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Advances in intergroup contact* (pp. 176–198). New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Agirdag, O., Phalet, K., & Van Houtte, M. (2016). European identity as a unifying category: National vs. European identification among native and immigrant pupils. *European Union Politics*, 17(2), 285–302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116515612216>
- Ajdković, D., & Čorkalo Biruški, D. (2008). Caught between the ethnic sides: Children growing up in a divided post-war community. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 32(4), 337–347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025408090975>
- AJLabs. (2023, 17 February). *Which countries recognise Kosovo's statehood?* Aljazeera. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/17/mapping-the-countries-that-recognise-kosovo-as-a-state-2>
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Amiot, C. E., de la Sablonnière, R., Terry, D. J., & Smith, J. R. (2007). Integration of social identities in the self: Toward a cognitive-developmental model. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 11(4), 364–388. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868307304091>

- Ang, L., & Eisend, M. (2018). Single versus multiple measurement of attitudes: A meta-analysis of advertising studies validates the single-item measure approach. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 58, 218–227. <https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-2017-001>
- Bagci, S. C., Baysu, G., Tercan, M., & Turnuklu, A. (2022). Dealing with increasing negativity toward refugees: A latent growth curve study of positive and negative intergroup contact and approach-avoidance tendencies. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 49, 1466–1478. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672221110325>
- Bagci, S. C., Cameron, L., Turner, R. N., Morais, C., Carby, A., Ndhlovu, M., & Leney, A. (2020). Cross-ethnic friendship self-efficacy: A new predictor of cross-ethnic friendships among children. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 23(7), 1049–1065. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430219879219>
- Barrett, M. (2007). *Children's knowledge, beliefs and feelings about nations and national groups*. London, UK: Psychology Press.
- Barrett, M., & Oppenheimer, L. (2011). Findings, theories and methods in the study of children's national identifications and national attitudes. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 8(1), 5–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2010.533955>
- BBC. (2022, December 29). *Kosovo: Serbs agree to dismantle barricades after talks*. BBC News. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64117730>
- Beelmann, A., & Heinemann, K. S. (2014). Preventing prejudice and improving intergroup attitudes: A meta-analysis of child and adolescent training programs. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 35(1), 10–24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2013.11.002>
- Berger, R., Benatov, J., Abu-Raiya, H., & Tadmor, C. T. (2016). Reducing prejudice and promoting positive intergroup attitudes among elementary-school children in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. *Journal of School Psychology*, 57, 53–72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2016.04.003>
- Cameron, L., Rutland, A., Brown, R., & Douch, R. (2006). Changing children's intergroup attitudes towards refugees: Testing different models of extended contact. *Child Development*, 77(5), 1208–1219. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2006.00929.x>
- Connor, W. (2015). Ethnonationalism. In *The Wiley Blackwell encyclopedia of race, ethnicity, and nationalism*. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118663202.wberen301>
- Čorkalo Biruski, D., & Ajduković, D. (2007). Separate schools – A divided community: The role of the school in post-war social reconstruction. *Review of Psychology*, 14(2), 93–108.
- Croucher, S. M., & Kramer, E. (2016). Cultural fusion theory: An alternative to acculturation. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 10, 97–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17513057.2016.1229498>
- Damjanovski, I. (2022). *Analysis of public opinion on North Macedonia's accession to the European Union (2014–2021)*. Skopje: Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis”. Retrieved from [https://idsos.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/A5\\_Analysis-of-public-opinion-on-North-Macedonias-accession-to-the-European-Union-2014-2021ENG-1-1.pdf](https://idsos.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/A5_Analysis-of-public-opinion-on-North-Macedonias-accession-to-the-European-Union-2014-2021ENG-1-1.pdf)
- Dautel, J. B., Maloku, E., Misoska, A. T., & Taylor, L. K. (2020). Children's ethno-national flag categories in three divided societies. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 20(5), 373–402. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568537312340090>
- Davies, K., Tropp, L. R., Aron, A., Pettigrew, T. F., & Wright, S. C. (2011). Cross-group friendships and intergroup attitudes: A meta-analytic review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15(4), 332–351. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868311411103>
- Dovidio, J. F., Gaertner, S. L., Pearson, A. R., & Riek, B. M. (2005). Social identities and social context: Social attitudes and personal well-being. In S. R. Thye & E. J. Lawler (Eds.), *Social identification in groups (advances in group processes)* (Vol. 22, pp. 231–260). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0882-6145\(05\)22009-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0882-6145(05)22009-X)
- European Commission. (n.d.). *Potential candidates*. European Commission. Retrieved from [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/glossary/potential-candidates\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/glossary/potential-candidates_en)
- European Council. (n.d.). *North Macedonia*. European Council, Council of the European Union. Retrieved from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/enlargement/republic-north-macedonia/>
- European Union. (2022). *EU accession process: Step by step*. European Commission. Retrieved from [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/eu\\_accession\\_process\\_clusters%20%28oct%202022%29.pdf](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/eu_accession_process_clusters%20%28oct%202022%29.pdf)
- Field, A., Miles, J., & Field, Z. (2012). *Discovering statistics using R*. London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Anastasio, P. A., Bachman, B. A., & Rust, M. C. (1993). The common Ingroup identity model: Recategorization and the reduction of intergroup bias. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 4(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779343000004>
- Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Guerra, R., Rebelo, M., Monteiro, M. B., Riek, B. M., & Houlette, M. A. (2008). The common ingroup identity model: Applications to children and adults. In S. R. Levy & M. Killen (Eds.), *Intergroup attitudes and relations in childhood through adulthood* (pp. 204–219). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Healy, M., & Richardson, M. (2017). Images and identity: Children constructing a sense of belonging to Europe. *European Educational Research Journal*, 16(4), 440–454. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116674015>
- Huynh, Q. L., Nguyen, A. M. D., & Benet-Martínez, V. (2011). Bicultural identity integration. In *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 827–842). New York, NY: Springer.



- Jovanovski, B. (2011, 25 November). *Eurosepticism rises in North Macedonia amid EU membership delays*. Euronews. Retrieved from <https://www.euronews.com/2021/11/25/eurosepticism-rises-in-north-macedonia-amid-eu-membership-delays>
- Jugert, P., Noack, P., & Rutland, A. (2011). Friendship preferences among German and Turkish preadolescents. *Child Development*, 82(3), 812–829. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01528.x>
- Killen, M., Crystal, D., & Ruck, M. (2007). The social developmental benefits of intergroup contact for children and adolescents. In E. Frankenberg & G. Orfield (Eds.), *Lessons in integration: Realizing the promise of diversity in American schools* (pp. 57–73). Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press.
- Lam, V. L., & Katona, Z. (2018). National and supranational identities and ingroup-outgroup attitudes of Hungarian adolescents. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 15(1), 115–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2017.1333421>
- Landberg, M., Eckstein, K., Mikolajczyk, C., Mejias, S., Macek, P., Motti-Stefanidi, F., ... Noack, P. (2018). Being both – A European and a national citizen? Comparing young people's identification with Europe and their home country across eight European countries. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 15(3), 270–283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2017.1391087>
- Lennon Malbasha, L., Dautel, J., & Taylor, L. K. (2022). Exploring children's knowledge of Irish and European symbols: A comparison of Irish-medium and English-medium primary school children. *Irish Educational Studies*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2022.2094445>
- Maloku, E. (2021). *From conflict to peacebuilding: A social identity perspective on intra and intergroup processes in post-independent Kosovo*. [Doctoral dissertation, Leiden University]. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3166014>
- Maloku, E., Derks, B., Van Laar, C., & Ellemers, N. (2016). Building national identity in newborn Kosovo: Challenges of integrating national identity with ethnic identity among Kosovar Albanians and Kosovar Serbs. In S. McKeown, R. Haji, & N. Ferguson (Eds.), *Understanding peace and conflict through social identity theory* (pp. 245–260). New York, NY: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29869-6\\_16](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29869-6_16)
- Moran, D., & Taylor, L. K. (2022). Outgroup prosocial behaviour among children and adolescents in conflict settings. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 44, 69–73. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2021.08.030>
- O'Driscoll, D., Taylor, L. K., & Dautel, J. B. (2018). Intergroup resource distribution among children living in segregated neighbourhoods amid protracted conflict. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 24(4), 464–474. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000348>
- Paolini, S., White, F. A., Tropp, L. R., Turner, R. N., Page-Gould, E., Barlow, F. K., & Gómez, Á. (2021). Intergroup contact research in the 21st century: Lessons learned and forward progress if we remain open. *Journal of Social Issues*, 77(1), 11–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12427>
- Pehar, L., Čorkalo Biruški, D., & Jelić, M. (2022). Longitudinal effects of direct and extended intergroup contact in multi-ethnic communities in Croatia. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 136843022211383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302221138340>
- Petreski, M., Petreski, B., Tomovska-Misoka, A., & Tumanoska, D. (2021, June). *The social and economic effects of COVID-19 on children in North Macedonia: An update*. UNICEF. Retrieved from <https://www.financethink.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/The-Social-and-Economic-Effects-of-COVID-19-on-Children-in-North-Macedonia-An-Update4.pdf>
- Petroska-Beska, V., & Najcevska, M. (2004). *Macedonia: Understanding history, preventing future conflict*. United States Institute of Peace. Retrieved from <https://www.usip.org/publications/2004/02/macedonia-understanding-history-preventing-future-conflict>
- Petroska-Beska, V., Najcevska, M., Kenig, N., Ballazhi, S., & Tomovska, A. (2009). *Multiculturalism and inter-ethnic relations in education*. UNICEF. Retrieved from [https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/1821/file/MK\\_MulticulturalismInEducation\\_EN.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/1821/file/MK_MulticulturalismInEducation_EN.pdf)
- Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49, 65–85. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12423>
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751–783. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751>
- Philippou, S. (2005). Constructing national and European identities: The case of Greek-Cypriot pupils. *Educational Studies*, 31(3), 293–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055690500236761>
- Reese, E., & Whitehouse, H. (2021). The development of identity fusion. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 16(6), 1398–1411. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691620968761>
- Reidy, C. M., Taylor, L. K., Merrilees, C. E., Ajdukovic, D., Čorkalo Biruški, D., & Cummings, E. M. (2015). The political socialisation of youth in a post-conflict community. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 45, 11–23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2014.12.005>
- Reimer, N. K., Hughes, J., Blaylock, D., Donnelly, C., Wölfer, R., & Hewstone, M. (2022). Shared education as a contact-based intervention to improve intergroup relations among adolescents in post-conflict Northern Ireland. *Developmental Psychology*, 58(1), 193–208. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001274>

- Rohdewald, S. (2018). Citizenship, ethnicity, history, nation, region, and the Prespa agreement of June 2018 between Macedonia and Greece. *Comparative Southeast European Studies*, 66(4), 577–593. <https://doi.org/10.1515/soeu-2018-0042>
- Schubert, T. W., & Otten, S. (2002). Overlap of self, ingroup and outgroup: Pictorial measures of self-categorisation. *Self and Identity*, 1(4), 353–376. <https://doi.org/10.1080/152988602760328012>
- Štambuk, M., Taylor, L. K., Löw, A., Biruški, D. C., Merrilees, C. E., Ajduković, D., & Cummings, E. M. (2020). Parental competitive victimhood and interethnic discrimination among their children: The mediating role of ethnic socialization and symbolic threat to the ingroup. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 59(1), 87–110. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12321>
- Stathi, S., & Vezzali, L. (2021). *Using intergroup contact to fight prejudice and negative attitudes: Psychological perspectives*. Routledge: European Monographs in Social Psychology.
- Swann, W. B., Jetten, J., Gómez, Á., Whitehouse, H., & Bastian, B. (2012). When group membership gets personal: A theory of identity fusion. *Psychological Review*, 119(3), 441–456. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028589>
- Tausch, N., Hewstone, M., Kenworthy, J., Cairns, E., & Christ, O. (2007). Cross-community contact, perceived status differences, and intergroup attitudes in Northern Ireland: The mediating roles of individual-level versus group-level threats and the moderating role of social identification. *Political Psychology*, 28(1), 53–68. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2007.00551.x>
- Taylor, L. K. (2020). The developmental peacebuilding model (DPM) of children's prosocial behaviours in settings of intergroup conflict. *Child Development Perspectives*, 14(3), 127–134. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12377>
- Taylor, L. K., Dautel, J., & Rylander, R. (2020). Symbols and labels: Children's awareness of social categories in a divided society. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(5), 1512–1526. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22344>
- Taylor, L. T., Corbett, B., Maloku, E., Tomašić Humer, J., Misoska, A., & Dautel, J. (2023). Strength of children's European identity: Findings from majority and minority groups in four conflict-affected sites. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 20, 776–796. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2023.2200930>
- Tomovska-Misoska, A., Taylor, L., Dautel, J., & Rylander, R. (2020). Children's understanding of ethnic group symbols: Piloting an instrument in the Republic of North Macedonia. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 26(1), 82–87. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000424>
- Tomovska-Misoska, A., Taylor, L., Dautel, J., & Rylander, R. (2019). Contact, conflict and interethnic attitudes among children in North Macedonia. *Primenjena Psihologija*, 12(4), 409–428. <https://doi.org/10.19090/pp.2019.4.409-428>
- Tropp, L. R., White, F., Rucinski, C. L., & Tredoux, C. (2022). Intergroup contact and prejudice reduction: Prospects and challenges in changing youth attitudes. *Review of General Psychology*, 26(3), 342–360. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10892680211046517>
- Turner, R. N., & Cameron, L. (2016). Confidence in contact: A new perspective on promoting cross-group friendship among children and adolescents. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 10(1), 212–246. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12023>
- Turner, R. N., Tam, T., Hewstone, M., Kenworthy, J., & Cairns, E. (2013). Contact between Catholic and Protestant schoolchildren in Northern Ireland. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 43, E216–E228. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12018>
- Ülger, Z., Dette-Hagenmeyer, D. E., Reichle, B., & Gaertner, S. L. (2018). Improving outgroup attitudes in schools: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of School Psychology*, 67, 88–103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2017.10.002>
- United Nations Children's Fund. (2020, November 06). *Schools should be the last to close and first to reopen*. UNICEF Kosovo Program. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/press-releases/schools-should-be-last-close-and-first-reopen>
- Wölfer, R., Christ, O., Schmid, K., Tausch, N., Buchallik, F. M., Vertovec, S., & Hewstone, M. (2019). Indirect contact predicts direct contact: Longitudinal evidence and the mediating role of intergroup anxiety. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 116, 277–295. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000146>

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

**How to cite this article:** Nic Craith, I., Corbett, B., Tomašić Humer, J., Tomovska Misoska, A., Maloku, E., Dautel, J. B., & Taylor, L. K. (2023). Supraordinate identity integration in childhood: Intergroup implications of ethno-national and supraordinate identification in three divided societies. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2754>