

## WP 8 – Identity Formation and Enlargement

### **Research Report**

### **Collective identity formation in accession states**

April 2008

# Table of contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
EU Enlargement: Dilemmas of identity <i>Zdzisław Mach</i> .....	2
Transforming European identity: The Central European syndrome <i>Grzegorz Pożarlik</i> .....	5
Research summary - first year: Identity Formation and Enlargement <i>Magdalena Góra, Maria Heller, Meltem Müftüler-Bac, Jacek Nowak</i> .....	9
<b>Part One</b>	
<b>Key Issues of Collective Identity Construction with regard to EU Enlargement</b>	<b>14</b>
Problems of identity and citizenship: Hungary <i>Maria Heller and Agnes Rényi</i> .....	15
The European Union's Enlargement: Does Culture and Identity Play a Role? <i>Meltem Müftüler Baç and Evrim Taşkın</i> .....	25
<b>Part Two</b>	
<b>Enlargement and Identity Changes .....</b>	<b>43</b>
National Identity in Quantitative Empirical Surveys <i>Petra Rakusanova</i> .....	44
Polish public opinion regarding the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe <i>Olga Brzezińska</i> .....	51
Turkey in Cosmopolis: Turkish Elite Perceptions of a European Project <i>Nora Fisher</i> .....	57
Migration, European Union and civil society: Research conclusions <i>Dariusz Niedźwiedzki</i> .....	67
Ukrainian minority in Poland: New social reality <i>Jacek Nowak</i> .....	73
The changing importance of identification of German minority in Poland in the context of European integration <i>Marcin Galent</i> .....	78
Women who define their identity through political struggle for gender equality <i>Paweł Kubicki</i> .....	89
<b>Part Three</b>	
<b>Introducing Innovative Empirical Methodology in the Identity Analysis .....</b>	<b>94</b>
Identity in focus – and the case of ascribing schizophrenia to Europe and Hungary <i>Péter Bodor</i> .....	95
Rep-test as part of focus research: Overcoming the deficit of understanding in qualitative research on European identity <i>Jacek H. Kołodziej</i> .....	110

# **Introduction**

# EU Enlargement Dilemmas of identity

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Before 1989 the European Communities constructed their collective identity largely in relation to the eastern part of Europe, on the other side of the Iron Curtain. The Berlin Wall was a powerful boundary which separated two sides of Europe, but which also gave meaning to the process of western European integration. It was relatively easy to think of the principles upon which Western Europe was to be founded: free market, democracy, human rights, freedom and prosperity, in opposition to eastern dictatorship, centralisation, poverty, and oppression. The boundaries of Europe were well-defined, as were the values which governed the Western European way of life. The East was far away, largely unknown, alien and distrusted; it practically did not exist in the mind of an average European, except as a very vague concept of a grey, cold and generally unpleasant zone in the East.

The revolution of 1989, the unification of Germany and subsequent process of gradual accession of former Soviet satellite, communist countries to European, western structures, in spite of being generally very positive in most respects, also ruined the former, clear and easily understandable meaning of the world. Nothing was simple any more. Former distant neighbours from the East became "us", at least nominally and institutionally. The question of borders of Europe and limits of EU enlargement became an important issue and problem to solve. The EU decided to undergo deep reforms of its institutions, as it became clear that the organisation could no longer function in its present form, if a dozen of new members were to join. The prospect of enlargement caused much anxiety both in the West and in the East of Europe. For citizens of the EU 15, the accession of new members brought a risk of losing job security and possible decrease of the level of income. But perhaps equally important was uncertainty as to the social and cultural consequences of the enlargement. Would Europe still be the same after the new members join? Are Eastern Europeans prepared to be EU citizens? Or perhaps the cultural gap between old and new members will cause problems? Will European institutions be able to function as before?

There was also much anxiety in the East, though of somewhat different kind. Will we be able to cope with the challenge of accession? Will we be able to compete with Western Europeans, whose competence is perhaps much greater than ours? Or perhaps we, the Easterners, will lose in confrontation with the reality of integrated Europe. Apart from obvious hesitations and fears caused by unequal economic relation between East and West, and the problem of economic security which seemed to be in danger, the main issue was "mental security", the perception of the world as meaningful, understood and familiar. On both sides of the former Iron Curtain this mental security is in danger. People in the west feel that Europe is changing, that new, less known and culturally different people joined the Union, that they bring not only sometimes unfair competition in the labour market, but also different mentality, traditions, beliefs and prejudices. People in the East are afraid of opening up to the West, exposing themselves to new ideas, new ways of life, and new requirements of competences which they may lack. The EU, to which they now belong, is governed by principles, values and norms which they often do not understand. The reaction of both sides of the former East-West boundary is a tendency to hide behind the secure boundary of the new and familiar. This is why many Western Europeans chose to say no to the proposed European Constitution, preferring to remain within the familiar boundaries of the nation state, where they at least now know what to expect, even if they are not always completely happy. They opposed against giving

more power to the European institutions, in fear that things may slip out of control, perhaps in the direction of even further enlargement. One may doubt if European citizens are at present ready for any new enlargement, before their world re-integrates and their mental security is restored. In the East, citizens also reacted to the trauma of transformation and European accession by hiding behind the familiar boundary of tradition. Alternatively, they chose to support politicians who promised strong leadership, and clear guidance, preferably along traditional, well known and well understood, secure lines.

The questions which the European Communities always tried to answer now sound particularly strong: who is a European? Where are the borders of Europe and of the EU? How far the process of EU enlargement can go, without losing the common European identity? Does Europe have a common identity in the first place?

Identity is a very popular concept in social sciences. It is also very often discussed in Europe today, where it usually refers to collective identifications, a feeling and expression of belonging to a common culture, way of life, a common symbolic system, a common cultural heritage. Identity is always constructed in relation to others, to partners, with whom we are in dialogue, negotiating our mutual images and meaning of whom we are and what it means to be "us" and "them". In the present European context, the former, pre-1989 "significant other" – Eastern Europe, disappeared, and so did the clear meaning of who is European and where the boundaries are. At the same time, the discussion continues as to the nature of collective identity in Europe. In general, there are two main approaches to collective identity. One sees it as a kind of cultural "essence", an intrinsic characteristic of a group, based on its origin, common core culture, and historical heritage. Such a model of identity, often referred to as "ethnic", tends to be exclusive, creating boundaries separating "us" from "them", and demanding that those who wish to join "our" community will convert to "our" culture, through assimilation. Those who are not "like us" do not belong to our society. The other, alternative concept of collective identity, often referred to as civic or political, allows for more pluralism in the matters of culture, and more diversity. To belong to "our" community, people must be willing to contribute and to negotiate, but they may remain different. Such a model of identity seems to be more appropriate for the construction of integrated Europe. However, in the debate about the future European identity, one often finds "ethnic" approach, when for example the religious identity of Europe is discussed in connection with future membership of Turkey.

It seems to be useful to conceptualise identity not as "being", but as "becoming", as a process of construction, as activity in the direction of building a collective image in a dialogue and negotiation with others. Identity seen from this perspective is a dynamic process of construction, something one does, rather than what one has. In this way identity is seen in a context of interactions with others, as a process of mutual identification and construction of images through a complex symbolic process. Seen as such, identity may often appear to be inconsistent, fragmentary, and contextual. Especially in the contemporary European society, suspended between modernity and post-modernity, one should expect plurality and diversification of frames of reference in which identity is constructed. Traditional frames of reference, such as national, regional, religious, coexist with new ones, while individuals and groups move more and more freely in the European public space, negotiating their identity in relation to different partners. The prospect of constructing a future common European identity has to take into account the process of fragmentation, diversification and negotiability of various different identities within the changing boundaries of Europe. It seems to be possible to think of European identity more as a process of construction than as something which has already been constructed, which exists and is ready for Europeans to take.

Enlargement of the EU made this process of construction and negotiation of multiple identities even more complicated. We are still learning the lesson of the big enlargement

of 2004, and it seems that the EU and its citizens are not yet ready for the new big opening, before the issue of collective identity has been properly discussed and negotiated. There are questions of common European values, of mutual trust and distrust, of the meaning of European citizenship, overcoming ignorance and stereotypes of each other, the conditions of participation in the common social and cultural space. The failure of the proposed Constitution Treaty, and the current attempt to have the Reform Treaty accepted should be seen in this light, together with the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

New, eastern members of the EU must learn the meaning of what is European, which does not mean that this learning process has to take a form of unilateral instruction from the West. It will rather be again a process of negotiation of new meanings and interpretations of European values, common goals, prejudices and anxieties, hopes and expectations. For the Eastern Europeans this process is part of the larger process of transformation which started in 1989, and which is still far from complete. Becoming European and earning the meaning of European citizenship constitute an essential aspect of this transformation. New European citizens often suffer from the lack of civic competence and of trust, but many of them are also very active in the process of creating new, better life for themselves and their children. This is happening in the new, European frame of reference. But this does not mean that the process of construction a new meaning of the social world and new life in the broader, European framework, is immediately and consistently expressed and communicated symbolically. It seems that there is a gap, a discrepancy between what people do and what they say and even how they think about their activities. More and more people from eastern member states become active in the European framework. They migrate in search for work and opportunity, they travel and trade, and they learn languages and establish professional and private relations with other Europeans. Networks of contacts are becoming more and more elaborate, and they constitute the new social and economic reality of Europe. Through these activities the new identity of Europeans is being constructed at the grass root level. Soon it will be inconceivable that one could go back to the old, narrow framework of a nation state. But at the same time people still think in old, traditional categories, as far as their identity is concerned. They still describe themselves in terms of national and regional frames of reference. There is a lack of new language, of new categories available to average citizens of new EU member states with which they could express their new, transnational identity. The old categories dominate in the public discourse, in the media and in the church. They have the symbolic power with which they impose traditional categories on citizens, who often lack a platform of debate in which new language and new thinking could be developed.

The case studies which our team carried out in the first year of the project reveal this discrepancy between the symbolic discourse and the involvement in various individual and collective projects on the European level. The public discourse is dominated by the national rhetoric. Europe is described either as the common cultural heritage to which all Europeans belong, and which excludes others, or as a diversity of nation states, internally integrated and possessing well established identity. The future of Europe is seen either as a federation (to be rejected by true "national" patriots) or as a "Europe of sovereign nation states". There is little room in this discourse for anything like a new type of transnational identity developed by citizens through their involvement and participation in various projects on the European level, across traditional boundaries. This new transnational identity can be understood only if seen as a dynamic process, diversified, often fragmentary and inconsistent, but on the whole developing in the direction of Europe of citizens, and out of the tradition of seeing collective identities in Europe in "ethnic" categories. Further research which is being planned for the next 3-4 years will hopefully allow us to trace this process developing further and to verify this hypothesis.

# Transforming European identity

## The Central European syndrome

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The functionalist discourse of European integration, which dominated both theory and practice of post-1945 integration process in Western Europe was based upon the assumption that constitutionalisation of supranational legal and political architecture would inevitably lead to crystallisation of genuine European social identity. The relative success of economic integration and slow but firm constitutionalisation of European legal order based on the evolution of *acquis communautaire* seemed to confirm efficiency of the functionalist approach. What was relatively a linear process in the post-1945 Western Europe, however, has not been the case when European integration faced the challenge of Eastern enlargement in the post-Cold War international environment.

With the downfall of the Berlin Wall new line of division emerged in Europe: *tribalism vs. supranationalism*. Ethnic nationalism in post-communist Europe became a driving force for collective identity construction in most of the East-Central European countries which aspired to the EU membership. At the same time, the Western Europe was forging a common destiny in Maastricht with much growing confidence in *an ever closer Union among the peoples of Europe*. The EU enlargement of 2004 magnified the clash of these two distinct modes of social identity construction, which defused between and across East-West cleavage. The ultimate failure of a Constitution for Europe ratification process could be also an evidence for predominantly conflictual nature of emerging European collective identity. It seems that an enlarging Europe has entered presently a period of an ongoing negotiation of social identity between European civilisational identity and cross-cutting myriad of national, regional and local identities. As seen from the perspective of new and prospective EU countries, a consolidation of genuine European identity is largely depending on complementarity of two interrelated processes: a social integration within the East-Central European societies based on the ideals of democratic rule of law, civil society and respect of human rights and the East-West integration based on common understanding of European civilisational identity.

Analysing the European identity in the context of the EU Eastern enlargement should not exclusively be framed as an obvious feature of the ongoing process of reform of the institutional setting of the EU. It seems much convincing to argue that the European identity is constructed in multidimensional interactions between national identities, European cultural identities and identifications with the EU integration project (Spohn 2003). The reason for that is that we can hardly speak about an all-European integrative identity manifested by all segments of the societies of the new EU member states. In order to be able to understand this multidimensional interactions between different forms of collective identification in the context of the EU Eastern enlargement, it seems essential to investigate – among others – attitudes towards democracy displayed by various segments of the Central-Eastern European societies.

As Jacques Rupnik recently observed (2007): “the bad news is that several CEE countries in which democracy is allegedly consolidated have recently displayed signs of backsliding (even if these are not captured in their still very good Freedom House ratings). [...] the real question is not „Is democracy facing an imminent threat?” Instead, we should ask „What kinds of democracies are emerging after the transitions in East-Central Europe, and what are their vulnerabilities?” and „What is the significance of their troubles from a Europe-wide perspective?”

The significance of democracy fatigue in the Eastern-Central European countries for the European collective identity discourse is that it reduces the debate over reconstitutionalisation of democracy in Europe to virtually a single model of the nation-state as the only "natural" container of democracy. As a consequence, the EU is seen from the East-Central perspective as a common market primarily. Thus, it should not claim any distinct role on the international arena. This democratic fatigue in Eastern-Central Europe reveals also a quite dangerous tendency to bypass democratic standards. The findings of the public opinion polls conducted subsequently by Eurobarometer and CBOS in Poland in 2005 and 2006 are especially alarming in this respect. In 2005 CBOS survey about 50% of all polled admitted that "in some cases a non-democratic regime may be preferable to a democratic one". In 2006 CBOS survey about 75% of Poles expressed the view that "democracy is too indecisive or incapable of maintaining law and order". These findings confirm also a lack of trust to public sphere displayed by large proportions of Polish society.

Trust in public sphere is one of the main factors, which determines functioning of a particular type of social ties within civil society, which turn, has a profound impact on the process of constructing collective identities within different segments of the society. The map of social trust that emerges out of the analysis of surveys conducted in Central European countries which joined the EU displays certain asymmetry in the level of social trust between the private and the public sphere. An overwhelming majority of Poles, Czechs and Hungarians – although to a different degree – trust their relatives and friends more than the public institutions such as parliament, government and political parties. Poland represents a particularly sharp case for the asymmetry in the map of social trust and distrust. Charity institutions and the Roman Catholic Church are trusted by 80% of the population (CBOS 02/2006). Other most trusted institutions are: the army (76%) and the Ombudsman (69%). In this context it is worth emphasising that international institutions such the EU also enjoy a relatively high level of public trust (62%). Distrust dominates in relation to crucial democratic institutions such as parliament (67%) and political parties (72%).

The accession of Poland and other Central European countries to the EU had a rather positive impact with regard to the level of trust to public institutions. However, in spite of an improvement in the level of social trust in the public institutions both of national and international character, the level of distrust to strangers in daily situations remains high (43% rather distrust, 30 % definitely distrust). This may be an indication of predominance of an ethnos over demos type of social ties, which determinates a dynamics and forms of collective identity construction.

The conflictual nature of collective identity construction processes present in the new member states of the EU found its manifestation in dichotomous character of public discourse in these countries over the meaning of EU membership as well as finalite politique of the EU. Since 1989 membership in the EU has been a strategic objective of the most of post-communist countries. As confirmed in the Statement on Opening of Poland's Membership Negotiations with the European Union: "Membership in the European Union will enhance the consolidation of reforms implemented since 1989. The perspective of close integration into the Union will accelerate the completion of transformation and it will allow Poland to enter the 21st century as modern country, capable of competing on world markets. Membership of the Union will enable Poland to take her share of responsibility for shaping European and World politics in a more efficient way than until now. As a consequence Poland will be more effectively able to promote stability in the region and principles of good neighbourly relations and co-operation in Europe and world-wide [...] Poland's sovereign decision on its participation in the process of European integration is intended to finally end the division of the continent, imposed against the will of the nations affected, and gives Poland the chance to make up at least partially for the losses suffered as a consequence of Yalta [...]"



European integration has been always beneficial to all parties involved. We believe that the same apply to us”.<sup>1</sup>

The two factors, namely the lack of a clear-cut vision of the ultimate aims of integration and an underestimation of the need for the adoption of *acquis communautaire* produced an *in abstracto* integration syndrome. It needs to be emphasised that the essence of this syndrome was a vague acceptance (and a little knowledge) of principles and consequences of European integration displayed by both political elite and public. It should be also noted that a pace of adaptive process of integration with the EU was closely connected with a progress of systemic transformation. The analysis of the social perception of benefits stemming from the progress of market reforms and democratisation shows that there were a limited number of those who admitted to take advantage of these developments. Similarly, there was a restraint part within the East-Central European societies, which acknowledges making profit of integration with the EU.

A relative deprivation felt by the overwhelming part of the East-Central European societies was a result of marginalisation caused by the dynamics of systemic transformation. This, in turn, triggered massive frustration and disappointment. The simultaneity of the processes of systemic transformation and the European integration implicated a reaction of “scapegoat-search”. A scapegoat here was the EU building its economic prosperity at the expense of the national economies of the Central European countries as a whole as well as at the expense of farmers and the people of labour in particular.

Political parties played a decisive role in public discourse over the meaning of the EU membership. In the strive to attract electorates they adopted a certain attitude towards EU upon a criterion of group interest. The impact of the calculation of anticipated profits and losses upon party’s stand towards European integration was so significant that it determined a certain vision of country’s European policy. The panorama of partisan discourse in the East-Central European countries revealed predominance of two “ideal models” of European integration: Europe as an opportunity vs. Europe as threat.

Amongst the arguments elevated by parties representing the pro-European attitude one can point at the argumentation according to which consolidation of market reforms, strengthening of civil society and a prompt accession into the EU were perceived as interwoven processes. The critics of pro-integrational policy pointed out, on the other hand, that the EU membership would have meant exploitation and marginalisation as a result of peripheral geo-economic location of post-communist countries, Poland in particular.

Most extreme anti-European parties identified the EU with a hegemonic superpower trying to impose its rule upon the newly independent Central European countries. Accession to the EU would signify a loss of political and economic independence and deadly threat to a national identity.

The *in abstracto* social acceptance of integration with the EU has been a constant feature of European discourse East-Central Europe. Reaching a full and lasting social consensus with regard to the present and the future of the EU seems a lofty expectation without a common axiological platform in public debate, which was confirmed by a weakness of the ratification debate over a Constitution for Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> Wystąpienie na otwarcie negocjacji Polski o członkostwo w Unii Europejskiej, tekst zaaprobowany przez Radę Ministrów 24 marca 1998 r. i ogłoszony przez premiera Jerzego Buzka 31 marca 1998 r. w Brukseli [Statement on Opening of Poland’s Negotiations on Membership of the European Union, a document approved by the Polish Council of Ministers and presented by Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek in Brussels on 31 March 1998] in *Yearbook of Polish European Studies*, vol. 2/1998, p.296

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# Research summary – first year

## Identity Formation and Enlargement

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The first phase of the research conducted by Work Package 8 “Identity Formation and Enlargement” encompassed creation of research teams, establishment of cooperation channels for researchers from various countries and the first round of field research carried out in three academic centres: Eötvös Loránd University Budapest, Hungary (ELTE), Jagiellonian University Kraków, Poland (JUK) and Sabanci University Istanbul, Turkey (SABU). The other partners: Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASCR), ARENA, University of Oslo and Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) delivered extensive expertise in theoretical discussion about the identity research.

The main task was analysis of formation of collective identities with regard to past, present and future enlargement processes. The aim was to assay European integration with regard to two interconnected processes: political representation (parliaments, civil society) and symbolic representation (construction of collective identity). Problems appertaining to identity are crucial in the development of Europe as a common polity and an integrated community. Problems of identity are closely related to how citizens see and define the relevant frames of activity and decision-making concerning their own life, and identities contribute to construct the relevant levels of participation of citizens and groups of citizens, e.g. civil society. In order to feel concerned and responsible, people need to have some kind of notion of their belonging and membership. The main hypotheses deal with Central and Eastern Europe’s special situation with respect to European development throughout history, belated development of the countries in the region and subsequent “catching-up” complex, long historical periods of defeat, particular geopolitical situation including problems of centre and periphery, cultural borderlines and divisions, the Balkan syndrome and the heritage of former communist systems. The complexity of identities and the way people deal with them in various public and private situations can be traced back to “distorted” national identities, which have been researched by historians, and also to strongly engraved public/private differentiation in behaviour, discourse and memories, which has also been described in various former research.

An important question the researchers addressed was how to implement the theoretical framework of the RECON consortium into the field research reality. Three RECON models for reconstituting democracy in Europe include distinct definitions of collective identity and belonging, the first being the EU as an association of ‘patriotic’ nation states; the second providing for possibility of the emergence and consolidation of EU patriotism to replace national identities and finally, the third one, which sees the EU as a post-national union with a cosmopolitan imprint in which different local, regional, national and post-national belongings are reconciled.

### Description of field research activities

Field research constitutes the most important element of research within the WP8 and was conducted mainly in three academic centres: Eötvös Loránd University Budapest, Hungary (ELTE), Jagiellonian University Kraków, Poland and Sabanci University Istanbul, Turkey. Those three academic centres have long and distinguished tradition of research on identity. The broad scope of research planned in the RECON project posed a

considerable challenge to researchers who managed to respond to it successfully. The final stage of this phase of research was the meeting of the researchers at the workshop in Kraków in October 2007. The main aim of this gathering was to discuss preliminary research findings. Selected papers discussing the results constitute the second part of this report.

*Eötvös Lóránd University Budapest, Hungary (ELTE)*

During the first period of the RECON project, the following research activities have been undertaken by the ELTE team:

1. Preliminary studies on concepts of European and Hungarian national identity, national rituals. The team has circulated former research results, reports and other publications for elaborating a sound basis for the RECON collaboration.

Three preliminary studies on identity questions have been compiled. One analyses the identity as a complex phenomenon challenging existing definitions and approaches. This study, based on former research done by the team, tackles the problem of how to investigate European identity in the contemporary European context and emphasises the importance of identities in the Central and Eastern European context (Mária Heller, Ágnes Rényi). The second one examines the national identity studies carried out in Hungary since the 1980s providing a critical overview of the approaches dealing with questions of national identity, nationalism and nationhood in Hungary (Borbála Kriza). The third study examines the national rituals related to Hungarian national symbols including the Holy Crown (Anna Wessely). The outputs of the two first studies were presented by Maria Heller and Borbála Kriza at the Krakow workshop in October 2007.

1. First phase of empirical studies on European identity encompassed cooperation with the Polish team in elaborating comparative research methods.

Four focus group analyses were conducted in October by the members of the ELTE team. (P. Bodor, B. Kriza, N. Schleicher). The groups arranged according to educational levels and experience of having lived abroad. The preliminary results of the focus group analysis were presented by Péter Bodor at the Krakow workshop of October 2007.

2. Narrative interviews

During the focus group research, certain individuals were selected to participate in narrative interviews on the basis of their particular experiences abroad or their opinions expressed during the focus group discussions. That started the process of preparation for narrative interviews and initiated the elaboration of methodology.

The aim of narrative interviews is to shed light on processes of identity formation and strategies on multiple identities in a changing context. It is interesting to note that Hungarian citizens often show great differences of opinions, dispositions and attitudes about their national identity and feelings about their group belonging. Narrative interviews will help understand these mechanisms.

*Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland (JUK)*

During the first period of the RECON project the following research activities have been undertaken by the JUK team:

1. Preliminary studies on the distribution of regional, national and European identity in Poland and on the understanding democracy in new Europe.

This research focused on opinion-polls analysis. The main task was to visualize the distribution of particular identifications such as ethnic, sectoral, regional, national, transnational or European in the Polish society and subsequently compare it with similar research conducted in Hungary and Turkey. Two areas attracted special attention of researchers: the phenomenon of trust in democratic

institutions in the Polish society as well as opinions and attitudes towards the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe. The preliminary results of this study were presented at the Krakow workshop in October 2007 by Olga Brzezińska, Magdalena Góra and Grzegorz Pożarlik.

2. Empirical study on European identity in three different groups in Polish society.

This part of the research was concentrated on the quantitative analysis of collective identity formation in Poland. Four research teams were set up to conduct research on following topics/social groups: ethnic language minorities with a strong regional identity (German and Ukrainian minorities in Poland), migrant workers and women who define identity through political struggle for gender equality and/or difference. The fourth group provided other teams with support by media analysis (Media representations: democratization, Europeanization, civil society and identity).

- Ethnic language minorities with a strong regional identity: The case of the German and Ukrainian minorities in Poland.

The research encompassed ethnic and language minority groups. One of the selected groups is the German minority in Poland, which is of crucial importance from the perspective of the process of European integration, which results from the role Germany plays in Europe. Moreover, its existence in Poland testifies to the changes connected with systemic transformation (from non-existence to parliamentary democracy). The second group is Ukrainian minority. The research sought to encompass: social leaders (self-government, teachers, priests) as well as German/Ukrainian minority activists in Poland (with respect to internal divisions); adults with German/Ukrainian self identification; teenagers with German/Ukrainian self identification; neighbours with Polish self identification. The main tasks were to reconstruct the rules governing the formation of contemporary German and Ukrainian identity in Poland; present dominant relations between Poland and Germany as well as Poland and Ukraine in Polish society; present the relations between the German minority and Germany as well as between Ukrainian minority and Ukraine; and finally, to place these relations in a wider European context with respect to the role of the EU and its institutions.

- Returned migrants: Collective identity transformation in the processes of Europeanisation and civil society formation.

The research encompassed returned migrants alongside with pendulum migrants, but as a deliberative aspect of civil society formation was of a particular interest, comprehensive research required examination of two groups which are interactively crucial to them: a receiving group and a group of origin. Moreover, the reconstruction of migrants' identity in the processes of European integration and systemic change in Poland was also interesting for researchers. The research question was to what extent pendulum migration is an element of Europeanization, that is, how construction/reconstruction of migrants' social identity proceeds in various interactive contexts triggered off by migration.

Research activities were devoted to the reconstruction of principles underpinning the creation of returned migrants' identity; presentation of dominant relations between migrants and receiving society; presentation of relations between migrants and their group of origin; placing these relations in a wider context of European integration process.

- Research on women who define identity through their political struggle for gender equality and/or difference

The research team introduced three variables to define the group of women who define identity through their political struggle for gender equality and/or difference: women who are able to distinguish and define category 'we' against

other social groups (imagined community); women who negotiate their identity in gender categories – they enter into a dialogue with their social surrounding; women whose build-up aspirations face structural and cultural barriers in local communities. The research was conducted in a comparative mode within two local communities in Małopolska region (Gdów and Dobczyce). It allowed researchers to work on the hypothesis that strong influence of urban lifestyle, on an everyday basis, will affect the dynamics of women's identity and will allow for the redefinition of traditional, patriarchal cultural patterns.

- Research on media representations: democratization, Europeanization, civil society and identity.

The media research was meant to supplement the anthropological field studies on ethnic/language minorities, returned migrants and women organizations and groups. The media research provided the possibility to discern and reconstruct an additional, symbolic dimension of identity represented in the texts.

#### *Sabancı University, Istanbul, Turkey (SABU)*

During the first 12 months of the RECON project, the Turkish team focused on the following research activities: the collective identity formation in Turkey and the role of culture and identity in the EU's enlargement process.

The SABU research focuses on the Turkish elite perceptions of the European project and how that translates into the collective identity formation in Turkey. Within this research 16 face-to-face interviews with leading Turkish academics, public intellectuals, and politicians were conducted. These interviews facilitated analysis of the Turkish collective identity formation and the Turkish elite's absorption of European norms and values. The initial findings of that aspect of research were presented in Krakow in October 2007 by research team participant Nora Elizabeth Fisher.

In the second stage of the research, interview questions for the interviews to be conducted with the policy makers and the business elite in Turkey were prepared and the first set of interviews began in August 2007. As of November 2007, 6 in-depth face-to-face interviews have been completed.

The third element of SABU research – analysis of the European politicians and leaders' views, perceptions and speeches in Turkey – begun in March 2007 and is currently underway. The initial findings are summarized in the article "Does Culture and identity play a role? The Turkish accession to the EU" by Evrim Taskin and Meltem Müftüler Baç, which was also presented in Krakow in October 2007. This paper was approved for publication in *The Ankara Review of European Studies*, and scheduled for the summer 2007 issue of the journal which is published by the Centre for European Studies of the Ankara University in Turkey.

#### *Common Innovative Methodology*

One of the main tasks was to introduce common, innovative methodology into empirical research within the frameworks of the RECON project. The emphasis was on the focus-group analysis in the conducted field research. The sociological and anthropological research experience suggests that the most effective method in research on identity is qualitative research with the special emphasis on individual in-depth interviews. Apart from employment of traditional methods, research teams decided to broaden the repertoire of research techniques and to make use of focus group interviews. It is by no means a new method in social sciences, none the less; it has rarely been used for the research on social identity.

The most common method of obtaining information about behaviour, attitudes, emotions and other characteristics of people is to ask them. However, it is not always possible or

desirable to use direct questioning to obtain information. People may be either unwilling or unable to give answers to questions: they might consider it an invasion of privacy, which may adversely affect their self protection or prestige. Moreover, such inquiry might be embarrassing, as it could concern motivations they do not fully understand or cannot verbalize.

At the beginning of the research within Work Package “Identity Formation and Enlargement” it was expected that introducing the focus groups analysis into research on changing identities on different levels may result in obtaining interesting insights and conclusions. First of all, research on identity, and especially research on the identity of ethnic minorities, is complicated and difficult. The complications stem from the extreme sensitivity of issues which are brought up. The focus group interviews technique is conducive to open discussion on identity related topics. It gives participants more comfortable environment for sharing opinions on controversial or sensitive issues. Secondly, the technique was modified in order to increase its value, namely a special *affinity group* was organised for the participants who know each other. It provided freer and more relaxed atmosphere to foster discussion and encouraged generating new ideas. Thirdly, given that identity-related topics are especially complex and multi-faceted, the most important element was to decide which aspects should take priority in our research. The focus groups research aimed at grasping identity perceived as process: the main emphasis was on practice: how interviewees execute their local, ethnic or civic identities. It produced interesting results which we will be draw on in the next phases of research. As far as further development of the method is concerned, we are planning to organise panel focus-groups with pendulum workers and students participating in the Erasmus Programmes, before their departure from the country of origin and after gaining experience in the host country. The main task will be to prepare and test innovative scenarios for the focus-group research which may be useful to seize the impact of direct experience of living abroad on an explicit level of declarations and implicit dimension of functioning and proceeding both in the context of Europeanisation and democratization. Finally, qualitative methods are of exploratory character and their main purpose is to answer questions why something is happening. The focus-group analysis has provided us with a lot of new material for further examination, which might be explored through individual interviews. The focus-group technique triggers off synergy mechanism based on the intensification of actions and mutual stimulation of interviewees, i.e. participants themselves create new dimensions of discussion.

We have gathered considerable amount of interesting material so far. Some of the well-known advantages of using described method were confirmed. Preliminary findings are presented in the second part of this report. Further work will include preparation of research standards for the application of focus group interviews in research on identity. Examination and discussion on precise scenarios which seem to be more adequate for the analysis of identity transformations will be continued.

## **Part One**

### **Key Issues of Collective Identity Construction with regard to EU Enlargement**



# Problems of identity and citizenship Hungary

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The integration process of the European Union stirs up various problems of unity and solidarity, sovereignty and representation on different levels. The fact that the nation-states forming the Union are on different levels of development, creates tensions and challenges. In order to pursue the integration process, solutions should be elaborated not only to tackle problems of economic, political and social order but also concerning the community itself, its functioning, and the self-definitions that prevail in it. These problems are closely related to the public sphere and peoples' notions of belonging to this community. Research on identities, public debates and the formation of the civil society (on local, national and European level) has been undertaken in the Recon project because these domains constitute the cognitive and emotional basis of European citizens in their notions of belonging and participating in EU affairs.

The question whether identities play a role in the construction of the European Union has often been debated by political actors as well as social scientists. In our view, identities, the public sphere and the future of a united Europe are closely related. If identities enhance feelings of belonging and concern in the affairs of the embedding group, they affect participation, responsibility, opinion and reinforce activity in the common causes and matters. Active participation in public life and in the public sphere involves the individuals' concern and participation in debates about topics that concern the community and the individual in it. Lack of concern is a symptom of lack or weakness of identification with the embedding group: it is a sign of disinterest, of feeling of "alienness". It can be argued that the appearance of strong European identities throughout the Union would result in strong and active implication in a European public sphere. The European citizens' feeling of belonging would strengthen concern and participation in EU affairs.

In this article, after having considered the relationship between identities and discourses we are going to touch upon the problem of identities and especially Central and Eastern European identities the formation of which is closely linked to problems of development of the countries of the region. Research on Hungarian public debates will be referred to as a special case highlighting actual problems of integration.

## **Identities and discourses**

In order to assess the state of identity formation in Hungary at a period when the country has become a member of the European Union, we have conducted several researches that try to explore public debates on identities in Hungary (e.g. Kovács – Wodak 2003). The hypotheses underlying these researches constitute a complex set:

In all societies, individuals simultaneously and subsequently, participate in different formal and informal groups. Identities are in strong relationship with membership and participation in various groups and institutions. The very membership in them, through the shared or imposed value-structures of the groups, the different roles that are defined in them, the internal relationships they activate and the internal power structure, all contribute to and affect the formation of various forms of identities. Participation in different groups in which different expectations, loyalties and coercions prevail, may generate different identity constructions in the members. Thus, individuals may have various sets of identities or multiple identities, more or less strictly elaborated and related to each other.

We believe that identities are complex mental constructions having cognitive and emotional components. They are not exempt of internal incongruence between individual achievements and community defined shared characteristics (national, religious, ethnic, cultural traditions) and these constructions are elaborated and represented through discourses. They are constituted by feelings and emotions, dispositions, shared values and are used in different discursive situations with various aims: expressing membership in a group, constituting defence, expressing self-reflexive contents, etc. Self-definition and group representation are important aspects of the individual's activity: in social situations through discourse and behaviour they express the individual's symbolically constructed images to be presented in his/her changing contexts and they aim to present his/her belonging to formal and informal groups (like family, ethnic or religious groups, kinship, social groups, etc.).

Certain identities are formally guaranteed, others are more symbolically constructed or inherited and are subject to recognition. Consequently, they often constitute important stakes and display conflictual relationships. As identities constitute a basis for self-representation, which is a necessary step in every discourse, we assume that people "use" their multiple identity constructions in different ways in different communicative situations. According to the actual communicative situation (partner, communicative goal, setting, roles, context, etc.) they put forth certain layers or forms of their multiple set of identities while keeping other forms in the background. Public debates as well as private conversations, narrative interviews and focus group discussions show strong evidence concerning the strategic use of identities in various communicative contexts. Such strategies, however, are meant to be successful and thus they have to obey certain socially accepted rules and norms. Public debates often form the battlefield where different conceptions of norms are put into negotiations: these discourses struggle for the right to define the valid and sanctionable norms.

The hierarchic structure of identities affects people's loyalties to these groups and institutions and plays a role in categorizations and classifications. People tend to navigate in the world by categorizing others into either groups of shared, common or adverse characteristics. Definitions of such "We" groups and "They" groups are elaborated using various important or irrelevant traits.

National identities are complex constructions in the sense that they are based on the historicity of the nation ("imagined community"<sup>2</sup>) and they serve as a basis for historically relatively long-term communities. The process of nation-formation involved symbolic elaborations in opposing directions. Achieving the level of membership in the nation guaranteed the symbolic elevation of various individuals and groups into a newly constructed category of equality while at the same time it also meant the devaluation of memberships in various former groups and the depreciation of the constituting categories of these groups. Nation formation raised different individuals and groups into the same category of membership (regardless of various other identities like regional, etc.), granting them the same rights and duties. But the preceding important categorizational criteria, certain so-far border forming differences were made irrelevant thus becoming depreciated. These dominated identities, however, did not fade away, they are still present today in ethnic, or religious struggles for acknowledgement and recognition. Many actual tensions in Europe can be traced back to these competing identity constructions<sup>3</sup>.

The notion of the nation still nurtures diverse conceptions and underpins diverse types of identities. It cannot do away with the necessity of defining those who belong to the in-

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<sup>2</sup> Anderson, Gellner.

<sup>3</sup> Movements of ethnic revival and separativist claims, ethnic cleansing, religious unrest: all these tensions are present in present day Europe (Brittany, the Basque Country, Corsica, Belgium, former Yugoslavia, former Czechoslovakia, Transylvania, etc.)

group and thus, because of the ever present constraint of border definition, it cannot escape a certain type of exclusionism: “who belongs to the nation and who does not?” “who is part of the “We” group and who is out?” And even if the border definitions are permissive, the principle of classification is nonetheless present. Unfortunately, the European Union, in any form of integration it will pursue, will have to face the same structural problem.

The basic problem of classification can still call for diverse solution concerning the definitions of membership. Belonging to the nation can be defined focusing on various criteria: they may be primordial, inherited, rigid characteristics (skin colour, kinship, etc.) or achieved, learned, meritocratic even universalistic characteristics (culture, language community, etc.). The classifications elaborated through these symbolic constructions may be exclusive or inclusive, depending on more liberal or more traditional, more permissive, open and evolutive or more closed definitions. The recent public debates in Hungary have demonstrated that definitions of citizenship may differ on this basis. Citizenship defined on legal terms is an inclusive category where the borderlines of the in-group can be thwarted while the traditional ethnically and emotionally based category of “nationality” is exclusive and fights back every attempt to change categories. Debates on Hungarian national identity since the early 90s struggle with the definition set by populist writers and political actors professing some romantic ethnicist vision of the nation that is based on strong sentiments about past national glory and long term national suffering

In Hungary, as in most countries of Central and Eastern Europe, identities have constituted a strongly debated topic for the last decades or even centuries. The delayed development of the region in comparison to Western Europe and the frequently changing but steadily lasting foreign domination have contributed to various problems and distortions of identity formation in this region. This fact explains the high frequency of identity-related public debates in the recent and present public sphere of the countries of the region. Our research on public identity debates in the last 40 years in Hungary shows that discourses contain bitter symbolic struggles over identities: public speakers try to assert and legitimate their own identity constructions, delegitimize others’ constructions and impose their own criteria and definitions. Many identity debates (e.g. demographic debates about de-natality during state-socialism, national identity debates<sup>4</sup> in the 90s) struggle over the symbolic enforcement of arguments and over the priority of setting the rules for definitions (Heller – Rényi 1996).

Besides defining categories of “We” and the “Other” (Wodak, Ricoeur), discourses also serve to assert or to revoke criteria of membership, assigning rewards and blames to individuals and groups and even constructing enemies and scape-goats. Identity construction in discourses always implies categorization and classification: by defining the borderlines between members and out-groups, discourses need to handle exclusion and inclusion. The stake is often the definition of real and/or symbolic borders. Depending on the ascriptive or achieved criteria used in identity discourses, different modes of negotiations and bargaining can be found. The discursive analyses of debates clearly testify that they imply border-setting games, strategies and highly symbolic struggles.

### **Hungary and the EU**

Public discourses and debates on citizenship and identity have been very frequent and fierce in Hungary since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Categories like citizenship and nationality have several meanings and they overlap. Definitions range from liberal, inclusive definitions based on legal or formal criteria like taxpaying or owning a passport to extremist exclusionist definitions, focusing on ethnic or religious affiliation and immeasurable

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<sup>4</sup> Who is a true Hungarian?

feelings and emotions. The fact that the dividing line is so unstable and blurred is imputable to the age old cleavages of the region and the historic circumstances which, especially in the case of Hungary, are strongly related to the "Trianon shock": the country's important loss of territories and populations after the 1<sup>st</sup> and later the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war.

In most Central and Eastern European countries, problems of identity and especially of national identity are well known. The problem can soundly be imputed to the delayed development of the countries in the region compared to Western European societies. According to the centre / periphery opposition, patterns of economic, social and civilizational development were elaborated in the Western part of the continent and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, struggling with various problems of domination, foreign rule, etc. were trapped in an orbit of coercion: how to cope with the more dynamic, more evolutive West (Bibó, Szűcs). The dilemma of catching up with the West resulted in opposing controversial models of development that are to be found in each of the countries in the region. Liberal, "westernizers" propose the application of the Western models and patterns while traditionalists, "populists", nationalists are persuaded that some kind of a national model should be found based on the nation's specific characteristics and qualities. State-socialism as it was practiced in Eastern Europe can also be considered as another model that aimed to keep up with the West.

The outstandingly complicated Hungarian identity complex has its roots in the aforementioned belated development but also in some internal historic facts. The long struggle for independent statehood after a strong stately position until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the long historical period of defeat and the symbolic role of Europe's defending bastion against Tartars and Turks, the ever changing political and ideological constraints coming from subordination to foreign empires created a curious mixture of national pride and inferiority complex. The long historical periods of oppression and the inner contradictions of the society resulted in a very strong separation between public and private life, public and private speech or behaviour. The small-state complex after the Trianon treaty and the traditional Hungarian derring-do: simultaneous over- and underrating of oneself and of the "We"-group, the traditional propensity for self-destruction have not been dissolved or eased during the decades of state-socialism: most of these problems were "frozen", they have stayed unreflected and undiscussed or have even been deteriorated through coercions of disguise and concealment.

Thus, after the political changes in 1990, the unsolved problems of national identity burst out in extremely heated and radical public debates most of which are still present. The different elite groups involved in the model choice dilemma, used this problem as the main dividing principle, the main stake of political and ideological struggles for positions and recognition in the new political field. The former cleavages in style and orientation have become sharp dividing lines strongly splitting the population and excluding any compromise or even collaboration between the two main groups. Public debates and discourses mainly centre on questions of identity, the main stake being the criteria and the right to define belonging.

### **Accession debates**

Hungary's European accession was thematised in this discursive context. The European Union and the possibility of joining it became a publicly discussed topic after the political changes in 1990 and gradually became more and more present in the public discourse as the country approached the referenda about NATO-accession (1997) and later about EU-accession (2003).

The existing different identity constructions and political-ideological stances reacted in different ways to EU membership. The groups aspiring for essentialist, ascriptive criteria and impermeable group borders rejected the country's membership or at least looked for

guarantees that the move would serve “our” national interests. Groups sharing universal, liberal or just more open notions of identity were ready to consider the advantages (and incidental drawbacks) of accession. As one of the main advantages, it was expected that the EU will serve as a crash barrier against nationalist extremism.

The accession debates put forward all kinds of more or less serious pro- and counter arguments. Because of the deep identity crisis, one of the main questions in the debate was about the meaning of Hungary’s integration in the EU: is the accession a recognition that we are part of Europe, that we have always been part of Europe, or does it mean that we are changing positions in the sense that we are moving from some despised situation into Europe. Or else: do we at all want to be part of Europe? Does our changing position mean that we are crushing and destroying former solidarities (with neighbouring countries, with Hungarian minorities living in the non-accession countries, etc.)? Many debates about accession were confined to the ideological - symbolic realm: is the accession a kind of symbolic reparation for all the historic sacrifices of the country? Does it mean that Hungary’s special position as a “ferry country” between East and West is recognised? Does Hungary’s accession modify the over-debated definitions of “Hungaritude”, “Hungarianness” and if so how: are we going to lose our defining substance, our “national values”, etc?

Our research on public debates, interviews and other sources gave evidence that the discursive constructions on Europe in general and the EU in particular as well as Hungary’s relationship to the EU have been very complex. Different groups have had very different expectations and fears and the political cleavages constituted a complicated relationship to EU accession.

The public debates as well as many private conversations about the EU centred around the questions whether the Union is a value-based or an interest-based institution. The answer to this question had strong implications on the voters’ decisions. Those who argued that the EU is a new type of entity, which is constituted by freely uniting nations or better: societies because they agree on common principles, shared values and future coordinated activities, were on the pro-EU side. They advocated that it would be a fatal error not to join this venerable project because such a move would mean that the country excludes itself from mainstream development and from the European culture or civilisation. Refuting the opportunity would isolate the country and would mean it stays behind when the others are uniting their efforts. The values that were cited as the foundations of the EU (democracy, justice, solidarity, etc.) each and all were presented as highly estimable and important that can scarcely be rationally rejected (without losing our trustworthiness and our face).

The opposite view was more complex in that sense that it enclosed several different stances, the most important being that the EU is an interest-based construction. Opinions still differed whether Hungary should or should not become a member but the distribution among these opinions was governed by the different speakers’ attitudes or convictions about the EU’s interest-driven character. Pro-accession speakers either affirmed that the interests of the EU and of Hungary are the same (common development, problem-solving, etc.) or tried to argue that negotiations and inner EU solidarity can easily surmount conflicts in interests. The EU was also often depicted as a high authority that may and does help to solve conflicts between member-states or even different factions inside one and the same society. This role of the “superposed judge” was an important factor in the yes-votes, because the Hungarian electorate often behave like quarrelling children when they hope for the settling of a conflict by the judgement of some respectable exterior authority. In many discourses, the EU has been expected to play the role of the supreme judge.

Other speakers on the interest side (especially leftist groups and certain civil society organisations) saw the EU as an institution that strives to ensure the internal interests; thus, they claimed, Hungary’s EU membership would ruin solidarity and commonality

inside the region, i.e. with our partners in historical misfortunes on the periphery of Europe. These civil society groups, rather uneasily, found themselves on the same anti-EU (and anti-NATO) side than the radical right wing groups for whom the EU is definitely an interest-based institution where only the interest of those already in and already in power are taken seriously. For these latter speakers the EU only wants Eastern or Central/Eastern Europe to join in because it serves the interests of the Western countries or better the interests of their ruling forces. The public debates on accession hosted a surprising number of “conspiracy<sup>5</sup> theories” all of which shared the same basic idea: “they” only need “us” to exploit us. Many dangers were evoked: all the sacred land of Hungary will be sold to foreigners, foreign investors only want to buy out markets, traditional Hungarian cuisine will be forbidden by EU laws (the famous Hungarian pastries with poppy seeds or traditional pork dishes, etc.)

Eventually the referendum was positive<sup>6</sup> for several reasons. All mainstream political forces, parliamentary parties and politicians backed the accession, the government<sup>7</sup> organised a strong pro-EU campaign and many public intellectuals took a clear stance about the importance of accession. The analysis of public discourses shows that arguments of very diverse nature were advanced many of which were in close relationship with problems of national identity.

Besides considerations of basic principles and questions of national identity, the accession debates also thematised the problem of balance between investment and benefit. When these questions were tackled, interests, and especially national interests were plainly and coldly measured without wasting arguments on universal principles of democracy or justice. The EU was expected to reinforce economic development of the country and in this construction, no more questions of regional solidarity were advanced. This topic highlighted that strong competition was perceived among accession countries for EU investment, funding and subsidies. For many discussants, the main EU-question was to ensure that Hungary should not be a net in-payer.

During the debates, the economic arguments aiming at defining the various conflicts of interests forced into the background most of the pro- or counter arguments that dealt with questions of sovereignty. This was already the case before the NATO referendum when in spite of our expectations that sovereignty and neutrality for historical reasons would play an important role in the debates, these topics were relatively absent from the various discourses. In both debates, thematisations either centred around highly ideological questions of principles or around practical questions on (economic) interests.

Focus group research, opinion surveys and private conversations in particular, revealed that EU accession for many Hungarians, especially for those not much concerned by public affairs, had a strongly symbolic meaning affecting their representation of European identity and the occasion of (economic) emancipation. They expected to become part of the wealthy, the more fortunate, the winning part of Europe although how this would affect their personal life was not clearly assumed. It was, however, largely expected that by becoming part of “Western Europe”, life expectancies, level of comfort and wealth will somehow be equalized or balanced. Western Europe’s solidarity was generally hoped for...

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<sup>5</sup> The most frequent conspiracy assumptions were: the New York – London – Paris – Tel Aviv axe, the Jewish-Masonic conspiracy, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Participation at the referendum: 45,62 % of the electorate, yes-vote: 83,76 % of all votes.

<sup>7</sup> Since 2002, it is a government of coalition between socialists and liberals.



## The Hungarian situation after accession

As a clear consequence of the complex and ambivalent opinion structure, the date of accession, in the whole country, was celebrated by happy crowds and strong expectations. Many representations of European unity, of European belonging to a great community were put on display and for a time it seemed to be the end of anti-EU animosities.

Since accession, most Hungarian citizens have not experienced radical changes because of EU membership. With the fading away of this stake, debates have been thematised around different other questions. As the Hungarian political sphere is highly divided and public discourse does not tend to become more peaceful and collaborative, there are renewed attempts from extremist groups to link various debated topics to EU membership and its drawbacks, just like some of the bitter interior debates of the opposing political forces are subjects to attempts to be introduced to European contexts (especially to the European parliament)

The complex feelings of Hungarians with regards to the EU can well be illustrated by the contradictory results of Hungarians in the different surveys as to their knowledge and relationship to the Union. A quiz on EU affairs organized by Eurobarometer found Hungarians to have more knowledge about EU institutions than about concrete practical topics. The level of their objective knowledge was much higher than EU27 average (EC, 2006a:19), especially concerning symbols, while their practical knowledge was mainly restrained to questions of citizens' mobility.

Hungarian citizens' subjective knowledge<sup>8</sup>, however, was very low: i.e. Hungarians rated that their own knowledge about the EU is not sufficient. (The Eurobarometer research ranked their estimate as the 3<sup>rd</sup> worst in the EU) (EC, 2007a:107). This should be considered as an important sign because low subjective knowledge can form obstacles to participation and feeling of belonging. It was also found that social differences were very strong in the self-evaluation of subjective knowledge: the lower the social status the lower the subjective knowledge. It was also found that especially young people's knowledge was insufficient and mainly concerned practical aspects like scholarships and volunteering (Szonda Ipsos, 2006: 77)

Nearly no knowledge (self-evaluation )	48 %
Very informed (self-evaluation )	20 %
Top (Mark 10/10)	0 %

(EC, 2006a: 18)

Different opinion surveys and discourse analyses have given evidence that public discourse on the EU cover different topics and domains than public interest on EU matters: strong discrepancy was found between population interest and communicated message priorities e.g. concerning advantages of accession or the Constitution, itself. Public interest centred around questions of employment (60 %), the economic situation (43 %) (EC, 2006a: 8), the introduction of the Euro, EU subsidies or agricultural regulations, (Szonda Ipsos, 2006:79), employment abroad, EU health card, entrepreneurship abroad or registration tax.

It was also clear from the different research results that there is little interest in post-material values beyond individual wealth and lifestyle in most of the new member-states. ([www.worldvaluessurvey.org](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org)). A generally widely shared opinion sees the EU as an institution which mainly safeguards the interests of EU elites and not of its populations. But some research results also revealed the appearance of some new topics

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<sup>8</sup> Self evaluation of one's own knowledge.

of public interest, mainly in discourses about norms and founding values of the Union: the search for just societies, equal opportunities, gender equality, cultural diversity or solidarity between different nations.

Cognitive and emotive relationships to the EU are also very contradictory in Hungary, pointing to two facts: the mixed feelings and uncertainty of Hungarians about their own identities but also to problems of EU identity and image, the very representation that Hungarians have about the EU. In 2007, 62 % of Hungarians would still vote for their country's EU membership and 29 % would vote against it if there were a referendum. But when they were asked whether the country's accession had positive outcomes or benefits, only 41 % were positive and 45 % had a negative opinion. The difference between those who would vote today for EU membership (62%) and those who have already acknowledged positive balance is high and means that there are still strong expectations in the population, based mainly on abstract principles or long-term benefits. The EU is often seen as a high authority, capable of setting safe-guarding marks to societies that have had bad experiences of sharp turns in their recent history or that are afraid of their own interior extremist movements. This role of the EU as a "steely judge" or a "severe father" is rather frequent in various representations and was already often found in discursive scenarios before the accession referendum. (Heller – Rényi 2003). It can well be illustrated by the high trust that Hungarians demonstrate in EU institutions: 70 %, the highest in the EU (while, e.g. the UK scores 31 %). (EC, 2007a: 56) The high scores of trust in EU institutions are in strong contrast with the very low scores of trust in Hungarian institutions.

Opinion surveys also show that certain feelings of deception of Hungarians are outstandingly high, especially regarding the security of employment: 66 % think that employment has decreased since accession. Only 54 % of Hungarians believe that there have been positive changes concerning equal opportunities in employment, while 80 % of Poles, Estonians, Latvians share the same view ([www.gfk.hu](http://www.gfk.hu)). Deception among Hungarians is strong mainly because for large factions of the population the most positive expectations of the country's membership were about financial advantages and quick increase in welfare.

The polarized public opinion about the results of Hungary's EU membership comprises contradictory opinions on the effect of EU accession on various levels of activity: the regions are thought to profit rather positively from EU membership, the whole country only slightly but the respondents' own private life is thought to be negatively affected<sup>9</sup>.

<i>Opinion about EU</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Non available</i>
Influence on own life or family	33	44	23
Influence on own region	46	27	
Influence on Hungary	47	40	

Szonda Ipsos, September 2007

For the majority of the Hungarian population the question of being European is not really a challenge: it is a fact. The majority strongly feel European, meaning that Hungary as a nation is and has always been a European one. But individually, few Hungarians affirm of "feeling European", on the private level "Europeanness" is an empty notion for them. Many people believe that EU membership strengthens national statehood: Hungary's accession means for them, in this sense, the acknowledgement of the state. It indicates that the country "became part" or even "went back" to Western Europe. 51 % of Hungarian citizens say they feel only Hungarian (EC, 2006b: 48). And although some of

<sup>9</sup> This is very typical of Hungarian public opinion. In the last decades, all surveys indicated that Hungarian citizens always esteemed that their own fate, wealth, opportunities were much lower than those of the country.



the values that are attributed to the EU, like peace (80 %), or the defence of democracy or of the environment are considered positive, the values associated with the EU are not the ones that are regarded by the Hungarian population as the most important values (e.g. lowering social differences, increasing well-being).

Different research results in Hungary show very timid civil society activities and low participation in public actions. Historically, this trend can be attributed to the strong differentiation between public and private life due to the population's century-old negative experiences about domination, political coercion and strong unexpected political and ideological twists (Heller – Rényi 1996). The weakness of civil society can well be documented by various attempts of measurement of population activity: 0,1 % of the population admits participating in civil society groups and networks, and there are very few associations or NGOs compared to Western European countries. It is a largely shared opinion that public debates only interest small elites and only 12 % affirms discussing EU matters in private discussions (against 36 % very rarely and 23 % never) (Szonda Ipsos, 2006: 78). Public debates on EU questions appear in the Hungarian public sphere only if the topics are thematised in the political cleavage between Hungarian political parties.

The confused state of Hungarian public opinion is tangible in a number of factors, e.g. in the fact that many Hungarians think they can have an active role in the EU: that they can interfere in EU questions: as a matter of fact, the score is very high even compared to other EU countries (51 %) (EC, 2007a: 61). Hungarians strongly believe the EU represents universal values like peace, democracy and justice but at the same time they feel they are not treated equally by their Western partners. This may be a consequence of the well-known Hungarian identity problems (suffering from a continuous and simultaneous inferiority- and superiority-complex):

	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
"Hungary not being treated equal"	19	34	26	17
Sum	53			43

The few examples treated above all demonstrate the mixed feelings of the Hungarian population. Problems of identity, negative public and private experiences, lack of knowledge and interest as well as other factors all participate in this complex picture. Opinion polls as well as analyses of various types of discourses indicate that there are strong expectations but also more or less clearly articulated fears and apprehensions in various layers of the population.

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# The European Union's Enlargement Does Culture and Identity Play a Role?<sup>10</sup>

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## Abstract

It is a highly acknowledged fact that in the European Union's enlargement process, Turkey plays a highly interesting role and deserves analytical attention in terms of its theoretical and policy making implications. This fact has become more pronounced since the start of accession talks with Turkey on 3 October 2005. However, the opening of the Turkish accession talks marked the beginning of a new era in terms of defining what constitutes Europe and the European identity. It is for this reason that Turkey's accession to the EU should be evaluated within the larger framework of EU enlargement and the European integration process and goes beyond an analysis of bilateral relations. Thus, Turkey's ability to adopt the EU standards is only one aspect of the whole picture with the EU specific factors playing an equally important role. This paper argues that the enlargement process of the EU determines the boundaries of what is Europe and what is not and that Turkey's accession to the EU becomes the most important and visible line of demarcation in that aspect. This means that a candidate's accession negotiations to the EU are determined by perceptions of that candidate's fit into a predetermined European identity. That is why the Turkish case is important because it illustrates the ambivalent nature of Europeaness and attempts by member states to clearly define it. The purpose of this article is to analyze the process of enlargement from the sociological/constructivist approaches with regard to enlargement in general and towards Turkey in particular.

**Keywords:** EU enlargement, culture, Turkey-EU relations

## Introduction

The question of Turkey's accession to the EU has occupied the European leaders in an increasing fashion since 1999. However, since October 3 2005 the opening of accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU has radically changed the nature of this question. The intense reform process in Turkey in an attempt to fully adopt the EU's *acquis communautaire* and the European political standards led to the European Commission's recommendation in 2004 to begin accession negotiations with Turkey. This paper argues that Turkey's accession to the EU should be evaluated within the larger framework of EU enlargement and the European integration process and goes beyond an analysis of bilateral relations. Thus, Turkey's ability to adopt the EU standards is only one aspect of the whole picture with the EU specific factors playing an equally important role.

On May 1 2004, the EU has completed its most important wave of enlargement when 10 new countries mainly from the Central and Eastern Europe joined the EU. This was the fifth and the most extensive round of enlargement for the EU. The 2004 enlargement of the EU has not only affected the political and economic shape of Europe, but it also changed the institutional set up of the EU and the course of European integration. As a result, since the end of the Cold War in 1989, the importance and priority attached to enlargement by the academic circles and the key policy makers started to increase in an unprecedented fashion. In the enlargement process, Turkey plays a highly interesting

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role and deserves analytical attention in terms of its theoretical and policy making implications. When negotiations with Turkey began on October 3 2005, it marked the beginning of a new era in terms of defining what constitutes Europe and the European identity. This paper argues that the enlargement process of the EU determines the boundaries of what is Europe and what is not and that Turkey's accession to the EU becomes the most important and visible line of demarcation in that aspect. This means that a candidate's accession negotiations to the EU are determined by perceptions of that candidate's fit into a predetermined European identity. That is why the Turkish case is important because it illustrates the ambivalent nature of Europeanness and attempts by member states to clearly define it. The purpose of this article is to analyze the process of enlargement from the sociological/constructivist approaches with regard to enlargement in general and towards Turkey in particular.

Since the 2004 Brussels European Council Meeting, in which the decision on the formal opening of negotiations between Turkey and the EU was taken, "opponents to enlargement have invoked a supposed historical and cultural identity, especially with regard to Turkey."<sup>11</sup> The perceived impact of Turkish accession to the EU has thus become quite apparent in both the political elite level and the societal level in Europe. It is at this stage in which cultural, ideational, and religious factors come into the scene. Prior to this stage, objections to the Turkish membership were primarily based on economic and political considerations. Debates as regards to Turkey's Europeanness were not yet on the table of the EU. According to Ziya Onis, "European approach to Turkish-EU relations was that Turkey was economically backward and, at the same time, had failed to satisfy the criteria in relation to democratization and human rights necessary to qualify for full membership in the foreseeable future."<sup>12</sup> With the reform process in economics since 2001 and in the political system since 2002, Turkey was able to overcome most of the obstacles and fulfil the EU criteria in its economic and political aspects. As a result, when the EU opened the accession talks with Turkey on October 3 2005, upon the Turkish fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria, debates "concerning the various dimensions of European identity and the boundaries of and the ambiguities surrounding the European project" have sharply increased in number<sup>13</sup>, rather than Turkey's ability in fulfilling the EU accession criteria. Thus, since 2005, "Turkish accession to the EU has [thus far] become one of the most politically contentious issues in Europe".<sup>14</sup> Almost every political actor in Europe has a stance on this issue. Nonetheless, it is worth to point out the fact that debates over Turkey, "and the broader issues surrounding membership, reveal much about what Europeans hope the 'New Europe' will become".<sup>15</sup> Thus, this paper proposes that the Turkish accession to the EU is going to be determined by the extent to which it is perceived to be part of the European identity. Given the various objections coming from various quarters in the EU such as the French presidential candidate Nicolas Sarkozy's declaration that "Turkey's place is not in the EU",<sup>16</sup> the main obstacle in Turkey's negotiations seems to be precisely this perception. The sociological institutionalist school with its emphasis on collective identity formation plays an important role in furthering our understanding in this aspect.

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<sup>11</sup> Franz Mayer and Jan Palmowski, "European Identities and the EU-The Ties that Bind the Peoples of Europe," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 42 (No. 3, 2004): 593.

<sup>12</sup> Ziya Onis, "Turkey, Europe, and Paradoxes of Identity: Perspectives on the International Context of Democratization," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 10 (March, 1999): 107.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 109.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Kubicek, "Turkish Accession to the European Union: Challenges and Opportunities," *World Affairs* 16 (No. 2, Fall 2005): 71.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> Owen Matthews, "How Europe Lost Turkey", *Newsweek*, December 11 2006.

## Sociological Institutionalism and its possible insights into Turkey-EU relations

Sociological institutionalism rests on the assumption that the logic of appropriateness which clearly refers to the fact that players while making up their minds, do not only take into account what is good for them but also what they are expected to do, that is to say, the roles and norms to be applied.<sup>17</sup> It might suggest both rule-following due to habitual practices or particular identity and rule-following based on a rational assessment of morally valid arguments.<sup>18</sup> Here the causal mechanisms suggested to clarify how norms and principles can have an impact on negotiation or bargaining process alter depending on the theoretical frameworks. Sociological institutionalism emphasizes the building and reshaping effects of principles and norms on social actors to such an extent that norms and conventions of the institutional setting become embedded in the minds of the members of the institution. Thenceforward, preferences of the social players are set in accordance with those norms and principles. And eventual outcome of this interaction is that decisions are inevitably taken in line with those 'constructed' preferences.<sup>19</sup> "Within this approach, the rationality of the actors is considered contextual, rather than instrumental, and deriving from the identity of the community they belong to."<sup>20</sup> As March and Olsen puts it "human actors are imagined to follow rules that associate particular identities to particular situations."<sup>21</sup> In a similar vein, "the criteria for social action justification rely on values stemming from a particular cultural context and salient concerns of the decision-making process have to do with the search for collective self-understanding and the building of a common identity, which can serve as the basis for developing stable goals and visions. Collective decisions are a matter of identity, rather than efficiency, seeking to develop and protect the sense of 'we-ness' and to establish bonds of solidarity."<sup>22</sup> In line with this argument, "this puzzle is solved through a sociological perspective in which enlargement is understood as the expansion of international community. If the EU is conceived of as the organization of the European liberal community of states, its decision to open accession negotiations with five Central and Eastern European countries can be explained as the inclusion of those countries that have come to share its liberal values and norms."<sup>23</sup> Institutions -which are defined in a rather broad term in sociological institutionalism in comparison with the rational account-, turn out to be the instrument through which the world is made meaningful to actors. For sociological institutionalists, "interests and identities are *endogenous* to (emanate from within) the processes of interaction that institutions represent. Interests as well as the contexts of action are socially constructed- given meaning to actors-by institutional norms and conventions"<sup>24</sup>. To sum up, this view clearly represents the belief in "capacity of cultural and organizational practices (institutions) to mould the preferences, interests and identities of actors in the social world (hence sociological institutionalism)."<sup>25</sup>

<sup>17</sup> For further information see James. G. March and Johan .P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*, (New York: Free Press, 1989).

<sup>18</sup> Erik Eriksen, "Towards a Logic of Justification: On the Possibility of Post-National Solidarity", in Morten Egeberg and Per Laegreid (eds.) *Organizing Political Institutions: Essay for Johan P. Olsen* (Oslo: Scandinavian Press): 215-44 as cited in Helene Sjursen, "Why Expand? The Question of Legitimacy and Justification in the EU's Enlargement Policy" *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (No.3, 2002): 494.

<sup>19</sup> For a deeper analysis see Wayne Parsons, "Theories of the Policy Process", *Journal of European Public Policy* 7 (No. 1, 2000): 126-130.

<sup>20</sup> Sonia Piedrafita and Jose Torreblanca, "The Three Logics of EU Enlargement: Interests, Identities and Arguments", *Politique Européenne* 15 (Winter, 2005): 34.

<sup>21</sup> March and Olsen, 951.

<sup>22</sup> Piedrafita and Torreblanca, 34.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 47-8.

<sup>24</sup> Ben Rosamond, *Theories of European Integration*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000): 119.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 114.

As Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier have already argued “rationalism and constructivism do not provide us with fully elaborated and internally consistent competing hypotheses on enlargement that we could rigorously test against each other.”<sup>26</sup> Therefore it is wise to perceive rationalist and sociological/constructivist theories of institutions “as partially competing and partially complementary sources of theoretical inspiration for the study of enlargement.”<sup>27</sup> The enlargement process has turned out to be a significant area to test, elaborate or falsify contending theories of rationalist and constructivist/ sociological institutionalism.<sup>28</sup> It is possible to argue that they are based on different social ontologies (individualism and materialism in rationalism and ideational ontology in constructivism) and assume different logics of action: a rationalist logic of consequentiality opposed to constructivist logic of appropriateness.<sup>29</sup> These two contending visions about the status and purposes of institutions inevitably influence our theorizing enlargement in its entirety. Hence, the conditions, assumptions and mechanisms of enlargement have to be different according to the chosen logic at work.

Accordingly, different status of institutions conceptualized in these two approaches also reflects itself in the importance attached to international organizations. “Rationalist institutionalism emphasizes the instrumental, regulatory, and efficiency-enhancing functions of international organizations.”<sup>30</sup> It would be fair to say in this context rational account views institutions as a significant constraint upon self-interested action. On the other hand, sociological institutionalism views “institutions as autonomous and powerful actors with constitutive and legitimacy-providing function.”<sup>31</sup> In line with this logic, it is possible to arrive at this conclusion: “international organizations are ‘community representatives’<sup>32</sup> as well as community-building agencies. The origins, goals, and procedures of international organizations are more strongly determined by the standards of legitimacy and appropriateness of the international community they represent (which constitute their cultural and institutional environment) than by the utilitarian demand for efficient problem-solving.”<sup>33</sup>

Sociological institutionalists argue that action of the social players are motivated through the rules of appropriate behaviour, adapted into institutional setting in which norms/rules are ensued due to the sheer fact that they are perceived to be natural, expected and the right thing to do. However, what is not to be forgotten at this point is that the expansion of the liberal community on the basis of constitutive Pan-European rules takes its roots from sociological institutionalists who basically claim that actors act not only according to exogenously determined utility functions but also according to the values and norms that are endogenous to the process of social interaction.

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<sup>26</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, “Theorizing EU Enlargement: Research Focus, Hypotheses, and the State of Research”, *Journal of European Public Policy* 9 (No.4, August, 2002): 508.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> In order to see some of the examples in theorizing Eastern enlargement of the EU, see Karin M Fierke and Antje Wiener, “Constructing Institutional Interests: EU and NATO Enlargement”, *Journal of European Public Policy* 6 (No.5,1999): 721-42; Frank Schimmelfennig, “The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union”, *International Organization* 55 (No.1, Winter, 2001): 47-80.

<sup>29</sup> March and Olsen, 160.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Kenneth Abbott and Duncan Snidal, “Why States Act Through Formal International Organizations”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42 (No. 1, 1998): 24 as cited in Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 509.

<sup>33</sup> Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 509-10.



In an institutional environment like the EU, political actors are concerned about their reputation as members and about the legitimacy of their preferences and behaviour. Actors who can justify their interests on the grounds of the community's standard of legitimacy are therefore able to shame their opponents into norm-conforming behaviour and to modify the collective outcome that would have resulted from constellations of interests and power alone.<sup>34</sup>

In a similar fashion, Sjursen argues that "norms constitute the identity of the actors: they not only constrain their behaviour, but also constitute their world-views and preferences. It is on this basis that enlargement must be understood."<sup>35</sup> Ethical-political reasons which basically refer to a feeling of shared identity, common history, political values, and sense of we-ness are the main driving forces behind the Eastern enlargement. In other words, sense of kinship-based duty has played a key role in mobilizing the member states for enlargement. But at this point it has to be noted that the critical point is how rules, principles, norms become embedded in the minds of social actors? Thomas Risse points out the role of communicative action: "the processes by which norms are internalized and ideas become consensual...communicative processes are a necessary condition for ideas to become consensual (or fall by the wayside for that matter)."<sup>36</sup> Hence, it is possible to argue that theories of communicative action which heavily draws from the work of Jürgen Habermas<sup>37</sup> concentrate on processes of deliberation and argumentation, which are in turn perceived as manufacturing the basic epistemic 'glue' that binds actors together.<sup>38</sup> According to "Habermas' theory of communicative action, actors are rational when they are able to justify and explain their actions, and not only when they seek to maximize their own interests."<sup>39</sup> This is very much in line with the logic of appropriateness as opposed to the logic of consequentiality. "The perennial issues of 'what is Europe' and 'who can the EU legitimately claim to represent' inevitably arise with enlargement."<sup>40</sup> It is however highly problematic to give a precise answer to the question of where Europe starts and ends and what is the EU's collective identity.

This is precisely why the Turkish case is highly important to illustrate the validity of sociological institutionalism. The accession of Turkey to the EU will be one of most important steps in clarifying who the Europeans are once and for all. This is also why there is so much hesitancy among some EU members precisely because of Turkey's membership's impact on Europeanness.

### **The Borders of Europe**

Europe is a geographical region which gave birth to construction of a particular civilization. In the formation and construction of *this* civilization, the Roman Empire and Christianity played constitutive and unifying roles in binding the peoples of Europe together. Despite the fact that the Reformation might have broken the seemingly harmonious state of unity in religion; however, Christianity has never ceased to serve for

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Sjursen, 491.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Exploring the Nature of the Beast: International Relations Theory and Comparative Policy Analysis Meet the European Union", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 34 (No. 1, 1996): 69.

<sup>37</sup> See Jürgen Habermas, "On the Pragmatic, the Ethical, and the Moral Employments of Practical Reason", in *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993): 1-17.

<sup>38</sup> Rosamond, 121.

<sup>39</sup> Sjursen, 493.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 501.

the greater good of the European intellect.<sup>41</sup> Subsequently, Enlightenment with its emphasis on rationality and individualism engendered an unprecedented process of development in Europe in science and technology. In other words, Enlightenment and modernization went hand in hand. The peoples of Europe-albeit experiencing the Enlightenment and modernization in different times- witnessed "the transformation of rural, subsistence economies and feudal patriarchal political systems into industrialized democratic systems."<sup>42</sup> However, being European does not only refer to living in a particular region of the world- i.e. Europe- but also refers to sharing and practicing of a common history, norms, traditions and values.

The difficulty of defining the borders of Europe has led to the emergence of the European Union membership as the most concrete indicator of Europeanness. Thus, it is no surprise that current twenty-five members of the EU are key players in creating the concept of Europeanness. The members of the EU share a common understanding of the past along with a common heritage. For so many times in history, economic and social practices made them closer; but at the same time cultural and historical specificities made them foes and rivals. In this common heritage, Europeans have witnessed several important events such as the Reformation, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the industrialization, the birth of nation-state and democracy. Aforementioned events were not only 'essential' and 'revolutionary' *per se* in the history of Europe but also crucial and constitutive in the world history.

In a very broader sense, at the risk of oversimplification, the European Union as we know it today can be viewed as the latest product of the peoples of Europe. Modernization, which is oft-identified with Europe, started to spill over to the rest of the world. "Historical points of convergence, common experiences and the development of a particular appraisal of the world, humanity and life itself went beyond underlying cultural and ethnic differences".<sup>43</sup> These differences, rivalries, enmities throughout all European history have to a certain degree been instrumental in shaping the political and cultural map of Europe. At this point, Jewish, Arabic and Ottoman influences are worth mentioning in Europe's search for the 'other'. Following the same line of reasoning, it is thus reasonable to interpret European history and Europe as an end result of the interplay of the commonalities and differences engendered by Europeans themselves as well as non-Europeans. These diverging and converging points gave birth to the genesis and continuity of European thought and culture.

Agnes Heller points out that "Europe takes the other, transforms it and makes it own."<sup>44</sup> In accordance with the idea of a 'unified and integrated Europe', it is possible to argue that the very existence of external threat and the urgent need to defend themselves against the threat compelled Europeans to think and act in harmony.<sup>45</sup> For most of the time, the source of the threat was the East: (i) Arabic invasions to the Iberian Peninsula; (ii) Ottomans march to the doors of the Central Europe; (iii) the hegemony of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe.<sup>46</sup> Europe's other has always been subject to change according to evolving nature of the European circumstances. In other words, "[t]he importance of external recognition varies, but at its most extreme it is a crucial determining factor in

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<sup>41</sup> As regards to Christianity, it has to be reminded the reader that both Judaism and Islam have been crucial in shaping the European civilization.

<sup>42</sup> Cigdem Nas, "Turkey-EU Relations and the Question of Identity", in Cigdem Nas and Muzaffer Dartan (eds), *The European Union Enlargement Process and Turkey*, (Istanbul: Publication of Marmara University European Community Institute, 2002): 219.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 220.

<sup>44</sup> Agnes Heller, "Europe: An Epilogue", in Brian Nelson (et al), *The Idea of Europe*, (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1992): 12-25.

<sup>45</sup> Nas, 220.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*.



the creation of identities."<sup>47</sup> As David McCrone points out "nor are national cultures and identities fixed and immutable. They are subject to processes of translation and change."<sup>48</sup> The same point of view has also been advocated by Mayer and Palmowski. In a similar fashion, they argue that "[i]dentities are constructed and mediated constantly, and they require acceptance both within and from without."<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, the same logic can also be applied to the formation of the European identity. Thus the particular conception of Europe should not only be constructed on the basis of a common reading of the past and homogeneous culture. Despite the fact that, 'others of the Europe' have played a significant role in construction of the self-definition of Europe, it is better to remind that being European is also defined through "forgetting as much as remembering".<sup>50</sup>

One needs to point out that European identity is yet to prevail over the national identities which are still at the fore front and do not appear to be eroding in favor of the newly emerging European one. In this context, European identity is a new layer of self-identification, added on top of national identities without necessarily challenging them. The latest debates indicate that there is no actual trade-off between the national and European identities. In this sense, as Hooghe and Marks point out, there is a positive correlation between attachment to one's own country and support for European integration.<sup>51</sup> By the same token, Bruter claims that the more an individual defines oneself with his/her nationality, the more he/she associates himself/herself with Europeanness.<sup>52</sup>

One final point still demands an urgent attention. "Identification with the European continent has always been linked to the continent's history, geography and culture. However, the current, particular [...] meanings of a European identity have been reshaped, expressed and amplified through the process of European integration since the 1950s."<sup>53</sup> It is actually the case because the supra-level European identity revolves around the EU. Therefore, the roots of the European identity, as we know it today, can be traced in the political and legal aspects of the EU. "[T]he EU can at most be characterized by an attempt to build civility codes of identities by reutilizing new practices and rituals in a European sphere of communication and identification with key values and institutions."<sup>54</sup> In accordance with Bartolini's point that only the acquired rights and traits can be the base of Europeanness; and, thus, the fundamental elements of European identity are declared in the Document on the European Identity is to be a society which measures up to the needs of the individual representative democracy, rule of law, social justice and respect for human rights.<sup>55</sup> In other words, European identity should be inclusive in the sense that "[t]he factors that make the difference between being European and not-on the margins of Europe- involve sharing a particular set of values, socio-economic development and societal organization."<sup>56</sup> Therefore, "[c]ommon

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<sup>47</sup> Mayer and Palmowski, 577.

<sup>48</sup> David McCrone, *The Sociology of Nationalism*, (New York: Routledge, 1998): 30.

<sup>49</sup> Mayer and Palmowski, 577.

<sup>50</sup> Nas, 221.

<sup>51</sup> Lisbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, "Does Identity or Economic Rationality Drive Public Opinion on European Integration?" *PS-Political Science and Politics* 37 (No. 3, July, 2004): 417.

<sup>52</sup> Michael Bruter, "Institutions, Media & the Emergence of European Identity" (speech delivered at Sabanci University, Istanbul, 29 January 2005).

<sup>53</sup> Mayer and Palmowski, 592.

<sup>54</sup> Stefano Bartolini, *Restructuring Europe: Centre Formation, System Building and Political Structuring between the Nation State and the European Union*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005): 215.

<sup>55</sup> Article I-I of the Document on the European Identity.

<sup>56</sup> Nas, 221.

understandings, values, norms and interests will constitute the basis of liberal community" in which the peoples of Europe live.<sup>57</sup>

This is why European identity sits at the very core of the EU's enlargement process. EU membership implies being a part of the European integration process through the sharing of burdens and benefits emanating from the membership. Accordingly, while deciding on decision to expand, the EU sets its own agenda and its own priorities. Thus countries excluded from the successive enlargement rounds will be the ones whose Europeanness is not acknowledged or in question. What is significant and clear is that "the European collective identity *promoted* by the EU is hybrid in terms of embodying both inclusive and exclusive aspects."<sup>58</sup> Therefore the newly-emerging- political map of Europe will set the demarcation line between the Europeans (i.e. insiders) and non-Europeans (i.e. outsiders).

In this critical juncture, Turkish membership to the EU has to be analyzed through the lenses of identity and culture so as to shed light onto the ongoing debate on Turkey's Europeanness and Europeans willingness to embrace Turkey as a new member in the EU.

### **Turkey as Europe's Other**

Turkey's Ottoman past still casts shadows over its present day relations with Europe. Since the end of World War II, Turkey has been in a close relationship with Europe. Nonetheless, despite the existence of decades long relationship with Europe, Turkey's Europeanness has always been a controversial issue. Turkey's own internal ambiguities regarding its identity and Europe's own confusion in shaping its newly emerging identity are the factors that complicate Turkey's fit into Europe.

It is important to note that Turkey's past relations with the European states since the 15<sup>th</sup> century played a crucial role in shaping the European perceptions of the 'Turk'. The Ottoman Empire and its Muslim identity as opposed to Christian Europe have been crucial in shaping the minds of Europeans in conjunction with the Turkish membership to the EU. In particular, when one starts considering the civilizational dimension of the European integration project, ideational and religious factors inevitably come to the forefront. Not surprisingly, the demarcation lines between the insiders and outsiders start growing bolder. For example, "Europe represented 'civilised' world and the Ottomans belonged to the 'barbaric' world. It was claimed that the 'Turk' possibly did not belong to the progressive races of mankind."<sup>59</sup>

In the context of contemporary Europe's self definition and the other; according to Ziya Onis, "Christianity is a key component of European identity, even though it may not be its principal or overriding constituent."<sup>60</sup> He goes further and argues that "[i]n the EU's relations with Turkey, this dimension of the European identity comes to the surface and plays a major determinant role."<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Meltem Müftüler Baç argues that Turkey's relations with the EU is one of binary opposition and one of the major obstacles to Turkey's EU membership.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Bahar Rumelili, "Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding the EU's Mode of Differentiation", *Review of International Studies* 30 (2004): 44.

<sup>59</sup> Iver Neumann and Jennifer Welsh, 'The Other in European Self-definition: An Addendum to the Literature on International Society', *Review of International Studies*, 17, (1991): 344.

<sup>60</sup> Onis, 113.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> Meltem Müftüler-Baç, "Through the Looking Glass: Turkey in Europe", *Turkish Studies* 1 (No.1, Spring, 2000): 21-35.

Having said that "Christian-Muslim divide is ...a central line of demarcation between Turkey and contemporary Europe", it is relevant to go back in history to find the traces of this demarcation.<sup>63</sup> As has also been stated by Mayer and Palmowski, it is worth to look back at history in the sense that "[w]ith the current wave of enlargement, a European identity has largely been constructed on historic grounds."<sup>64</sup> In this context, it is possible to argue that "for more than 500 years Europe defined itself partially in opposition to the Ottoman Empire, asserting an historic identity for Europe would have profound implications for the question of Turkish accession."<sup>65</sup> The first meeting of Europeans with Muslim civilization can be assumed to take place in battles at Tours/Poitiers in the eighth century. Some two hundred years later -through the crusades- confrontation of Christians with the Muslims started growing tense and violent. Finally, with the second siege of Vienna in 1683, this confrontation reached its climax. Therefore, these historical experiences of Europeans with the Muslim world still have contemporary influence in the minds and hearts of the peoples of Europe.<sup>66</sup> In this sense, the Ottoman Empire was obviously a critical player in European politics; however, for most of the time, the Ottomans' confrontations with Europe were always almost hostile and violent. In addition, the Ottomans did not exert themselves too much to develop more substantial and closer ties with Europeans in the areas like culture, economics or even in diplomacy.<sup>67</sup> According to Mayer and Palmowski,

[i]t is through interaction with each other and with outsiders that individual and group identities are constructed. Certain base co-ordinates such as geographic and familial origin are given, but they obtain their individual meanings through the emotional content gained in interaction with others.<sup>68</sup>

The emotional content in the EU-Turkey relations were already existent in conjunction with the Ottoman past of the Turks. As already mentioned "[e]vents such as two Ottoman sieges of Vienna did much to imprint a view of the Turks on Europeans, so that in Said's terms, Turks (and Muslims more generally) were defined as 'the other' by Europeans and imbued with a host of negative traits (for example, 'uncivilized', 'barbaric', 'heathen')."<sup>69</sup> This is also why the barbaric invader image of Turks emerges in the speeches of European officials and leaders from time to time such as in the speech delivered by Frits Bolkestein, then European Union Commissioner responsible for the Internal Market, at the Leiden University in September 2004 where he stated that "If Turkey accedes to the EU, then this means that the efforts of the German, Austrian and Polish troops that resisted the Ottoman Turks' siege of Vienna in 1683 would be in vain".<sup>70</sup>

As of the nineteenth century, the Ottomans became the 'sick man of Europe' and World War One brought the collapse of the Empire. Nonetheless, hostile confrontations of the Ottomans with the Christian community in the Balkan Wars and in World War One did nothing but to make the Ottomans' image worse in the eyes of the Europeans and to a

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<sup>63</sup> Onis, 107.

<sup>64</sup> Mayer and Palmowski, 574.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 575.

<sup>66</sup> Daniel Dombey, "Turkey's Legacy Casts Long Shadow over Talks with EU", *Financial Times*, September 6, 2004.

<sup>67</sup> For the falling short and/or omission of the Ottomans in establishing close engagements with Europeans, see Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). For a critical discussion of Turkish history, see Erich Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004).

<sup>68</sup> Mayer and Palmowski, 577.

<sup>69</sup> Kubicek, 68. For further information on Europe's definition of its other and critique of Euro-centric view, see Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage, 1979)

<sup>70</sup> European Voice, "Turkish Accession: why frank discussion is vital" 10 (No.30, September 2004): 9.

great extent strengthened the prejudices against the Ottomans with regard to their 'savagery'. When one follows the traces of the past, it is not hard to find 'hostile sentiments' against the Ottomans among the Europeans. Here is a simple manifestation of one of those 'hostile' sentiments against the Ottomans:

The primary and most essential factor in the situation is the presence, embedded in the living flesh of Europe, of an alien substance. That substance is the Ottoman Turk. Akin to the European family neither in creed, in race, in language, in social customs, nor in political aptitudes and traditions, the Ottomans have for more than five hundred years presented to the European powers a problem, now tragic, now comic, now bordering almost on burlesque, but always baffling and paradoxical.<sup>71</sup>

The systemic changes at the end of World War II began to change the Turkish position in the European order as well. The post war restructuring and emerging dynamics of the Cold War gave Turkey a specific role to play in the European order as the southeast bastion of its defense against Soviet expansionism. As a result, Turkey was an integral part of the European institutions that were created. Turkey first demonstrated its will to become a member of the EEC (i.e. now the EU) through a signing of an Association Agreement with the EEC in 1959. Since this day, "Turkey's status as a potential member has continuously evoked heated debate within the EU and remained at best ambiguous."<sup>72</sup> Drawing from the above discussion about Turkey's being Europe's other, "an important asymmetry seems to be evident concerning its [i.e. Europe] approach to and treatment of insiders and outsiders."<sup>73</sup> If one considers the recent enlargement of the CEECs, this reality comes to the surface and becomes much more visible. "It would not be possible to explain the differential treatment of the CEECs and Turkey, countries broadly at the same level of economic and political development, without reference to this factor."<sup>74</sup> The EU did not display the same eagerness and goodwill towards Turkey as it did towards the CEECs.

The discourses that emphasize the exclusive aspect of European identity based on geography and culture construct Turkey as inherently different. On the other hand, the discourses that emphasize the inclusive aspects of European identity construct Turkey as different from Europe solely in terms of acquired characteristics.<sup>75</sup>

Thus, the debates about Turkish membership to the EU are related with Europe's own confusion and hesitancy about its own identity. Debates over Turkish membership are merely the asymmetrical reflections of ongoing debates on European identity, in which 'mess' and 'confusion' about the shared identity among Europeans is no longer possible to hide.

[s]ince a European identity is not based on a common historical memory, it is difficult to argue that Turkey should be excluded on these grounds. As long as Turkey can fulfil the institutional, economic and legal requirements for membership, all of which are necessary to meet other conditions such as human rights, Turkey is not principally excluded from a European identity which has been shaped so decisively by the institutions and the law of the EU.<sup>76</sup>

Even though this constitutes the main factor in taking Turkey so far in the EU accession process, ideational factors play a significant role in determining the public's views on Turkey's accession. Because the question of shared identity of Europe heavily reveals

<sup>71</sup> John Arthur Ransome Marriot, *The Eastern Question*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1919), 3 as quoted in Kubicek, 68.

<sup>72</sup> Rumelili, 44.

<sup>73</sup> Onis, 112.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 593.

itself in the polls made at the societal level; it is thus relevant to discuss the opinion of the EU citizens as regards to the prospective Turkish membership to the EU.

### **Public Opinion: Support for Turkish Accession**

Since the latest enlargement round in May 2004, the public opinion in the EU towards further enlargement has changed in a negative direction "While 49% of the citizens of the EU are in favour of further enlargement of the EU in future years, 39% of the respondents oppose this."<sup>77</sup> Several events have contributed to this decline in the popular will vis-à-vis the European integration: (i) rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by the French and Dutch citizens in 2005; (ii) increasing rate of unemployment in several core EU member states; (iii) low rates of economic growth in the EU-25.

When framed as such, economic considerations might seem to affect the public attitude towards the accelerated integration. Beyond doubt, "[t]he main thrust of European integration has been to sweep away barriers to economic exchange, facilitate mobility of capital and labour, and create a single European monetary authority."<sup>78</sup> Therefore, it is no coincidence that economic factors play a major role in shaping the public opinion of the EU citizens. Looking back at the 2004 enlargement provides the simple fact that there were already clear reservations of the EU citizens as regards to the entrance of ten new members. The low level of economic development, concentration on agricultural sector, and the prospect of immigration to the core EU countries have been the characteristics of the state of nature of those states. The perceived impact of enlargement triggered an anxiety among the European public who were already suffering from the decline in economic performance in the European Union. All these economic arguments and concerns are also valid for Turkish membership. What is significant and determinant in the Turkish case is that fears and concerns of the EU citizens over Turkish membership are heavily impacted by the ideational, cultural and religious factors. These factors could be illustrated by an examination of public opinion in the EU towards Turkish accession through the Eurobarometer polls, the Special Eurobarometer and Standard Eurobarometer 64 of July 2006 are chosen for that purpose.

When the citizens of the EU are asked as regards to their choice of future members of the EU; the lowest level of support has been observed for Turkish membership to the EU. The question is as follows: "For each of the following countries, would you be in favor of against becoming part of the European Union in the future".<sup>79</sup> Results can be summarized as follows: "The 77 percent of the EU citizens would like to see most Switzerland and Norway as future members of the EU. In other words, with 77 percent of support level coming from the EU citizens, Switzerland and Norway are at top of the list of the countries that are most wanted to be seen as future members of the EU."<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, with the 31 percent of support level, Turkey has been found to be the least desired country in the list of the EU citizens as to which country they would like to see as future member of the EU.<sup>81</sup>

The most critical question of the Special Eurobarometer survey assesses whether the citizens of the EU are willing to see Turkey as a future member when Turkey complies with the EU criteria. "Once Turkey complies with all the conditions set by the European

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<sup>77</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 64, Public Opinion in the European Union, (Publication June, 2006): 134.

<sup>78</sup> Hooghe and Marks, 415.

<sup>79</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 64, 137.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*.

Union, would you be... to the accession of Turkey to the European Union?"<sup>82</sup> Results of the question are compiled in Table 1 below:

**Table 1:** Turkey's Accession Generates Approval or Disapproval?

1.	39% of the respondents are in favour of the Turkish accession while 48% oppose this.
2.	The strongest opposition comes from countries like Austria (81%), Germany (69%) and Luxembourg (69%) in which public opinion is already less in favour of enlargement.
3.	On the other hand, Cyprus (68%) and Greece (67%) are also in disfavour of Turkey's accession although they are generally in favour of accession of other countries.
4.	The strongest support comes from the Turkish Cypriot Community (67%). Conspicuously, 54% of the Turkish citizens are in favour of their country's accession and 22% of them oppose it.

Source: Special Eurobarometer 255, pp.70-1.

In this critical juncture, it is worthwhile to mention the positions of some EU member states vis-à-vis Turkish membership. However, before going deep down of the debate, there are some central points that still demand overall review. Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks point out the fact that

opposition to European integration is often couched as defense of the nation against control from Brussels. Radical right-wing parties in France, Denmark, Italy, and Austria tap nationalism to reject further integration, and since 1996 such parties have formed the largest reservoir of Euroskepticism in the EU as a whole.<sup>83</sup>

This analysis is especially true for the case of Turkey's EU membership. Members that are less in favour of further integration are also less in favour of Turkey's EU membership. For example, "[t]he German Christian Democrats (i.e. Christian Democratic Union and Christian Social Union) oppose Turkish accession together with Austria and several politicians in France, since it would 'overstretch' the EU."<sup>84</sup> Namely, material considerations which are driven by logic of consequentiality (e.g. overstretching of the EU) might appear to work in opposition to Turkey's EU membership. The same logic leads those parties to suggest a 'privileged partnership' to Turkey as opposed to full membership. In other words, albeit in an implicit manner, historical and cultural differences seem to deteriorate the Turkish case. According to Francois Heisbourg of the French Foundation for Strategic Research, "[i]t is more or less spoken or more or less hidden, but the major component in popular rejection of Turkey's admission is Islam."<sup>85</sup> Nonetheless, it has also to be noted that arguments about Turkey's cultural fit to Europe does not all come from the far-right political parties of Europe. For example, when former French Prime Minister Jean Marie Raffarin was asked in 2004 so as to comment about Turkish membership, he made the following remarks: "We are not doubting the good faith of Mr. Erdogan, but to what extent can today or tomorrow's government make Turkish society embrace Europe's human rights values? Do we want the river of Islam to enter the riverbed of secularism?"<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Special Eurobarometer 255, Attitudes towards European Union Enlargement, (Publication June, 2006): 70.

<sup>83</sup> Hooghe and Marks, 416.

<sup>84</sup> Kubicek, 73.

<sup>85</sup> Peter Ford, "Wariness over Turkey's EU Bid", *Christian Science Monitor*, (October 6, 2004) as quoted in Kubicek, 73.

<sup>86</sup> "Turkey's Francophiles Wounded by French EU Doubts" *Turkish Daily News*, (September 12, 2004) as quoted in Kubicek, 73.



Although the overall picture might appear to give negative signals about the issue of Turkey's cultural fit to Europe; there are however some positive arguments which prove that Turkish accession is still an attainable goal. Former German Prime Minister Joschka Fischer, once claiming himself to carry doubts about Turkish membership; has given the following statements after the 'War on Terrorism':

to modernize an Islamic country based on the shared values of Europe would almost be a D-Day for Europe in the war against terror, [because it] would provide real proof that Islam and modernity, Islam and the rule of law...[and] this great cultural tradition and human rights are after all compatible.<sup>87</sup>

To end the discussion on the public opinion about Turkish accession, nine statements, in which the EU public opinion as regards to Turkish membership are crystallized, are assumed to give valuable insights in this matter. Nine statements are produced from the answers given the subsequent question: "For each of the following please tell me you agree-% EU"<sup>88</sup>. Results are compiled in Table 2 below:

**Table 2:** Turkish Membership in the Eyes of the EU Citizens

1. "To join the EU in about ten years, Turkey will have to respect systematically Human Rights": 83 % agree and 7% disagree.
2. "To join the EU in about ten years, Turkey will have to significantly improve the state of its economy": 76 % agree and 10% disagree.
3. "Turkey's joining could risk favouring immigration to more developed countries in the EU": 63 % agree and 23% disagree.
4. "The cultural differences between Turkey and the EU Member States are too significant to allow for this accession": 55 % agree and 31% disagree.
5. "Turkey partly belongs to Europe by its geography": 54% agree and 35% disagree.
6. "Turkey partly belongs to Europe by its history": 40% agree and 45% disagree.
7. "Turkey's accession to the EU would favour the mutual comprehension of European and Muslim values": 38 % agree and 47 % disagree.
8. "Turkey's accession to the EU would strengthen the security in this region": 35% agree and 48% disagree.
9. "Turkey's accession would favour the rejuvenation of an ageing European population": 29% agree and 50% disagree.

Source: Standard Eurobarometer 64, p. 139.

In view of the nine statements presented above, it is possible to argue that in the eyes of the EU public 'Turkey's accession should be contingent on the fulfilment of certain conditions': the systematic respect for human rights (83%) and the significant improvement in the state of Turkish economy (76%). In other words, as Hooghe and Marks have previously pointed out both the identity (in the form of cultural traits, and religion) and economic rationality impact the public opinion on further EU enlargement.<sup>89</sup> Regarding the Turkish case, as the numbers clearly reveal, both the logic of consequentiality (implying to economic rationality) and the logic of appropriateness (referring to the shared identity, norms, values of the EU) appear to go hand in hand.

With respect to country profiles, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, Greece and Luxembourg are the countries in which there is already a tacit

<sup>87</sup> Robert Kagan, "Embraceable EU", *Washington Post*, (December 5, 2004) as quoted in Kubicek, 71.

<sup>88</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 64, 139.

<sup>89</sup> Hooghe and Marks, 415.

agreement on the view that Turkey will have to respect Human Rights in the following ten years. More than 9 out of ten respondents in those countries apparently adhere to this view. As for the case of Turkey itself, 69% of the Turkish respondents are in agreement that Turkey will have to demonstrate a systematic respect for human rights.<sup>90</sup>

As for the issue of economic improvement, there is almost unanimity among the respondents, 76% are in agreement with the view that Turkey will have to significantly improve the state of its economy. It is worth to remind that varying degrees of agreement among the countries seem to be arising from the 'don't know' responses which are tantamount to 14%. The highest level of agreement in this matter can be observed in Greece (92%), Finland (91%) and Belgium (90%).<sup>91</sup>

In reference to the discussion on further enlargement and the prospect of Turkish membership, the citizens of the Union in the final analysis are found to be displaying certain characteristics. See the following lines at the end of the Special Eurobarometer 2006;

Europeans surveyed recognize that EU enlargement will have positive consequences on mobility for Europe, the enrichment of cultural diversity, peace and stability, democracy, as well as the reinforcement of the EU's role on the international scene. In contrast, with regard to the economic and social consequences of the process, EU citizens worry most about employment. They fear an increase in labour transfer to countries where labour is cheaper, as well as expecting workers from future member states of the Union to settle in other EU countries...for future enlargement processes; apart from the low level of knowledge about the topic in general, benefits for the EU are less known compared to benefits for potential future member states.<sup>92</sup>

## Conclusion

This article attempted to analyze Turkish membership to the EU from the perspective of sociological institutionalism and argue that ideational and cultural factors play a very important role in Turkey's accession.

With regard to enlargement, rational institutionalists claim that players live in a world in which they seek to maximize their utility which is represented in the form of economic or security preferences. In case of conflict of interests, players utilize negotiations with the aim of distributing the benefits or accommodating the costs among themselves. Correspondingly, outcome of the negotiations is akin to manifest the distribution and asymmetries of power among the players. In a nutshell, both at the member state level and the applicant state, enlargement preferences are shaped by the calculation of expected cost-benefit of each individual state. Accordingly, each actor seeks to maximize the net benefits of its own. However, as Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier argued "it is not necessary that enlargement *as such* is beneficial to *each* member. Enlargement can also result from unequal *bargaining power* among the incumbents. Member states that expect net losses from enlargement will agree to enlargement if their bargaining power is sufficient to obtain full compensation through side-payments by the winners (which, in turn, requires that the necessary concessions do not exceed the winners' gains from enlargement). Otherwise, the losers will consent to enlargement if the winners are able to threaten them credibly with exclusion (and if the losses of exclusion for the loser exceed the losses of enlargement)."<sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 64, 140.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> Special Eurobarometer 255, 74

<sup>93</sup> Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 512-3.



As opposed to rationalist account, sociological/constructivist institutionalism sees enlargement as shaped by the ideational, cultural factors. Therefore analysis of enlargement is tantamount to the analysis of social identities, norms, values, rules.<sup>94</sup> Accordingly, enlargement politics inevitably focus on the “collective identity, the constitutive beliefs and practices of the community, and norms and rules of the organization.”<sup>95</sup> Obviously, Turkey’s membership is not guaranteed. Turkey still has a lot to do on its way to the EU. Turkey’s poor economic and political credentials are the main obstacles in front of Turkish accession to the EU. Turkey still needs further democratization in the political realm and the state of sustainable growth pattern in the economic realm. Stability and sustainability in both realms are assumed to help Turkey find its place in the international arena. It is no surprise that Turkish state needs to get into a profound and radical process of transformation in order to meet the EU demands throughout the entire accession process. Nonetheless, many commentators do not give up pointing out the ‘differences’ of Turkey in every occasion without taking into consideration the final stage arrived in Turkey-EU relations. Discussions on Turkey’s not belonging to the European family or hints on its Islamism are part of EU criteria in front of the Turkish membership. “To assert that Turkey cannot be a member of the EU because of its culture and, especially, because it is Muslim, would be ...an intrinsic and insurmountable incompatibility with democratic values and respect for human rights”.<sup>96</sup> Such claims on Turkish membership are mere reflections of Europe’s own confusion, disorientation about its own identity.<sup>97</sup> However, this seems to be where the debate mostly centers on. In other words, challenge is two-sided: one lies at the heart of the EU’s itself. The prospect of Turkish membership will not only determine the future of Turkey but also that of the Europe’s. Turkish identity and European identity are subject to change in accordance with the circumstances dictated by the nature of the relationship. The second challenge stands at the core of Turkish state in view of the fact that Turkey still needs to better its economic, societal and political conditions. Namely, “the realization of the EU dream and, in part at least, its pursuit, require a process of transvaluation whereby the normative core of political activity and institutions in Turkey faces the need not simply to adapt but radically change.”<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, 514.

<sup>96</sup> Jose Torreblanca, “Europe’s Reasons and Turkey’s Accession”, *Real Instituto Elcano* ARI (No. 199, 2004): 3.

<sup>97</sup> Eric H. Ballin, “Europe’s Borders and Basics: Where to Situate Turkey?”, (lecture delivered for the Centre for European Studies, Bogazici University, and the Foreign Policy Forum, Istanbul, 17 December 2004): 2.

<sup>98</sup> Leda Glyptis, “The Cost of Rapprochement: Turkey’s Erratic EU Dream as a Clash of Systemic Values”, *Turkish Studies* 6 (No. 3, September 2005): 402.

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## **Part Two**

### **Enlargement and Identity Changes**

# National Identity in Quantitative Empirical Surveys

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The main aim of this presentation is to underline the contribution, which the use of secondary data can make to the WP 8 of the RECON project. This paper concentrates on two modules of broad-range comparative project – ISSP (1995 and 2005 National Identity modules) and one comparative EC project. In presenting selected comparative results, the paper aims to demonstrate the possible use of ready-available data and secondary data analysis in combination with qualitative data of the RECON project as well as the compatibility of the secondary data with the three RECON models.

Let us open up with citation from seminal piece by Ernst Gellner. In *Nations and nationalism* Gellner wrote:

In case, that general social condition come together towards standardized homogenous, centrally protected high cultures penetrating all societal levels and not only elite minority, we can observe emergence of clearly defined educationally embedded and unified culture, which tends to converge with political units.

(Gellner 1993)

Thus, will, culture and state entity unify into a political unit. Czech sociologist Emmanuel Radl further compares nations to organism, in which nothing is natural rather; they are artifacts of human will (Radl 1929). On the contrary, according to Benedict Anderson, nations are political entities, which only exist in the minds of people, in the sense of borders as well as sovereignty (Anderson 1991). According to Heller, in the current times, nations find themselves in double tension between local and global (Heller 1993).

## ISSP – National Identity

In the 1995, 2003 ISSP, we find data on following issues:

1. relationship towards the place of residence and the willingness to move;
2. citizen, nation and state: perception of statehood, nationality and citizenship, national and ethnic family history, language skills and national pride and patriotism;
3. relationship of respondents country towards other countries: geographic preferences in political and economic cooperation with other countries and cultural proximity, relationship towards supranational bodies;
4. attitudes towards national minorities and migrants;
5. attitudes towards Austrian-Hungarian heritage (1993);
6. prospective voting in the accession referenda.

**Table 1:** Participants and number of cases in data files in particular waves of the ISSP research program (countries outside Europe excluded).

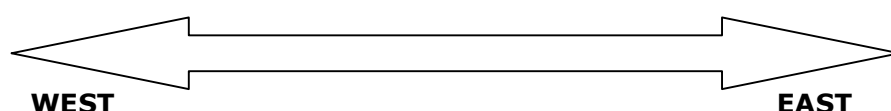
country	1995	2003	country 2/2	1995	2003
Belgium – Flanders	-	-			
Bulgaria	1105	1069	Netherlands	1044	1823
ČR2)	1111	1276	Norway	1527	1469
ČSFR2)			Poland	1598	1277
Denmark	-	1322	Portugal	-	1602
Finland	-	1379	Austria	1007	1006
France	-	1669	Russia	1585	2383
Ireland	994	1065	Northern Ireland	1043	-
Italy	1094	-	Slovakia*)	-	1152
Cyprus	-	-	Slovenia	1036	1093
Latvia	-	1000	Spain	1221	1212
Hungary	1000	1021	Sweden	1296	1186
Germany - West	1282	1287	Switzerland	-	1037
Germany - East	612		Great Britain	1058	837

Source: (Krejčí 2005) actualized data supplemented by the author.

#### *ISSP National Identity 1995*

**Table 2:** Subjective Division of Europe by Czech Respondents of the ISSP 1995 National identity

<b>Western Europe</b>	<b>Central Europe</b>	<b>Eastern Europe</b>
France (93)	Austria (58)	Croatia (50)
Netherlands (91)	Czech Republic (90)	Bulgaria (73)
Germany (78)	Poland (80)	Latvia (87)
Switzerland (77)	Hungary (77)	Ukraine (94)
Italy (68)	Slovakia (50)	Russia (97)



Source: ISSP 1995, adapted from Nedomova and Kostecky 1996, 24.

Based on 1995 ISSP data Nedomova and Kostecky propose following typology of Czech ISSP respondents' vis-à-vis their attitude to the EU:

#### *1st group – “Uninformed Eurosceptics”*

This group of respondents knows the least about EU, do not see any pros from Czech Republic accession into the EU, refuse the accession;

#### *2nd group – “Uninformed Eurooptimists”*

This group of respondents knows very little about EU, are not sure if the Czech Republic will benefit from the EU accession, but support the EU accession anyway;



### 3rd group – “Average-informed Eurosceptics”

Have some knowledge of the EU, but do not see any profit from Czech Republics accession into the EU, refuse the accession, Czech Republic should retain its independence from the EU;

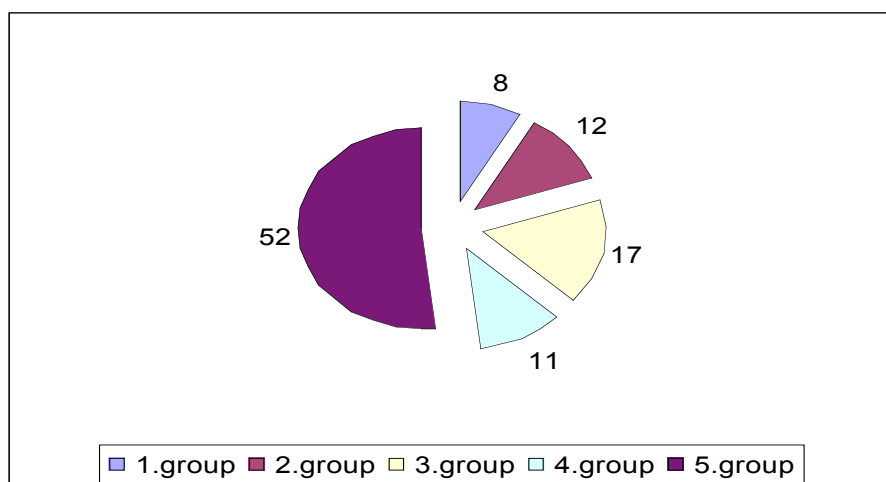
### 4th group “Average-informed Eurooptimists”

Have some knowledge of the EU, support the accession upon fulfillment of necessary conditions;

### 5th group “Well-informed Europeans”

This group of respondents has good knowledge of the EU, underlines benefits from accession, strongly support accession, as fast as possible (Nedomova and Kostecky 1996).

**Graph 1:** Typology of the Czech respondents of the 1995 ISSP towards the EU (in %)



Source: ISSP 1995 adapted from (Nedomova and Kostecky 1996, 24)

### *Summary of selected findings of the 1995 ISSP survey in the Czech Republic*

Most of the citizens have an intensive feeling of proximity towards their country - nationality and citizenship are perceived as one category. According to the respondents, “to be Czech” is defined by the knowledge of Czech language, Czech citizenship, and respect for political institutions and legal system of the country. To the lesser degree to be Czech one should also have Czech parents and to be born in the country. Czechs stressed the role of national character and critically assessed it as well as their state, they were mainly proud of their history, art, literature as well as the economic success after 1989. Czechs did not support wide opening of the country’s economy and culture to the foreign subjects and furthermore they showed rather negative attitudes towards immigrants – pointed to the danger of organized crime, endangering of the labor market, possible cultural conflicts. However, the survey detected more positive attitudes were towards political refugees and asylum seekers.

Based on these findings Czech society in 1995 was rather closed, traditionalist, conservative nationally and ethnically homogeneous, whose national identity was constituted and confirmed in the past, it had to yet adopt European identity.

### *ISSP National Identity 2003*

Based on the comparison of the Czech ISSP data on national identity from 1995 and 2003 we observe that Czechs become more open in regard to what it means to be Czech – in 2003 it is less important than in 1995 to speak Czech, but it is increasingly more

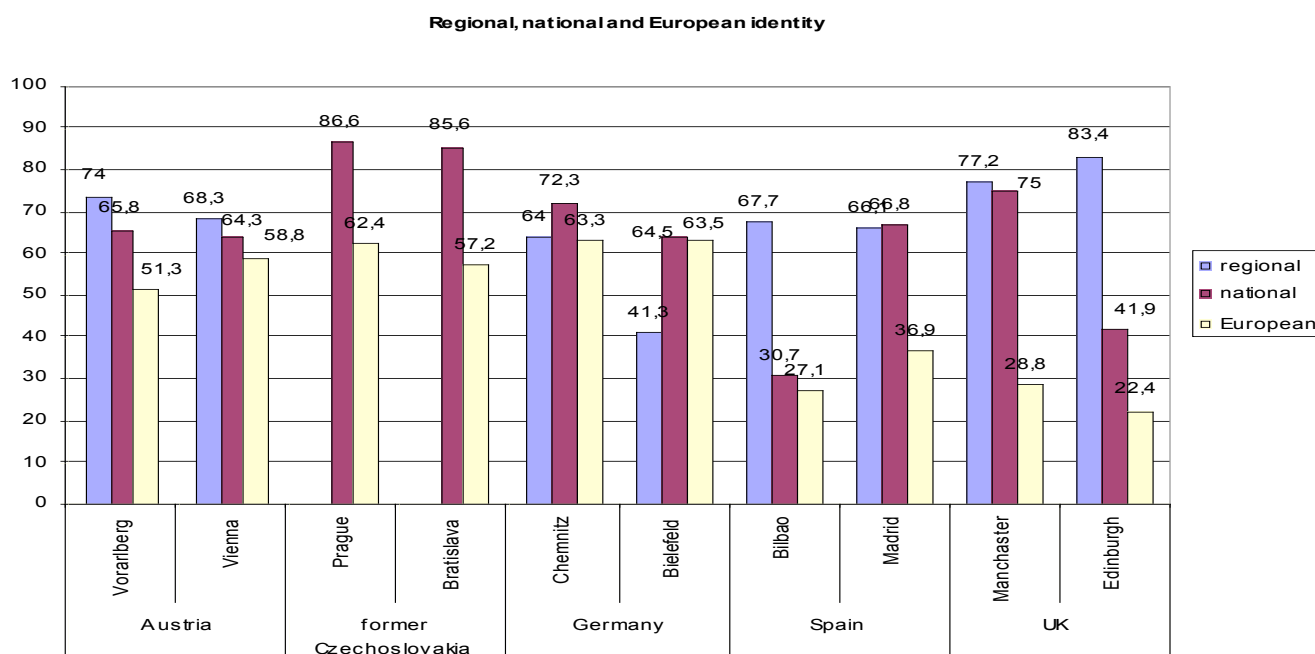
important to have a Czech citizenship, to feel Czech and to respect the institutional and the legal system of the Czech republic, Czechs also increasingly stressed the importance of living most of ones life in the Czech republic. In regard to the relationship to the EU, the data support Carey's notion that stronger national identity leads to less support for the EU and vice versa. And respondents who more closely identify with Czech Republic tend to underline the need for retaining national sovereignty within the EU – in RECON model words, they tend to support the regional-cosmopolitan model (3) and favor the least the federal-multinational model (2).

### **Orientations of Young Men and Women to Citizenship and European Identity<sup>99</sup>**

In summer 2003 the EC project „The Orientations of Young Men and Women to Citizenship and European Identity” asked its respondents (young people aged 18-24). The main goal was to provide EC and broader political representation with understanding what does it mean to be “European” to young people around Europe. The main question to the young man and women in six European countries was “Who are you?” (Macháček 2004). The project provides interesting insight into different patterns of formation of European identity.

The sample was composed by 400 young people in each of the two cities in following four countries: Vienna and Vorarlberg in Austria; Madrid and Bilbao in Spain; Chemnitz and Bielefeld in Germany; Edinburgh and Manchester in the UK; and two cities in former Czechoslovakia – Prague and Bratislava (Macháček 2004). As we can see, the researchers intentionally chose two more or less autonomous locations within one country, one of which in the past sought independence from the other. The only successful example of this separation was Czechoslovakia. The project combined quantitative and qualitative methodology; however, this presentation concentrates only on the relevant results of the quantitative survey.

**Graph 2: Regional, National and European Identity**



Source: Adapted from (Macháček 2004), data: EC project „The Orientations of Young Men and Women to Citizenship and European Identity” 2003.

<sup>99</sup> This part is based on Macháček 2004 and other materials of the project.

European identity was strongest in Germany and in Prague, where almost two thirds of the respondents very strongly or strongly identified as Europeans. On the contrary the weakest identification with European identity occurred in Spain and the UK, where less than one third of respondents felt like Europeans.

National identity was the strongest in Prague and Bratislava with more than 85% of the respondents identifying with the nation state.

Regional identity was important in Edinburgh, where more than 80% of the respondents identified themselves as Scots, followed by more than 70% of respondents from Vorarlberg and Manchester who identified with their respective regional identities.

#### *Reasons for Identification with Europe*

1. *Automatic mechanisms* – some respondents claimed that to be Europeans is automatic effect of the geographical location (country located in Europe) or membership in formal categories (EU member state). This type of discourse reflects weak basic identification. This discourse appeared in the pattern where national identity was the strong basis and European identity formed superior level of identity.

2. *Identification based on pride* – some respondents expressed their pride of common European culture, values and lifestyle (what Europe achieved in the past, within the global context; its living standards, attitudes towards family and religion) as well as political attitudes (overcoming the problems of nationalism and provincialism, and shared negative attitudes towards the war in Iraq).

3. *Identification based on personal experience* – this discourse was a result of personal contact with Europe due to travel, work and study as well as personal feeling of belonging (Europe defined as home).

#### *Reasons for absence of identification with Europe*

1. *Refusal of certain attitudes and behavior* – some respondents associated Europe with attitudes they refuse (exclusion of religious minorities, past full of conflicts and wars), others had more specific reasons for refusal such as power dominance of big countries in EU at the expense of the small EU member states (Europe is only France and Germany, but not us) or they felt that European identity was not necessary (for these respondents national identity was satisfactory).

2. *Absence of personal involvement* – part of the respondents did not identified with Europe because they felt that it has no sense for their life (mainly those lacking experience with mobility within Europe and with the everyday discourse of European affairs). for some Europe was too far stretched concept (too far from their everyday life), yet some lacked the existence of European discourse altogether (total lack of identification).

#### *Types of configurations between national and European identity:*

##### *1. Neo-European identity*

Emphasizes postnational identification with the EU which dominates national identity (occurred relatively often in Austria and Germany);

##### *2. Modern national/European configuration of identity*

Hegemonic national identity which includes regional identity and is compatible with European identity (typical for Prague, Bratislava and Madrid and to some degree in Edinburgh), this configuration often implied automatically “nested” understanding of individual identities.

### 3. Modern regional/European configuration of identity

Hegemonic regional identity replaces/surpasses identification with the nation state, and is compatible with European identity (typical for Bilbao, but appeared also in Edinburgh). Automatic mechanisms of identification were more prevalent in Spain, but not in EU and Europe. Basque-European identity appeared less often in Bilbao, and is generally connected with weaker identification with Spain.

### 4. Traditional regional/national configuration of identity

Hegemonic regional identity, which is often compatible with identification with the nation state, occurred most often in Edinburgh. Double Scottish-British identity was most often appearing configuration here. But it should be pointed out that Scottish respondents presented wide scale of discourses on configuration of their respective identities.

### 5. Traditional national identity

Traditional national identity leads to weak identification with Europe (and to the absence of EU as meaningful social category) – occurred in Manchester.

### 6. Absence of identification

Absence of identification with either ethnic-political category occurred in connection with global – cosmopolitan identity (accompanied by absence of identification with any national category) or individualist attitudes (refusal of any social categorization, because it leads to stereotypic perception of individuals. This type of configuration occurred in Bilbao and Edinburgh.

## **Tentative Conclusions**

To conclude the first general overview of the quantitative surveys on national identity, it is possible to say that:

1. In the comparative ISSP data on National identity we find direct relationship between identification with Europe and EU and identification with nation state; this is also valid for areas with strong regional identity;
2. The EC project „The Orientations of Young Men and Women to Citizenship and European Identity” described two main identification mechanism with Europe and the EU – a) automatic identification with “nested” categories related to the weak identification with Europe and the EU; b) identification with Europe and the EU submerged to the hegemonic national identity. The perception of incompatibility was based on exclusive nationalistic discourses and on perception of conflict between EU policies and interest of respective nation states (which were dominating the discourse);
3. European identity is in formation and can be strengthening by personal exposure;
4. Construction of the EU as accepted social category was strengthened if the EU was perceived as independent political actor.

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# Polish public opinion regarding the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe

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The commencement of research within the frames of RECON coincided with a crucial period in the history of the European Union. At the beginning of 2007 the future of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe was still uncertain. Taking into consideration the salience of its provisions, which were meant to turn a new leaf in the process of the European integration, the research team in Study One decided to focus, among others, on the significance of the Treaty. The problems pertaining to the ratification of the Treaty contributed to a crisis of European identity, which had been sparked off by recent enlargements. We assumed that public opinion polls regarding the Treaty might provide substantial material to supplement the research into distribution of identifications in the Polish society. The findings of this study were presented during the workshop held in Kraków in October 2007.

In recent years Europe has constituted an important topic in public debate in Poland, the salience of which has only been heightened by accession to the European Union and its effects. Hundreds of thousands of Polish people have had the opportunity to experience Europe directly as a result of migration and frequent contacts with other Europeans in Poland and abroad. Nowadays, thanks to readily accessible information about the European Union through the Internet, press and television, Poles can gain more knowledge and awareness about processes in Europe and possibly become more involved in shaping the future of the EU and thus of Poland. A recent recurring theme in the debate on the future of Europe has been The Treaty Establishing a Constitution for the European Union.

The purpose of this paper is to explore and characterise Polish views on the European Constitutional Treaty, the level of knowledge about the Treaty and the interest Poles take in it. All of these will be set against the background of factors that may have affected Polish public opinion.

The key finding of this study is that in general Poles are broadly supportive of the Constitutional Treaty, which overlaps with their support for Poland's membership in the European Union (Public Opinion Research Center 2007b). At the same time, while still in favour of the Constitutional Treaty, Poles feel they are not well informed about this document, and the study reveals lack of substantial knowledge of the content of the Treaty. In the aftermath of the failure of referenda in France and the Netherlands, public opinion polls found that the support for the Constitutional Treaty had dropped dramatically. This brings the study logically onto the consideration of factors that may potentially be influential in gaining involvement on the part of Polish society in the debate. The question is whether one can continue building a common Europe, a European identity without a European public opinion.

The Treaty may have lost only in two countries, but the general public was affected in the whole of Europe. The ratification process was suspended and the European Union thrust into a period of reflection in order to reassess its future development. While European political elites somehow reached a consensus over the Constitutional Treaty, they failed to engage and explain the document to the general public. Now it has become self evident that a European public opinion will not approve of any developments in which their say is neglected.

The aim of this study is to establish what factors may have influenced Polish public opinion regarding the Constitutional Treaty between 2003 and 2007. In order to achieve this, the structure of this paper will be as follows: firstly, patterns of public opinion regarding the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe and its ratification will be explored and characterized. Secondly, sources of influence on public support for the EU Constitutional Treaty will be considered.

The central questions of this study are: Do Poles consider the European Constitutional Treaty an important and necessary document? Is the Treaty known and recognized? Do Poles want to be involved in the debate on the Constitutional Treaty and at the same time on the future of the European Union?

In order to measure public opinion regarding the EU Constitutional Treaty, a number of different sources of public opinion may be accessed. Due to limits on sample sizes in any study of public opinion, it is beneficial to consider multiple sources of data. As a basis for this paper, public opinion is measured according to the following indicators: statistics and research quoted from CBOS (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, or Public Opinion Research Centre), The Institute of Public Affairs and the EU Commission Eurobarometer reports.

Interestingly, the public political debate in Poland has devoted little attention to the Constitutional Treaty so far. In the electoral campaigns of 2005 and 2007 the debate on the model and strategy of the European integration was largely disregarded. Despite reluctance on the part of Polish political elites to discuss the future of the European Union and the new treaty, public opinion surveys show broad support for European integration and the Constitutional Treaty for Europe, which brings us logically onto the consideration that these positive attitudes towards further European integration should be taken into account by political elites in Poland.

### **Polish public opinion on The Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe**

Since the commencement of the European Convention responsible for preparing the new treaty, support for this project has remained at a high level. However, knowledge of the Treaty has always been limited. A CBOS survey in October 2003 found that 41% of Poles did not hear about the draft treaty at all, with 47% who had heard of the EU Constitutional Treaty and only 12% who declared they had not only heard of it, but also knew its content (Public Opinion Research Center 2003a). Results by socio-demographic characteristics revealed that the most educated showed a higher rate of persons who had heard of the treaty (64%) than the lesser educated and that more men (66%) had heard of it than women (52%). Social interest in the constitution has also been at a relatively low level, as found by a Eurobarometer survey in October 2003 – only 26% of Poles declared they would read the draft treaty (European Commission 2003). The same survey found that 42% of Poles agreed with the idea of having a European constitution.

Before the EU summit in December 2003 the media devoted a lot of attention to the European Constitutional Treaty, and it was expected that public awareness of the project would increase. This expectation is borne out by CBOS statistics, which showed an increase in knowledge of the Treaty in comparison with the equivalent October 2003 figures noted earlier. 67% of Poles claimed they had heard of the Treaty and among them 18% said they were familiar with the content of it (Public Opinion Research Center 2003b). Consecutive research conducted by CBOS in January 2004 showed another increase in recognition of the Constitutional Treaty – 71% of respondents declared they had heard of it, with 29% who said they knew nothing about the document. At the same time, 64% of Poles declared they would take part in a referendum and among them 56% would vote “yes” (Public Opinion Research Center 2004). However, only 32% of Poles claimed they were well informed about the Constitution (European Commission 2004).



These statistics confirm the expectation that more information and debate about the Treaty would result in greater support and recognition of it.

The CBOS figures for a constitutional referendum in February 2005 showed a slight increase – 66% of Poles wanted to vote and among them 64% claimed they would support the Constitutional Treaty (Public Opinion Research Center 2005a), and this was followed by a decrease noted in two consecutive surveys – in April and May 2005 58% and 61% of respondents respectively declared participation in a constitutional referendum and 56% and 60% respectively claimed they would vote “yes” (Public Opinion Research Center 2005b, 2005c). It was then that a slight fall in support for the EU was noted which might have resulted from institutional problems with regard to the Treaty. The decrease might also be partly attributed to the heated debates before the constitutional referenda in France and the Netherlands and the anticipated negative outcome.

The rejection of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe in France and the Netherlands affected the general public across Europe, and this could be noticed too in Poland. After the no-votes in France and the Netherlands the Treaty was proclaimed by some European politicians as dead and the crisis in the EU these referenda had sparked must have had a negative impact on Polish public opinion. The CBOS figures for constitutional referendum intentions changed dramatically. In June 2005, 43% of respondents claimed they would vote “yes” in a referendum, and 24% claimed they would vote “no”. At the same time, 54% of Poles declared they would take part in a referendum (Public Opinion Research Center 2005d). After the no-votes in France and the Netherlands the Treaty was proclaimed by some European politicians as dead and the crisis in the EU these referenda had sparked must have had a negative impact on Polish public opinion.

The most recent CBOS survey revealed the lowest rate of social interest in the Constitution – which had always been limited – since the European Convention submitted the draft treaty. In June 2007 69% of respondents said they were not interested in this matter, with only 27% interested. Moreover, Poles claimed that the issue of adopting the Constitution would not influence the position of Poland in the EU. The majority of respondents (58%) thought this position would depend on the performance and activity on the part of Polish authorities in this regard in the European arena (Public Opinion Research Center 2007a).

After a two-year period of reflection it seems that Poles have lost the interest in the Treaty. They no longer consider it salient as they could see the crisis did not disturb the functioning of the Union. Moreover, it should be stressed that the issue of the EU Constitutional Treaty is almost non-existent in political debate in Poland, as it could be noticed in the recent parliamentary elections.

### **Potentially influential factors on Polish public opinion regarding the EU Constitutional Treaty**

Having described the pattern of Polish public opinion regarding the European Constitutional Treaty between 2003 and 2007, we must now analyse what factors may account for this pattern. There are a few indicators that seem to corroborate the results of public opinion surveys on support for the EU Constitutional Treaty. In this study the sources of influence to be considered will be: support for EU membership and European integration, the level of public knowledge about the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe and trust in European as well as domestic institutions.

#### *1. Support for EU membership and closer integration*

Since Polish accession to the European Union, public support for membership and European integration has grown steadily. Currently, according to approval ratings 89% of

Polish society supports EU membership, with only 5% opposed (Public Opinion Research Center 2007a). The support for Polish membership in the EU is not only common to people across the whole country, but also among all socio-demographical groups and supporters of all political parties. Poles perceive Poland's EU membership as a good thing (64%) which positively affects the situation in the country and has strengthened Poland's position in the international arena (54%) (Public Opinion Research Center 2006b). A correlation can be seen between the support for Poland's membership in the EU and support for the Constitutional Treaty. People who positively assess Poland's membership in the EU more often support the Constitution – three quarters (75%) of those who respond positively to EU membership also hold positive views about the EU Constitution. The support and positive perception of the Constitutional Treaty may be connected with satisfaction with Poland's membership in the EU. Moreover, 69% of Poles support closer integration, which may be attributed to their vision of the EU as a source of benefits and a chance for Poland's development. In a survey carried out by the Institute of Public Affairs in 2006, 49% of respondents expressed support for a common EU foreign minister, 52% for the armed forces under joint command and 49% for common government (Ćwiek-Karpowicz 2006). The fact that Poles are supportive of closer integration can be seen as yet another factor influencing their positive perception of the Treaty. Moreover, Poles are in favour not only of deepening European economic integration (85%), but also integration in political (55%) and axiological spheres (52%) (Public Opinion Research Center 2007a). Some of the abovementioned elements were embedded in the Constitutional Treaty, which may account for the support the Treaty gained.

## *2. Knowledge about the Constitutional Treaty*

Generally speaking, Poles reveal a marked interest in European affairs; only 17% of respondents in an Institute of Public Affairs survey claimed they had no views on the current condition of the EU. In the view of 44% of Poles, the EU is going through serious difficulties, while 39% said the Union works correctly (Ćwiek-Karpowicz 2006). A possible reason for this discrepancy in opinions may result from a lack of point of reference – being a member for such a short period of time Poles find it difficult to assess if what the EU is going through is a usual condition or an unprecedented crisis. Poles not only support the new Treaty, but most of them declared they had heard of it (71%). More than half of Polish society (57%) claimed the Treaty is necessary for the Union to improve its performance and said the Treaty contained some practical provisions which would improve the decision-making in the EU and ensured equality between member states (Giza-Poleszczuk 2005, 21). However, only 15% of respondents declared their knowledge was good, with 56% who admitted that they lacked basic information about the Treaty (Ćwiek-Karpowicz 2006). Positive attitudes towards the Constitutional Treaty prevail among people who are most familiar with it. In a survey conducted by the Institute of Public Affairs in 2006, 78% of those who declared substantial knowledge about the Treaty said they supported the project and 55% of those who did not hear anything about the Treaty would support the opinion that the EU needed it (Ćwiek-Karpowicz 2006). As can be seen, despite relatively low declared levels of knowledge about the Treaty, Polish opinions remain very positive.

## *3. Trust in European institutions*

Polish public opinion with respect to domestic political institutions may be characterized by mistrust and a lack of identification with the political elites and parties. A direct result of this distrust is poor turnout and apathy in elections. In the last-but-one parliamentary election in September 2005, which brought the Law and Justice party to power, turnout was just over 40% (National Electoral Commission 2005). However, the last parliamentary election showed an increase in the turnout, which was almost 54% (National Electoral Commission 2007). It may be argued that in the light of distrust in domestic political institutions, Poles turn to Europe shifting their trust to European institutions. A CBOS survey carried out in 2006 showed that 62% of Poles trusted the

European Union. However, the trust in national political institutions remained at a significantly lower level. Only 30% of respondents declared they trusted the Polish parliament and 47% claimed they trusted the government (Public Opinion Research Center 2006a). The trust and positive perception of EU institutions seem to be the reasons why Poles are in favour of the Constitutional Treaty, as they associate it with the positive image they hold of the European Union.

To sum up, analysis of public opinion surveys results shows that Polish public opinion with regard to the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe is linked to public opinion regarding EU membership, the level of public knowledge about the EU and Constitutional Treaty, trust in European institutions and opinion on domestic political institutions. While the complex interplay between the aforementioned factors is important, there are more factors not discussed here that may have also influenced Polish public opinion regarding the European Constitutional Treaty. Therefore, avenues of analysis remain open and may merit further study in the future.

Polish society, citizens of the European Union, should play an important role in shaping the future of Europe and thus their own. Europe is a project yet to be completed, and therefore I think Poland and its citizens ought to take part in the process in every possible sphere of daily life and seek assistance and inspiration for their activity in the European project. To this end, it is crucial that they are well-informed and actively engaged in the project.

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# Turkey in Cosmopolis

## Turkish Elite Perceptions of a European Project

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### Introduction

The nature of the unfolding European Union (EU) project is uncertain but there are three broad shapes into which it may crystallise: an inter-governmentalist Europe, a federal Europe, and a post-national, cosmopolitan Europe. Each of these potential trajectories piques a number of philosophical and practical questions with ramifications for how EU citizens, aspiring members, and others will view Europe and their relationship with the Union. The inter-governmentalist project is associated with Westphalian concepts of order and belonging. An inter-governmentalist Europe would retain the current national pluralism of the EU but continue the pooling of sovereignty in clearly delineated functional areas. By way of contrast, in a federated 'United States of Europe' the locus of loyalty of EU citizens, a nascent European *demos*, would shift from the national to the supra-national. Federal Europe would be a sort of Westphalian state writ large with a number of *sui generis* features. A post-national, cosmopolitan Europe would take this logic even further. Departing from the Westphalian model altogether, a cosmopolitan Europe would be built by a 'novel and truly "civic" type of *demos*...which transcends culture and represents nothing but the collective consent emanating from shared moral values'<sup>100</sup>. Yet, predication of cosmopolitan Europe on common values is a paradoxical undertaking. This is because the 'civic' values upon which a cosmopolitan Europe would be built are not culturally neutral. Such values emerged from the crucible of Western European historical experience. This means that non-Western European participants in a post-national, cosmopolitan European polity—a polity which aspires to be a model for the rest of the world<sup>101</sup>—are faced with two choices. Either they must set aside values and practices steeped in their own historical, cultural, and national experience. Or they must attempt the daunting task of building a consensus with their partners in cosmopolis around syncretic values which allow for the reconciliation of the local and the universal. The question is whether EU citizens, aspiring members, and others are able or willing to attempt such a reconciliation of national particularity and the cosmopolitan project's pretensions to universality.

This paper locates the cosmopolitan European project in discourse about 'universal values' emanating from the EU, values upon which the Union claims it is founded and which it seeks to export. It explores perceptions of these claims by the political elite of a candidate country with a long history of both deep attraction to Europe and fierce defence of its own particularity. Specifically, it canvasses the perceptions of Turkish Islamists, nationalists, and social democrats—the three main constituencies for and against greater integration with Europe. It is based on analysis of interviews with representatives of these ideological positions. Respondents' views are canvassed as to what values, if any, qualify as universal, and whether the EU's enlisting of such values is legitimate. The paper then explores whether respondents believe that Turkish adhesion to a European cosmopolitan enterprise is desirable. It tentatively concludes that whilst most Turkish commentators believe in the existence of universal values and the legitimacy of a political project built upon such values, they are more ambivalent about the prospects of Turkish adhesion to a European cosmopolis. The sources of ambivalence,

<sup>100</sup> Peter A. Kraus, 'Cultural pluralism and European polity-building: neither Westphalia or Cosmopolis', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40/4, (2003):, 669.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

however, differ between ideological camps. The paper is an analytical-descriptive exercise, presenting preliminary results from interviews conducted with prominent Turkish public intellectuals and politicians. As part of an on-going research project the goal is to let respondents' speak for themselves rather than frame their views through a particular theoretical lens.

## Background

The sixteen interviews utilised in this analysis<sup>102</sup> were selected for their representativity of the discourse of the major constituencies for and against Turkey's integration with the Union: moderate Islamists (MI), nationalists (NA), and social democrats (SD)<sup>103</sup>. Moderate Islamists associated with the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* AKP) have controlled the parliament and government since 2002. The party is a coalition of modernists and traditionalists as well as adherents of rival Islamic sects. The modernist leadership broke with its anti-Western, anti-secular roots in the wake of a 28 February 1998 'post-modern coup' which targeted political Islamist actors. These AKP figures espouse a pro-EU, pro-rights discourse which appears to be reconciled with political and economic liberalism. At the same time, they seek to carve greater space for religiosity in public life. Critics therefore believe that the AKP's discursive embrace of EU 'universal values' discourse is insincere—a strategy for penetrating the secularist state. The AKP won a resounding 47 percent of the national vote in July 2007 national elections. Of the four MI respondents whose views are canvassed in this paper, three are prominent figures within the modernist clique. The fourth, a founding member of the conservative nationalist Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi* ANAP), is close to key personalities in the AKP. His views are incorporated into the corpus because they are representative of a conservative nationalist faction within the AKP coalition whose position on issues unrelated to religious semiotics overlap considerably with those of secularist nationalists<sup>104</sup>.

Nationalists in Turkey come in both right-wing and left-wing variants. Adherents of the former are associated with the National Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* MHP) founded by pan-Turkist Alparslan Türkeş. Anti-Western, and anti-imperialist, they espouse a populist, ultranationalist interpretation of Turkey's foundational ideology, Kemalism. The MHP has taken part intermittently in coalition governments since the 1970s. Partners in the 1999-2002 government, the party recently won 14 percent of the vote and in its time in parliament to date have cooperated with the AKP. Secularist, they differ from left-wing nationalists in that they uphold Islamic religiosity as a marker of Turkish national culture. Meanwhile, left-wing nationalist discourse is the hallmark of the current ruling faction of the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* CHP) which won 21 percent of the vote in the last elections. It is also endorsed by important elements of the military and judiciary. This group has made defence of its interpretation of Atatürk's principles of secularism and national sovereignty into its *raison d'être*. Their interpretation revolves around the Kemalist injunction to protect national sovereignty at all costs<sup>105</sup> and is thus hostile towards the European cosmopolitan project. Many elements of their discourse overlap with that of the nationalist right. The focus in this paper is on the perceptions of right-wing nationalists represented by four prominent exponents.

<sup>102</sup> The interviews were selected from a larger sample of fifty-five in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted from between December 2006 and May 2007.

<sup>103</sup> Respondents have been coded as MI1, MI2, MI3, MI4, NA1, NA2 etc. Their names are not revealed out of principle although the overwhelming majority of respondents were comfortable with being quoted openly.

<sup>104</sup> I did not interview any radical Islamists affiliated with the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi* SP) since its resonance in Turkish political life has been usurped by the AKP. The moderate Islamist respondents spanned a range of Islamist convictions.

<sup>105</sup> '*Egemenlik, kayıtsız, şartsız milletindir*' ('Sovereignty is unconditionally the nation's')



There are also two variants of social democrats. One group, whom I call, Kemalist social democrats (KSD) come from the CHP tradition and were affiliated with the party until its recent turn towards more nationalist discourse. KSD figures have a Kemalist formation but in lieu of the emphasis on national sovereignty they tend to privilege Atatürk's injunction to integrate the country with 'contemporary civilisation' (*muasır medeniyet*) traditionally understood as the West and associated today with 'universal' values. Staunchly secularist, in principle they seek integration with Europe but are wary of the possibility that EU-oriented revisionism could empower anti-secularist forces. Four KSD figures are respondents to this study. A second group of liberal social democrats—often called 'liberal-leftists' in Turkey and whom I have labelled (LSD)—come from a leftist tradition of opposition to the Kemalist establishment. Many were communists in the 1970s. Persecution in the wake of the 1980 coup catalysed their embrace of political liberalism and social democracy. A number of LSD figures including two respondents to this study collaborate with moderate Islamists in pursuit of reform by writing at Islamist newspapers or become parliamentarians on the AKP ticket. Although they do not field a political party, KSD and LSD personalities are well represented in the intelligentsia and business and NGO communities. Broadcasting their arguments from print and television media and civil society platforms, they play a more salient role in shaping national debate than their weight in policy-making mandates.

The interviews were conducted during a rocky time for both domestic politics and Turkey-EU relations<sup>106</sup>. At the domestic level tension percolated on two fronts. One was escalating confrontation between the AKP and secular establishment which culminated in a crisis over the presidential candidacy of an AKP figure whose wife veils. The second source of conflict was nationalist backlash at EU-oriented reforms undertaken from 2002 to 2005 by the AKP with the endorsement of many LSD commentators. The inflamed atmosphere drove an ultranationalist youth to assassinate Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink in January 2007, exacerbating social and ideological cleavages in Turkish society.

At the international level, there was also tension on two counts. First, Turkey-EU ties were confounded by rising resistance to Turkish membership from within the EU. Citing public opinion, prominent politicians from the centre-right in France, Germany, Austria, and Belgium voiced their opposition to Turkish accession on grounds many Turks perceived as racist. A French parliamentary resolution criminalising Armenian genocide denial further inflamed Turkish public opinion. Meanwhile, the EU accession process continued on paper but in reality ground to a halt with the December 2006 EU decision to freeze negotiations on eight accession chapters due to impasse over Cyprus. Political parties sought to capitalise on resentment to the EU in the build-up to July 2007 national elections. The prospect of an independent northern Iraq, resurgent Kurdish separatist violence, and perceptions of American agency in both further fed anti-Western sentiment. This charged domestic and international backdrop must be borne in mind when reading respondents' perceptions of Europe cosmopolitan or otherwise.

## **Turkish elite perceptions of Cosmopolis**

### *Defining the 'universal'*

Respondents were first asked to define the word 'universal'<sup>107</sup>. The question was asked to encourage inductive reasoning so that interviewees would stake out their own, pre-political position on the 'universal.' Respondents' understanding of the term evinced a cross-cutting consensus with the exception of some nationalists. The most frequent

<sup>106</sup> Cf, Nora Onar, *Kemalists, Islamists, and liberal: Shifting patterns of confrontation and consensus, 2002 to 2006*, *Turkish Studies*, 8/2, (2007).

<sup>107</sup> 'Sizin için evrensel kelimesi ne anlamına geliyor?'

definition was that the 'universal' is something valid for people everywhere despite the nuances of language and culture<sup>108</sup>. Yet there was considerable nuance with regard to the spatiality, temporality, and ethics with which this definition was imbued.

In terms of spatiality, there was concern with degree. Some felt that only physics, maths and human biology were truly universal<sup>109</sup>. Certain human needs and emotions were also seen as universal, from hunger and need for sleep<sup>110</sup>, to desire for a moral framework<sup>111</sup>. Several respondents immediately identified the universal with shared principles or values<sup>112</sup>. There was accord that the more one delves into the moral, the social, and the cultural, the more one encounters exception and particularity. Respondents sought to delineate at what point the universal elides into the particular. Several politicians and a former diplomat used the language of international relations, defining the universal as something non- or supra-national, something global<sup>113</sup>. A liberal newspaper editor and a representative of the religious right both evoked the Ottoman term *cihanişümül* meaning 'encompassing the world' as an ideal. But for the latter it was necessary to temper the ideal with the particular and practical:

From the point of view of humanism and religion, I look at the universal with sympathy. Yet I am someone who, above all, loves the Turkish nation. I would never put my own country, the values and interest of my people, in the background. So a humanist ideal, *cihanişümül*, certainly should be our goal. But honestly, with the conditions before us, these are a bit far away. As an old politician *realpolitik* seems more important to me<sup>114</sup>.

In this formulation, the universal is a transnational, indeed transcendental ideal. But the here and now requires patriotism and realism. As will be shown, this equation of universality with utopia, and particularity with the real world was characteristic of right-wing nationalist responses<sup>115</sup>.

Meanwhile, there was considerable diversity in the temporality assigned to the universal. For moderate Islamists, the universal was located in a pre-modern past and post-modern, globalised world. Modernity, in between and in eclipse, was a force which homogenised societies into national particulars and set them in conflict with one another<sup>116</sup>. The Harvard-educated, editor-in-chief of an Islamist daily said, for example, that in the past people were bounded by their place of birth. This meant that when they looked at the stars they felt themselves 'enclosed by a great universe'. This could lead to parochialism, but could also move a person 'to search for points of contact with others, with the Other'<sup>117</sup>. Though enchanted receptivity to the universal belonged to a bygone era, globalisation and complex webs of communication create opportunities today for comparable reciprocal influence (*karşılıklı etkileşim*). A similar point was made by an AKP legislator for whom the universal was something he understood growing up in a village. It is, 'a state of first knowledge...the impromptu understanding that people everywhere have the same impressions, understand things in the same way....Modernity silences this basic truth through institutions like military service which force you to 'stand in file, sing

<sup>108</sup> [MI1], [MI2], [KSD3], [KSD4], [LSD1], [LSD2], [LSD4]

<sup>109</sup> [KSD2], [LL1]

<sup>110</sup> [LL1]

<sup>111</sup> [MI2]

<sup>112</sup> [KSD4], [LSD2], [LSD4]

<sup>113</sup> [KSD4]

<sup>114</sup> [MI3]

<sup>115</sup> [NA2], [NA3], [NA4]

<sup>116</sup> [MI1], [MI2]

<sup>117</sup> [MI1]

anthems, wear the same clothing; you learn to battle, you learn Atatürk. But when you go home you see that life hasn't changed much<sup>118</sup>.

For social democrats, especially KSD respondents, the universal was not something intrinsic that was suppressed and then recovered through globalised inter-connectivity, but a work-in-progress imbedded in the actualisation of modernity. Though we are still at an early stage in its instantiation, certain principles and values have acquired an aura of universality. A former CHP Minister of Justice observed, for example, that the universal is about 'shared values, principles, views, and ways of behaving that are increasingly accepted by people everywhere as common values'<sup>119</sup>. LSD interviewees agreed that the universal was evolutive and hoped one day to see universal 'rules', 'values', 'principles', 'standards', 'norms', and 'logic' accepted everywhere<sup>120</sup>. Several explicitly and positively associated the universal with the West<sup>121</sup>. But they were also concerned with a tension between an emergent global consensus on the universal and the need for cultural pluralism<sup>122</sup>. An Armenian-Turkish columnist for an Islamist newspaper explained his reservations:

The content of the word 'universal' is determined by conjecture...when a Westerner says 'universal' its not clear that [his understanding] contains Chinese culture...perhaps if this global world continues different understandings of the universal will speak to one another, at least at the intellectual level. But I think that the notion of the universal has yet to make itself independent of local culture, for example, Christian universalism<sup>123</sup>.

Interestingly, this furtive hope for pluralistic universalism was attractive, at least in principle, for one right-wing nationalist, a former contender for chairmanship of the MHP. In practice though he was sceptical:

It's not that I think there can't be a universal culture of values; it's just not about one culture. It's about a framework of different cultures being able to come together on common points. And those points aren't as rare as often thought, not at all...However, the dominant Western-centric culture instead of looking for common points in other cultures says I have this value, you accept it, case closed...This sparks a reaction in the other side before the common 'universal culture' can be constituted<sup>124</sup>.

He went on to explain that the values touted as 'universal' since the eighteenth century are rooted in and serve the interests of 'Anglo-Saxon nationalism'. Other right-wing respondents did not even brook the possibility of universals. Instead, they immediately attributed political and ideological content to the concept. For a former diplomat and columnist, the universal was the ideal of individualistic, urban intellectuals who dismiss nationalism as anachronistic and dangerous. They see globalisation as auguring in a 'new civilisation (*uygarlık*) and think there is no turning back'. Yet, 'nobody here has experienced this yet and we don't see many examples around us'<sup>125</sup>.

### *Universal values*

Interviewees were next asked to flesh out their definition by identifying what thing or things might be described as universal?<sup>126</sup> The question was phrased in this open-ended

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<sup>118</sup> [MI2]

<sup>119</sup> [KSD1]

<sup>120</sup> [LSD2], [LSD4]

<sup>121</sup> [LSD1], [LSD2]

<sup>122</sup> [LSD1]; [LSD2]

<sup>123</sup> [LSD3]

<sup>124</sup> [NA2]

<sup>125</sup> [RWN1(PI)PO]

<sup>126</sup> 'Sizce ne veya neler evrensel olarak nitelendirilebilir?'

fashion to see if respondents would mention 'universal values' or 'universal rights' without being prodded. As has been shown, for many the basic definition of the word 'universal' already included the notion of universal values, legitimate or otherwise. At this second round of questioning, respondents almost invariably identified the trinity of basic rights and freedoms, rule of law, and democracy. Social democrats identified these particular principles with the most consistency<sup>127</sup>. Reference was made intermittently to social and collective rights related to labour and employment by respondents from the left of the spectrum. The AKP head of the parliamentary human rights commission was the only respondent to explicitly mention freedom of religion<sup>128</sup>. An AKP parliamentarian identified the principle of inviolability (of one's rights) as the overarching universal principle, an understanding that also resonates in Hanafi jurisprudence<sup>129</sup>. From a religious and underprivileged background, he emphasised somewhat different priorities than respondents with secular, elite formations: the right to marry and have children, to expect that you and your family will be respected, the right to own property, freedom from discrimination, and the right to rise according to one's merit. A right-wing nationalist who responded to this question also had somewhat different priorities than the other respondents. He enunciated the following sequence of principles: territorial integrity, respect, and defence of national culture, followed by democracy, human rights, and justice.

*European cosmopolitanism: a contradiction in terms?*

Respondents' exhibited greater ambivalence when asked whether the EU's claim to be based on and bid to export these values is legitimate<sup>130</sup>. They tended first to consider whether the EU project was legitimate in and of itself, then evaluate its relationship with Turkey. The most common initial response was to describe the EU as legitimate. This was because it was founded upon 'universal values' which, in turn, had enabled the Union to bring an end to millennia of internecine conflict. In their initial evaluation then, respondents approved of the foundations of a cosmopolitan European polity. Yet imbedded in this view was an understanding of the peace project as a positive-sum game, i.e., as interest-driven. This subtle realism played into respondents' evaluation of the relevance of the EU project for Turkey. Across the political spectrum, when the EU peace project and/or the interests it serves were perceived in positive-sum terms, respondents tended to affirm the Union's legitimacy. But when there was a perceived gap between EU actors' cosmopolitan discourse and zero-sum policies towards Turkey, then interviewees tended to cry 'double standard'. Perceptions of such a gap tended to take two forms. First, respondents were angered by a perceived gap between cosmopolitan discourse and power political manoeuvrings undertaken by member states to undermine Turkey's interests. Second, respondents were outraged if and when they perceived a gap between the EU's cosmopolitan discourse and actions committed by Brussels or member states that seemed motivated by a (post-) Christian exclusivity.

Respondents from across the board agreed that the 'basic thrust'<sup>131</sup> of the EU was legitimate. Social democrats in particular had few objections to the European origins of the 'universal values' at the Union's core. A former CHP minister described the Union as a 'very hard, large, and important project' which though 'at the beginning of the road...has

<sup>127</sup> [KSD1], [KSD3], [KSD4], [LSD2]

<sup>128</sup> [MI4]

<sup>129</sup> [MI2]; Cf. Recep Şentürk, 'Sociology of rights: "I am therefore I have rights": Human rights in Islam between universalistic and communalistic perspectives', *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, 2/1 (2005).

<sup>130</sup> 'The EU says it is built upon these universal principles. Moreover, in the past ten to fifteen years it has sought to export these principles. Do you see this project as legitimate?' (A.B. bu prensipler üzerine kurulduğunu söylüyor. Ayrıca son on, on beş sene içinde bu prensipler dışarıya ihraç etmeyi hedefliyor. Böyle bir projeyi meşrû görüyorsunuzuz?')

<sup>131</sup> [KSD2]

put an end to all the meaningless wars Europe fought for centuries'. With that 'sense of social solidarity that is part of European history and culture, it may yet right some of the injustices in today's world'<sup>132</sup>. Perhaps because of their initial admiration, KSD respondents also evinced a strong sense of betrayal over EU handling of Turkey's candidacy. The former Minister of Justice, after lauding the EU as the greatest project of its era, lamented the Union's misunderstanding of the Turkish situation. 'I can't understand' he said with passion, 'how they can say that Kemalism is an obstacle to Turkey achieving universal values. If it weren't for Kemalism Turkey would be a theocratic state ruled by Islamic law like Saudi Arabia or Iran'<sup>133</sup>. Kemalism has sought to construct a democratic, secular *reichsstaat*, to protect human rights, and have them be embraced by the people. He explained Turkey's deficiencies on these counts with the same logic he used to explain EU shortcoming: the instantiation of universal values is a process and cannot be achieved overnight. What was most important was that Kemalism had secured the transition from a sacred to a rational ontology, something which the AKP, with unwitting EU support, was seeking to undo. Similarly, a former vice-chairman of the CHP affirmed the legitimacy of the EU's foundations, but lamented that Brussels and member states, 'imprisoned in their own prejudices', had exhibited 'insincerity, double standards, condescension, and a stubborn insistence on not understanding Turkey's problems'. This had engendered a tremendous anti-EU front within Turkish society. The upshot was that he was now forced in his speeches to cast the need for greater freedoms as a requisite of 'contemporary civilization' (*çağdaş medeniyet*) as distinct from European civilization. 'Of course these they are the same thing', he told me, 'but at this point I can't use the word "European" or "Western" without alienating people from the values themselves'<sup>134</sup>.

For liberal social democrats, Europe's cosmopolitan aspirations were both admirable and flawed, but its inconsistencies were not grounds for losing faith. It might be Eurocentric, in fact could not be otherwise, but if it managed to 'democratise itself'<sup>135</sup> vis-à-vis the rest of the world it could achieve its true potential. A newspaper editor explained that as a non-believer he had searched for a personal ethical framework and found it in universal human rights. He acknowledged that these principles had been used instrumentally by the OSCE during the Cold War, and by the EU towards candidates. But 'even if I'm not entirely pleased, I don't think it is wrong either. It's politicised but based on legitimate foundations'. But like his KSD counterparts, he worried that the EU tendency to 'dictate from above, to say you are backwards peoples and societies' had engendered a rejection of the values themselves, in Turkey, but more dramatically in Putin's Russia<sup>136</sup>. An LSD columnist at the Islamist *Zaman* similarly believed Turkey must reform along the lines necessary for adhesion to a post-national, cosmopolitan Europe, but expressed frustration at recent EU policies. He believed that by introducing new, informal criteria for accession and double standards over Cyprus, the Union was impeding rather than facilitating Turkish adoption of cosmopolitan values.<sup>137</sup> If the EU could only manage to practice what it preached there was nothing wrong with embracing 'universal values' which emerged out of the Western canon. As the founder of Turkey's chapter of Helsinki Citizen's Assembly put it: 'those who insist on "our culture" don't mention that tanks and machine guns are also Western inventions'<sup>138</sup>.

In a vein not dissimilar to the LSD commentators, an advisor to the AKP leadership was unperturbed by the EU's bid to diffuse 'universal values.' The Union's great achievement

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<sup>132</sup> [KSD4]

<sup>133</sup> [KSD1]

<sup>134</sup> [KSD3]

<sup>135</sup> [LSD1]

<sup>136</sup> [LSD2]

<sup>137</sup> [LSD4]

<sup>138</sup> [LSD1]

was in having compelled both members and candidates to adopt universal values, something which regrettably has yet to happen at the global level. Like his social democratic counterparts though, he worried that the Union had recently abandoned its normative thrust for *realpolitik* towards Russia and the Arab world. The AKP chair of the parliamentary human rights commission likewise lauded EU values. But he emphasised that these values were a global inheritance derived from the UN declaration—the Copenhagen Criteria (CC) were simply a summary of other documents. Affirming the evolutive nature of the international human rights regime, a norm, he asserted, becomes universal when it is accepted by all countries in the world, not just Europeans<sup>139</sup>. Another moderate Islamist acknowledged the European roots of the canon of universal values, crediting the Enlightenment for ‘opening’ the West to the universal. However, and in contrast to the Kemalist and liberal view, this ‘opening’ did not have ‘to go the route of secularization or be done in a European way...that first knowledge...that reflexive answer [can be] discovered from within one’s own tradition’ be it Islam or Hinduism<sup>140</sup>.

This observation reveals a concern with the (post-)Christian subtext of the European project. Social democrats were upset by the proposal to include a reference to religion in the draft constitution<sup>141</sup>. Islamists, on the other hand, objected not to the insertion of religiosity into the constitutional framework but to the exclusion of Islam from the canon of Western religions. One respondent remarked that a reference to Europe’s Judeo-Christian-Islamic heritage would have acknowledged the debt to Islam for transmitting ancient Hellas to the Renaissance and the Aristotelian underpinnings of Islamic philosophy. It also would have enriched and empowered the EU in the eyes of millions of European Muslims<sup>142</sup>. Other Islamists were not bothered by the (post-) Christian subtext, so long as it was neither an instrumental nor existential reason for Turkey’s exclusion from cosmopolis. As an AKP delegate to the European Convention put it:

Why are you so jealous? Allow us to bring these values to Anatolia. We’ll take care of ourselves materially. We know how to work, we’re hard working. We’re people, not monsters. We can learn English. We’ll uphold certain standards. We’ll find a solution to Cyprus. But don’t bargain over universal values...It’s possible to have cohabitation but don’t force every aspect of your universalism onto us. We’re not going to force you to become Muslim or veil...We want a common language to share our common values in the public sphere. But don’t invade our private space<sup>143</sup>.

Social democrats and Islamists pointed keenly to Turkey’s will to participate in a universal civilisation but they identified different sources of this receptivity. For Kemalists the source was Atatürk’s directive that Turkey ‘achieve contemporary civilisation’. A former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs began our interview by observing that adjusting the Turkish project to the requisites of universal civilisation was the most important question facing the country. Atatürk, he explained, had recognised that the world would change. His open-ended directive sought to ensure that Turkey would accommodate the spirit of new times. Unfortunately, Atatürk was misunderstood by those who thought themselves his most loyal defenders. These old-school Kemalists did not realise that Atatürk’s emphasis on national sovereignty was based on the exigencies of the 1920s. But conditions today demand greater openness to international norms and institutions. Once hostile European nation states had recognised this and transformed themselves into a Union, pooling sovereignty to survive and thrive under conditions of global interdependence<sup>144</sup>.

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<sup>139</sup> [MI4]

<sup>140</sup> [MI2]

<sup>141</sup> [KSD1], [LSD3]

<sup>142</sup> [MI1]

<sup>143</sup> [MI2] He also added that he was not referring to a Habermesian public sphere which was too abstract a concept to be useful in practice.

<sup>144</sup> [KSD2]



The Turkish-Armenian columnist believed that this had been understood at the grassroots level where traditional frames of reference were losing their meaning. Cosmopolitan ethics could take their place as a common reference point for Kurds, Islamists, secularists, and Turks because today these groups all desired human rights, democratization, and freedoms. 'People here' he said, 'want to be citizens of the world, want to be accepted by the rest of the world, want to live according to the same standards that people have elsewhere'. The problem was that for decades the proponents of change based on these values, 'did not understand Turkey and processes of social change. They thought the country could only liberalise with the pressure or model of Europe'. Today, the AKP has taken this discourse of 'sterile liberal hands and imbedded it in society at large. It was easier for Turks to say "yes" to a universalism defended by the AKP than by a group which has no connection to society'<sup>145</sup>.

AKP respondents meanwhile pointed to Sunni Islam and the Ottoman legacy as the source of Turkish receptivity to universal values. Turkish Islam was described as intrinsically 'civic' and 'liberal' because there was no clergy in the way there was in the West or Iran (it is worth noting that some KSD respondents were also inclined to describe Turkish folk Islam as inherently tolerant). This predisposed Turkish Muslims to a universalist rather than particularistic understanding of the world. Ottoman cosmopolitanism was another source, because under the universalist Ottoman Empire everyone 'was free to have their own community in which they were able to live their own truths (*hakikat*)'<sup>146</sup>. This order could be (re)constituted through the process of EU accession, making Turkey a strong and positive force in the region and world<sup>147</sup>. A similar argument was made by the conservative nationalist affiliate of the AKP who, however, put a slightly different twist on Ottoman pluralism. For him the social imprint left by 700 years of cohabitation under the Pax Ottomana was most significant for its legacy for ethnic relations, not religion. He asserted that Turkish people, 'as heirs of a universalist civilisation' do not see an 'Other' when faced with others; our people are not racist<sup>148</sup>.

The theme of Turks as tolerant of ethnic difference took pride of place in the discourse of a number of right-wing nationalist respondents<sup>149</sup>. A columnist at *Zaman* explained that the Turkish nation was a 'train that left Central Asia and travelled to the Balkans with peoples getting on and off along the way'. Turkey was the homeland of those who chose to stay on-board, an amalgam of Turks, Kurds, Bosnians, Circassians, Albanians, Laz etc<sup>150</sup>. This was testified to by the frequency of intermarriage, especially between Turks and Kurds. His Yörük<sup>151</sup> parents had blessed his own marriage to a Greek-Orthodox woman from Athens because goodness not ethnicity is what matters<sup>152</sup>.

The West's incessant quest to 'invent minorities' in Turkey was thus an insidious attempt to undermine Turkey's traditional 'melting pot'<sup>153</sup>. EU pretensions to cosmopolitanism were a façade for the advancement of a power hungry and essentially (post-)Christian Europe. Brussels' imposition of its own understanding of human rights, democracy, and

<sup>145</sup> [LSD3]; Interestingly, this statement gave credence to right-wing nationalist castigation of LSD figures as marginal societal actors.

<sup>146</sup> [MI2]

<sup>147</sup> [MI1]

<sup>148</sup> [MI3]

<sup>149</sup> [NA2], [NA4]

<sup>150</sup> Both the columnist and a MHP vice-chairman assured me that if I took Turkish citizenship I too would be unequivocally Turkish.

<sup>151</sup> Semi-nomadic pastoralists of Central Asian origin who live along the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts.

<sup>152</sup> An AKP respondent told a story in almost identical terms about his parents' openness to his engagement to a Japanese woman.

<sup>153</sup> [NA4]

multiculturalism was an attempt to destabilise Turkey, its age-old *and* up-and-coming rival<sup>154</sup>. Human rights evinced a Western, individualistic content which threatens the cohesion of Turkey's cultural and social fabric. As an MHP vice-chairman put it:

Democracy is a system for a society to diagnose its own problems and realise its own preferences; it should not be forced to observe human rights. Human rights are about having a dignified life and what is the point of a human rights canon that counts national identity and national culture for nothing?<sup>155</sup>

Another nationalist—a former diplomat—also suggested that the EU's cosmopolitanism was thin. It's 'universal values', specifically human rights, had in any case only recently been lifted from the Council of Europe (CoE) and EU actors employed these values with great 'ambivalence and double standards'. This led Turks to believe that the EU is 'absolutely not about universal values and [that these values], in the full sense of the word, are being used against Turkey'. European ambivalence stemmed from the fact that the cosmopolitan project was a futile attempt to purge European civilisation of two intrinsic traits. The first was its warlike nature, the second its incomparable propensity to 'Otherise'. All societies marginalise 'Others' in the act of self-definition, but the European impulse was so venomous it sought to annihilate its 'Others'—non-Christians in the Inquisition, women in the witchhunts, Jews in the Holocaust. After the self-induced trauma of two world wars, European actors sought to purge these impulses by endorsing the peace project and a flimsy multiculturalism. But under the surface, these traits and a sense of guilt over them endured. Europe managed its repressed self-hatred by projecting it onto others. This was manifest, ironically, in condemnation of those said to have poor records on human rights and multiculturalism, e.g. Turkey. Criticising Turkey thus enabled Europeans to blithely overlook their own racism and Islamophobia<sup>156</sup>.

## Conclusion

Summing up, respondents overwhelmingly believed in the possibility of universals, universal values, and the legitimacy of a political project predicated on those values such as the EU. Even right-wing nationalists who were sceptical of any attempt to turn a project based on 'universal values' into a political platform, asserted that genuinely common values were possible in principle if not practice. Respondents were also nonplussed by apparent deviation on the part of European actors from rhetorical commitment to the cosmopolitan project to positive-sum pursuit of more mundane interests. When games were perceived as zero-sum, however, the gap between the discursive emphasis on 'universal values' and EU actors' policies caused social democrats and Islamists, alike to cry 'double standard'. (For right-wing nationalists the gap and the zero-sum game were apparent from the outset). Perceptions of 'double standards' were heightened when EU actors were thought to be acting in an exclusionary (post-)Christian vein. It was felt by all that the EU had mishandled Turkey's candidacy in a way that was detrimental to the project of a cosmopolitan Europe. For Kemalist social democrats, this was reflected in perceived betrayal by the EU of Turkey's project of modernity. Both KSD and LSD respondents, worried that the EU's actions had engendered within Turkish society a rejection of 'universal values' themselves. For Islamists, anger was most pronounced in the concern that (post-)Christian Europe may exclude Muslim Turkey regardless of Turkish progress in promoting the 'universal values' associated with civic cosmopolitanism. For right-wing nationalists, resistance crystallised most saliently around questions of ethnicity and the European formula for multiculturalism.

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<sup>154</sup> [NA2], [NA4]

<sup>155</sup> [NA3]

<sup>156</sup> [NA1]

# Migration, European Union and civil society

## Research conclusions

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### Introduction: civil society, social identity and migration

A broad range of social sciences literature offers different concepts of citizenship which have been developed since the Enlightenment. For the sake of this analysis I will refer to the concepts embedded in tradition of sociology and ethics (Magoska 2001). In a sociological perspective, the concept of citizenship is related to Alexis de Tocqueville's considerations and the emphasis is on self-organisation within society, based on deliberation, negotiation and mediation among people. In an ethical perspective, on the other hand, a special attention is paid to the significance of given values; especially pluralism, tolerance, trust, collective solidarity and responsibility. The conjunction of these paradigms seems to me crucial when the concept of citizenship is analysed in the context of social changes brought about by migration. This is manifested by new values replacing the old ones and concurrent reconstruction of social identity as well as emergence of new forms of social behaviour. My thesis is that both streams of analysis meet at the point where new types of activity and participation in social life emerge, and this is precisely the situation of post-migrant societies with a substantial number of returned migrants.

According to Tocqueville, civil society safeguards democracy. Organised and associated citizens constitute its essence. „The greatness of democracy is not about public administration efficiency but about what is happening away from or without it” (de Tocqueville 1996, 184). This is a wide network of „horizontal” interactions, participation in collective life and focus on common goals of the community that might offer an opportunity for functioning of the system, in which people would feel they are a priority. Institutions and elective authority representatives merely assist in satisfying the needs of the members of democratic society.

Construction of civil society in Poland requires rejection of values and principles connected to socialisation processes characteristic of real socialism. I would like to emphasise two of them which turned out to be particularly dangerous for democratic citizenship, namely centralisation in the public sphere which results in a social vacuum and demanding attitude, as well as selfishness in private life. The *sine qua non* condition for rejection of these elements of social identity is a promotion of civic values and principles which would stimulate emergence of strong civil society in the conditions of democratic capitalism.

I am deeply convinced that this educational mission requires that institutional changes are explained to the public and new goals are defined together with ways to achieve them in the changing cultural system. Adjustment of principles and patterns of conduct to a changing political, economic and cultural reality prevails over attitudes of withdrawal from social life, escapism and political apathy (Merton 1982; Sztompka 2000).

Transformation of cultural sphere is far slower than the one taking place in the sphere of legal regulations within the context of a profound social change. Introduction of new administrative and institutional procedures can actually take place independently of the citizens' consciousness (Morawski 2000, Wnuk-Lipiński and Ziółkowski 2001). However, difficulties arise when common attitudes are adjusted to institutional demands. People who are used to certain patterns of behaviour need external support in the process of adaptation. Assistance is even more important than cultural competencies. Inhabitants of

peripheral areas, who are usually deprived of proper education, need this assistance most. In the case of Poland, this problem applies to over one-third of population living in small cities and rural areas (Niedźwiedzki 2002).

The question arises - who is to provide such assistance? In the context of Polish transformation integration with the EU, such support could undoubtedly be provided by local elite representatives, but also migrants, who introduce new values and patterns of behaviour into the societies of origin. Returned migrants influence social environment by their behaviour which results from their social identity reconstructed during migration.

Social identity is a set of relatively durable features characterizing self-perception and perception of others, which are formed among members of a community and derived from characteristics of the cultural community in question (Bokszański 1989, 33-34). In addition, this results from classifying and introducing order into the surrounding world. Social identity is constructed in action, or rather in interactions; in the course of sending, receiving and interpreting information (Jacobson-Widding 1983, 19; Mach 1993, 5). A general frame for these processes is provided by the culture to which participants of an interaction belong. Consequently, identity may be treated as a dynamic, processual and contextual phenomenon. Thus, it is difficult to say that identity is something that one possesses. I am inclined to agree with Edwin Ardener that we should speak of a continuous process of identifying, or at least restrict ourselves to discernible ways in which individuals are identified (a passive aspect of identity) and in which they identify themselves (an active aspect of identity) (Ardener 1991). Undoubtedly, interaction in which identity is constructed is not an absolutely dominant factor. Another factor which exerts influence on the construction of identity is historical, biographical time connected with life stories of individuals in a concrete culture (Luckmann 1983).

Identity is constructed and activated in contact with others. Context decides which of the levels of social identity is set in motion in a concrete situation. Hence, we may speak of professional, local, regional, ethnic or national identity. It would be difficult to enumerate all the possibilities. Various levels of identity are also an expression of people's aspirations to individuality, to the realization of their longing for freedom, originality and distinctness in social life (Mach 1993, 13-14). It is especially important in the modern world which is full of technical and technological universalization. The principles of organization of contemporary societies, full of various barriers and limitations, intensify the need to be somebody different among others. Through identity, individuals may feel free to shape their behaviour or lifestyle, even if their choices seem to others strange or devoid of sense. The stress that I put on individuality does not mean that I ignore the fundamental division between individual and collective identity. Nevertheless, I believe that group identity is manifested in the behaviour of individuals on the basis of which we draw conclusions concerning identification traits of a group. In other words, I treat an individual as a representative of a social position in a community.

I have already mentioned that identity is connected with time. On the one hand, with the present, which sees interaction between individuals; on the other hand, with the past which is connected with one's biography, experiences and participation in the culture within which one has been socialized. There is also another time dimension of identification which describes an influence of time orientation on the ways of behaviour. Consequently, we may also speak of three variants of identity - time relationship with social identity in a community (Mach 1993, 12-13):

- 1) orientation towards the present, expressed in the inclination of an individual to participate in concrete reality, in everyday life;
- 2) orientation towards the past, manifested in the emphasis on one's origin and rootedness in the culture in which one has grown up. Individuals try to imitate older generations and their ancestors;

3) orientation towards the future, when an individual is characterized by his openness to changes in social reality, to cultural innovations. It is often accompanied by negation of tradition and the past, which are perceived as tokens of backwardness and reactionism.

In practice, all three time orientations usually occur simultaneously. In certain cases, however, we may observe the domination of only one of them.

Social identity is an interactional, changeable, contextual phenomenon. What is more, individual or collective identity always has social nature. Identity reconstruction holds company in migration as a necessary factor. Migration involves living in a world in which neighbouring families and people around represent completely different cultures, customs, traditions and lifestyles. Natural environment and cultural organization of this place vary considerably from those of familiar homeland. Confronted with the reality of an alien culture, migrants experience shock, fear of this new environment and, as a result, disintegration of their social identity. Its reconstruction is an essential condition for adaptation and assimilation to their new place of settlement. It requires that the migrants define their own situation in new circumstances. The culture of the places which shaped migrants' self-perception and perception of others has to be supplemented by elements of the new reality.

Reconstruction, which includes widening of the cultural basis of social identity, may be promoted by a factor which serves as a mediator between the "old" and the "new" reality. It facilitates changes and harmonizes the process of cultural amalgamation. In the countries where great migration processes are taking place, specialized government agencies are established. Their task is to reach out to the migratory population and to provide assistance. The situation is more complicated in the case of people who work on "black market", like many Polish pendulum migrants. Such people try to avoid any official institutions of receiving society.

The identification of pendulum migrants is composed of elements derived from both the society of origin and host society. This is an effect of their interactions in the place of migration and ties with the society of origin. We can say that they are somewhere between "old" (before migration) and "new" (after migration) cultural world. Their identity could be described as liminal one, supported by values, norms, patterns of attitudes and behavior descending from different cultural systems. In other words, they have never accepted the change of their place of living or the loss of their patrimonies. What is more, they often do not believe they would return to their former homes for good.

### **Pendulum migrants and their identity – research conclusions**

The process of identity reconstruction of Polish pendulum migrants was examined by means of in-depth interviews. The research team, Maria Molenda, Karolina Rzepecka, Marcin Galent and Dariusz Niedzwiedzki, conducted fieldwork in two rural communities in Eastern Poland: Zwierzyniec and Tyszowce. We carried out 20 in-depth interviews, including ordinary people and 2 local authority representatives. On the basis of them we drew a few conclusions about the mechanisms and circumstances of pendulum migrants' social identity reconstruction. There are some factors, or rather social phenomena, which determine directions and trends of identity reconstruction process. First of all, the experience of migration and interaction with others should be emphasised. Contact with different values, norms, attitudes and patterns of behaviour are treated as crucial experience for pendulum migrants. They often point out to learning a foreign language as an important reason for changes of their self identification. *"I know only basic words, indispensable in the kitchen, what to serve, how to speak to people... When they sent me shopping, she dictated to me in Italian, I wrote it in Polish, the basic rules of Italian as well..., so I bought everything and learned..., it was good..."* The interviewees claim that new customs of the receiving society change their attitudes and patterns used in everyday life. *"There is not a custom to rest after lunch/dinner in Poland but it is common in Italy. I came back to Poland a few weeks ago and I still have a rest after*



*dinner, I got into the habit of eating and going to bed afterwards for an hour or two..."* The interviewees underline that the interactions with members of receiving society bring about some unexpected effects. The most important is confidence in social relations. *"People are more trustful there... The family is so trusting to let me live with the old lady, grandmother; me who is an alien for them; it proves confidence and belief that people are responsible".* This factor influences Polish pendulum migrants to a great extent. It builds a feeling of pride, well-being in an alien cultural and social environment. The members of the receiving society generally hold a good opinion about Polish workers, which is another unexpected phenomenon. *"They employ Polish people willingly; they prefer Poles because Ukrainians for example are less responsible..."* *"There were different people employed there. They have Greeks, Turks and Ukrainians. And they told me that Polish people were the best. That is because Poles are the best for example as babysitters or people who take care of old people".* Consequently, pendulum migrants swell with pride.

Migration also influences opinions and attitudes towards local, regional and national society. Our interviewees change their attitudes to the "us" and "them" model of social order. Generally, they reconstruct the opinions on native groups. This new judgement is more objective, because it is based on bigger social distance to other people, neighbours, family members, etc. *"There are many lazy people here..., I can see it now..., they can go there (I mean abroad) but they are too lazy and not self-sufficient."* It often means more critical attitudes to the community of origin. Pendulum migrants construct new attitudes to others on the basis of changed social and cultural stereotypes. *"There are good and bad people in Germany, just like in Poland, and there are also rich and poor families..."*. *"I was afraid of waking up during my first stay in Italy. I paid attention to black people, I was afraid of them... And then my cousin told me that these black men were very kind and it is true..."* The others, who represent the unknown, sometimes strange and hostile culture, become normal people, just like Polish migrants. Interviewees feel that local, regional and national identity is a challenge, even if it is only a subconscious feeling. This is due to the fact that this new world is more attractive than the native land, be it local, regional or national. It lures and attracts migrants. As a result, locality or nationality are rarely defined when decision to emigrate is made. *"There was nothing except my family that pushed me to back to Poland".* *"I feel Polish, but it is possible to be Polish here or anywhere in Europe".*

Migration influences opinions on Europe and the European Union in a particular way. First of all, the EU sets a context for migration. Poland's accession to the European Union is understood by pendulum migrants as a change in their position in receiving societies. Firstly, European frontiers are open, so *"...now almost everybody can go wherever they wish... identity card is enough".* It is interesting that during the interviews hardly anybody indicated financial barriers of travel. Interviewees emphasize the changes in immigration policy of EU member states concerning Polish migrants. *"I work on black market but now [after Polish accession to the EU] it is not important. Earlier [before Polish accession to the EU] I heard about it [it means extradition], now the police tries to catch Russians or Ukrainians, they are not interested in Polish workers, they do not look for them".*

The EU does not exist as an idea, symbolical system, ideological or philosophical project in migrants' consciousness. First of all, it is perceived as a useful, practical project for everyday life. It means that on the one hand a European identity is only partly connected with the European Union understood by returned, pendulum migrants as a sphere of common values, norms and patterns. On the other hand, migrants treat the EU as a useful organisation which provides better paid jobs and subsidies. *"I feel European, what does it mean? That I have a say, I have the right to go abroad, take a job anywhere, here, or there, it is most important..."* *"Yes, something has changed after our accession to the EU, we have this extra money from the Union..., and it is for seed and fertilizers*

*(artificial, chemical)..., we are not eligible to full additional payment, but it is better than nothing..."*

In our fieldwork we sought to check how pendulum migrants affect the society of origin and the host society in economical, cultural and social dimension. In general, returned pendulum migrants cannot see their direct influence on social environment of the receiving society or group of origin, except two cases:

- presentation of Polish culture, customs, tradition, everyday life in Poland to their hosts in receiving society. "Yes, they very often ask me about Poland; they are interested in what life in Poland looks like." "They asked me about Christmas and I told them about Christmas Eve because they celebrate Christmas in a different way...". "I cooked Polish dinners for them and they liked the croquettes, dumplings, and our soups..."
- influence on economic situation of the society of origin. "We send and bring money; without that it would be very difficult to survive there [it means in the society of origin]".

The interviews with social leaders in the group of origin revealed different opinions about these influences. In their opinion pendulum migrants fail to come up to native societies' expectations but the situation should change in a future. *"To tell you the truth, we are disappointed that they are not economically active as it was expected...; I am sure that their role (economic) will increase..."* This diachronic image of society is especially visible in social leaders' hope pin on migrants. *"These people, returned migrants, can change the society...; the question is what they want. To stay here in the future or go back and forth all the time; I hope that after a few years they will decide to come back for good and will be important factor contributing to changes here"*. Social leaders count on returned/pendulum migrants to help change the community. What is more, they divide migrants into two groups: involved and uncommitted in the society of origin. *"Some of them [migrants] think about people and the place, village here, for them staying abroad permanently is unimaginable..., I can see that they are more involved than other inhabitants...; I do not know why, maybe because of their experiences abroad..., I do not know, they want something to change here..."*. *"Some migrants made a decision to be out of this place, they return from time to time, but do not think about this place..."*

To sum up, basic changes in pendulum, returned migrant's social identity could be defined by the values, norms and rules such as:

- the spirit of individualism (generally they have no doubt that they are personally responsible for the success in their life),
- involvement in public life (some of them declare being involved in social activity, but we have to remember that this element is a potential one and has to be uncovered by social leaders of community),
- optimistic opinion about further development of the local society (they believe strongly that the environment will change and will be closer economically to the world known from migration),
- creativity as the key to individual and collective success (only open-minded and, above all, well-organised people can be successful),
- realistic evaluation of their economic performance (they know what they can do, what they possess and how this could be used).

These conclusions do not constitute the final analysis of empirical data or offer answers to all questions. Nevertheless, the analysis of social identity of pendulum migrants presented here helps to understand the complicated nature of social reality in contemporary society. It explains human attitudes and behaviour to some extent. Thus, such analysis shows the causes and the circumstances of potential changes in societies of origin of pendulum migrants. In this case, it allows us to conclude that building of civil society or atomization of inhabitants and the internal conflicts in the community could arise from migration and processes set against it. The direction of reconstruction of Polish pendulum



migrants' social identity lets us perceive them as a 'promising group', which might play a crucial role in the creation of civil society. However, we have to remember that this role is only potential as it is dependent on their situation after return to the group of origin. The point is how to use their knowledge and experience for the common good of society. It will probably become visible soon if certain local societies pass or fail this special exam.

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# Ukrainian minority in Poland

## New social reality

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In this report I will make a few comments on the introductory analysis of research on the Ukrainian community in Poland. I will mainly focus on pointing to the way the group's leaders define the notion of community identity in the new socio-political circumstances.

### **Ethnicity and europeanisation**

Changes and transformations taking place in Eastern Europe pertained to the communities which remained inconspicuous or were put to the sidelines of social life over the last half-century. Not only did the questions of search for identity based on ethnic ties turn out not to have been eradicated but they also reappeared in the forefront of identification processes. Thus, finding universal institutional means regulating the life of ethnic communities became the key issue for further social coexistence. This kind of organized protection of national minorities has greatly developed owing to the reforms introduced by Eastern European countries. Democratization of political life has sparked a debate on the status of groups in question, which in turn has increased their initiative on the social stage. As a result, the social and legal conditions that were created let them compete for all kinds of goods. These days significance is being reattached to such tools for social struggle as language, religion or memory. The overlapping and merging processes of phenomena and clashes in the fields of socioeconomics, culture, language or religion are easily discernible. People who were perplexed by vanishing of the familiar social structures started to look for new ties and turned to the notions of nation, territory or tradition. Ethnicisation became a kind of collective device based on the status and meaning the communities give to ethnic identity (Brubaker 1998, Offe 1999).

With the findings of my research conducted among various national groups in this part of Europe, I feel invited to propose a thesis that it is mainly through and in the process of reclaiming history that ethnic politics assume its significance. The so-called 'memory practice' within post-communist societies provides the opportunity to set off the whole machinery of ethnic identification with all its consequences, the creation of most cross-ethnic tensions and conflicts included. At the same time, it is not exclusively about rationalizing the way they address the others, but it is mainly about justification for their own action strategy. In many cases ethnicity becomes a collective resource to bring notable economic benefits and it does not only refer to the Western world countries, where the subsidizing procedures are well advanced. Central European minorities have also learnt to treat ethnicity as a means of obtaining various goods. At the same time, the frequent reference to ethnic ties might be explained by the lack of alternative ways of individuals' integration, since in most countries the communist system has ruined the landscape of civil society. It turned out that the societies had no formative patterns allowing for encoding reality. The culture of mutual trust and social solidarity was nonexistent. Therefore, ethnic codes were held in great social esteem and nationality became a value preventing the community from disintegration into a number of amorphous groups (Hann, Dunn 1996).

### **Research goals**

The preliminary research hypothesis we suggested was to answer the question whether and to what extent the changes and transformations taking place in Europe affected cross-ethnic relations and how evident was the alteration in Ukrainian identity structure in Poland. The issue of primary interest was the rules and principles of using new

markers for drawing symbolic borders of the community under examination. Furthermore, our aim was to learn how the present-day Ukrainian identity is defined in Poland, whether any coherent model for creating identity already exists, how joining the EU has influenced the process of group identification in Poland, or finally, how the community perceives its position in the process of Europeanization.

Four types of relations were distinguished in the Ukrainian identity formation process to give directions to our study. First, we were interested in interdependency within the community. Second, we enquired about the nature and dynamics in the relationship with Polish people. Third, we checked whether Polish accession to the EU had any effect on the kind of cross-ethnic relations. The fourth inquiry concerned the role of the Ukrainian state in this sphere. In brief, we examined the way the Ukrainian community form their identity from the angle of contacts with the Polish, with consideration to the EU and Ukraine.

In general, the research was conducted in Przemyśl and its vicinity. The city lies in the South-Eastern part of Poland, close to the border of Ukraine. The number of its inhabitants is about seventy thousand with the Ukrainians making but a small percentage. Still, the area is widely regarded as the centre for Ukrainianness in Poland. Przemyśl vicinity has been traditionally inhabited by people of Ukrainian origin. In spite of the policy of ethnic cleansing adopted by the communist state, the region is still most densely populated by the ethnic group in question. After the infamous "Operation Wisła" of 1947 and frequent after-war migration waves other Ukrainians settled in the West and North of Poland. Although the estimated number of Ukrainians according to the latest National Census of 2002 is less than thirty thousand, leaders assess it at about two hundred thousand. Scattered as they are throughout the country and of complex, diversified identity, which makes explicit ethnic determination impossible, they are commonly viewed as an influential national group capable of posing a threat to Polishness in Przemyśl, as some Poles claim. The anxiety stems from the region's history, as the area has for ages been the object of contention used in the debate by both parties in conflict. The situation aggravated again in the early post-communist period in Poland. Democratization in progress let all the interested parties voice their manifold arguments. The most frequent policy was to give every issue a dimension of historical dispute, which invited manipulation of the past. The Ukrainian party has their official representative called the Ukrainian Association whereas the Polish interest, with definite majority indifferent to the issue, is defended by a network of groups working in league and attracting the same individuals labelled as nationalists. Even though the recent years have been quiet, leaders of the examined Ukrainian community view the handful of Polish nationalists, enjoying little public consent, as influential in decision process of the local government.

Ukrainian leaders are still facing the problem of the community being marginalized by local people and authorities. They say distrust and suspicion hang in the air, with the emphasis on local authorities slow to solve any problems with Ukrainian initiative in the region. This, for instance, resulted in delay in transferring ownership of National House in Przemyśl, the Association's seat and the Ukrainian community centre, to the Ukrainian Association. They also refer to the recent past conflicts, such as the one which accompanied reclaiming the Uniate Church, known as 'the dome dispute', or incidents revolving around the Festival of Ukrainian Culture in the nineties. The Association leaders have a constant feeling of stumbling blocks being put in their way. In their opinion, the recent sixtieth anniversary of Wisła Action, viewed by the community as very important, was spurned by local authorities. Our interlocutors sharply reacted to the problem of discrimination. Still, their assessment converges with the one of leaders of other national groups. What they emphasized was that the issue was more evident not as explicit discrimination but rather as inequality, difficulties or obstacles arising when it comes to implementation of their own policy.

## **The conflict of memory**

The thesis I suggested previously was that it is the debate on the plane of the past interpretation that is likely to create the greatest cross-ethnic tension, which was confirmed by our research. The sense of historic discrimination shared by national groups inhabiting Poland is prevalent when it comes to estimation of the past and interpretation of modern history. Democratization in progress has liberated numerous micro-narratives contradicting the current historiography. The Ukrainian minority has become responsive mostly to the kind of injustice that became evident in contact with the Polish majority. The surveyed Ukrainian leaders often suggested that the debate on settling the differences arising from divergent interpretations of the past should become more dynamic. Interestingly, the sense of injustice was mentioned in the survey of Ukrainian teenagers, who use historic arguments to describe Polish-Ukrainian relations as frequently as their parents.

What drew my attention in the analysis of our research was the group of teenagers from the local Ukrainian high school. I did not expect ethnicity to be such a crucial factor in the process of self-identification. What I did expect was impartiality towards the issue of Ukrainianness and more involvement in participation in social life instead. However, those young people see their stance and participation in the social life as fulfillment of their ethnicity. They associate it with Ukrainian language, religion and folk shows. They stress the meaning of the past and the role of their grandparents in passing the ethnic tradition, and view their parents as less engaged in those issues. The grounds for such behaviour may be explained in many ways. To begin with, leaders of many groups bring up the young generation in explicit ethnic context so that they advocate the values in the future, hold the community together and guard it against assimilation. Secondly, young people often search for definite markers in order to define surrounding reality. Therefore, ethnicity provides them with an attractive set of meanings. Finally, it creates an opportunity for active participation in the society, which lets them fulfill their ambitions. It also offers a prospect of notable benefits in the social, economic and prestige spheres. For instance, in the face of no alternative attractive options for gathering, reference to ethnic ties may fulfill the sense of belonging to an organization or a circle of friends sharing the same values. It allows for indulging one's passion through participation in folk groups, trips abroad, camps, concerts etc. Ethnic codes are highly estimated in the process of forming the culture of trust and social solidarity, thus fostering the sense of safety in the long run. The teenagers we have surveyed do not feel attached to Poland and would rather point to the importance of Przemyśl and the region, perceived as typically Ukrainian. When asked about the associations with "homeland", they unequivocally pointed out to Ukraine. At the same time, they do not link their future to the Ukrainian state. It is Poland that they regard as their prospective home of better opportunities. What they stress as assurance of better future is tolerance and democracy. The EU, in majority's opinion, would be the chance for improving living conditions. Additionally, they make a point of prospects for development of the Ukrainian state.

## **Identity in action**

Despite the rather pessimistic picture emerging from the above description of Polish-Ukrainian relations, a thesis might be suggested that there is some indication of improvement. Ukrainians value the new prospects for communication. The role of intercultural debate and dialogue is increasing in solving problematic issues. It stands to reason that for the time being it is impossible for an average Ukrainian who lives in Przemyśl or the area to observe the changes in Polish-Ukrainian relations. Still, a skilled observer may spot some heralds of quality improvement. The highlighted fact about Poles is that they are becoming more demonstrative, tolerant or communicative. This is explained by some subjects as a result of frequent trips and migration to the West. On the other hand, the possibility of staying in touch with Ukraine and its citizens helps break the negative stereotype of the Ukrainian. Interestingly, it is anxiety reduction and overcoming the fear which has so far accompanied most Ukrainians that are regarded as

the most fundamental changes. However ambiguous it may sound, most interlocutors emphasize that Ukrainians are no more afraid to manifest their Ukrainianness. When it comes to mutual trust, however, the progress is insignificant and the locals are still suspicious towards their neighbours. Yet, there is no more record of open dislike or hostility.

In spite of the consciousness of being marginalized and unappreciated, the leaders of Ukrainian community declare their willingness to participate in broadly understood public life. What is characteristic of their stance is the claim that the participation should be chiefly fulfilled through ethnicity display. The environment prefers traditional approach to ethnic policy, namely, folk bands, debates on the past, and emphasis on oppressed ethnicity struggling with disapproving social majority. Thus, what we face here is recurring old patterns rather than innovative ethnicity. Despite representing the young generation, leaders tend to focus on the old guard. There are obvious attempts at opening to other groups, not necessarily those connected with the Ukrainian minority, which might be confirmed by Ivan Kupala Day organized by the inhabitants of Przemyśl in effort to make a link between the old folk customs and some interspersing ethnic motives.

The debate within the Ukrainian community sounds also interesting. The Ukrainian Association embracing leaders, students of the Ukrainian high school and community representatives have to face the pressing need for internal debate on how to implement the identity policy. The topic demands further examination, and the first issue to be addressed is the way of promotion of Ukrainianness.

Those uninvolved in the Ukrainian school or Association do not have to approve of the imposed course of debate on Ukrainianness. They point out that the way of presenting Ukrainianness advocated by leaders invites formation of ethnic ghetto and promotion of inaccessible stronghold syndrome. This is the standpoint of those Ukrainians who do not perceive active participation in social life merely from the perspective of folk culture or tradition. What they opt for is changes and innovations instead of the recurring Ukrainian tradition. Interlocutors quoted some comments by Ukrainian guests who were surprised to meet mostly 'the nineteenth-century Ukrainians' in Przemyśl.

### **Ukrainian minority and EU**

According to the Ukrainian leaders, joining the EU by Poland was not a change meaningful enough to influence the groups' mutual relations. In addition, nobody expected its effects to be very direct. Still, the impression was that some changes concerning the quality of relationship would be more explicit. The main thing stressed was the arrival of a new subject, an alternative to the state, capable of becoming a valuable partner advocating the policy of national minority. Two kinds of expectations are articulated. First of all, the leaders find spreading European values under the EU aegis beneficial for the minorities' aspirations to achieve their aims. They also perceive the EU as a controlling device for Polish strategies towards minority groups, which in turn might consolidate their position in the society. Another thing is that there exists a presumption that the European schemes will financially support projects proposed by national minorities, which will improve the state of communities' managing bodies, thus making the work for their own community more efficient. In brief, both the EU and its institutions are seen by the leaders as prospective guarantors of the minority organization efforts aiming not only at strengthening its position but also at endorsing the policy of multicultural society and tolerance. Leaders apply to the EU for grants to support their actions. However, it is tough in the beginning and they are only learning how to use the resources. Our assumptions that the Ukrainian minority, following other social groups, would seek funds to back their own activity proved ungrounded.

Formation of the Ukrainian state became a crucial factor affecting the process of community identification among the Ukrainians. All the respondents unanimously acknowledge that gaining independence has much boosted their national spirit. Even though the Ukrainian state is not considerably engaged in improving their situation, the mere awareness of having this kind of patron makes them feel better. Each gesture, such as opening the consulate in Przemyśl, or other symbolic actions taken together with Ukraine, raise the community's prestige to great extent. Formation of the new state have both enlivened and enhanced the debate at the international level. In their opinion, the Polish started to perceive the Ukrainians as partners, which has greatly stimulated their economic and cultural cooperation. The subjects frequently quoted the events which, to their mind, greatly improved their mutual relations. The most popular topic was the role of Poland in the Orange Revolution, John Paul II visit in Lviv and the recent issue of joint organization of the Euro 2012 Championship.

To sum up, the Ukrainian community in Poland define themselves mainly in traditional ethnic categories. The group of activists and committed young people turn to the Ukrainian language, religion and traditions. Identification processes revolve around the past and collective memory. It is also a plane which determines conflicts and mutual dislike in relations with Polish people. They mainly fulfill their engagement in the broadly understood social life through ethnic policy. Their assessment of Polish membership in the EU is positive, still it is evident they do not view the event as most relevant to their situation. The EU and its institutions are perceived in terms of partnership capable of indirect influence on the improvement of their situation and regarded as a sort of supervision of the Polish state strategies. European values such as democracy and tolerance are highly estimated, however, without much consideration. Undoubtedly, as they claim, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and Polish support have significantly enhanced the quality of Polish-Ukrainian relations.

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# The changing importance of identification of German minority in Poland in the context of European integration

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The process of identity reconstruction among members of the German minority was researched in the fieldwork by in-depth interviews. The research team was composed of four people: Maria Molenda, Karolina Rzepecka, Marcin Galent and Dariusz Niedzwiedzki. The fieldwork was conducted in one small town and three villages, composing a unit of local authority (gmina): Biała, in the Opole voivodship, in the south west of Poland. 12 in-depth interviews were carried out with ordinary people and 3 with formal social leaders, heads of local power, all German minority members.

According to the last census conducted in 2002, the total number of Germans in Poland is around 153 thousand people. Nearly 90 % of them occupy two neighbouring voivodships: Opole – 70 % and Silesia – 21 %. Most members of the German minority are Roman Catholic and only some of them are Protestants (the Evangelical-Augsburg Church). Currently, the German minority in the Opole voivodship constitutes 10 % of the whole population of the voivodship.

In discussing the ethnic composition of the south west region of Poland, it is necessary to underline the following: as it turned out during the last national census in Poland, a new emerging Silesian ethnic minority the biggest ethnic minority in Poland with nearly 174 thousand members is on the way of consolidating and institutionalising itself. That is why it has been decided in the title of this report to use the word 'identification' and not 'identity'. This wording more accurately shows the elusive character of the ethnic boundaries between Polishness and Silesianism on the one hand, and Germaness and Silesianism on the other. This is to underline the fact that two completely different ethnic identities, Polish and German, are very often mediated by a Silesian one, which in turn can be (and is) also expressed as a fully separate one. It is often the case that Silesian identity may overlap and intertwine with the two others, depending on the partner of social interaction or the context of the interaction. In a sense this Silesian identification could be described as a liminal one, characterized by ambiguity, openness and indeterminacy which allows for a reconfiguration of accents which enables fluent adjustments to the changing socio-political context (Turner, 1991). In different historic circumstances Silesianism served as a safe haven for those members of the German minority who sought protection from Polish nationalism or communist persecutions. Parallel to this, Silesianism was also used by Poles as a way of ascribing to Germaness in order to acquire the right to live and work in Germany. This observation confirms these theories which pay attention to processual and contextual aspects of the nature of social identity, which is constantly constructed and reconstructed according to determining social structures and existing narratives on the one hand, and the agency of social actors who strive for their individual interests in the framework of changing context on the other (Mach 1993).

Thus, when analysing the dynamics of the German national minority identification, one must take into consideration a few crucial determinants which have played a decisive role in establishing a socio-political framework within which the minority identity has been constructed and reconstructed. These developments prove quite clearly that identity formations among the German minority have been extremely dependant on the broader social, political and geopolitical context, which imposed structural conditions on their



ways of identifications, self-definitions and definitions of others. Being German has meant different things throughout history. Such a status has involved different privileges and drawbacks, advantages and disadvantages. In broader and more general terms, these different historic stages, still present in the collective memory, are the following: the years following 1933 when Hitler came to power and started the process of Germanisation (for instance changing names of villages and towns into 'pure' German ones), World War II, post-war period of expulsion and severe prosecutions, relative normalisation from the end of 50s till the end of 80s, the fall of the Iron Curtain and Poland's entrance into the EU.

This sequence of circumstances is of much importance for at least a few reasons. First and foremost - and this can be traced in nearly each respondent's answer- it is because of the affirmation of the value of cultural coexistence. The situation of peoples occupying this territory resembles the situation of Alsace, where Germany and France tried to impose their own exclusivist national culture several times. They experienced (or were socialised to maintain a memory of it) moments of German supremacy, war and subsequent revenge and persecutions. These memories of the tragic consequences of nationalistic ideas according to which culture and ethnicity should be symmetric with political entities (Gellner 1983), seem to prevail over the whole picture of intercultural coexistence. All the respondents who survived the war and Soviet occupation remembered tragic events which took place during that time, where many people were forced to leave the land or prove that they are not German. There is still a scant resentment among them, but it is extremely difficult to find any sorts of disloyal attitudes towards the contemporary Polish state or their Polish neighbours.

*Just like Germans may have committed crimes or caused agony deep within Poland where the war was taking place, this is what the retaliation was like here in return. There were so many innocent victims that fell to the Germans over there. It is not everyone, but there is scum everywhere, whether in Germany, in Poland, or in Russia. Gangs are everywhere – some know how to kill, others don't. In those 5 years after the war, was it my fault that I only knew how to speak German? It was me in those 5 years that got beaten, kicked, my lips bleeding, because I spoke to my friend in German. Because I didn't know how to speak Polish. How was I supposed to know how? In 1952 the hatred eased a little bit, and then it got better, and better, and better. And so today there is equilibrium. Everyone who knows me, greets me in town when they see me. My son-in-law [A Pole – coincidentally] is going to Germany to work with a friend, because he is a good, hard-working person, because he has culture (B2: 3-4).*

*A few million people were deported, but everyone still held on to the hope that they would return. But the next generation, their children, don't think about it anymore. They accepted it long ago, they know that their parents were born here, their grandparents, etc. (B8: 6).*

*When a girl got married to a Polish guy after the war, oh, how people would talk. Because a guy wouldn't take a Polish girl so quickly. Now, no, now everything has normalised — so many years after the war and we'd still be living in hatred? (B5:2)*

*Me, I don't show hatred or whatever, that Germans once were bad, because Poles were bad, too. What's the point? (B6: 5).*

*We don't remind them that they are Poles, a person is a person. How can we do something like that? Who can choose where they come from? (B10: 8).*

It is rather interpreted as a lesson which showed that the only reasonable and viable solution is to learn to live together, to share common land with different cultures and nationalities. Our respondents quite openly criticised all the efforts of homogenising

activities. Tolerance and explicitly expressed conviction about necessity of dialogue and cooperation between different ethnicities while living together is one of the most often evoked values. This common fate has been proved by a very high number of intermarriages and their durability.

*I think that the mixing of cultures is a very good thing, because you can pick and choose the things that are most valuable of each. Good communities come always come out of it, and then individuals (B3: 6). There were a few families that were placed here after the war, and no one ever said a bad word to them, because that doesn't make sense. No one asked to be taken anywhere, these were just the times of war, because they left their possessions there, and here they got others, and they guard them, and all is well. I still remember when they brought them here — they brought with them such a lively folklore, all sorts of parties, dolls, when there was something to be sung, they had it in them (B1: 6-7).*

*I know this, that you can't force someone to be this way or that — each person feels that which he is (B3: 4).*

*I don't like things like that, kinds of separations. I believe that there are different kinds of people here and there. I've experienced this myself, just as my father did (...), and that's why I think that different types of people exist everywhere. I am now more tolerant. We need to have tolerance. You need to remain human. (...). People are to blame here and there, we were not alive then, we didn't live in those times, we have this passed onto us. I think that we shouldn't go back to those times. They tell us this and that about those times, and we're supposed to believe in it, even though it wasn't exactly so, because there were those to blame on either side, the Russians get even mixed in there after some time. First only the Germans were to blame, now the Russians are guilty again, and we didn't take part in it. Now, we should just forget about it (B6:4-5).*

*We are not the only minority in the world. We understand this, because there are others, and so on. So they should let everyone have their own culture, let them cultivate their own traditions. (...) On my table there are now Polish, Silesian, German and various other dishes. A kind of hodgepodge. We borrow from them, and they from us (B7:10).*

*What is the most important is tolerance towards everybody, because without it, things will never be good (B8:8).*

*I always say this: I worked so many years with Poles, with pure Poles, and I never made the distinction. If they didn't do anything to me, why should I take revenge? Whether it is a Russian, a Pole, or whoever (B4:1).*

The fact that boundaries between distinct ethnic identities have always been blurred, discussed and contested, plays an important role in the perception of a national community. For most interviewed respondents, cultural and ethnic pluralism is treated as a matter of fact. From such a perspective a national community is something more than merely a community of culture, descent, religion and common history. Pluralistic and an often negotiable cultural reality of everyday life certainly contests such a perception of national identity which presumes ethnic essentialism, where the national community is closed and exclusive and the boundaries are sharp, explicit and unambiguous. They have evolved multiple points of reference, political loyalties and allegiances which are not parallel to cultural and familial ties. They have also experienced or witnessed different kinds of transgressions that helped them to realise that social identity is not what people are born into and ethnic and national traits are not handed out by God nor nature.

*Generally speaking, each person decides for themselves who they feel they are (B3:6). At home we spoke mostly Polish, because mom rather spoke Silesian. But after, when I myself stopped working, and when those ladies used to come and see mom and would chat in Silesian, I would also chat with them and then I would laugh that I don't speak any language anymore – not Polish, not Silesian, nor German (B4:4).*

*We had to speak German with my father – in that way he taught us how to speak German. My mom used to speak to us in Silesian, but we only understand it, but can't speak it. And we then did our schooling in Polish. A very strange kind of family. (...) My kids don't want to go and live in Germany. I've already thought about something like that, where we would have it easier, because here it's hard to move up in the world. I've thought of everything, but they don't want to (B6:6).*

*So it is, so it is the eternal question. So then what, who are we? Poles? No, I don't think so. So then we're either Germans or Silesians. Not one, nor the other (B7:8-9). I'll tell you, it comes from something else, that I feel German — it's because my father used to support the German football team, and so it's been in me since I was young. And I'll tell you a second reason, that when I worked with Poles, they kept on teasing me that since I'm from Silesia, then I support the Germans for sure. In all it wasn't such a big deal, but there was some sense of being torn. But I'll admit openly that I leaned towards the Germans. But I did support the Poles in handball. In football it's for the Germans, in handball for the Poles. It's a sort of cultural and national mishmash, but you can't just stick your finger in there and start poking around, trying to stir it up and start bringing out the past, we have to move forward, together, and none of that stirring stuff up (B3:14).*

*It was this one that made himself a great Pole. He wanted to be a Pole, not to go to the army, he escaped, he lived through it all, and then he was the one giving orders (B2:15).*

*I'm emotional when I hear both Polish and German news, because sometimes I would like to take a hammer and just ram that television, because the truth is different, and here they just talk rubbish. But in Germany it's the same. When there's something important, I first listen to the Polish version, and then, two hours later, the German (B2:10).*

*I vote here, because I'm not interested in over there, and because here I sat on the voting committee for 8 years (B2:15).*

*We watch the Polish news, because it's necessary to know what's going on here, but usually if we want to watch films, we prefer watching German channels on satellite, but my kids no, they only watch in German (B5:5).*

*A German took a Polish girl as his wife, and so she also inscribed herself to the German minority. Not that she's declaring that she's German, but that she's part of the club (B8:2).*

*My father really suffered because of the fact that I married a Polish man. Because back then emotions were still so deeply rooted, it was 1958. I was the first girl in town who married a Pole. And so my father suffered, I could see that. But he was able...., he didn't disown me, he didn't curse, he didn't kick me out of the house, nothing like this. He just talked with him. Normally. He was able to talk with him (B9:6).*

*Silesian was our first language, but we also spoke German at home. Or we would speak in Polish. It would depend on how mixed the family was at that moment (B9:9).*

*Now it is I who have little contact with them [with the family], because they also treated me like, oh, your a Pole, you want to live in this Poland instead of coming to Germany. This made me a little angry, because Poland or no Poland, this is my homeland, I was born here, my parents are buried here, my siblings lived here. My mom, a German, already in the 1920s belonged to a Polish song group, she read Polish books. It is these things, that when you try to distinguish the Poles from Germans, [you can't] – they are Silesians, who can live in two languages (B8:5).*

*On of my sons-in-law is from the Poznań region, another one here was born in Biała, the one that lives here with my daughter, the wife of my son is from Prudnik, and one son-in-law is from Tychy, but he's one of those typical Silesians. When his son was born, he took his guitar at midnight and went into the park, and there he belted out : 'Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła' ['Poland still hasn't disappeared', the first line of the Polish national anthem] (B8:10).*

*I've been to Germany many times, but something doesn't suit me there. For example, I would introduce myself as Anna from Poland, and someone would whisper to me: but you aren't from Poland, you're from Silesia. And this was horrible, this pissed me off (B9:13).*

It must be said that one can certainly detect a lower level of insecurity and frustration among the members of the minority than in other comparable Polish local communities. This is partly because of the fact that most of them hold dual citizenships, nearly all of them have had a chance to leave Poland: some of them did leave and then returned. This fact obviously enhanced the feeling of subjectivity, higher self-direction and self-determination. Most of the respondents visited Germany in the 70s and 80s, met with members of their families, were able to confront communist anti-German propaganda with reality. They had a chance to compare the efficiency of free market economy and the level of social and political security in Poland and Germany. Such experiences created a solid base for acknowledging the superiority of the so-called free world or Europe.

*We were there with my husband for the first time in 1976, we came back dumbfounded. This was an enormous difference, at that time there was really an enormous difference. Shiny clean and wealthy! (B5:1-2).*

*And in Germany everything is so systematic, that it hurts the brain. Even just those railway houses eh, but in Poland it's that way now too, but even those 10-storey car parks, that's just a whole new kettle of fish (B8.5).*

*Already then in Germany they said that there would be a united Europe one day. And I would always pray that I would live to see the day (B8:8).*

*I think that we of course want to be Europeans, here I think that even more so. And so like I say, since 1990, we have these migrations and they feel, they know, that they can make money there, and there are a lot of people who went, made some money, but set up their businesses back here. Little by little, but everything is developing (B3:7).*

*We have to look into the future, because the tolerance they have in Germany, Poland doesn't have. The Germans did actually learn something from this war. They look differently on foreigners (B5:5).*

*We have to get used to the fact that this is Europe, and in Europe there are these types of people, and those. And at the end we need to think in different terms. In any case I wish that you get to that EU, there in the West (B8:13).*

*I would hope for myself that Poland also introduce such aid. (...) I would wish for myself that Poland also provide for mothers like me, some kind of basic things. I am for this. I sometimes say that the Germans are stupid, that they distribute their money out like that, they pay. I even know that my cousin's wife was also left like that, alone with children. She has three kids, a huge house, they pay for everything. She even gets an allowance. She lives better there. I wouldn't have it like that here, absolutely not (B6:5).*

Many of them chose quite deliberately to stay in Poland and struggle against the hostile environment. Their situation changed radically after '89, so they can feel, at least in this field, as undisputable winners of the downfall of communism, democratisation and European integration. The year 1990 meant for them a new chapter in their history, since they were officially recognised as a national minority. The Social-Cultural Association of Germans in Silesian Opole was created, places in the Polish parliament were secured. As a party of a national minority, it is not required to pass the election threshold of 5% as standard political parties in Poland are. It is symptomatic that the name of Lech Walesa is remembered in a positive light even among those who are often described as victims of post-communist transformation.

It was a time when they could openly start to restore traditional artefacts in the public sphere, especially these with symbolic meanings related to the German presence. That was extremely important for older members of the community who remembered the pre-war period. It was mainly them who spontaneously engaged in re-establishing places of German martyrdom, commemorating those who died during the first and the second world wars. These acts were of crucial importance in re-establishing the symbolic structure of sacred places which define the symbolic and mental map of emotional belonging. By this token they turned the occupied and colonized land by 'them' (Poles, Communists, Soviets) into their own, and by this they brought back their private homeland, or what in German language is called *Heimat*. They are quite sure about their heritage. They put much effort into maintaining symbolic representations of local heritage and collective memories, such as places of commemoration of casualties of the first and second world wars, but also local cemeteries where many gravestones were revamped in order to return to the original German names of people buried there. A very strong feeling of locality is manifested often by refusing to choose between Polishness and Germaness, and by using the term of 'being from here' instead.

*Above all, I am of a German background. I was in the Minority, but then I changed my mind. There were a few things I didn't like there. A Silesian is like the piggy in the middle – family on either side. Ya, I can't just go to one side, either. Maybe someone can, but I can't. It's stronger than me. I don't feel German, nor Polish. I simply feel Silesian (B9:1).*

*I always say that I'm Silesian. A Silesian is to me a person with a German background, a person with Polish background, and one with a Ukrainian background. A person who was born here. They don't even have to be born here, but a person who just lives here, they are simply Silesian. Those who work here, who live here, who want to do something here, these are Silesians (B3:4).*

*I always say that I'm not Polish, nor German, but Silesian (B4:1).*

*We were born during the war, so we wrote down German [nationality in national census], but I always say that I'm Silesian. But do I have something against either? I have nothing against Poland, nor against the Germans. I am Silesian. I was born*



*here, all of us were here, and here is our home, and we made it through the war (B4: 3).*

Locality has also been reinforced by mass migration experiences. Most of them have encountered a phenomenon which in the social sciences is termed as 'double absence' (Sayad 2004). In Germany they were categorized as Poles with German descent and not as Germans from Poland.

*When we go to Germany they call us Poles (B5:7).*

*Our accent is different and so they recognise us right away. They don't consider us real Germans at all, not as their brethren (B7:8).*

*Those of us who live there are never treated as Germans, always as Poles. And even though we have German ancestry, we are always treated as Poles, that we are simply from Poland. Those of us there explain that they have the same ancestry, the same one as them, but they still always treat them as Poles, as migrants. They are still are treated as such, never are they treated as equals (B10:4).*

*I am there, but I still stand out, because my accent is Polish. So when I'm there they say: that Polish girl, or that Russian, or that Bulgarian girl, etc. So it is "that Polish girl", even though I have dual ancestry. We live in the region of Silesia, but unfortunately I don't speak Silesian. I understand, but I can't communicate in Silesian, because I know it either in Polish, or in German. Again I stick out when in company. I always stick out (B6:1).*

To many, such a situation was unacceptable and made them come back not to 'ideological' Poland, as they often maintain cultural contact with Germany through electronic media, but to their land, Silesia, which only happened to be a part of Poland. The fact that Poland has joined the EU has become additional encouragement.

*I think that things got much better at the moment of entry into the EU. At last, it is a real turning moment, and Poland is open to Europe and to the whole world, and many people are coming here so that it opens up doubly (B3:2).*

*If we wouldn't have gotten into the EU, then I wouldn't have come back here, it wouldn't have made sense. Without Europe, we don't really have a chance, we would have really been on the other side of the wall. Russia on one side, Europe on the other, and us in between. Some kind of punching bag (B3:8).*

*My brother also lived in Germany, but they returned to Poland, it's strange – he has a business in Germany, he still works in Germany, but she is here. She didn't like it there, they have a house and she simply felt bad there, and he still keeps on going there, because he has a business, and so he goes, but comes back every week, and she studies here (B10:1).*

*My sister's son lived there for 7 years, got married, saved money, came back with his wife, a house near Opole caught her eye, he set up a business, has a few workers and now is very happy (B8:5).*

Such experiences often lead to a multilayered web of interests which may additionally influence an ability to create a multidimensional European identity. At least at the phenomenological level, where social life and social institutions are negotiated through everyday interaction and definition of situations (Schütz 1967).

The fall of communism not only triggered a symbolic restitution of locality but also a concrete and real revival of civic activism. German identification does not prevent them from participating in the Polish political polity. Quite the opposite, because they felt deprived of their rights, they are now more active in the public domain. Their minority status is expressed institutionally through the aforementioned Social-Cultural Association of Germans in Silesian Opole which mobilises its members, supporters and sympathisers at the cultural as well as political level. The local authorities have been dominated by their representatives for a few terms in a row. According to the words of local leaders, members of the German minority are more prone to take part in the various levels of political elections. Their turnout is at least twice as high as compared to Polish citizens. They are also more eager to be active in local social life.

German identification was also important for many decades because, as I already mentioned, it was a way of escaping real socialism brutalities of everyday life which were even more severe for those with inappropriate national descent. That identification had a very practical dimension which consisted in a possibility of obtaining German citizenship and by this token securing a legal status in an affluent post-war West Germany. What seems to prove this voluntary and pragmatic approach towards one's identification is the fact that quite a significant proportion of those who emigrated in the 80s and 90s chose to live in other European countries, mostly in the Netherlands. This advantage of being eligible for legal employment and social benefits in western European countries was one of the reasons why German identification was so euphorically welcomed and assumed on a mass scale. There is also a term in local language which describes members of German minority as double-passport-holders.

*I figure that if it weren't for the financial aspect, no one would have these passports. This is more of an economical identification than an idealistic identification, or national. In reality, the majority of these people feel themselves Silesian, if one is German or not is irrelevant. Because this is already the third generation. If you were to talk with some of the older people, they would definitely identify with being German, and not a "dual passport'er", they would be embarrassed to say that. Whereas young people approach it lightly, they have two passports, it is easier with both of them (B11:8).*

*A German passport is a ticket to work in Germany, and looking at it critically, many only identify with Germaness because of this, although of course not every one(B12:5).*

*My youngest son once asked me this: dad, you have German ancestry or no? And I said son, my parents are from 1900, so of course these were German parts. I said, of course I do, and I think that we will get this German ancestry. And so what, it sunk so deep into my son that he first went to Germany. He lived in Germany and then went to work in Holland, because he said that work is pretty hard to come by in Germany. He went to Holland and he likes it there (B1:6).*

*And so we also have German passports. But right now there are just lying there, I don't go to work there, so it lies there useless. Because now you can go on your identification card, so now I will have to think what to do when the validity expires. I don't know. Because I don't need it, it's really those that go to work there that need it (B7:3).*

*Everyone wanted this ancestry, so that they could go there to make money. To have two passports. It's really just about that. Because they tried everything, writing down data from tombstones. It was like that for a certain amount of time, but then they started checking thoroughly (B10:3).*



In this context it is worth mentioning that the value of a German passport is being overridden by citizenship of the European Union, which will soon level out differences of opportunity on the German labour market between Poles and double-passport-holders. An increasing number of people admit that German passports are becoming redundant in the united Europe.

*We know have a united Europe, now it's no longer needed, now we can speak normally in German, sing in German, what do we need Germany for now. Now you can't really see the difference in it (B5:7).*

Although one should not underestimate an authentic longing for unrestricted expression of ethnic or cultural difference after the years of suppression, it is a commonly shared feeling within the German community that the enthusiasm from the beginning of the 90s has largely evaporated. The preservation of memory and conservation of traditional customs still plays a role, but many churches, for instance, have given up celebrating masses in German. Mass activism has become less popular. Members of the German Minority Association pay a tiny amount of money (1 zloty per a month, which means 3 euros per year) for its activities, and without other sources of support this small amount of money is used to mark rather universal and not particular occasions, mainly Mother's Day, Grandmother's Day and the like. What is still valued has to do rather with such practical issues as German language taught in primary and secondary schools, German help in developing local cultural and health centres which serve the whole community and not only selected groups.

*In comparison to the 90s, there are undoubtedly less [people that belong to the minority]. It started in the 90s and there was such a boom, because it was about the dual passport, which helped people from here a lot, because it opened the door to legal work for decent money. (...) And after a while it is obvious that those who thought more in economic terms have slipped away. Those who care to maintain their German roots are the ones who stay active (B3:4-5).*

*Because when the sign-up list went around, some didn't know what they would get. So when the list was passed around, I signed up, because I had to write something, no? I said that I was born in Silesia and at that time there were Germans, so it seems to me that I'm German. We ourselves didn't know what to write. And some just signed up, because they thought they would get something. And now they don't get anything so they took their name off the list, because of the 12 PLN, my God (B4:7).*

*These young people, no one cares about it anymore, no. It emerged, everyone wanted it to be, and now, nothing (B5:6).*

*First in 1990, I think a youth group was established. And we only really sang in German. And this group was called "Źródło" ["the little source"], because from a little source it was supposed to spread out and out it spread, for 12 years it existed until it died a natural death. (...) There are young girls, but they aren't as eager, or as talented, so there are less and less (B7:1).*

*Now these meetings, I don't know, it sort of dwindled away. When the older ones were around, they were more into it. But now the young people look at it differently. There isn't that kind of need, either. Before it was to get something out of this minority, but at this moment there isn't anything, they don't have the cash (B10:3).*

*There used to be German masses here, here in our parish. But this also isn't so simple. To force a priest to use German, when he doesn't know how. Because how*

*is a priest supposed to prepare for this, when there are no church-goers? There were for maybe two, three years, and then it died down by itself (B1:9).*

This decrease in minority activities is confirmed by such quantitative indicators as support for political leaders in national elections. In 1991 they received 74 thousand votes, in 2007 only 32,5 thousand (Dziadul 2007, 123). In 1991 the German minority was represented in Polish Parliament by 7 MPs and one senator. In 2007 only by one MP. In 1997, 17 % of all voters in the Opolskie region voted for German politicians, in 2007 only 9 % of voters in the Opole voivodship.

The entrance to the EU has been described by respondents mostly in positive terms, even though it is perceived mainly through a prism of personal experiences like the hassle while applying for a passport, queues at the border controls and intimidation by police after returning to Poland. The idea of a border free area speaks very clearly to those whose families live in other European countries and this conviction seems to be perfectly explicit. On the other hand, there is very little knowledge about the institutional structure of the EU, its competences, areas of policies, current debates surrounding the European Constitution and, more generally, the desired shape of European integration.

It seems also that the acceptance of a free market economy and democratic institutions is relatively higher than in other rural areas of Poland. Neither are they alien, nor perceived as forced on the Poles by foreign forces. The fact that Germany is in a sense a role model for modernization processes in Poland eliminates fundamental criticism of harsh consequences of free market economy, high unemployment and relative deprivation. On the other hand, they compare their material situation with their friends and relatives who live abroad, watch income differences and are very cautious about further economic integration. It is a pretty common assumption, especially among elders, that life in Poland is still acceptable because even though people earn less than in Europe, the prices are lower. In their view this situation may be endangered by introducing the new euro currency. The chance of forming an European civil society is questioned by the very fact of income differences. This expressed lack of feeling of equality is perhaps the most important doubt as far as European integration is concerned. Such concerns resemble intuitive reference to T.H. Marshall's idea of citizenship as a three-dimensional entity consisting of civil, political and social rights, where in this case the stress is put on the latter, where a fair society means one in which most members of a political polity have similar resources and a similar possibility of taking part in social interactions (Fraser 2005, 50).

*You know, with this governing, the powers-that-be should maybe think a little bit about this united Europe, because it is not just a name, but it has to be equalised a little bit. There where people have it just a little too good, a little should be taken from them, and there where it is a little weaker, a little more should flow in, under some kind of control (B1:9).*

*If the borders will open and if an equilibrium will be achieved with this euro, because for the moment it isn't worth it there, this isn't worth it. Now you have 600 PLN in retirement pension, and there I would have, I wouldn't even have 200 euro. For 200 euro you curse everything (B2:16).*

*This is a good thing, but with every good thing there are also negatives. And so this needs to be worked on. For example, this common currency is very good, but we just have too little of it, because if you're a Pole, your pension comes out to 300 euro, let's say, and there they have 1300, so they can afford to go to that Mallorca. But will I go to Mallorca if I have a house to support? (B8:8).*

*In my opinion it is better [after entry into the EU]. There aren't such borders, there are more opportunities, you can get some funds, something more can be done*

*there. I think that this is good. And at least they will make them pull up their socks a little bit over there, and teach them a different mentality (B10:7).*

For some, European integration is a very needed and unavoidable process which serves all Europeans. The idea of close and deep integration is perceived as an obviously positive goal.

*It seems to me that there is a chance to integrate Europe. Actually, I think that this is the only chance for Europe. To be able to compete economically, maybe not compete, but to be a partner for the rest. I ask you to take a look at how those Asian countries are developing: China, India. They will be partners for America pretty soon. (...) And that's why our only chance, ours too as Poles, is to be in Europe and an integrated Europe. (...) So what that the US is going to place an anti-missile shield here, so what, when economically it doesn't give anything. It is necessary that we as Poland should co-exist well with our neighbours, really well. Well economically, because we can't fight with them, that doesn't make sense. Neither economically, nor militarily, but actually militarily doesn't count anymore. (...). Germany is the economic motor of the EU, there everything works like a Swiss watch (B3:6-7).*

What is very interesting is the fact that members of the German minority seem to have become immune to recent tensions in the relations between the highest political circles of Poland and Germany. There were no opinions directed at any signs of deterioration of relations between Poles and Germans at the local level. The picture is not idyllic, there were and still are situations where members of minorities experienced hostile attitudes which boils down mainly to verbal abuse after sports events where Poland and Germany compete against each other. Nevertheless they were only rare and minor incidents.

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# Women who define their identity through political struggle for gender equality

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The aim of this report is to present conclusions drawn from the research conducted with women groups in the Małopolska region, in southern Poland. The aim of the research was to find out if women in Poland define themselves as a subject of social processes, especially in the context of struggle for political and social rights. In other words, in our fieldwork we sought variables which would categorise women as a community cemented by a common identity and conscious common good.

The problem of collective identity is inextricably related to dividing social sphere into "familiar" and "alien". This, in turn, requires the ability to build or imagine boundaries which define the sphere of "us". As F. Barth put it in his work entitled *Ethnic groups and boundaries* (1969), in collective identity construction, it is not awareness of common culture that is important, but boundaries, which are essential for the existence of social communities. Collective identity will hence always be connected with relationships; will always require interactive partners in relation to whom borders are constructed. Mutual interactions between groups are conditioned by two fundamental factors: social relations in the sphere of power and symbolic image of the world. Z. Mach put it convincingly: the first factor includes both an internal structure of authority in a group and relations with other groups. Firstly, relationships are consolidated in the form of normative constructs, images and symbolic models of social structure, which in turn play an important role in defining the character of further relations. In this way social order is created, in which groups act according to their imagined position with respect to their partners. The other factor, symbolic model of the world, forms the basis for this action. It provides members of the group with images of themselves and others, the concept of social relations, beliefs and prejudices (Mach 1989).

The concept of identity understood in such a way, determined the operating model of the category of "women" that we assumed for the sake of our research. We believed that this category could be best described by means of three variables. First, the ability to define themselves in the "we" category in relation to other social groups. In practice that means our research sought to capture the features which would allow us to describe examined women as a social group characterised by solidarity, conscious common good and distinct boundaries on the one hand; and as a cultural community which allows for the creation of a common system of meanings necessary for the construction of imagined identity which goes beyond the context of everyday interactions on the other. The second variable pertains to the issue of negotiating one's identity with social surroundings; that is the ability to build social institutions, whereby women can express their identity in gender categories. That is why we decided the research should encompass only those women who establish and act in different types of institutions through which they are able to manifest their group identity (mainly NGOs). The last variable is related to the question of what social mechanisms instigate women's struggle for political and social rights. In this case we assumed that the basic factor would be the gap between heightened expectations and the possibility to satisfy them in social structures in which the examined women function. This assumption was based on the conviction that in the Polish context the problem of gender equality exists *de iure*, providing for potential possibilities; however, *de facto* these possibilities are often overlooked. Hence, we might suppose that structural barriers women have to face in everyday life constitute the basic mechanism encouraging them to strive for a change of *status quo*.

With such a defined research question, we formulated a working hypothesis, according to which the dynamics of socio-cultural processes in contemporary Poland would depend mainly on two different types of society, two distinct ways of the perception of social world. F. Tonnies distinguished two models of society: community (*Gemeinschaft*), characteristic of traditional societies, and association (*Gesellschaft*), which is representative of modern, industrial societies (Tonnies 1955). To put it simply, both models correspond to the axiological dichotomy described by K. Popper as open and closed society (Popper 1993).

Generally speaking, closed society is characterised by the lack of rational political debate, authoritarian dogmatic thinking, xenophobia and, above all, absence of healthy competition for the position in social structure. This type of society is particularly characteristic of traditional communities and contributes to the consolidation of patriarchal social structures. On the other hand, open society is characterised by creativity, activity, democracy and liberal attitudes typical of civic culture. In the research we decided to examine the way women who function in such distinct social systems define their identity. Consequently, we decided to carry out the research in two different types of society, defining them for the sake of the research as "urban" – open society as opposed to "folk" – closed society. According to the aforementioned types we chose two *gminas* to carry out the research. The first *gmina*, Dobczyce, represents "urban" type. Notwithstanding its provincial character, the town of Dobczyce has had long civic traditions, which play an important role for the inhabitants, both in everyday life and symbolic sphere. The second *gmina*, Gdów, is a typical traditional rural society, devoid of civic traditions. Another factor that determined the choice of these two *gminas* was the small distance from Kraków, a modern metropolis and Poland's third largest city. We were interested to see if and how urban cultural patterns reach local communities and in what ways they may affect the dynamics of women's identity in the examined societies. The closeness of Kraków (at a distance of 30-40 km) provided an opportunity to observe such patterns in everyday interactions through commuting or participation in cultural or entertaining events.

From a methodological perspective, the decision to examine women in local communities and not in big urban centres was influenced by the assumed variables. We believed that in order to verify those variables the most effective method was the one established by social anthropology. Firstly, it allows for a comprehensive analysis. The paradigm of anthropology assumes that society should be examined as a complete whole, both structurally and culturally. What is more, two techniques used in anthropological method, in-depth interview and participant observation, let us capture meanings deeper than verbal declarations. Participant observation technique enabled us to analyse involvement in the public sphere and to compare declarations with actual participation. Moreover, the majority of social actors are not aware of some aspects of social life and thus they are not able to explain them. With regard to this fact, participant observation makes it possible to capture patterns governing social life, whose existence people do not realize. This is especially important in the case of social groups undergoing profound transformation. One example of such a group may be women in contemporary Poland. In-depth interview allows for the analysis of language discourse which is used for group description. It enables us to answer the basic question if a group has a set of concepts to describe itself and at the same time if a group can distinguish itself from a wider community. In the course of three-month fieldwork 10 interviews were carried out in each of the *gminas* and a number of descriptions of participation in public life were made. What is more, 3 focus groups were organized; one with local NGO leaders, one with school leavers from a local secondary school and one with the leaders of feminist discourse from Kraków.

Research findings enabled us to verify the variables. The most important research conclusion is that the examined women's groups do not constitute a common interest group and are unable to define group identity. The discourse of the struggle for equality



of women is almost non-existent in either of the two *gminas*, the one referred to as *urban* or the other, of a more rural character. This does not mean, however, that women are not interested in public activity. Just the opposite, they run successful businesses, are members of self-government at all levels, but above all, they cooperate in social initiatives of more or less formalized nature.

Our interviewees willingly refer to themselves as „activists“, considering it an important element of their lives. However, they rarely define their activity on the basis of inequalities pertaining to social construction of gender. This might result from the lack of a language they could use to describe themselves. The language that is used to express gender issues is commonly regarded by our respondents as “alien”, designed only for “feminists from big cities”. Additionally, this language is considered as a negation of traditional definitions of femininity. Thus, in an attempt to describe their activity, our respondents avoid references to feminism or gender for fear of stigmatisation, since they often interpret these concepts in a stereotypical way as anti-feminine. This is especially conspicuous in the language they use. The women often use male forms to refer to their jobs, position at work or their education, especially when the name indicates status: “manager”, “deputy master”.

Another important finding is a complete lack of solidarity and definition of common interest, wider than a local community. The activity of non-governmental organisations, which develops in the examined societies, is focused only on local community. Our respondents do not feel the need to create women groups which go beyond locality, and they consider them unfunctional. Local community in their opinion resembles the functionalist ideal of equilibrium, which might be destroyed by any external interference. The only common interest (as regards femininity) that our respondents are able to define is action which provides assistance for other women, mutual aid in cases of family crises, job loss, etc. Crisis prevention in equilibrium durability is in the opinion of our interviewees made possible only by means of neighbours’ mutual aid. Hence, frequent argument is that participation in gender-focused organisations is senseless as major problems are best solved through mutual aid. What is more, nation-wide women’s organisations in Poland are hardly recognised; the respondents have never shown any interest in them or sought help. The most frequent argument is that these organisations “have no idea about problems here”, and moreover, because of this “ignorance” they might introduce dysfunctional contents, which in turn may disrupt the community’s consensus. It is conspicuous that there is a tendency for closing in locality and solving problems on the spot, with own resources, according to the conviction that trust is possible only within the local community. This can also be seen in parallel focus group interviews, in which the respondents more often point to the values they recognize and interpret as “familiar”, such as locality, neighbourhood, assistance. A characteristic thing in this context is the issue of European institutions. Notwithstanding the respondents’ positive opinion about the aid their *gmina* receives (some of them often take part in application procedures), the institutions themselves are perceived as distant and having no influence on the interviewees’ everyday life. That is why they do not seek any European instruments of support to solve concrete problems of women. In this regard the participants of the focus group from Kraków showed the opposite. A carefully selected group of well-educated women who define themselves as feminist activist would seek help in “imagined” institutions, be it national or European.

In the examined communities non-governmental organisations flourish, animated mainly by women. However, local women’s organizations do not construct their identity on the basis of gender. It is best exemplified by the activity of typical women’s NGOs in a “folk” type of a community, namely The Circles of Country Housewives. This activity relies on active and usually successful cooperation with archetypically masculine organization – The Volunteer Fire Brigade. This collaboration is often based on family bonds – the head of the Country Housewives’ Circle is married to the fire chief of the Volunteer Fire Brigade, and her son-in-law is the chairman of the village council. Cooperation between

housewives and firemen involves mainly renting the fire station for cultural purposes, especially during holidays which reflect traditional viewpoint placing the patriarchal family at the core of values they subscribe to. In the „urban“ type of community in Dobczyce, the most well-known NGO „ISPINA“ is more modern. Established and managed by women, this organization is not closely related to negotiating women's identity. The main focus is on art animation and preserving civic traditions of the town, thus promoting the *gmina*. In both *gminas* the cooperation between women's organizations and local authorities is more than satisfying. In addition, the majority of respondents view this cooperation very positively. However, Polish democracy is evaluated very critically, which contributes to the creation of closed local societies which can function as long as there is no external interference. The pre-modern way of thinking can be observed in both *gminas*, where local community is a fully-integrated cosmos, and the outside world is chaotic. Consequently, our respondents do not incline towards participation in wider organizations, beyond locality, especially those which promote gender identity. They frequently perceive them to be harmful, as they tend to destroy the homogenous image of society, introducing, as they see it, „artificial“ and unnecessary conflict between man and woman. This tendency is quite visible in the Polish society, and this is best exemplified by the attitude towards the Women's Party – the first political party which has as its main aim the integration of women in the struggle for common political goals. Established by a pronounced feminist writer, Manuela Gretkowska, in spite of intensive electoral campaign for parliamentary elections in 2007, the party received only 0.28% of votes. In the examined societies the institutions which could help women to express they identity or negotiate it with social surroundings are non-existent. This is especially worthy of notice as the number of NGOs represented by women is much bigger in the examined societies than the Polish average.

In the examined societies, both of folk and urban type, the issue of women's mobilization, which results from the lack of possibilities to realize aspirations, is basically nonexistent. This may be attributed to two fundamental facts. First, our respondents do not notice or experience sex discrimination. On no occasion was this problem tackled in the interviews; not even in the case of women who are village administrators, which may seem to go far beyond the patriarchal structure. This may result from the fact that women in these societies are usually better educated than men and they successfully participate in the public sphere; they hold high offices, become village administrators, run business associations, etc. What is worthy of special attention, they did not have to compete with men for these positions. On average, in traditional local societies men are badly educated and prepared to perform simple physical work. The dynamics of social changes, which compel people to acquire new qualifications, have also affected the examined societies, excluding from the public sphere people who are not competent, regardless of their sex. Polish accession to the EU played a special role here as it created a demand for qualified people to deal with aid resources, international cooperation and to establish partner relationships. Well-educated and with better language competencies, women found their feet easily in the new reality. Frequently emphasized issue of life aspirations was not mentioned by the respondents in the context of gender inequality, but rather in the context of barriers created by the local community itself. Another reason which contributes to the lack of women's mobilisation in local communities is the sphere of values, with family and their well-being as the most important ones. Our respondents point to children upbringing, running the house, care of good atmosphere and relations among family members as fundamental values. However, there is a noticeable difference between the two examined communities. In a society where civic culture patterns are prevalent, self-realisation is an important element, however never at the family's expense. What is worthy of notice, the respondents who have prestigious jobs in Kraków, absolutely reject the idea of settling there, because of the family. Local community in the opinion of respondents is more conducive to the family and raising children with the advantage of family support. A big, atomized city, notwithstanding better opportunities for self-fulfillment, offers less security provided by mutual aid among families and neighbours. A characteristic thing is that the respondents do not attribute



any problems they might encounter to sex discrimination. Potential problems, in their opinion, derive from within the family, seeking a life partner, marital crises, etc., and that is where help should be directed.

To sum up, the problem of identity construction of women who define themselves through the struggle for political and social rights is in the Polish context conditioned by two main factors. First and foremost, it regards the language. Feminist discourse describing women's identity is perceived by active women to be alien and unsuitable for depiction of their situation and activity. However, they themselves are not able to find an alternative language, which would allow for liberation from patriarchal structures. Thus, we may say that they lack a key element necessary to oppose the consolidated identity – that is the community of meanings. Another problem pertains to the integration of communities where women exist. Paradoxically, the stronger local identity is, the weaker identification with the category "we - women" is. This results from the fact that the key value for women is still family and its safety, and not their self-realisation. Well-integrated society provides for proper functioning of the family and this in turn satisfies the basic need. Consequently, seeking other structures of support or identification grounds is considered meaningless, regardless of the type of community, be it folk or urban. Hence, further research into identity of women who define themselves through their struggle for political and social rights should focus on communities which reveal a certain degree of disintegration. A good field of research may be found in big cities, which have undergone profound changes in recent years, and which constitute a destination for massive migration of well-educated young people. Migrating to metropolis, they have lost their former frames of support in local communities and have not yet created new ones.

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## **Part Three**

### **Introducing Innovative Empirical Methodology in the Identity Analysis**

# Identity in focus – and the case of ascribing schizophrenia to Europe and Hungary

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## Abstract

In this paper we will summarize our developing approach to study of identity relying on “semi-everyday” discourse of members of the Hungarian society and present some initial analysis of the data. Specifically, we will describe (1) why do we consider focus group method as a viable way of gathering specific type of discourses; (2) what is the general structure of our research design; (3) how we obtained data for studying discursive construction of identity through focus groups. And finally, we will provide (4) a sample analysis of some sections of the conversations we obtained, namely an analysis of the sections in which the speakers characterized Europe and Hungary with the “schizophrenia”, i.e. with a term originates from mental pathology.

## Introduction

This paper provides an overview of our developing approach to study identity relying on semi-everyday discourse of members of the Hungarian society and present some initial analysis of the data. Our research is part of an international project which seeks to promote our understanding of the European societies on multiply levels. On the one hand the project is directed to reconstructing structural changes and possibilities of the European political system, and on the other hand it tries to depict the people’s or citizen’s interpretations of their life within the emerging European political system, and their self understanding or identity within (Eriksen and Fossum, 2007).

A major supposition of our approach is that analysis of such aspects of collective identity as ethnic, national or some putative European or cosmopolitan identity can not be pursued if one disregards the persons’ ‘lifeworld’, specifically the issue that how these identity components are located in the people’s personal identity. In other terms, within a methodological individualist framework, it can be argued, that only persons can have human identity. And corresponding to this, an analysis could have an access to the person’s national, ethnical and European identity as specific aspects of their overall identity only through the communicative practices of the involved persons.

In this paper we will offer an account on (1) why do we consider focus group method as a viable way of gathering specific type of discourses; (2) what is the general structure of our research design; (3) how we obtained data for studying discursive construction of identity through focus groups. And finally, we will provide (4) a sample analysis of some sections of the conversations we obtained, namely an analysis of the sections in which the speakers characterized Europe and Hungary with the “schizophrenia”, i.e. with a term originates from mental pathology.

## Focus groups as encounters for obtaining data for social research

Focus groups as a qualitative method for doing sociological and social psychological research can be traced back to the studies conducted at the Columbia University in the 1940s. It is a procedure for interviewing the groups and was developed by Merton and his colleagues (Merton and Kendall, 1946). In a focus group usually eight to twelve people discuss some topic and evaluate some object or issue of interest while a

moderator guides the group's activity. At the beginnings of its use focus groups method was applied both for commercial market research and for a better understanding of the impact of wartime propaganda. It was meant to be a device for conducting social scientific studies in general. However, the method was for a long time predominantly used in applied market research studies, and was rediscovered by researchers with more general or more academic interests only during the last decade or such. Currently, focus groups are used in various research designs, including research on issues of identity.

Bloor, Frankland, Thomas and Robson (2001) for example identified three major types of application of focus groups. First, they are increasingly applied at the pilot phase of survey research parallel to or as an alternative to depth interviews, in order to properly "targeting" and "fine tuning" the items of a questionnaire. Second, focus groups can be used either to contest a survey study, for example by demonstrating the emerging and fluid character of opinions on certain topic, or within the main study, where applying different methods to the understanding of the same issue might contribute to a better interpretation through "triangulation". Third, being discussion groups of a selected topic, focus groups are ideal in involving subjects of research to the very process and evaluation of the research and its findings. In other terms the focus group has a clear participatory potential. With regard to focus group method as an independent method for doing social science Bloor and his colleagues are nevertheless rather skeptical:

there will only be a rather limited future role for focus groups as a main source of data in academic research, since they are superior to other methods only for the study of group norms and group understandings, and even here their superiority to ethnographic study is partly the superiority of convenience and accessibility (ethnographic work being difficult to undertake in increasingly private late-modern societies).

(Bloor et al. 2001, 8)

In general, we do tend to agree with this evaluation, although it can be further qualified. Insofar different phases can be delineated within a "method" conceived and used as a controlled procedure of scientific understanding then collecting and analyzing data are just such separate phases of a research. Focus groups are sites where one can collect thematically "focused" conversational data, while the analysis of such data is a rather different issue. Our contention is that one can use focus group method in order to obtain data, and at the same time opt for other methods or theoretical frames, for example discourse analysis informed methods for analyzing them.

Focus groups, in our understanding are mainly conversational fields where we can evoke and collect opinions, arguments and evaluations from the members of a society. In short a focus group is an occasion where certain thematically focused discourse could appear, such as talk about identity. More and more sociological and discourse studies follows tacitly or openly this type of approach to focus group method and provides interesting analysis of national, ethnic and other aspects of identity (De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak, 1999; Eder, Rauer and Schmidtke, 2004; Munday, 2006).

Indeed, data stemming from a focus group is less natural than attending to everyday practices *in situ*. In other terms, conversation in a focus group is somewhat more artificial than everyday discourse; hence in a strict sense we could call it "semi-everyday discourse". Nevertheless, obtaining naturally occurring discourses which is relevant with regard to certain special topic, such as people's self definition and relation to their home country or Europe and even to the European Union, seems to be a rather troublesome endeavor. On the one hand this type of talk may not be very frequent; on the other hand collecting this type of talk would involve surveillance. Indeed, a project of collecting any type of talk from the members of a society ideally would consist of a huge amount of surveillance aided by appropriate listening devices or bugs and an analysis of their output. Of course this is the world of Orwell's *1984* (1949) where devices such as the

TELESCREEN support technically this kind of activities.<sup>157</sup> And of course, the amount time of listening and watching the data and detecting relevant or suspicious details could be shortened by inventions of mathematicians, linguists and other scientists Sholzenicyn was writing about in *The first circle* (1968). Clearly, a “method” of this kind would be an ideal source of information for many sociological or related studies, but this is not a viable option for us. Naturally, it is not only a rather expansive way of data gathering, but clear ethical problems are implicated as well. But let’s leave these Negative Utopias and their data collecting methods in rest.

Ethnographic methods such as participant observation are probably the best and already legitimate ways of collecting naturalistic data on people, and focus group and depth interviews, such as narrative ones are still rather sensitive to the member’s own conceptualizations of various important issues. In this way, if one is interested in peoples’ everyday communicative practices and other meaningful acts with regard an issue of interest, a domain or a phenomena, in our case to the issue of how do people relate and sense themselves with regard to significant groups or categories like gender, ethnicity, particular state citizenship and last but not least to the European citizenship, then, we contend, qualitative methods including focus groups could be applied fruitfully. In short, if one is interested what is in people’s mind with regard to being a European, a Hungarian, etc., it seems reasonable to talk about these topics with them. And collecting data through focus group discussions means exactly that.

Focus group conversations as raw material for further analysis, especially discourse analysis could have a number of advantages. First, it is an economical and ethically sound way of data generating. Second, the obtained data is relatively naturalistic and as such possibly contains inconsequential formulations, even self-contradictions - these and related features of human conditions are hardly available to a number of other methods. Third, data of this type is more or less thematically oriented, therefore apt to thematic analysis. Forth, data of this type is unavoidable and definitely interactional, so open to interaction-oriented analysis. Fifth, data of this type being live conversational data contains huge number of inherently personal data: the speaker’s relation towards the subject matter, towards the topic is continuously indexed by various devices such as intonation, sequencing and further discourse markers, lexical options, selection of personal pronouns, etc.; in short, it is full of devices or means by which the speaker’s position or personal stance is realized.

### **Steps towards analyzing identity discourse of Hungarians: a focus group research design**

We have tried to coordinate three major type of information while designing our empirical study. The first was the general direction of RECON Project which defined the area of interest, namely the issue of identity in broad terms. The second more specific source of information stemmed from our cooperation with the Polish research team. We included into our final design a number of concerns aroused from this cooperation. Some of them pertains to the issue of selecting prospective participants for the focus groups, while others related to the specific tasks and activities the focus groups were about to perform. The third set of information was based partly on our methodological vision of focus group method detailed in the previous section, and partly stemmed from our practical experience with focus group studies. The major constituents or steps of our focus group study design are depicted on Chart 1.

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<sup>157</sup> Note that an Orwellian TELESCREEN is not only a surveillance device; it is also a channel of propaganda or indoctrination.

**Chart 1:** A general schema of our research design

1. Data generating or collecting via focus groups – obtaining data
  - 1.1. Selecting people: filtering questionnaire – education, experience abroad, gender
  - 1.2. Guide of focus group: a loose design for what are the topics to discuss and the activities
  - 1.3. Moderator's conduct: s/he guided the group in general a reserved manner - although one do not have to believe in innocent or neutral interviewer, a dominating moderator would have been contra productive
2. Data preparation for analysis – creating transcriptions
  - 2.1. First step: watching the recordings, taking notes, selecting sections to transcribe
  - 2.2. Second step: discussion of early notes and ways of managing and transcribing data
  - 2.3. Third step: transcription, control, transcription
3. Analysis - data plus conceptual devices<sup>158</sup>

We conducted our focus group sessions in the October of 2007, and we have transcribed the recorded conversations for analysis, although these transcriptions are to be further polished during the research. More detailed transcription of the data depending on the needs of the emerging analysis will be produced in the next phases of the research. Clearly, there is no innocent or theory-free transcription (Ochs, 1979; O'Connell and Kowal, 1995). In this way the best available policy is to apply a parallel or circular strategy – thus, in a sense, points 2. and 3. on the above described schema are separated mainly for didactic reasons. This strategy toward the transcriptional work what we call “incremental transcription” corresponds to the logic of qualitative research as explicated by the proponents of Grounded Theory (for example Charmaz, 1995).

Furthermore, we will supplement our focus group data with in depth interviews: eight participants of the focus groups will be approached and a biographical narrative interview will be conducted with them. Through interviews we do anticipate gaining a deeper insight to the relevant aspects of identity constructions of our subjects as they are embedded into their life history. At the same time narrative interviews could serve the methodological device called “triangulation” in qualitative research.

Regarding data originated from the focus groups we can descriptively say that each group sessions lasted about two hours. Each focus group was recorded digitally and can be analyzed according verbal and non-verbal terms. Additionally, we have some notes the participants took during the sessions and eight “collages” or compositions assembled by the members of the four groups. As for the first glance the material we gained seems to be extremely interesting and rich. Indeed, it deserves a detailed analysis during the next phases of our project.

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<sup>158</sup> Since the present paper is more technical than theoretical, we will touch upon our theoretical stance only briefly: three major angles of our theoretical orientation towards the complex issue of identity are philosophical (for example Ricoeur, 2001), social psychological (for example Tajfel, 1982) and discourse analysis (for example De Cillia et al., 1999; Baker and Galasinski, 2001).



### Details of obtaining conversational data: the focus group study<sup>159</sup>

We consider focus groups as a setting or an encounter where people are talking to each other relatively freely, hence we call the discourse evoked in a focus group semi-everyday discourse. At this occasion participants can articulate their way of thinking on a given topic. Our main purpose of arranging and conducting focus group discussions was to evoke as many conversations in which and through which participants talk about, and hence relate themselves to their home country, Hungary and to Europe as possible. Most face to face focus group study<sup>160</sup> consists of *people* who participate in the groups, a sequence of *topics* to discuss and activities to perform, some *props* or accessories (such as some sheets of paper, pens, a flipchart, magazines and glue) and the *moderator*.

*Participants* are usually pre-selected according to the aim of the study and some practical considerations. First, since we intended to collect as many varieties of opinions and arguments pertaining identity constructs of being a Hungarian and being a European as possible, it seemed plausible to us that the amount and quality of experience of prospective participants could be an important factor in this regard. According to these concerns we recruited people who have experience in living and working outside Hungary, and who have not such an experience. In short, in selecting prospective focus group participants the criteria of presence or absence of living and working outside Hungary for at least one month period was applied. Second, it seemed to be important considering the level of education at least in two respects: firstly, as a sociological factor, which could have an impact on the way someone define her or himself and locate and relate him or herself to the social context, and secondly, because of group dynamic reasons: less educated people tend to be less talkative in the presence of more educated people. The participants of the first group attended secondary school, while in the second have higher educational level. Third, we wished listening to the voice of both genders. Therefore, roughly equal number of females and males participated in the focus groups. In this way we created four focus groups, two of them consisted of people who have experience of living and working outside Hungary, and two whose members have not such experience. Participants were recruited with the help of a so called *filtering questionnaire*. Furthermore, a second selection was devised right before the focus group started, in order to check the data obtained by the filter questionnaire, and some other characteristics of the focus groups' prospective participants (such as ease to express themselves verbally, etc.). This selection was performed by a short *pre-focus group interview*. People who participated in the focus group received 5000 HUF (some 19 Euros), and people who showed up, but were not selected to be participants were given 1500 HUF (some 6 Euros). Relevant information on the participants of the focus groups is summarized on Tables 1. to 4. below.

**Table 1:** Participants of Group 1 (lower education with no experience of living abroad)

	sex	age	education	Stay abroad If yes, length in month
1	male	31	High school	None
2	male	21	High school	None
3	male	21	High school	None
4	female	20	High school	None
5	female	23	Vocational school	None
6	female	32	High school	None
7	female	43	Vocational school	None
8	male	26	High school	None

<sup>159</sup> Most members of the Hungarian research team discussed the focus group design. We also coordinated our plans with our Polish colleges. We compiled the filtering questionnaire, the actual guideline and moderated the focus groups with Borbála Kriza and Nóra Schleicher.

<sup>160</sup> Recently more and more so called on-line focus group study is conducted. We will restrict our discussion to face to face focus group interviews.

**Table 2:** Participants of Group 2 (lower education with experience of living abroad)

	<i>Sex</i>	<i>age</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Stay abroad If yes, length of stay in month</i>
1	Male	21	High school	3
2	Female	29	High school	3
3	Male	24	High school	18
4	Male	30	High school	6
5	Female	33	High school	2
6	Female	42	High school	6,5
7	Male	25	High school	2
8	Male	22	High school	6

**Table 3:** Participants of Group 3 (higher education with no experience of living abroad)

	<i>Sex</i>	<i>age</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Stay abroad If yes, length of stay in month</i>
1	Female	26	College/Univ. diploma	None
2	Female	34	College/Univ. diploma	None
3	Female	23	College/Univ. diploma	None
4	Male	38	College/Univ. diploma	None
5	Male	25	College/Univ. diploma	None
6	Female	38	College/Univ. diploma	None
7	Male	28	College/Univ. diploma	None
8	Male	25	College/Univ. diploma	None

**Table 4:** Participants of Group 4 (higher education with experience of living abroad)

	<i>Sex</i>	<i>age</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Stay abroad If yes, length of stay in month</i>
1	Female	29	College/Univ. diploma	12
2	Female	23	College/Univ. diploma	3
3	Female	26	College/Univ. diploma	12
4	Female	32	College/Univ. diploma	3
5	Female	36	College/Univ. diploma	2
6	Male	30	College/Univ. diploma	24
7	Male	26	College/Univ. diploma	2
8	Male	26	College/Univ. diploma	2,5

Beside participants, a focus group must have some schedule or a *guideline* which prescribe the topics to be discussed and the activities to be performed. While designing the focus group guide we faced with the delicate task of orienting the group participants towards our issues of interest, and letting them to guide themselves there “naturally”. At the same time we also have to consider some characteristics of group dynamic, for example we rotated individual, sub-group and all-group tasks. In general, first we intended to contextualize the issue of identity in the participants’ “lifeworld” asking them to talk about their sense and meaning of “home”, and then directed them with various tasks toward Europe and their home country, Hungary. The major function of our focus groups guide was first to circumscribe and contextualize our topics of interest, and then orient or “focus” more or less tenderly the ensuing conversation to the issues we are explicitly interested in. The complete guideline is presented on Chart 2.

**Chart 2: Focus Group Guideline****Focus Group Guideline**

*The moderator introduces her/himself, describes the purpose and rules of the discussion (5 minutes)*

"Thanks for coming here today and spending your time with us in the upcoming discussion which will last for about 2 hours. This discussion is a part of an international research in which we are interested in your opinions and experiences. We would like to talk with you on what you think of your neighborhood, of Hungary and of the wider world. In the next two hours there will be some playful and some more serious activities and situations. But in any case we are interested in your opinions; in other terms, there will not be good or bad solutions to the questions we ask or the issues we pose. Also, you should be aware of the fact that our conversation is recorded for scientific and teaching purposes. Of course, the data obtained from you will be handled confidentially, no data allowing personal identification will be published."

*1. Introduction (10 minutes)*

"Introduce yourself, please: tell us five things which you consider important about yourself!"

*2. Establishing group identity, anchoring participant's identity – discussing the concept of „home“ (10 minutes)*

"Different kinds of things have just been mentioned above, such as family, home, job, community. What do we need to have in order to feel ourselves at home? What does the word „home“ means to you?"

Each participant formulates her/his respective ideas and the group discusses them.

*3. Association task – focusing conversation on Europe (10 minutes)*

"What comes to your mind on Europe? Please write it on a piece of paper." (2-3 minutes)  
Reading aloud the replies and discussing them. Why?

*4. Personification (10 minutes + minutes 10)*

The group is working in two sub-groups, each creates and presents a biography, then all participants discuss them respectively.

"There are two persons, one of them is called Europe and the other is Hungary. Let's write the biography of „Europe-Man“ and „Hungary-Man“. One sub-group will compile a biography for „Europe-Man“, while the other for „Hungary-Man“."

Presenting and discussing the biographies.

*5. Unfinished sentence (10 minutes)*

Short individual work followed by group discussion.

"Let's finish the following sentences. Everyone should work individually and complete each sentence."

It is a good thing to be a Hungarian, because ...

It is a bad thing to be a Hungarian, because ...

It is a good thing to be a European, because ...

It is a bad thing to be a European, because ...

Group discussion of the replies. Why do you think so?

*6. Construct (REP-test) (15 minutes)*

*Common features and oppositions – pros and cons in argumentation.*

"Select two items which are similar to each other, and tell us what the basis is of the

similarity. What is the difference between the two similar items and the third one?"

Example: apple – orange – banana

Dimension/construct:

1. not produced in our country – produced in our country
2. round shaped – lengthwise shaped

Target items: Budapest – Brussels – New York – Moscow

#### 7. Collage (25 minutes + 15 minutes)

The group is working in two sub-groups, each creates and present one collage, then all participants discuss them respectively.

Using pictures taken from five magazines, and adding drawings and texts to them, try to assemble two collages with the titles:

1. What is Europe like today?
2. What should our children's Europe be like?

Finally, we will turn shortly to the issue of moderation. Although we do not believe in neutrality, the *moderator* generally took a restrained stance, applying mainly indirect methods for guiding the conversation. In other terms, the moderator made the group to follow the major thematic units described by the guideline, only occasionally pushed the participants tenderly back to the relevant topics, only sometimes involved in the conversation more actively, while most of the time s/he behaved like a client-centered Rogersian therapist, using non-verbal cues and paraphrasing to keep the conversation to go on. All of the moderators intended to guide the conversation instead of guarding it. Be it as it may, relevant contributions of the moderators to the conversations can be and will be included into the analysis.

### **A sample analysis: Schizophrenia as an attribute of Europe and Hungary and its conversational construction**

At the end of the paper we will have a closer look on a somewhat surprising characteristic of "Europe-(wo)man" and "Hungary-(wo)man" as it occurred at some personification tasks performed during the focus groups. Remember, in the fourth task of the focus group sessions we asked the participants to write a biography for an imagined person called "Hungary-(wo)man" and "Europe-(wo)man" (see Chart 2.). In this way the four groups produced eight biographies. We would like to concentrate only one feature of these personifications. To anticipate its gist: there is good news and bad news for the friends of Hungary and Europe. The bad news is that both Europe and Hungary was attributed schizophrenia by some of the groups, while the good news is that this ascription was not a "preferred" version of the state of the arts, according to the focus group participants. In other terms, the content of this characterization of "Europe-(wo)man" and "Hungary-(wo)man" attest a rather deep trouble with regard to their identity, while its ways of delivery, the interactional characteristics of saying it in the discourse shows, that people do not at all consider this state of art as a normal one.

Out of the eight biographies compiled by the focus group participants the term "schizophrenia", a psychiatric diagnostic category was mentioned three times. Once it served as a thematic characterization of the "Hungary-(wo)man", and twice as a descriptor of "Europe-(wo)man". The propositions of schizophrenia were as follows:

„We are [Hungary-(wo)man is] (edit.) schizophrénic.“ (sic!) - Group 15.1

„S/he [Europe-(wo)man] was schizophrénic ...“ - Group 15.2

„S/he [Europe-(wo)man] is schizophrénic ...“ - Group 16.2

While the prevalence of schizophrenia in the “real world” - depending on the applied construction of “prevalence” - is about 0.33-0.72 percent in the population (Bhugra, 2005), it seems to be striking that one biography of “Hungary-(wo)men” out of four (25 percent) and two biographies of “Europe-(wo)man” out of four (50 percent) mentioned this feature. This seems to us as a rather significant finding, but of course not in a statistical sense. We will offer a *thematic* (1) and a *discourse-oriented* (2) *analysis* of the segments of conversations where schizophrenia was ascribed to Hungary and Europe. On theoretical and deductive bases the pronoun “we” claimed to be playing crucial role in conceptualizing and studying identity and collective identity (Kantner, 2006). Finally, we will turn to this issue and highlight in a related sequence of utterances a set of various actual uses of “we” in order to present an empirical *demonstration of the identity work* (3) of the speakers in our focus groups, i.e. we will demonstrate how their different uses of the pronoun “we” is featured in descriptive and performative identity work they accomplished. Relevant sections of the biographies are presented in the Appendix.

(1) Let’s start our thematic analysis with some general remarks. First, it seems to us that characterization of something with a proposition which includes a given lexical item is a result of a selection from an almost infinite number of possible terms. Therefore, any actual use of a given term is to be appreciated on the background of other possibilities. Furthermore, just like other linguistic devices, the items of the lexicon of a language community are clustered into specific social languages (Gee, 2001), such as the language of everyday communication or the language of a particular profession - some of them are more specific than others. On this background, note, that “schizophrenia” in Hungarian just like in most other live languages is a foreign word. Furthermore, it is a constituent of a social language characteristic to the “medical profession” and this fact lends to the use of the word a certain sense of detachment and authority.<sup>161</sup> Also, it is a word with a complex meaning structure: it is not easy to substitute “schizophrenia” with other terms or even a short alternative description.

As a first attempt to understand this peculiar characterization of “Europe-(wo)man” and “Hungary-(wo)man” we can try to turn the meaning of schizophrenia as it is defined by psychiatry and clinical psychology. Since the term is originated from psychiatry, a short inter-textual exercise seems to be relevant. In the DSM IV, in the most widely used contemporary international system of describing mental disorders we can read the followings under the heading of symptoms of “schizophrenia”:

Initial symptoms may include delusions and hallucinations, disorganized behavior and/or speech. As the disorder progresses symptoms such as flattening or inappropriate affect may develop.

DSM IV. (APA, 1994)

DSM IV in this way provides an expert definition of “schizophrenia”. Nevertheless, everyday people’s use of the term “schizophrenia” naturally can not be taken as an expert “diagnosis”, rather “schizophrenia” for them might be a term which only loosely

<sup>161</sup> Interestingly, in cultures like Japan using Chinese writing system (for about a quarter of the world's population) the benevolent (?) and euphemistic effects of using foreign terms like “schizophrenia” disappears, and the signs used for it directly expresses the meaning of schizophrenia as “the disease of disorganized mind”, which has a clearly and openly stigmatized status. It has serious consequences even on the level of diagnosis, and its communication to the relatives, and led some scholars to propose re-naming schizophrenia to “Kraepelin-Bleuler disease” (Yoshiharu and Berrios, 2001).

corresponds to the expert's meaning. Mental health professionals possibly apply the relevant expression in a more precise manner.

For everyday people "schizophrenia" possibly means some trouble with normality, more specifically, lack of integrity. There is a gap, an imbalance, a schizma which attested by and/or lies behind schizophrenia. Furthermore, according to this reasoning, or "social representation" of the relevant condition, there may be good people, and there may be bad people, but all of them are within a common moral realm, where agency and moral responsibility can be meaningfully ascribed. But there are a third kind of people: the lunatics. What is done by normal people, either a good deed or a bad one, just happens by the schizophrenic ones. So, in one sense the status of schizophrenia places one out of the usual moral order and at the same time attaches to him or her stigma. This broad understanding of "schizophrenia" could very well be the background of ascribing metaphorically "schizophrenia" to "Europe-(wo)man" and to "Hungary-(wo)man".

Interestingly the core of this usage goes back to the original Greek meanings of the terms "schizophrenia" was compiled from by Bleuler (1908) at the beginnings of the twentieth century<sup>162</sup>:

the Greek roots *schizein*, means "splitting"; *phren*, stands for "a breath and soul"; finally the suffix *-ia*, indicates a disease

In short the thematic meaning or function "schizophrenia" could be given as an entity with problematic or even complete lack of integrity - being the denotation of the term - and which is an entity with morally dubious (or stigmatized) status - being its connotation. Naturally, this second layer of meaning of "schizophrenia" is not present in official professional medical discourse, although the social representation of the "mental illness" of professionals contains this feature as well (Morant, 1995).

Insofar the subject of any identity involves congruence, harmony, balance, and realizes dialectic of Idem and Ipse aspects of identity as Ricoeur (2001, 15) puts it, or attest "self-sameness", as we tend to understand his analysis, then assigning the term "schizophrenia" to "Europe-(wo)man" and "Hugary-(wo)man" indicates a deep crisis in regard to their identity. And at least some people perceived Europe and Hungary in such a way.

(2) And now, let's have a look on the discursive characteristics of the segments containing "schizophrenia". Whatever negative meanings a predication of "schizophrenia" has, even if it is only a lay, and a metaphorical application, the way this predication was accomplished in the discourses attest a negative evaluation, a "un-endorsement", a "dis-preference" of that predicated state of arts on behalf of the speakers. Conversational construction of "schizophrenia" indexes dis-preferred relation of the speaker to the propositional content of his/her speech act in a number of ways.

First, a closer look on sequential occurrence reveals that all predication of "schizophrenia" has a backgrounded status. Once it appears relatively lately within the characterization of "Hungary-(wo)man" (see the transcription Group 15.1 in the Appendix), and twice it was almost omitted, and surfaces only after the description task was already finished (see the transcriptions Group 15.2 and 16,2. in Appendix). Both the "late occurrence" and the "almost omitted status" indicate that although the speakers ascribed "schizophrenia" to "Europe-(wo)man" and "Hungary-(wo)man", they are not at all happy with this fact.

Second, two of the relevant ascriptions were followed by uninvited explanations (see the transcriptions Group 15.1; 16.2 in the Appendix); while one ascription was followed by a laughing to which a number of participants contributed (see the transcription Group 15.2

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<sup>162</sup> For the gradual emergence of the concept see Scharfetter, 2001.



in the Appendix). Here self-initiated explanations just like paralinguistic indexing may be interpreted as marking a moral standpoint or a position of the participants from which they evaluate negatively the relevant feature.

(3) Finally, let's have a closer look on the material from the Group 15.1., in order to appreciate a speaker's various uses of "we", both as discursive realization of identification with Hungary, and as being a member of a small group which is just performing its task: presenting a biography of "Hungary-(wo)man". We will highlight only some aspects of this complex identity work.

In the first example the speaker at the beginnings of his monologue identified the "Hungary-(wo)man" first with Hungary as a country and than shifts to Hungarians as people, including himself: "sadness, meaning that this is the characteristic atmosphere of the entire country. In those days we hit the eye of many states and countries."

Later on, as we have already seen, he claims rather straightforwardly that "we are (edit.) schizophrenic." Whatever negative this ascription is, the speaker feels a need to explain it:

We have said this, or we have added this because there are enormous differences between the capital and the countryside here in Hungary. And, and this is the reason why – and we have agreed on this – people from the country, the other way, people from the capital look down on the people living in the country and the people from the country consider the city people obnoxious.

Note, that throughout the entire monologue this is the only ascribed characteristic which is calling for an account from the speaker indicated by the use of "because". An account, in which the function of "we" shifts again, this time the speaker refers to a sup-group of focus group of which he is a member, of which he is the spokesperson. The "we" pronoun here functions as creating common background for claiming "schizophrenia", since the speaker positions himself as a representative of the sub-group. Functionally it is a way for sharing responsibility for the claim. This may indicate that the claim is considered as a significant and negative claim deserving both an account and a social support, probably because it is not supposed to be shared by the audience.

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## Appendix

### *Excerpts from focus groups – Occurrences of “schizophrenia” in discourses*

The transcribed sections of the focus group conversations below are all produced during the “personification” task, when the participants were to create a biography for “Hungary-(wo)man” and “Europa-(wo)man”, respectively.

Code:

- Proposition of “schizophrenia” / thematic identity claim is marked by uppercase
- Some features of discursive realization of its “dis-preference” / conversational identity work is marked by underline
- S(n): speaker (1, 2, ..., n)
- M: moderator

#### **Group 15.1**

Biography of the “Hungary-(wo)men” - Group 15.1 (Participants with no living experience abroad, lower level of education)

00:38:44 – 00:41:00

S: I will try to summarize, but I think the others will add to it too. So we have written more or less the following: sadness, meaning that this is the characteristic atmosphere of the entire country. In those days we hit the eye of many states and countries. There is a good saying for this isn't there? The older we were getting the fewer we became. And this is true from several points of view. We have fought many times and a lot, have we not? Now, if we look at Hungarian history, then (this is true of) most part of it. A great number of inventors are Hung(arians), are of Hungarian origin. So considering this we may say that we are successful. Next, WE ARE creative and SCHRIZOPHRENIC. (sic!) We have said this, or we have added this because there are enormous differences between the capital and the countryside here in Hungary. And, and this is the reason why – and we have agreed on this – people from the country, the other way, people from the capital look down on the people living in the country and the people from the country consider the city people obnoxious. And this happens quite often. Also, we are hospitable and resigned. Well, we ... refer back to the saying that the older we grew the fewer we became. Well, the country has resigned itself to it, hasn't it? Then, ..... it is also very important for us to keep up with the others. What car others drive, how big their house is, but we fail to consider that there are people living in much worse conditions than we do. ...Let's consider, for example, an African country, say Ethiopia, where people have nothing to eat, there are worms in their stomach, they have no home, and they cannot afford a hamburger, and we ignore these things. Because we always look at only the others, those who are better off. So we fail to notice what a good life we have. Then, so we feel we are poor, and we are jealous too. That was about it.

M: How authentic is this Hungary-Man?

#### **Group 15.2**

From biography of “Europe-(wo)man” -Group 15.2 (Participants with living experience abroad, lower level of education)

00:54:46 – 00:56:30 “Europe-(wo)man”  
turns into a discussion, in which:

00:57:54- 00:59:10

- S1: THE "EUROPE-(WO)MAN" is fairly old. Family background: He is surrounded by all sorts of relatives who want to go in different directions. We have also added to the end that he grew up in a poor family, where the parents had little education. Nevertheless his intelligence and knowledge have made him stand out.
- M: Why?
- S1: I was thinking of the Middle Ages, the Dark Middle Ages, with all the hunger ... He is knowledgeable, well-versed, has learned a lot, he is experienced, a bit snobbish, he considers himself better and more than his peers.
- M: Who are his fellows?
- S1: From the other continents
- S2: I do not agree with this. In my opinion the Americans think much more highly of themselves.
- S1: They, too, may be conceited, but
- S2: Not really, but they.
- S1: But the Europeans are fairly prideful people too.
- S2: They are brought up that way from their childhood. Who, if not me. And above all others. They lack a profound background.
- S1: To to me self-confidence means, self-confidence in a man, is that I have done everything, American dream, etc. Here, on the other hand, one is proud of being a European, this is what I mean, a man from Europe. Regardless of whether I am a street-sweeper, or anything else.
- S3: ... that he gets ahead of others. So what we have said is that there are these highly qualified specialists abroad, abroad, doctors from Europe are wanted in many places. Because he has good results. This is what we mean when we talk about self-confidence, self-conceit. So not just because I feel I am important indeed.
- S2: This is exactly what I meant, things are backed-up here, unlike in the US.
- S3: But this is just what we are talking about.
- S2: OK.
- S1: We have also written down that he is reserved and distrustful, he trusts only his family, selfish but well-meaning.
- M: Any comments?
- S4: I dunno . . . here Europe, it includes Hungary too, I think, and Romania, the Ukraine etc., quite a lot of people and it seems to me that only Germany and those more positive countries. . .
- S3: But if you look at that here in Hungary, too, there are successful people, and there are selfish and reserved people too.
- S1: My. . . my very first idea was that S/HE ["EUROPE-(WO)MAN"] WAS SCHIZOPHRENIC, but (laughter) but . . . eventually we left it out.
- M: Why?
- S1: I do not know, it was just left out somehow.
- M: What makes you think, what makes you think that he is schizophrenic?
- S1: Well, he has a very positive, a very confident self, and also has an uncertain, pessimistic, depressive self suffering from an inferiority complex. He is inclined to it.
- S2: The abyss that we were talking about.
- M: How does it manifest itself, with these feelings of inferiority ...
- S1: It is also there in what we have just been talking about, in my opinion, that that I get the impression from what we've been talking about that, on the one hand, there are very negative thoughts on your side, which is understandable, but as a people we depreciate ourselves compared to how other European people esteem themselves. That's what I think. As we have said before, a lot of things are decided in the heads. Where we are going to and what we are capable of.

**Group 16.2**

Biography of "Europe-(wo)man" -Group 16.2 (Participants with living experience abroad, higher level of education)

00:47:56 – 00:50:16 "Europe-(wo)man"

followed by a discussion where the question why he is depressed and schizophrenic reoccurs

S1: So I will tackle to it, and we will clarify things later, er. He was born BC, we do not know when exactly. (laughter)

M: Who, who is he?

S1: EUROPE-(WO)MAN.

S2: We would have an easier job with the Hungary-Man (laughter) from this point of view.

S1: And also there were a lot of things that were characteristic not only of Europe. But anyway. He has suffered plenty of accidents during all those years. He has starved a lot and has had a lot of diseases. But he is improving day by day. He attended school and has developed a lot in the areas of science and technology. He has been awarded a lot of Nobel-Prizes. We have left the sentence about the Industrial Revolution unfinished. Er, er (laughter) now, nowadays he works a lot, er and oops! HE [EUROPE-MAN] IS SCHIZOPHRENIC, I have forgotten to mention that and the East side pays loans to the West side. And one side of it is depressed, pessimistic, withdrawn, while the other side is quite well-off and is getting fat because of all the welfare food. (laughter)

M: What is he doing ?

S1: Getting fat. (edit.)

M: And that will turn into fat.

S1: ...

M: Would you like to add anything?

S(n): (applause)

B: There were a few more things, but mainly historical, that the Roman Empire, I have written this down because such questions were also raised as radio, TV, art, SMS, mobile phone, nuclear power station is in other countries as well.

S2: Why is he depressed? ?

M: Yes.

S1: Well, for instance, when I returned home everyone was complaining,

S2: And why is he schizophrenic?

S4: Because one side is paying for the other.

S4: The east and the west.

S2: Schizophrenia, er.

# Rep-test as part of focus research

## Overcoming the deficit of understanding in qualitative research on European identity

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### In search of the meaning of European identities: language, meaning and connotations

*And like the concept of democracy, to use the notion of the public sphere does not suggest that what we see today is its consummate embodiment. Again, we would be advised to try to position ourselves between 'dismally ideological' and 'blatantly Utopian' views.*

(Dahlgren 2002, 196)

Democracy in this sense can still function as a critical concept, since it invites us to think about the good society.

(Dahlgren 2004, 13)

All the while we were preparing and operationalising the methodological tools for description, reconstruction and explanation of the process of identity formation of selected minority communities in Poland, unceasingly we were trapped in sort of a cognitive dissonance – every time when theoretical models and hypotheses of political integration of Europe were used to understand common people's thoughts and attitudes. This dissonance stems from the following circumstances:

- a) Respondents attribute different meanings upon such key notions as *democracy, Europe, European Union*; this attribution is a language process;
- b) Respondents do not understand the categories of 'normative grammar' of democratisation and constitutionalisation of Europe, typical for the organised, erudite knowledge<sup>163</sup> of academics together with established theoretical models of democratisation of Europe;
- c) Respondents are neither interested nor involved in EU policies unless they concern their very concrete situation;
- d) Anthropological method of enquiry requires that a researcher should try to reconstruct and understand deep processes of motivation, attitudes, values and goals for social interactions, with a stress put on the meaning people ascribe to their behaviour, following the dynamic concept of identity formation.

Consequently, an epistemological perspective 'from below' marks our approach, grounded on the premise that well organised, rational normative knowledge ought to be supplemented by reconstruction of meaning people give upon key notions and concepts. Additionally, the perspective goes hand in hand with the popular ('the naïve') concept of democracy as well as with the key-role of the recipient part of the successful communication in the Habermassian tradition of social research.

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<sup>163</sup> In the sense M. Foucault (1976/1998) gives on the clash between erudite and common knowledge.



## Semantics as the reason for misunderstanding European processes

Various European research corroborates the vision of semantic instability and temporary context-orientation by members of different communities in their ways of conceptualising and understanding such concept as Europe and democracy. Diverse media discourses of Europe can only make meanings more unstable – in the pluralistic market of political ideas and justifications it is not the bright future of European Union that counts most. In conclusion to their research on discursive reconstructions of European identities in the Laeken constitutional process<sup>164</sup>, R. Wodak et. al. claim that:

[...] the press coverage of the EU summit in various countries differed substantially among others on the level of semantics, thematic structures (e.g. contested issues), and structures of relevance and argumentation (e.g. apportioning of blame). The meanings of EUrope remain unclear and contested (...), and within each country a different EU seems to be represented and different issues are debated

(Oberhuber et al. 2005, 263).

Assuming that media is the main factor of disseminating knowledge on European political process, it goes without saying that 'media logic' of producing symbolic representations of Europe and democracy rather amplify the sense of alienation from the well organised and governed European polity. To give an example, the mediated European debate on the Constitutional treaty was – against the will of European Convention – reduced to...

[...] the micro-discourses of political experts and small segments of society. (...) However, for the wider public, the fundamental questions concerning the political bond – „what is the political collective?“, „who decides?“ and „why are decisions legitimate?“ – are unclear and in the state of flux

(Oberhuber et al. 2005, 229).

The above research on post-Laeken political process and media debate show precisely how a crucial and multilevel political event are filtered and condensed by media into the collection of particular symbolic and conflict representations – providing that media culture cannot be neglected as an important circumstance and cause for 'transcribing' politics into popular knowledge:

[T]he press coverage can be viewed as 'transcribing' the long process of constitutional debate and reform in the political system according to its own media logic, that is, proposes certain topoi, images, metaphors (what also could be called 'public constitutional concept') for representing and explaining the European political space

(Oberhuber et. al. 2005, 230).

The discursive approach make it evident there is neither single nor coherent vision of EUrope in European public debates, as much as there is no single meaning of Europe itself for different political actors at national level. The depth of divergency can be best exemplified by juxtaposition of two data-sets: the first, by Eurobarometer, showing that for 'Euro-citizens' the EU has a positive image: it is above all perceived as democratic (67%), modern (67%) and protective (54%)<sup>165</sup>. At the same time, 'Europe' – traditionally with moderately positive connotations in Poland – has been losing its positive

<sup>164</sup> Having its symbolic beginning when European Council of Laeken in December 2001, and continuing as a subsequent political debate within European Convention, and public debate on constitutionalising Europe in the next years.

<sup>165</sup> However, close to one in two respondents considers it to be technocratic (49%) and inefficient (43%); period of research: 20. 02.–24. 03. 2006; sample: 24,750 citizens of the European Union aged 15 and above; in the 25 Member States (Special Eurobarometer no. 251).

associations (with the tendency of decline from 7,5% to 1,7%). The table 1 illustrates how readers of the three popular Polish dailies with clear political stance understand the meaning of Europe, including their prevailing connotations. It somehow corroborates the transactional, utilitarian concept of negotiating meaning by language users (citizens and elites), who by everyday experiences, social practices, routine acts of communication etc.

**Table 1:** Different meanings of 'Europe' for readers of Polish dailies

<b>Europe understood as:</b>	<b>the right</b> <i>Nasz Dziennik</i>	<b>the centre</b> <i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	<b>the left</b> <i>Trybuna</i>
European Union	43%	50%	38%
Threat	13%	7%	2%
the West	8%	10%	6%
Civilisation	17%	18%	31%
Prosperity	5%	8%	7%
Depravity	6%	4%	11%
sth else	8%	3%	5%

Source: Pisarek 2001, the method of unfinished sentences, national random sample of 5000 Poles.

Empirical studies on language mechanisms of valuation show that in every political culture there is a group of core values – e.g. *peace, friendship, love, freedom, life, truth, justice, honesty, independence* etc. – which form relatively stable, transnationally correlated hierarchies (Fleischer 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Pisarek 2000, 2001). However, there is a strong factor of differentiation: political orientation. The more an issue is politicised at a national level – the more likely it falls within the paradigm of conflicting connotations. In Poland this is the case of *Europe* and *European Union* – values which go through the dynamic process of renegotiations of meaning because of political instrumentalisation. Such words have become 'weapon of mass persuasion', 'banner words' in public debates on the future of Europe.

With all means it is also the case for *democracy* – with its meaning and connotations not given once and for all. Thus, the divergent and nationally rooted notion of 'democracy' follows European suit of symbolic battles. Josef Melchior in his empirical study on national and European understanding of democracy addresses the question of how the ways Austrians attribute meaning to democracy would help to construct / disrupt further democratisation of Europe (Melchior 2005). Two of the aims of the study were to...

[...] gain a more realistic and critical picture of the workings of democracy in Austria; and [...] to identify 'cognitive dissonances' that may arise from different understandings of democracy in Austria and the EU.

(Melchior 2005, 3)

The Austrian study upheld the conviction that there is no single understanding of democracy but a plurality of interpretations, mixing elements of various ideal typical concepts (Ogris 2001; Delpo and Haller 2001). Therefore, the initial tasks for a researcher should be to understand the dynamic and multi-faceted phenomenon of democracy as well as 'measuring the workings of European democracy against an idealized or ideal-typical model of national democratic systems' (Melchior 2005, 18, 27) – in order to reconstruct 'democratic imagination', 'a pool of ideas, attitudes, and standards that are (selectively) used to form opinions about the 'democratic quality' of national political systems and the EU alike (2005: 8). Josef Melchior claims in his report that:

Only on the basis of sound knowledge about the different national understandings of democracy we will be able to identify whether an 'overlapping consensus' (Rawls) on basic values, ideas and conceptions of democracy exists or, at least,

which 'cognitive dissonances' we are faced with if we want to move towards a common understanding and practice of democracy at the Union level.

(Melchior 2005, 3)

Yet another aspect of the problem is the question of common connotations of the key-words as *Europe* or *democracy*. Stemming from political culture of a given place, tradition of implementing democratic institutions, standards of civil society, level of political participation etc., it may lead in its best version to develop the model of conflict democracy, and in its worst, to question the democratic ideal themselves. That was the Polish case before the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2005, when the popular meaning of democracy happened to be far away from its ideal. For Poles, democracy meant most of all: 'lack of order' (73%), 'idle talk and indecisiveness' (77%) and 'mess, untidiness' (31%)<sup>166</sup>.

A possible conclusion stemming from the above might be that without accepting the simple truth that the meaning and connotations people dynamically and relationally attribute to their values, including such notions as *Europe*, *European Union*, *European Constitution*, *democracy* etc., any attempt to explain political processes would be a vain pastime.

### **Communication deficit: two epistemologies of communicating European integration**

After the failure of the constitutional referenda in France and Netherlands, and in the context of well described processes of 'democracy deficit' in Europe (Moravcsik 2002, 2004) and 'crisis of public communication' (Blumler and Gurevitch 1995; Bucy and D'Angelo 1998) in the liberal democracy, a number of questions appear. Having in mind Recon objectives, particularly the questions of how democracy can be reconstituted in the European context (with EU as a possible 'vehicle to rescue its ideals'), and how democracy can be strengthened and participation of citizens increased – the following research issues come to the fore:

- Why the transfer of the 'deliberative logics of constitutional politics' to general publics often fails? What are the reasons for insufficient communication here? Why European elites and masses sometimes become so sharply divided? What social factors stimulate the potential openness for 'European persuasion'? In what way and how strong are they correlated with the media messages?
- What factors shape the public understanding of various contexts of democratization / constitutionalisation of Europe? What general values the members of public in each country consider as the most important – and in what constitutes their hierarchies? Where are 'European values' in these hierarchies? What exactly people mean by 'European values' and 'democracy'? In what way and how strong are the values shared on European level? Are the shared values correlated with the media messages?
- How is commercial media culture (media logic) correlated with the European project as a meaningful message? Can EU decision-makers successfully address citizens through public service broadcasting? In what sense the EU broadcasting policy can lead to orchestrated and successful 'communication for better European democracy'? Is it overall possible – if yes, to what extent and how – to persuade European citizens by top-down public communication and political campaigning? How members of European public understand (make sense of) media messages?

Discussing the reasons why the European constitutional project collapsed in France and Netherlands, Andrew Moravcsik argues that popular participation and support for European Union projects and policies should be examined in the symbolic

<sup>166</sup> Polish General Electoral Survey 2005, representative sample of 1402 people.

communication field – since it cannot be confined to the policy issues for number of reasons. He writes:

[A]ctive support and opposition for the EU as a symbol (i.e. general pro- or anti-Europe sentiment) are more salient in the minds of voters than interest in almost any of its direct policy outputs. The result is that electoral politics is quickly dominated by symbolic politics. This, in turn, plays into the hands of small bands of active Euro-enthusiasts and Euro-skeptics, who are likely to dominate any popular debate with ideological appeals to nationalist or anti-nationalist sentiment. This is hardly the sort of informed deliberation Euro-enthusiasts and democratic theorists seek.

(Moravcsik 2006, 228)

Moravcsik's argument supports the assumption that, on the one hand, expressions of symbolic meaning, key words, emotionally flavoured wording and phraseology, and on the other, the way people attribute meaning to them should be taken for granted as an intervening variable within the process of explaining characteristics of European successes and failures. Consequently, to give more clear-cut picture, one could think of two different languages, rhetoric and epistemologies: the first one of the centralised 'normative grammar of European public sphere', top-down EU propaganda discourse, typical for 'Europe-visionistic' approach, and the second one of popular, highly decentralised, typical for 'Europe-reality', heterogenic, colloquial discourses 'from below'. Table 2 illustrates the hypothesized differences between the two, showing possible reasons for European communication failures.

**Table 2:** The hypothetical dichotomy between two epistemologies of communicating Europe

<i>'Normative grammar' of democratisation and constitutionalisation of Europe</i>	<i>'Popular language' of people</i>
Politicians, elites, academics, researchers	Ordinary people
Centralised, institutionalised, orchestrated	Heterogenic, divergent, local
Certainty of opinion	Equivocative trials to organize and express opinion
Organized, erudite knowledge	Common knowledge
A bird's-eye view, scaffolding for high-rise constructs	Mundane, utilitarian and confined orientation
Sacerdotal, homilist's approach	Pragmatic approach
Formal, institutionally focused	Informal, everyday interactional focus
High political engagement and involvement in improving EU political system	Lack of political engagement; low conscious knowledge on European integration
Terminological, hermetic language	Colloquial, vernacular language

The perceived dichotomy should not lead a researcher to a deterministic stance, where s/he would accept local epistemology as the only one acceptable and realistic. On the contrary, the hypothesis of the two epistemologies means that building a research strategy on the complex political processes including policies and strategies as well as popular participation and support for the European project should include *both* of them: the institutional, 'normative grammar of EU reform', and 'popular language' are mutually dependent and self-driving. Colloquial 'European phraseology' together with 'Euro-myths' and symbols (in their positive and negative sense) do not come from vacuum – they are fed by everyday EU institutional practices, particularly, by their symbolic representations in mediatised public sphere. Hence, it is justified to include semantic analysis both to better understand the institutional logics and ordinary people talking on Europe.

In his on-line paper on the Constitution debate Heinrich Schneider (2003) acknowledges the overwhelming need to use semantic approach to study the meaning of institutional messages. Following the Weberian postulate to 'elucidate of what is meant' by public discourse participants and political actors, he explains:

The aim is more modest: it is an attempt to ensure – by simple hermeneutics – that misunderstandings, inappropriate conceptual constrictions and simplifications in the discourse can be either avoided or recognized – and, perhaps, finally resolved.

(Schneider 2003, 3)

Semantic approach opens the gates for realizing very different determining factors and assumptions, e.g. the following ones:

- the specific viewpoint of a scientific discipline, school of thought, analytical approach or research method, for example;
- to the peculiarity of a pre-scientific political way of thinking: in our context especially, to the specific factor of a 'basic European-policy understanding', which in turn is derived from a fundamental political understanding and 'political worldview';
- the political worldview itself may depend on an ideological tradition or contemporary current of thought, be simultaneously shaped by the processing of experiences and legacies from social and constitutional history, or itself shape the understanding of the problem obtaining in a national or social milieu.

(Schneider 2003, 3–4)

On the other hand, semantic approach fits like a glove to studying the 'repertoires of social practices' ordinary people come into to make (their) sense of Europe.

However it not a prerequisite that semiosis and signification must be at the centre of scientific inquiry – but complimentary studying social contexts and 'cultural aspects of socially situated texts' is as much relevant as productive for broader scope of explaining political mechanisms: it helps us to understand how institutional discourses are socially constructed and reproduced. *Meaning is performative* – claims Klaus Bruhn Jensen in his 'Social Semiotics of Mass Communication' – because *it constitutes social actions* (Jensen 1995).

### **Overcoming the deficit of understanding as the relevant premise for research on identity: testing rep-test as part of focus research**

All the while we were preparing methodological tools for studying European identities in WP8, it was becoming clear that there is a need to implement a particular qualitative technique to be able to face the deficit of understanding. Pilot studies (interviews) and hitherto research experiences corroborated our strong belief that the discourse of political elites debating on the future of Europe and democracy would be different, if not utterly incomprehensible, from the ways our respondents would think of the world.

Perhaps it is worth stressing here that the rudiments of cultural anthropology are in methodological conflict with at least two of three traditions of studying political process, public sphere and political communication: the historically-descriptive approach, evoking criticism for being *too formalistic, too bound to the prevailing political/institutional arrangements, too wedded to constrictive methodologies – and too non-responsive towards its critics* (Dahlgren 2004, 15), as well as the second – 'broader Habermasian tradition'<sup>167</sup>. The third tradition is devoid of all inconveniences of the former two, being based on 'various kinds of cultural theory':

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<sup>167</sup> Which ...includes a range of interests and approaches that take up not only the public sphere, but also such themes as communicative rationality, deliberative democracy and civil society. I call

The culturalist approach cuts through political communication from a different angle. First it must be said that there is not as yet that much work amassed in this tradition explicitly concerning political communication. What the culturalist approach has addressed in particular is the theoretical dimensions of citizenship, which in turn offer frameworks for analysing and assessing features of political communication (...). Themes such as meaning, identity and social agency are highlighted, sometimes in a poststructural mode with links to radical or neo-republican political philosophy

(Dahlgren 2004, 15–16).

Cultural theory brings 'different inflections of key concepts such as politics, citizenship, deliberation and even democracy itself' (Dahlgren 2004, 16), thus, as a result of that, a researcher is obliged to keep in mind the fundamental question: 'What do you mean by that concept?' – every time s/he interviews a respondent.

Therefore, cultural theory, together with the assumed in WP8 notion of identity<sup>168</sup> as well as the decision to focus research on selected minority communities made it even more obvious that the dominant methodological paradigm shall be qualitative, with particular attention to 'deep' and 'focus interviews'.

It is not my goal to discuss here the intrinsic features of focus interviews methodology in its entirety – it is described in other chapters of this report. I am going to narrow myself to a 'role construct repertory test' – the technique we decided to test during the first stage of focus research (Kelly 1955; Fransella, Bay, Bannister 2003; Oppenheim 2004). The very idea of implementing such a tool came to us to meet the need for using a technique which would a) fit within typical scheme of a focus without disorganizing it, b) help to initiate focus discussion on 'European identity concepts', c) produce data on how people organize their personal knowledge during the process of selecting words and structuring sentences on selected concepts – what we find crucial to be able to analyse what people mean by their declarations; d) enable us to combine very specific research on identity issues with more politological questions of how ordinary people describe, define and understand the processes of democratisation and integration of Europe, and in what way personal belief systems on political processes are correlated with identity forming mechanisms.

Consequently, all focus teams in WP8 decided to include rep-test during the first stage of interviews with minority groups (ethnic – Ukrainian, Silezian, gender – women activists and migrants). Traditional 3-card sets were replaced by 5 cards, and clear-cut pictures and images by abstract words. Technically, respondents in every group were asked to deliberate on every set of cards, and then make two separate groups (1 vs. 4 or 2 vs. 3). After having sorted cards, they were induced to explain reasons for doing this in that or another way, and to negotiate the sense of the similarity and differences between the meaning of the two elaborated groups of cards. Every layout was documented, and every sentence recorded, and then transcribed. However, because of pragmatic reasons (limited time for each focus) we decided not to include an evaluation matrix – the second rep-test tool, working on the assumption that the data collected during the first phase would abundantly fulfil our expectations.

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*it the 'public sphere approach', given the familiarity of the concept. The public sphere approach emphatically asserts the norm of democracy, often understood in procedural terms with an emphasis on its deliberative character; it thereby gravitates towards republican conceptions of democracy (Dahlgren 2004, 15).*

<sup>168</sup> As dynamic and not complete state of negotiating the sense of 'myself' in everyday social practices, not necessarily susceptible to be recognized and defined by analysing single sociological factors, or even verbal declarations.



The following six sets of cards were worked out and tested:

1. Centre – Brussels – New York – my town – Warsaw (the dimension of centre-periphery identity).
2. Clerks / office workers – local government – my neighbours – petty problems – help (dimension of citizenship identity).
3. Poles – Europeans – tradition – citizens of the world – future (dimension of national – European – cosmopolitan identity).
4. European Parliament – state – NGOs – help – We (social trust and institutional dimension of identity).
5. Tradition – truth – agreement – openness – compromise (deliberativeness, openness for discussion, dimension of democratic susceptibility).
6. European constitution – European values – order – democracy – mess (dimension of the sense of democratisation).

In every one of 6 card sets there are 15 logical combinations.

To give an example, the first set (centre-periphery) could produce the following layouts:

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. my town                       | vs. Warsaw + New York + Brussels + centre  |
| 2. Warsaw                        | vs. my town + New York + Brussels + centre |
| 3. Brussels                      | vs. Warsaw + my town + New York + centre   |
| 4. centre                        | vs. Brussels + Warsaw + my town + New York |
| 5. New York                      | vs. Brussels + Warsaw + my town + centre   |
| 6. Warsaw + my town              | vs. New York + Brussels + centre           |
| 7. Warsaw + New York             | vs. my town + Brussels + centre            |
| 8. Warsaw + Brussels             | vs. my town + New York + centre            |
| 9. Warsaw + centre               | vs. my town + New York + Brussels          |
| 10. Warsaw + my town + New York  | vs. Brussels + centre                      |
| 11. Warsaw + my town + Brussels  | vs. centre + New York                      |
| 12. Warsaw + my town + centre    | vs. Brussels + New York                    |
| 13. Warsaw + centre + New York   | vs. Brussels + my town                     |
| 14. Warsaw + centre + Brussels   | vs. New York + my town                     |
| 15. Warsaw + New York + Brussels | vs. my town + centre                       |

No layout can be arbitrary excluded (everything may happen during dynamic focus interviews), however some particular patterns are highly improbable for standard groups, e.g. the following ones:

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 2. Warsaw                      | vs. my town + New York + Brussels + centre |
| 5. New York                    | vs. my town + Brussels + Warsaw + centre   |
| 8. Warsaw + Brussels           | vs. my town + New York + centre            |
| 9. Warsaw + centre             | vs. my town + New York + Brussels          |
| 13. Warsaw + centre + New York | vs. my town + Brussels                     |
| 14. Warsaw + centre + Brussels | vs. my town + New York                     |

The above cases are not easy to explain since the card 'my town' plays a role as a marker for spatial / cultural identification, so they rather match the pattern of post-migrants (for instance Europarlamentarists, EU administration workers) – suggesting sort of multi-identity typical for persons of very high social mobility. However, location of the card 'centre' – marker for the identification of the middle of the active world, source

of influence and power – particularly in cases no. 9, 13, 14 causes many problems of interpretation.

To continue, let's look at the rest of hypothetical layouts of cards in the centre-periphery set. They come in the order of the observed in test research in Poland patterns, and are presented here with short exemplary interpretation on the basis of the essence of respondents' discussions and categorisations of differences:

*Warsaw + my town vs. New York + Brussels + centre*

- parochial, peripheral identity (both in Europe and in the world system)
- identity constructed in opposition to administration and financial centres of the West
- identity constructed in opposition to allocation of power and influence (inferiority complex? sense of material deprivation?)
- national identification – the centre figured out in the context of a nation state

*Brussels vs. Warsaw + my town + New York + centre*

- Eurosceptic, anti-European identity
- EU constructed as powerless however potentially danger entity and threat to our identity (depends on the words used by respondents and their understanding of 'Brussels')

*Brussels + centre vs. Warsaw + my town + New York*

- Eurosceptic, anti-European identity
- Euro-Atlantic ties [international security]
- EU as powerful administration and decision centre
- the alienation from Europe?
- cosmopolitanism without EU?

*Warsaw + New York vs. my town + Brussels + centre*

- Eurocentric, optimistic vision of integrating Europe
- trace of European and cosmopolitan identity?

*Warsaw + my town + Brussels vs. centre + New York*

- Europe vs. the USA – strategic vision of the world divided between continents
- the USA as superpower
- trace of the scenario for 'strong Europe'

*Warsaw + my town + centre vs. Brussels + New York*

- national identity based on spatial and cultural criteria

*My town + centre vs. Warsaw + New York + Brussels*

- self-centred, communitarian approach

*My town vs. Warsaw + New York + Brussels + centre*

- radically parochial, peripheral identity (constructed in opposition to allocation of power and influence as well to markers of administration, power, capital etc.) – or identity problems
- sense of being lost?

*Centre vs. Brussels + Warsaw + my town + New York*

- conspiracy theory?

As I mentioned before, not all layouts happen with equally high probability. Our research experience lead us to a hypothesis that a researcher would meet limited number of layouts and categorisations, rather than the whole abundance of logical possibilities. After all, focus interview as a method should lead to a commonly discussed and established solution. On the other hand, layouts depend on the very characteristics of each group of respondents (with the level of education as perhaps the most important variable because of the nature of the task), type of community they belong to, the context of research etc. and in no sense can be treated as representative for the whole population. Yet we have been observing quite regular patterns of card layouts, even in heterogenic groups of respondents.

The following six pictures come from our rep-test pilot study (all six dimensions, layouts produced by 2 groups of women – activists and non-activists). The six layouts are partially described and interpreted.

### 1. Identity in the centre–periphery dimension

<b>my town</b>	<b>Warsaw</b>

Home-made, familiar, Polish  
- 'patriotic peryphery'

Distant business  
and governance  
centres

<b>centre</b>	<b>Brussels</b>	<b>New York</b>

## 2. Identity in the dimension of citizenship

<b>clerks</b> (office workers)	local government

Self-government as  
not-friendly  
administration

Tocquevillian model of  
citizenship mobilization

<b>my</b> <b>neighbours</b>	<b>petty</b> <b>problems</b>	<b>help</b>

## 3. National – European — cosmopolitan identity

<b>tradition</b>	<b>Poles</b>

The Past as the  
identity defining  
category

We vs.  
the rest of the world

<b>Europeans</b>	<b>future</b>	<b>citizens</b> <b>of the</b> <b>world</b>

#### 4. Social trust and institutions

European Parliament	state

Institutions alienated  
from domesticated reality

NGOs

With us or with them?  
wavering status of NGOs

help	We

#### 6. Democratization

European constitution	order

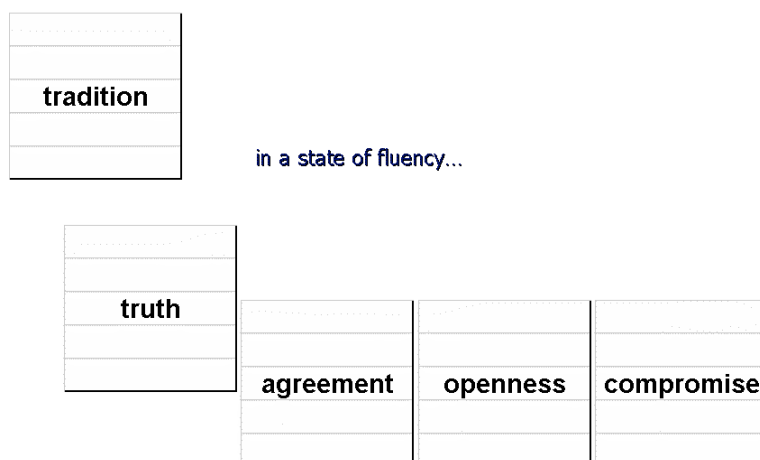
The Constitution as  
a regulatory base for  
procedural democracy

democracy

'Real' vs. 'normative' -  
cognitive dissonance  
- dimorphism -  
as a category  
of giving sense  
to democratisation

European values	mess

## 5. The dimension of deliberativeness, openness for discussion



### Testing rep-test: methodological opportunities, challenges and discussion

However in the pilot stage of testing a technique it is a matter of conceit and assumptions rather than of justified beliefs to determine the usefulness and productivity of rep-test in its modified version, but perhaps with naïve optimism we want to recapitulate our methodological experiences. We think the rep-test proved to be useful as a tool for:

- launching discussion among focus members and directing their attention to selected key notions and their meaning (intra-focus application);
- inducing respondents to explain 'what they mean by saying something' (what seems to be the crux of our quest for understanding people – not only meaning of their words, but also their attitudes and values);
- discovering personal belief systems and ways of categorising knowledge by people;
- realizing the subtleties and individual patterns of attributing meaning to key notions and values;
- reconstructing overall patterns and of pro- and anti-European attitudes;
- reconstructing language structures of naming and evaluating Europe;
- providing vast quantity of language data (mostly transcriptions of the deliberation phase) which can be used to reconstruct 'the dictionary of defining Europe and democracy, and the 'grammar of argumentation' for and against political processes in Europe (extra-focus application).

On the other hand, while testing rep-test we realized that this technique requires much more co-ordination than we had assumed before. It is crucial that the following decisions have to be taken before implementation of the method:

- it must be clear where the categories (words on cards) should come from – there are at least three options: a) arbitrary choice; b) empirically reconstructed key words in a given discursive community; c) other source;
- comparativeness of rep-test outcomes requires that the same categories should be used in all groups (it is quite difficult to combine experiences from different



locations and cultures – first rule says: the more general a label on a card is, the easier it can be transculturally implemented, but at the same time, the risk of superficial outcomes grows badly, and such general categories are less indicative...);

- regardless the level of generality of labels, joint interpretation of results is a must;
- it must be jointly decided what role should a focus moderator play during rep-test, options go from 'active prompter' down to 'neutral observer' – as far as categorisation of words and giving structures to meaning are concerned, it is crucial that a moderator's behaviour be completely fixed and invariable, otherwise the outputs could not be compared;
- a focus moderator should also be instructed on how deep and in what ways s/he should *post factum* intervene into raw data while describing discussions and mining observations on people deliberating on meaning;
- rep-test put into frames of a focus interview falls into time pressure of the latter – it is an open question whether rep-test should be put into focus together with other techniques, or, perhaps, develop into complete form with evaluation matrix – devouring much time of an interview...

Finally, rep-test can serve 'extra-focus' applications. In our pilot study we started to examine the opportunity to make use of rep-test as a tool for working out language structures used by respondents to describe reality and define the meaning of key notions. After all, as a method it is designed particularly to reconstruct patterns of personal beliefs, which manifest by language expressions. In consequence of that, it is a potentially productive task to use rep-test outcomes (particularly language means by which respondents attribute meaning to key notions and values) in order to construct the core of a 'dictionary' of important words and phrases, used by each studied community to express the meaning and evaluate the most important events, mechanisms and processes.

It is justified to assume that such a dictionary (made of key words, phrases, evaluations) makes a missing link helping a researcher to overcome the deficit of understanding. It can be a powerful instrument serving as the axis for reference corpora – every time there is a need to compare media, elites', politicians' discourse with local ways of interpreting all kinds of 'top-down' acts of communication. Last but not least, it is technically possible and easily attainable to reconstruct the map of semantic structures of the 'normative grammar of European integration' (e.g. by analysing Euro-documents) as well as of the media representations of public debate on Europe (critical discourse analysis, content analysis) in such forms, that a structural and semantic comparison with the aforementioned 'dictionaries of locally important categories' would bring us closer to understand all dimensions of integrating Europe. And that is our task for the future.

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