



# Chapter 15

## European Citizenship and Identity

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### 1. Introduction

This paper is part of a larger project trying to systematically assess the legitimacy of the European Union. There are two main methods for assessing the legitimacy of a political system. The first one is to evaluate the political system against normative theory, inquiring to what extent a political system conforms to certain normative criteria. The second is to empirically determine to what extent the political system is right in the eyes of the relevant beholders - the members of a particular polity (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999).

In order to apply the first method, it is necessary to elaborate a normative theory and then specify criteria against which political reality can be evaluated. In order to determine these criteria we rely on the work of Beetham and Lord (1998). These authors distinguish two key normative principles of liberal democracy, *popular sovereignty* and *the proper ends and standards of government*. The first principle refers to the main components of the concept of democracy, *demos* and *kratos* (literally: rule by the people). It assumes that the only source of political authority lies with the people. This belief that the people constitute the ultimate source of political authority makes the question 'who constitutes the people' one of the most fundamental aspects or dimensions of legitimacy, and makes issues of political identity

equally crucial for political legitimacy (Beetham and Lord 1998: 6). Therefore, any idea of democracy in the European Union must start with a description of the European *demos*. This we will refer to as the first dimension of legitimacy.

In addition to the *demos*, popular sovereignty also refers to the question of what it means for the people to rule. Because modern democracy is nearly identical with representative democracy, this aspect of popular sovereignty refers to the electoral authorisation of government and stipulates the requirements of *representation and accountability* (Beetham and Lord 1998: 6). In order to understand what democracy in a specific context means, we need to specify the mechanisms of representation and accountability that are needed within a given polity with a given *demos*. This we refer to as the second dimension of legitimacy.

The second principle of liberal democracy, ‘the proper ends and standards of government’, can be summarized in its most classic form as the protection of the Lockean rights (life, liberty and property), complimented more recently with welfare rights and securing the conditions for economic growth (Beetham and Lord 1998: 4-6). This principle yields criteria by which to judge the *performance* of government, the third dimension of legitimacy that we distinguish.

Summarising, from the main principles of liberal democracy three dimensions of legitimacy can be deduced - identity, *representation and accountability*, and *performance*. For each of these dimensions more specific criteria for evaluating a specific political system can be developed. These three dimensions are reflected in most normative theories of democracy, although different words may be used. The most concise summary is Abraham Lincoln’s famous triad requiring government *of, by* and *for* the people.

The second method for assessing the legitimacy of a political system, by determining to what extent the political system is right in the eyes of the people, requires an analogous approach. In order to apply this method, we should first determine which aspects of the political system are relevant for people's attitudes toward the legitimacy of government. This can only be decided on the basis of criteria deduced from a normative view.

Most empirical research using this method to assess the legitimacy of a political system as perceived by the people is based on the theoretical framework originally developed by David Easton (1965). He makes a distinction between three objects of support: the *political community*, the *political regime* and the (performance of) the *authorities*. Although Easton's original framework is more encompassing and refined, for the purposes of this project we will interpret the political regime in terms of political institutions. As can be seen in table 1, the three objects of support basically are referring to the same normative dimensions of democratic legitimacy distinguished in the first column.

Therefore, this conceptual triad helps us to develop and apply both methods of assessing the legitimacy of European democracy. As they stand for fundamental normative principles they form the basis for the development of criteria against which the performance of the democratic system can be evaluated. The Eastonian framework will help us to assess to what extent the system is supported by the people.

**Table 1: Three dimensions of liberal-democratic legitimacy and related concepts**

Dimensions of Democratic Legitimacy	Objects of Support
Identity	Political community
Representation and accountability	Regime- political institutions
Performance	Performance of authorities

In this paper we will limit ourselves to the first dimension of legitimacy. Also, we will limit ourselves to the second method to assess the legitimacy of a political system. More precisely, we shall try to develop an instrument of measurement to be used in mass surveys that might help us to assess to what extent the European Union from the perspective of this first dimension is legitimate in the eyes of the people.

It is beyond dispute that the very idea of democracy, and of people's sovereignty, presupposes the existence of a people, a *demos*. What is disputed though is what 'the people' really means. A basic issue is whether 'the people' is more or less a legal construct, in the sense of all people who are subject to the jurisdiction of a particular polity, or whether the notion of 'the people' is based on a more sociological or even ethnic concept, which stresses the subjective affiliation of the people with a community as a prerequisite for the constitution of a *demos* as a collective actor. In the next section we will present a short summary of this debate. We will argue that one needs to distinguish between people's identification with a political community or sense of citizenship and their sense of communal identity. The latter might enhance the former but the two concepts are not identical. In sections three and four we will develop an operationalization of these two concepts. In section five and six we will present a preliminary descriptive analysis of the degree to which people across the European Union have developed both an identification with the European Union as a political community and a sense of a European social community.

## **2. European identity and European citizenship**

Different views on the feasibility of a legitimate democratic system at the level of the European Union are partly due to different historical views on the relationship between citizenship and nationhood. In the traditional German view, established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by philosophers like Fichte and Herder (Bruter 2003) nations are based on a common culture, in particular a

common language. This view that the pre-existence of a collective identity is the very condition for the establishment of a legitimate democracy is well represented in the German academic literature on the feasibility of a legitimate European democratic political system. According to Graf Kielmansegg, the concepts of *demos* ('*Volk*'), community ('*Gemeinschaft*') and nation are almost identical. Once one accepts this view, it is obvious what the verdict on the feasibility of a European democracy will be. European democracy cannot succeed because a democratic constitution in itself cannot establish a legitimate European democracy. As long as there is no European community, every attempt to establish a democratic Europe is bound to fail. Against this background, it is easy enough for Graf Kielmansegg to demonstrate that the European Union is far removed from a community with a common identity. The European peoples do not share a common language; they lack memories of a common history that might help to develop a collective identity; and they do not take part in a common 'European' public sphere ('*Oeffentlichkeit*'); there are only national public spheres (Kielmansegg 1993). In a similar vein Scharpf argues that the democratic principle of majority rule will only be accepted in polities with a 'thick' collective identity, i.e. in polities based on pre-existing commonalities of history, language, culture, and ethnicity. Because such a collective identity does not exist at the level of the Union, input-oriented legitimacy is out of reach for the EU for the foreseeable future:

'Given the historical, linguistic, cultural, ethnic and institutional diversity of its member states, there is no question that the Union is very far from having achieved the 'thick' collective identity that we have come to take for granted in national democracies -- and in its absence, institutional reforms will not greatly increase the input-oriented legitimacy of decisions taken by majority rule' (Scharpf 1999).

According to this view input oriented legitimacy requires a pre-existing collective identity. This same philosophy is reflected in the famous decision of the German Federal Constitutional Court on the compatibility of the Treaty of Maastricht with the German Basic Law (BVerfGE 89, 155 – Maastricht). According to the decision, democracy cannot be exclusively grounded at the European level as no European *demos* has developed yet (Shaw 1997: 35).

However, the argument that a *demos* and *citizenship* require the pre-existence of a community with a collective or national identity is disputable. It presumes a conception of citizenship along the lines of the *ius sanguinis*, the rights of kinship. Until quite recently this *ius sanguinis* defined the German concept of citizenship. However, at least since the French revolution, there has been a competing notion of citizenship that is based on the *ius solis* whereby citizenship is acquired through permanent residence (under specific conditions) within a certain territory (Brubaker 1992). This alternative concept of citizenship is predominant in Europe. It allows for the possibility that European citizenship need not be the political projection of a cultural idea of Europe, but can essentially be regarded as a legal construct: ‘Citizenship should be the ultimate basis of legitimation for institution-building, not ambiguous cultural identities’ (Delanty 1995: 163). This seems to be consistent with the history of many nation states. The argument that a shared common identity, a *demos* in the ethno-cultural sense, should precede the constitution of a *demos*, that is a community of citizens sharing the rights and duties of citizenship, has little ground in history. In many European countries the formation of the state preceded the development of the nation (Fuchs 2000: 230).

This view is shared by Easton. First, he makes a clear distinction between a *sense of social community* and a *sense of political community*. Sense of *social community* is an indication of the cohesiveness of *society*. The sense of *political community* ‘indicates political cohesion of a group of persons [ ] the

feeling of belonging together as a group which, because it shares a political structure, also shares a political fate.’ (Easton 1965: 185). But in Easton’s view even a sense of political community is not a prerequisite for a feasible political system.

‘...this approach does not compel us to postulate that before a political system can exist or even it is to persist, a sense of political community must first rise to some specified level. Although we may adopt the degree of mutual identification as one kind of measure of the input of support for the political community, it is conceivable that for considerable periods of time, the sense of political community may be low or non-existent. [ ] It is possible for a political structure to bind a group together before feelings of mutual identification have emerged. We may go further. Frequently the imposition of a common division of political labour has itself made possible the slow growth of sentiments of political solidarity; this reverses normal expectations of the significance of sentiments of solidarity as a pre-condition for the emergence of a political community. A political community may precede and become a condition for the growth of a sense of community.’ (Easton 1965: 185-6)

While this view explicitly accepts the reciprocal reinforcement of ideas of community and the practice of citizenship, the causal sequence is reversed. Therefore, one may well argue that the constitution of a European democratic polity and the establishment of a European citizenship, first by the Treaty of Maastricht (‘Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union’ (Article 8.1)) and confirmed by the draft constitution (article I-10.1) is a prerequisite of the development of a European identity. To use a phrase from O’Leary: European citizenship may be regarded as an ‘evolving concept’: starting from the free movement of persons, through its legal formalisation, to a full-fledged identity (O’Leary 1996).

A final possible argument against equating citizenship with nationality is that it reflects an outdated concept of citizenship. It is based on the idea of undisputed national sovereignty of autonomous states. However, the process of globalisation has made national states gradually less self sufficient and autonomous. They have become more and more dependent on each other and have surrendered part of their autonomy to supra-national arrangements. Also, their citizens have become more and more dependent on all kinds of provisions and regulations that surpass the national borders. As a consequence, the 'statist' concept of citizenship and of a *demos* can no longer make a claim to exclusivity over the individual, but is becoming part of a structure of concentric circles encompassing not only national but also supra-national and sub-national identities (Shaw 1997: 35). This leads to the development of a multiple citizenship, where people do not exclusively claim to identify with the nation state, but share this identity with other identities (Soysal 1994). Accordingly, the very idea of European citizenship should lead to a radical decoupling of concepts of state, nation, national identity and nationality and yield to a form of post-national membership which is fundamentally different from a (nation)-statist concept of citizenship (Shaw 1997: 37).

However, the argument that the *demos* need not be defined in terms of an exclusive identification of the people with a cultural or social community does not imply that there is no empirical relationship between the two or that this relationship would be unidirectional. It is generally recognised that the feasibility and stability of a democratic political system are related to its political culture. Notwithstanding a formal definition of a *demos*, a democratic community undoubtedly benefits from citizens identifying themselves with the *demos* as a collective entity and with other members of this *demos* (Fuchs 2000: 219). Also, a *democratic* political community requires that people identify with the norms and values underlying a democratic political system, not only in the abstract, but also accepting them as being applicable to all their fellow citizens (see a.o. Klosko 2000). But the

essential thing is that the identification with a European *political* community (what Jürgen Habermas has called ‘constitutional patriotism’) is not the same thing and takes priority over any cultural identification with a European collective community (Habermas 1994).

To a large extent this is a normative debate. Different positions taken in this debate can have far reaching implications for the further process of European integration, as the verdict of the German Constitutional Court on the Treaty of Maastricht proves. However, the two different views on the meaning of a European demos and their mutual relationship have empirical implications as well. It is to these empirical implications we now turn.

### 3. Conceptual framework and operationalization

#### *Concepts*

The argument in the previous section implies that social, cultural or national identity should be clearly distinguished conceptually from the concept of citizenship. McCrone and Kiely define the difference as follows: ‘nationality and citizenship actually belong to different spheres of meaning and activity. The former is in essence a cultural concept which binds people on the basis of shared identity – in Benedict Anderson’s apt phrase as an ‘imagined community’ – while citizenship is a political concept deriving from people’s relationship to the state. In other words, nation-ness and state-ness need not be, and increasingly are not, aligned (McCrone and Kiely 2000: 25). Citizenship is usually conceptualised as a package of rights and duties bestowed on individuals by the state. T.H. Marshall described citizenship as ‘a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to rights and duties with which the status is endowed’ (Marshall 1950: 28-29, as summarised by Jamieson (Jamieson: 14-15). In a more or less similar way<sup>1</sup> Bruter makes a distinction between the *civic* and *cultural* component of a European political identity. The European *civic identity* of people can be understood as the degree to

which they see themselves as citizens of a European political system, whose rules, laws, and rights have an influence on their daily life, whereas cultural identity refers to citizens' identification with their political system as an institutional frame, that is, their state. Civic identifiers will identify with European integration as a political project whether or not they feel a sense of commonality a priori with the citizens of the European Union. In Bruter's conceptual framework the 'European cultural identity of citizens is best described as individuals' perceptions that fellow Europeans are closer to them than non-Europeans. That means that cultural identity refers to their identification with their political community as a human group, regardless of the nature of the political system.' (Bruter 2003 :155-6).

In our operationalization of citizenship we will try to stay as close as possible to Marshall's definition. In our view the concept of European citizenship implies, first, that European citizens are prepared to accept without exception all citizens of the (enlarged) Union as their fellow citizens, and to accept that all EU citizens are therefore entitled to all rights that come with the citizenship of the Union. Examples of these rights are the rights of free movement and residence, voting rights in municipal elections, diplomatic protection and the right of appeal to EU institutions (art. I-10 draft constitution). The extent to which people in different member states are aware of these rights and their consequences, and their willingness to accept them as applying equally to the citizens of each and every member state, is an indicator of the support for the very idea of European citizenship. A second indicator of European citizenship is that people do *consider* themselves as citizens of the European Union, in addition to, not necessarily instead of, considering themselves as citizens of their country.

As an indicator of the cultural or social component of identity we prefer to use the 'sense of community' as originally developed by Deutsch et al. It is defined as 'a matter of mutual sympathy and loyalties; of 'we-feeling', trust and mutual consideration; of partial identification in terms of self-images and

interests; of mutually successful predictions of behaviour, and of cooperative action in accordance with it' (Deutsch et al. 1957; Niedermayer 1995; Scheuer 1995; Sinnott 1995)

### *Operationalization*

In the European Election Study 2004, which was conducted in 24 of the 25 member states<sup>2</sup>, we tried to operationalize the three concepts developed above:

- The acceptance of citizens from other EU-countries as fellow European citizens;
- The sense of being a European citizen;
- The sense of (a European) community.

The following set of questions refers to the extent to which people across Europe are willing to accept citizens from other EU countries as fellow European citizens, entitled to all the rights coming with European citizenship, although only Q20 refers to a formally recognised right.

Q19 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following three statements. When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to [Irish] people over citizens from other EU-member-countries who want to work here.'

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

Q20 'Citizens from other EU member-countries who live in [Ireland] should be entitled to vote in local elections.'

- strongly agree etc

Q21 ‘Citizens from other EU member-countries who live in [Ireland] should not be entitled to social security or unemployment benefits.’

- strongly agree etc

Two questions trying to measure respondents’ sense of European citizenship were included:

Q23 ‘Do you ever think of yourself not only as an [Irish] citizen, but also as a citizen of the European Union?’

- often
- sometimes
- never

Q24 ‘Are you personally proud or not to be a citizen of the European Union? would you say you are...

- very proud
- fairly proud
- not very proud
- not at all proud’

The ‘sense of community’ as introduced by Deutsch has several components. Because of the limited space in the questionnaire the operationalisation had to be limited to only one of these components, mutual trust. This is an important component as it can be considered as a measurement of European social capital. This aspect of the sense of community is measured by the following question:

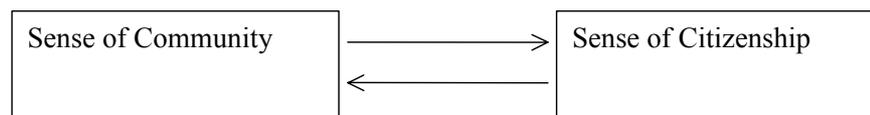
Q26 Now I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in people from various countries. Let’s start with the Austrians: do you trust them a lot or not very much? And the Belgians?

This question was then repeated for the people of 28 countries in total, including the Bulgarians, the Romanians and the Turks in addition to the people of the 25 member states.

#### 4. Research questions

The basic question we are interested in refers to the mutual relationship between the sense of community and the sense of citizenship, as indicated in figure 1. Does the development of a sense of citizenship depend on the pre-existence of a sense of community, or can it develop despite a lack of a feeling of community and can it in turn be instrumental in the development of feelings of community?

**Figure 1: Sense of community and Sense of citizenship**



It is obvious of course that if we want to make a serious effort to explain either people's sense of community or their sense of citizenship, or both, a reference to the other variable will not be sufficient. Since we have developed instruments of measurement for both variables at the individual level, we might develop a multivariate model in which both variables figure as the final dependent variables.

However, for several reasons we will not do this, at least not in this paper. First, our main priority in this paper is just developing of an instrument of measurement for both concepts and making a preliminary assessment of their usefulness in empirical research. But more important are methodological considerations. We are interested in the causal sequence of the two variables. At a single point in time we can assess the correlation between them and test

a causal model, but we can never give a definite answer to the question of causality. Even if we would have at our disposal panel data over a longer period of time, the usefulness of those data might be limited. Feelings of citizenship or community are not volatile attitudes, but they can be assumed to belong to the category of basic attitudes that will not easily change during people's lifetime. As far as changes at the level of society as a whole occur, it is more likely that these changes are due to generational replacement. Basic values are developed mainly during people's adolescence and tend to be persistent during their lifetime (see a.o. Inglehart 1977). In order to test to what extent changes at the aggregate level are due to generational replacement rather than a life cycle or a period effect we need cohort analysis on data collected over a longer period of time. For most of the variables involved here such data do not exist.

Therefore, we will limit ourselves to a simple descriptive analysis at the country level in order to get a first impression of the usefulness of the instruments of measurement we presented in the previous section.

## **5. Citizenship**

In section 3 two sets of survey questions on citizenship were introduced, two questions on people's self orientation as a European citizen and three questions on people's recognition of the citizen rights of their fellow European citizens. In order to see to what extent the conceptual difference between these two sets of attitudes corresponds with the way people's attitudes are constrained in reality, we first computed the correlations between these items and then factor analysed them. The results are shown in table 1 and table 2 respectively. We might be satisfied if we were to take into account only the outcome of the factor analysis. This analysis nicely confirms our conceptual distinction. The two self-orientations form a strong first factor whereas the three questions on citizen rights come together in a second factor. However, the mutual correlations between the three items on

citizen rights are disappointing. Pearson correlation coefficients are between .16 and .20. Therefore, although the covariance between the three items might be explained by a common factor, there is not much covariance to begin with. The correlation between the two self-orientations is much higher (.56). Because of the low correlations between the first set of items we will abstain from an attempt to scale them and just present our findings for each item separately.

**Table 2: Correlations between items on citizenship**

Q17 Employment – priority to citizens of [country]				
Q18 Citizens of EU countries entitled to vote in local elections	-.17			
Q19 Citizens of EU countries entitled to social benefits	.19	-.20		
Q23 Not only [country] citizen, but also European citizen	-.21	.19	-.14	
Q24 Proud of EU citizenship	-.16	.20	-.13	.56
	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q23

All coefficients are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**Table 3: Factor analysis of items on citizenship**

	Component	
	1	2
q17 Employment - priority to [country] members	-.155	.612
q18 Citizens of EU countries in [resp. country] vote in [resp. country]	.205	-.601
q19 Citizens of EU countries in [resp. country] social benefits of [country]	.036	.768
q23 not only [country] citizen, but also European citizen	.861	-.155
q24 Proud of EU citizenship	.873	-.110

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

In table 4 a preliminary descriptive analysis of the variables on citizenship is presented per country. For this purpose the five variables were dichotomised. Only the pro-European answers are presented. The countries are grouped in order of their admission. A summary measure for each group of countries is added.

**Table 4: Attitudes on European citizenship (% pro-European)**

Country	European Citizenship				
	Labour market	Elections	Social Benefits	European Citizen	Proud to be European citizen
Belgium	34		43	67	62
France	48	60	34	73	75
Germany	54	60	74	61	54
Italy	31	60	19	78	76
Luxembourg	31	63	18	70	79
Netherlands	28	59	28	49	29
<b>Original six</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>63</b>
Britain	43	61	45	40	47
Northern Ireland	25	33	57	36	32
Ireland	26	71	39	69	76
Denmark	51	63	38	57	54
<b>1973 enlargement<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>40</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>59</b>
Greece	18	60	32	75	63
Portugal	27	70	31	79	77
Spain	19	74	24	59	77
<b>1980s enlargement</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>72</b>
Austria	37	62	35	56	41
Finland	20	64	30	66	38
Sweden	30		51		38
<b>1990s enlargement</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>39</b>
Cyprus	9	46	19	84	77
Czech Republic	9	48	52	46	36
Estonia	16	47	42	46	28
Hungary	5	40	59	24	59
Latvia	11	37	47	42	26
Poland	10	79	29	53	54
Slovakia	8	63	41	51	46
Slovenia	15	55	37	60	46
<b>2004 enlargement</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>47</b>

<sup>1</sup> Northern Ireland was excluded here because otherwise its weight compared to Britain would have too high.

The percentages in the first column of table 4 leave little doubt about people's attitudes towards a free labour market. In all member states but Germany and Denmark a clear majority is against it; in some countries this

majority is even close to a 100%. There is a clear difference between the older member states in North-western Europe and the new member states in Central and Eastern Europe. All six founding states are among the ten most liberal countries of the enlarged Union. Therefore, it is tempting to attribute this difference to the longer process of socialisation into the idea of a European political community that the people of these countries have been subjected to. However, since Austria, Britain, Denmark and Sweden are also part of this group of ten, this interpretation is disputable. The more positive attitudes in these countries might just as well be due to a longer tradition in liberal democracy with its self-evident value of equality for all citizens. But an equally plausible explanation is that the differences are due to differences in economic development. It is remarkable that despite the fact that 'Polish plumbers' have become proverbial for the fear that after enlargement Western Europe will be flooded by cheap labourers from Central and Eastern Europe, this fear is not reflected in these figures. It is not the people in Western Europe but those in Central and Eastern Europe that are most inclined to reject a free labour market. On average, no more than 10% of the people from these countries are willing to accept this. It is not unlikely that a general feeling of being economically behind Western Europe is responsible for this more negative attitude.

The entitlement of people from other EU countries to national social security and unemployment benefits is very unpopular in all EU countries, in particular in some of the older member states. This is the only question where people from the accession countries are not less European minded than the people from the older member states. Here an interpretation in terms of self-interest seems to be obvious.

Only the right to vote in local elections is accepted by a clear majority of the people across Europe.

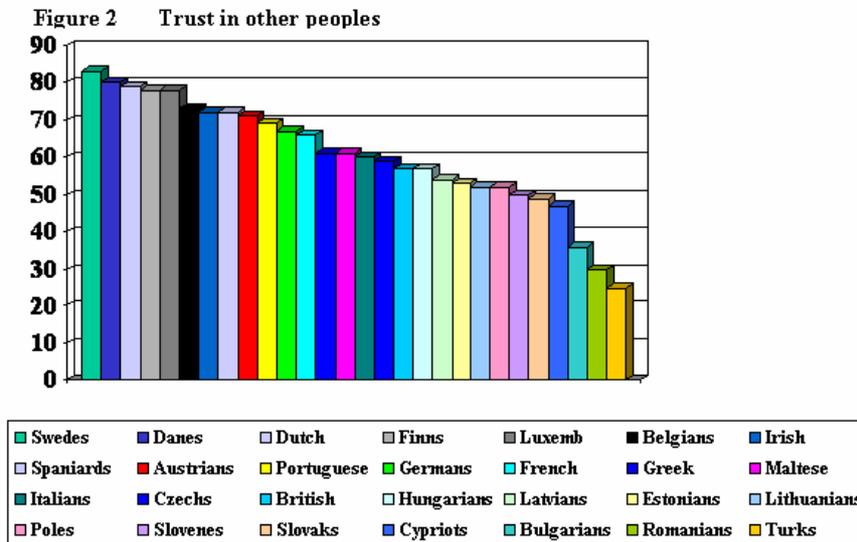
The percentage of people who see themselves, at least sometimes, as European citizens in addition to being citizens of their own country is on average above 50%. Also, a majority of the people in just over half of the countries are proud to be a citizen of the European Union. However, on both questions there are huge differences between countries. There is not much of a pattern in the extent to which people across Europe differ in their reaction to either question, at least not if we try to interpret the existing differences in terms of geography or the length of membership of people's home country. In general the people from the new member states in Central and Eastern Europe are less inclined to see themselves as a European citizen or to be proud of being a citizen of the Union than people in the older member states, but this is not a uniform pattern. The differences between some of the founding member states (the Netherlands and Luxembourg for instance) are as large as between any other pair of countries. In particular, the low percentage in the Netherlands on the second question is strikingly low.

## **6. Trust**

As mentioned above, mutual trust is one of the main components of Deutsch's concept of sense of community. A sense of community can exist only if the people of the EU evaluate each other positively, i.e. if they trust each other. An increase in the level of mutual trust over time would indicate a growing sense of community (Niedermayer 1995: 228). Mutual trust was measured repeatedly in Eurobarometer surveys from the 1970s on. From previous analyses of these data two conclusions can be drawn.

First, the mutual trust between the peoples of EU countries increased substantially during the 1970s and 1980s, but fell back somewhat in the early 1990s (Niedermayer 1995; Scheuer 1995). In particular the trust in the people from the countries of the second enlargement (Greece; Portugal and Spain) increased during this period. This might suggest that the establishment of common political institutions does indeed enhance a sense of community

as was suggested by a.o. David Easton. Secondly, previous research makes it highly unlikely that the same level of trust will immediately extend to the people from the 2004 accession countries. In the European Election Study 1994 people from the then 15 member states were asked whether they would welcome each of a number of countries as new member states of the EU. Whereas countries like Switzerland and Norway would have been most welcome, this did not apply to most candidate member states in Central and Eastern Europe, let alone to Turkey. These countries were hardly, or not at all, part of the ‘mental map of Europe’ of the people of the, then, mostly West-, European Union (Scheuer 1995: 41). Therefore, it is most likely that the recent enlargement will have a negative effect on the sense of community in the European Union as a whole.



In figure 2 (see also table A1 in the appendix) countries are ordered according to the level of trust people across Europe have in the people of these countries. This figure contains one very clear message. The further East we move in Europe, the less peoples are trusted by their fellow Europeans. The left part of the figure is occupied by West-European countries (Swedes, Danes, the Dutch etc). In particular the people from the Nordic countries and the Benelux countries are well trusted. All of them are relatively small

countries. Of the older member states the Italians and British are traditionally the least trusted. With the exception of the Maltese the people of all the new member states are in the right tail of the figure. But the tail of the figure is occupied by the people from the candidate countries: Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. Trust in the people from these countries is very low.

What we are basically interested in is the extent to which there is a sense of community across the several countries of the European Union. Figure 2 gives a clear indication that the recent enlargement might have increased the tensions in the Union by admitting people that are far less trusted than the people from the older member states. Why this is the case is not immediately clear. Is it because their countries have only just entered the Union, is it because of their weak economy or is it for the simple reason that from the perspective of Western Europe they are far(ther) away and unknown? It is all but impossible to disentangle these possible explanations because each of them lead to the same categorization of countries.

The bars in figure 2 refer to the level of trust in the people of a particular country as expressed by *all* the people in the 24 member states in our surveys. What might help to understand these feelings is to see to what extent they are mutual and whether there are sub-communities of countries within the EU the people of which trust each other but not the people from other parts of Europe.

In tables 5 and 6 we have grouped the member states in two different ways. In table 5 this is according to the length of membership; in table 6 it is according to geographic location. Both tables are asymmetric because people in EU countries were asked to what extent they trust the Bulgarians, the Romanians and the Turks, but not the other way around, as no survey was conducted in these three countries. Also, the question was not asked in Britain.

**Table 5: Levels of Trust by Admission Year**

	Original 6	1973 Enlargement	1980's Enlargement	1990's Enlargement	2004 Enlargement	Bulgaria	Romania	Turkey
Original 6	79,5	72,6	75,0	82,8	51,3	31,4	29,4	23,3
1973 Enlargement	74,5 <sup>1</sup>	81,6	68,5	84,7	50,3	38,1	32,1	28,1
1980's Enlargement	66,9	59,1	72,6	68,2	47,8	40,8	33,8	25,4
1990's Enlargement	74,3	76,8	70,3	90,3	56,7	32,2	26,6	28,4
2004 Enlargement	64,6	67,7	60,8	70,0	58,3	40,4	29,9	24,9

<sup>1</sup> The table should be read horizontally. E.g. 74.5 % of the people from the countries that joined the Union in 1973 trust the people from the six original member states.

**Table 6: Levels of Trust by Geographic Location**

	Original	Nordic	Southern Europe	Central Europe	Baltic States	Islands	Ireland	Austria	Britain	Bulgaria & Romania	Turkey
Original Six	79,5 <sup>1</sup>	87,6	75,0	49,3	53,5	53,2	79,9	79,2	51,7	30,4	23,3
Nordic	78,6 <sup>2</sup>	95,1	72,3	56,3	55,3	60,1	85,0	87,8	83,4	37,0	30,7
Southern Europe	66,9	70,1	72,6	47,7	44,2	53,3	62,3	64,3	45,2	37,3	25,4
Central Europe	67,3	76,2	67,2	67,9	49,9	55,8	69,1	61,7	64,5	35,5	29,9
Baltic States	61,9	75,5	43,5	48,1	74,2	43,0	73,0	67,3	65,5	35,9	19,5
Islands	49,4	51,6	66,2	36,8	32,8	75,9	40,6	40,0	14,5	29,7	3,7
Ireland	69,1	77,3	63,8	47,4	44,3	53,3	83,3	72,8	52,8	33,7	25,2
Austria	72,0	80,1	69,8	49,5	59,0	59,1	72,5	82,5	57,5	24,6	27,0

<sup>1</sup> This is the average percentage of the trust people from each of the original member states have in the people from each of these same countries, including the people from their own country. Note that the smaller the number of countries in a category is, the heavier the weight of the trust people have in the people of their own country.

<sup>2</sup> The table should be read horizontally. E.g. 78.6% of the people from the Nordic countries trust the people from the six original member states.

Year of admission does not explain very much. If social integration were a consequence of EU membership, of the existence of a European polity, we would expect the highest levels of mutual trust among the people from the six founding member states. This, however, is not the case. Although trust among them is relatively high (80%), it is even lower than the trust people from these countries have in the people from Austria, Finland and Sweden, countries which did not join the Union before the 1990s. Therefore, any attempt to explain these differences in trust in terms of a clear distinction between who belongs and who does not belong to the political community of the EU is bound to fail.

The only indisputable finding is that trust in the people from the 10 new member states is relatively strikingly low. Only the people from the candidate countries, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, are trusted even less. A remarkable result is that people from the new member states trust the people from the older ones more than they do each other. But, other than the clear difference between the newcomers and the older member states, the length of membership does not explain very much.

In table 6, countries are classified according to their geographic location. The reason to do so is that, as far as mutual trust is based mainly on familiarity and a common culture, geographic vicinity is a proxy for familiarity and a certain commonality of cultural traditions.

We have grouped together the original six, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Sweden and Finland), the Southern European countries (Greece, Portugal and Spain)<sup>3</sup>, the new member states in Central Europe, the Baltic States, and the two islands, Cyprus and Malta. Ireland, Austria and Britain were left as separate countries because it was difficult to include them with one of the other groups or with each other. We might consider including Britain and Ireland in one group, but the expectation that the British and Irish would trust each other because of their geographical proximity assumes too much

historical ignorance. The reverse side of the proximity argument is, of course, that neighbouring countries often have a long history of wars. It is obvious indeed that the Irish hardly trust the British<sup>4</sup>. Other than that, geographic proximity seems to breed trust. In particular, the countries in Northern and Western Europe (the original six and the Nordic countries) form a community of countries where mutual trust is very high. The mutual trust between these countries on the one hand and the three Southern European countries that joined the Union in the 1980s and Austria and Ireland on the other hand is somewhat lower, but still clearly on the positive side.

But the relationship between the people of the European Union as it existed before the recent enlargement and the people from the new member states, let alone the people from the three candidate countries, is a totally different story. It is quite obvious that the recent enlargement had an enormous negative effect on the mutual trust of the peoples now constituting the European Union.

## **7. In conclusion**

In this paper we have tried to make a clear conceptual distinction between European citizenship in the sense of a legal construct on the one hand and a sense of European communal identity on the other hand. Next we tried to operationalise both concepts in order to be able to test two rival theories. According to the first theory a sense of European communal identity is a necessary condition for the development of a legitimate European political community. The second theory claims that there is indeed an empirical relationship between these two concepts, but the causal sequence is not necessarily unidirectional. Once a political community is established it can breed a sense of community.

The instruments of measurement we developed for European citizenship turned out to be pretty poor. The mutual correlation between the three items referring to European citizenship rights is very low. Also, only one of them refers to a formally recognised right.

But this is not the only reason why we cannot draw a definitive conclusion about the causal sequence of European citizenship and communal identity. We also would need a longer time period to assess the causal sequence of these two characteristics.

Still, the limited relevant data we were able to present offer little evidence for the hypothesis that formal citizenship breeds communal identity. In Western Europe mutual trust in general is high, but there is no relationship with the length of European Union membership, as one would expect.

Trust in the people of at least some of the accession countries, not to speak of candidate countries like Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, is so low among the citizens of the older member states that one should wonder whether formal citizenship can gradually remedy this serious blow to what at least might have been the beginning of a European community.

The argument in the literature that in European history citizenship in most cases preceded national identity is only partly relevant for the development of the European Union. In most of the cases often referred to, citizenship was forced upon the people. This fortunately went out of fashion in Europe. The feasibility of the European Union as a polity strongly depends on the consent of the people. If the Union extends too fast beyond the borders within which its citizens feel more or less comfortable, this is bound to have a negative effect on people's support for the European project. This might be at least part of the explanation for the misgivings that people across Europe apparently have with the development of the Union, as became so obvious in the recent referenda in France and the Netherlands.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> More or less because what Bruter defines as the cultural component of European identity still refers to the *political* community.

<sup>2</sup> Although centrally organised by a group of principal investigators, the surveys in each country were funded and conducted by national study directors. They were: Günther Ogris (Austria), Marc Swyngedouw and Lieven Dewinter (Belgium), James Tilley (Britain) and John Garry (Northern Ireland), Bambos Papageorgiou (Cyprus), Lukas Linek (Czech Republic), Jorgen Goul Andersen (Denmark), Alan Sikk and Vello Pettai (Estonia), Mikko Maatila and Tapio Raunio (Finland), Pascal Perrineau and Bruno Cautres (France), Hermann Schmitt and Andreas Wüst (Germany), Ilias Nikolakopoulos and Eftichia Teperoglou (Greece), Gabor Toka (Hungary), Michael Marsh (Ireland), Renato Mannheimer and Roberto Biorcio (Italy), Ilze Koroleva (Latvia), Algis Krupavicius (Lithuania), Patrick Dumont (Luxembourg), Cees van der Eijk (the Netherlands), Radoslaw Markowski (Poland), Pedro Magalães (Portugal), Olga Gyrfasova (Slovakia), Niko Tos (Slovenia), Juan Diez Nicolas (Spain), and Sören Holmberg (Sweden). For more information on the specifics of the 2004 surveys, see [www.europeanelectionstudies.net](http://www.europeanelectionstudies.net).

<sup>3</sup> One might argue that Italy should be included in this group rather than among the original six.

<sup>4</sup> In principle the same argument might be applied to the rest of Europe of course, in particular to Germany and its neighbour countries. However, taking into account that bigger countries in general are less trusted, 60 years of peaceful cooperation in Western Europe had a very positive effect on trust. As figure 2 shows, Germans are pretty well trusted, in particular in Western Europe.

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## Appendix A1: Trust in other peoples

Swedes	82.5
Danes	80.1
Dutch	79.2
Finns	77.7
Luxembourgers	77.6
Belgians	73.2
Irish	72.2
Spaniards	72.1
Austria	70.5
Portuguese	69.1
Germans	66.7
French	66.4
Greek	61.3
Maltese	60.8
Italians	60.1
Czechs	58.7
British	57.4
Hungarians	57.1
Latvians	54.1
Estonians	52.7
Lituanians	52.2
Poles	52.1
Slovenes	50.2
Slovaks	48.7
Cypriots	46.9
Bulgarians	36.2
Romanians	29.8
Turks	24.7