Globalisation as a Hidden Stimulus of the Growth of European Territorial Identity

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ABSTRACT: The issue of identity becomes a subject of an enlarged interest especially in view of progressing European integration. This paper is a reflection on the growing extent of the consciousness of European territorial identity and tries to uncover the underlying factors of this development. It is empirically well documented that Europeans can be increasingly characterized by multiple territorial identities, i.e. simultaneous identities to a variety of territorial communities.

It is argued that exclusive identities as an inseparable part of European history and memory acted as one of trigger mechanisms of nationalism. Therefore, the shift from exclusive identities to the over-arching European identity seems to be desirable supplement to the current integration process. There is ample evidence that European administration supports the creation of European identity. Officially, fostered idea of European identity has found a striking and unexpected ally in the form of globalisation. Global processes became one of the stimuli of the growth of multiple territorial identities. Since the same applies to European territorial identity, individuals increasingly find themselves within European context as well. The main aim of this article is thus to illuminate and conceptualise the relation between globalisation and territorial identities, with special emphasis on European territorial identity.

Introduction:

Why has there been an enlarged interest in European identity among politicians, sociologists, and economists since the late 1980s? The issue of identity is becoming a particularly important one for integration in Europe, given economic and largely political integration has been achieved. Growing proportion of individuals, especially younger people, feel as "Europeans". It is empirically well documented that Europeans have increasingly multiple territorial identities, i.e. simultaneous identities to a variety of territorial communities[81]. This paper examines the growing extent of consciousness of European territorial identity[82] and tries to uncover the underlying factors of this development.

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[81] See for example Hedetoft (1994) or Reif (1991)

[82] For the purposes of this paper we perceive the identity from its spatial perspective. Geographers, regional and other spatial scientists describe particular parts of the territory as regions. Regions are perceived as complexes of socio-economic and natural elements, processes and their interactions. Spatial rank differentiation expresses the relations between regions at various qualitative levels. However, the common denominator of above mentioned research approaches is that they describe real elements and processes that are both qualitatively and quantitatively measurable. This paper brings seemingly vague idea of territorial identities. One cannot omit that people belonging to particular region are bound to the territory by interests, emotions and feelings. In that case, we can

European continent in its diversity witnessed many conflicts in the past. Nations were divided not only by language and religion, but also by rivalry and security interests. The idea of European integration remained the mere theory. The World War II changed Europe. The effects of the conflict converted the idea of integration into the necessity. Common needs and interests of European countries reflected political, economic and safety circumstances after the conflict. "And the opportunity for a fundamentally new form of politics was grasped in Europe. The first step was when six countries founded the European Coal and Steel Community in which basic industries important for the conduct of war were placed under a common authority. From this beginning came the European Economic Community, and eventually the European Union, in a process, which led to peace between the member states and higher standard of living than any previous generation in Europe had experienced. The division of Europe, however, remained an open sore till at last the system which

had dominated the East for half a century collapsed, partly as a result of its own inner contradictions but also because it permitted neither a free economy nor individual responsibility or enterprise" (Charter of European Identity, 1995). The fall of Iron Curtain generated new expectations about the future of Europe.

One of the most controversial issues in the debate about the future of the European Union is the question of identity of its member states and individuals. While optimists point towards some indicators of a growing community that should complement the emerging polity, sceptics avow that a truly integrated European culture and identity is a mirage. The problem is vividly discussed at both official (European administration and scholars) as well as an informal levels and consequently it is exposed to many diverse standpoints.

While "external" elements, such as economic and political integration run rather well, it is generally felt that "internal" connecting link is missing at present. If we comprehend the territorial identity as the search for the meaning of the individual/group in relation to the self and to the society from geographical/spatial perspective, it is not surprising that the question of European identity has arisen in a new light.

The main aim of this article is to illuminate and conceptualise the relation between globalisation and territorial identities with special emphasis on European territorial identity. The attention will be focused particularly on the growth of European territorial identity, which epitomises the results of both intended official policies and the spontaneous process of globalisa-

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delimitate the territory according to seemingly hidden layer of (common) interests and emotional ties. This concept does not hide its finality, but comparing to the cultural identity it is much concrete as particular area has finite borders that meet (or share) the borders of another region, nation or continent. In my opinion, there are the possibilities of measuring the interests, feelings and emotions related to the territory. This would be worth to make the empirical research in order to verify whether there is for instance the correlation between the number of the members of Parliament at the state level originating from certain region and the amount of investments directed to their region considering the total socio-economic weight of the region. In comparison with geographical approaches that are often artificially created, we concentrate on inherent, inborn characteristics

tion. Augmentation of European terri-torial identity complies with the growth of multiple territorial identi-ties.

In the first part of the article, the no-tion of territorial identity is analysed and conceptualised. The efforts of European administration directed to-wards the support of the territorial identity on the European level are un-covered as well. The next part of the paper concentrates on the identifica-tion of global elements and aspects that affect territorial identities. This is essential for the derivation of the theo-retical framework that is subsequently confronted with empirical data.

The main hypothesis of this article is that globalisation represents one of the underlying causes of the increase in multiple territorial identities. Euro-pean territorial identity is compre-hended as just one layer of multiple identities. The methods of synthesis, analysis as well as induction and de-duction are widely exerted in this pa-per.

Quest for the Common European De-nominator

Exclusive identities have been an in-separable part of European history. They have been rather forceful in their creation and very violent in their ex-pression. The division of the world into mutually exclusive in-groups and out-groups based just on exclusive identities has created a vital back-ground of nationalism. This contrib-uted to the generally accepted all-or-nothing conceptions of identity. It was claimed that while identities in general are multiple and diverse, territorial identities consist just of one layer. In other words, if one feels German or British, he or she cannot identify you as European at the same time.

The creation of conditions for spread-ing of over-arching European identity seems to be desirable supplement not only to the traditionally exclusive identities but also to the current inte-gration processes. The nation state has increasingly come to be rivalled by social, economic, cultural as well as political supranational forces. Not sur-prisingly, European administration fo-cused on enhancing the common European identity as well as on the support of multiple territorial identi-ties. Obviously, the stimulation of European identity does not mean to omit or even abolish the other identi-ties.

Figure No. 1: Schematic illustration of territorial rank differentiation
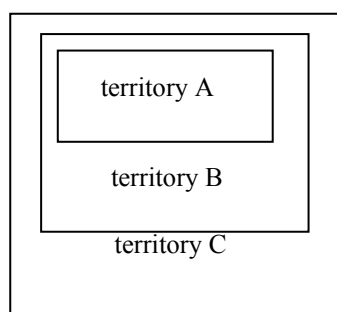
Source: my own illustration

Multiple territorial identities are geo-graphically described as "nested iden-tities". Thus, an individual can be a Londoner and English, but also a Briton and a European. This spatial rank differentiation is a lucid concept because a particular territory has finite borders that meet (or

Figure No. 2: Schematic comparison of territorial identities {see page 34}

share) the borders of another region, nation or continent. Comparing to the

cultural identity, it is more concrete concept and therefore less difficult to define clearly.

Official documents of the European Union give us an ample evidence of the need of consciousness of European culture and identity. There are several typical territorial contexts for the use of the word identity in the treaties that regulate the European Union. First, there exists the need for identity at the level of the Union. Such identity has to be perceived as clear and distinct from both inside and outside. Secondly, there is the need to respect existing national identities of the Member States as well as particular regional or even urban or rural identities. In other words, the effort to strengthen various spatial ranks of identity is apparent. This conception is in compliance with already mentioned multiple territorial identities.

Jacques Santer, President of the European Commision stated in 1995 that European identity is necessary for the European Union to avoid "fragmentation, chaos and conflict of every kind (military, social, economic and political) and to help achieve cohesion, solidarity, subsidiarity, concert and cooperation. Practically all potential sources of European identity are welcome: political and ideological beliefs, economic theory, culture, history, geography, ethics, common destiny, etc. However, they all have to be effective. European identity has to crystallize." (http://www.itu.int).

Article F of the Maastricht Treaty draws the attention to the fact that "Union shall respect the national identities of its Member States" (http://europa.eu.int). The other texts suggest that European Identity should not force out the lower layers of the territorial identities. Therefore, there should be the sufficient room for particular identities in the framework of a complex spatial hierarchy.

Many legal or economic harmonisations, which could be defended as a matter of justice or equal opportunities, are stressed in their consequence of strengthening the European identity. For instance, Decision of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of 12/19/95 on protection for citizens on European Union by diplomatic and consular representations reads: "Whereas such common protection arrangements will strengthen the identity of the Union as perceived in third countries; Bearing in mind that the introduction of common protection arrangements for citizens of the Union in third countries will also strengthen the idea of European solidarity as perceived by the citizens in question..." (http://europa.eu.int).

The European Commission explained the presence of a policy on tourism in the European Union Treaty in a following way: "tourism contributes to promoting a European identity". The Commission Work Program for 1993/1994 addresses the continuation of an "active audiovisual policy designed to promote more extensive cultural exchanges which will accentuate the European identity". It is intriguing that the idea of European audiovisual policy to lay the foundations of European identity is deeply rooted in Union's intentions since the single European Act (1986). Text on providing access to European Union Institution Libraries (1995) emphasizes it as "an important contribution (…) to fostering the spirit of European cohesion and identity in a way which will

strengthen the sense of a common European identity amongst all the citizens of the Union". (http://europa.eu.int).

When it comes to reflect directly on what European identity is, the official texts are usually very cautious. The official reports on external relations or reviewing applications of new members offer a good deal of information in this regard. This gives us indirect evidence that gradual qualitative development of European identity is an inherent part of the European integration. European identity is still in the premature state, however it is emerging naturally.

Again, it is appropriate to cite several paragraphs from the Charter of European Identity that draw more accurate picture of European identity:

"…..and on the basis of practical and credible policies, we hold the following items to be essential to the growth, within the framework of the European Union, of a European identity:

• a succinct and easily understandable constitution of the European Union setting out its federal structure. A binding catalogue of common fundamental and human rights, and guaranteed social rights. The constitution would be presented to the citizens for ratification,

• further extension of citizenship rights,

• a common economic, social and environmental policy whose overall aim must be to provide work for all and to protect our planet against further environmental pollution,

• a common cultural and education policy to foster a sense of European identity in the European Union and its member states. Promoting unity in diversity and common values for all citizens,

• being a European is not a question of birth, but of education,

• the promotion of multilingualism. All Europeans should learn foreign languages as early as possible. European citizens must be able to understand each other,

• a declaration of the political goals to which the European Union aspires. Without damaging its many-sided heritage, the European Union must follow common policies in world affairs.

Freedom, peace, the dignity of humankind, equality and social justice are our greatest goods. To protect and further develop these aims, Europe needs a morally acceptable political structure and policies, which strengthen the sense of common purpose while establishing the credibility of the European Union and making its citizens proud to be Europeans. When that point has been reached, then a stronger, European identity will also exist. "(A Charter of European Identity. http://www.eurplace.org).

The number of questions concerning the specification of the notion of European identity grows dramatically. For the purposes of this paper, we can perceive drawing on the European identity also as the gradual qualitative change of the behaviour of European entity. Formerly the European states or individuals became active mostly in case of the emergent external incentives or dangers that could influence the space within the borders of their interests. Stronger European identity means also the activity that stems from the inside of the European space.
Surprising support of Globalisation

In the previous paragraphs, we have discussed some intended aspects of the formation of European Identity. They have taken place in a very unusual historical period and context. We cannot omit the ideographical character of the current process of European unification as such. Nevertheless, what is intriguing even more is the relation of the creation of European identity to the process of globalisation.

European continent currently undergoes the double transformation: First, there is specific process of European unification directed by the European administration. Second, Europe is strongly influenced by spontaneous process of globalisation. Both above mentioned processes relate substantially to the European Identity.

The massive impact of globalisation forces us to re-evaluate traditional approaches to everyday life. Global processes bring far-reaching social, economic and cultural implications. Until now, they could not be carefully investigated because there is a wide consent that the globalisation is at its very beginning. Moreover, the transformations of recent years have taken different forms in different places.

However, globalisation can generally be comprehended as a dominant general trend that changes the organisation of the society on the world level. From the economic perspective, it is a process of change from national to global scale of integration of production, exchange and consumption. This process was enabled mainly by the technological informational revolution that provided the basic infrastructure for the formation of global economy (Sassen, 1991; Castells, 1993). Politically this gained the sufficient room with the end of the cold war. According to Soros (1998) the globalisation is not complete, because it includes only the economy, but not the democratic decision-making. Nevertheless, in the literature there is a relatively strong accord that the process is natural, unavoidable, and into certain extent, predictable and optimistic scenario assumes its qualitative development[83].

One of the most relevant impacts of globalization is quickly advancing time-space compression. The concept describes increasing movement and communication in space, widening of social contacts in space and human perception of such changes. Growing spatial mobility and overcoming spatial barriers are enabled by technological progress in the field of production, transport, communication and information. According to Harvey (1989), the world of the 1960 was one fiftieth of the size of the 16th century world. Increased functional integration made possible by time-space compression has, in turn, led to the emergence of a global scene of accumulation, consumption, distribution and production, and equally important, differentiation. The role of time and space in our lives and in the organization of socio-economic relations has changed dramatically over last few years. World is rapidly diminishing in our perception.

Globalisation involves various players-firms, institutions and organisations, households and individuals. In

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[83] The development of global processes might seem inevitable: a predictable form of technical or cultural evolution. On the other hand, some authors stress that in practice this evolution has been strongly influenced by the economic and political agenda of advanced industrial countries. After all, this fact is not so surprising. However, this gives us more complex and objective picture of reality

principle, they can be involved in this process in two ways:

 I. Activities of some players can actively contribute to the formation of the process of globalisation. The typical example is when translational company directs its activities into certain area; this has extensive socio-economic implications (from changes in the composition of jobs and consequent impacts on the individuals, to the connection of the territory with the global environment). Of course, the number of the processes that can more or less directly form the process of globalisation is quite limited. Another aspect has to be mentioned: globalisation processes induced by those players create global external environment in which such players operate. This group is relatively small and relatively powerful.

II. Most players, as well as their behaviour, are influenced by globalisation.

(See also the Figure No.3)

This concept draws us on the derivation of the relation between globalisation and territorial identity, which serves as a distinguishing feature of this article.

Regarding the topic of the paper, the attention should be focused on those elements of globalisation that influence the spatial dimension of identity. "Interconnectedness" is the key notion that describes the relations in the contemporary world. As already stated, places become "closer" to each other because time and space tend to compress due to the advances of technology and mass media: the most distanced places are easy to access, and the world seems smaller. It is impossible to overlook such symbols of modern era as intercontinental flights or the internet.

As an individual becomes more and more involved in the process of increasing "mutuality" of the world and finds him or herself submerged in a great number of various dialogues and debates, he or she is exposed to the widest variety of opinions and viewpoints, often contradictory and moreover usually hardly reconcilable. The intensity, quantity and complexity of social, economic, cultural and other factors and relations in daily reality have a tangible influence on the human spatial identities. It is easy to agree with Bauer (1997) that "We witnessed more economic, social, cultural and technological changes during last 50 years than during the whole previous history".

Figure No. 3: Globalisation and its territorial effects {see page 33}

In the history, the overall number of already mentioned "disturbing forces" coming from outer world was quite limited (at least in comparison with contemporary dynamism). This implies that drawing on the individual's territorial identity was not so difficult as nowadays. Undoubtedly, there was higher probability that people relatively easy will identify themselves with their jobs, social relations as well as a certain territory. World was quite unchangeable, the pace of life rather slow and the development somewhat sluggish. Succinctly, the situation differed substantially from contemporary global circulation of icons and products. Not surprisingly, the particular individual identities of that time can generally be described as coherent and stable. From the territorial perspective, there existed mostly exclusive identities. In other words,

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there was the space for nationalism with all negative consequences.

With the globalisation drive, the concept of identity has undergone some significant changes in its theorising. Identity can no more be fixed and this contradicts with the way identity was perceived before the debates on globalisation became so widespread. Recent discussions about the concept of identity, especially in the literature on the rise of nationalism, emphasise that in contemporary conditions, most people experience multiple territorial identities. Which of these is predominant at any moment in time depends on the context in which an individual is acting and thinking, but each identity exists alongside the others.

The number of above-mentioned situations is growing, as there is increasing intensity, quantity and complexity of social, economic and other relations in everyday reality. Subsequently, individuals find themselves within the European context in various situations more and more. Various surveys show that people increasingly feel as "Europeans". Concurrently, one can contemplate an impressive appearance of multiple territorial identities.

Some Empirical Evidence

Apart from already mentioned publications of Hedetoft (1994) and Reif (1991), there are also regular surveys pursued by European Commission. As the last released "Eurobarometer Public Opinion in the European Union" presents, 53% of EU citizens feel to some extent European, compared with 44% who only identify with their own nationality, while in 9 of the 15 member states that the European identity actually outweighs any exclusive identification with a particular nationality.

The proportion of people who do not identify with their own nationality and who feel European is highest in Luxembourg (16%). In the other member states, the proportion of people that feel European ranges from 28% in the UK to 66% in Italy. Apparently, the highest proportion of European population experiences multiple territorial identities (50%), while only 44% has an exclusive national identity. (See also the Figure No.5)

Figure No. 5: Exclusive and multiple territorial identities in Europe {see page 35}

Source: European Commision, Eurobarometer: Public Opinion in the European Union (April 2002), p.14, http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opin ion.

The demographic analyses show that people who left full-time education at the age of 20 or older, those who are still studying and managers are most likely to feel to some extent European. Retired people and those that look after the home are most likely to identify to a greater extent with their own nationality[84]. This fact supports the hypothesis that globalisation represents one of underlying causes of multiple territorial identities, since elderly retired people or those who take care of homes are less involved in daily life and consequently less exposed to global forces.
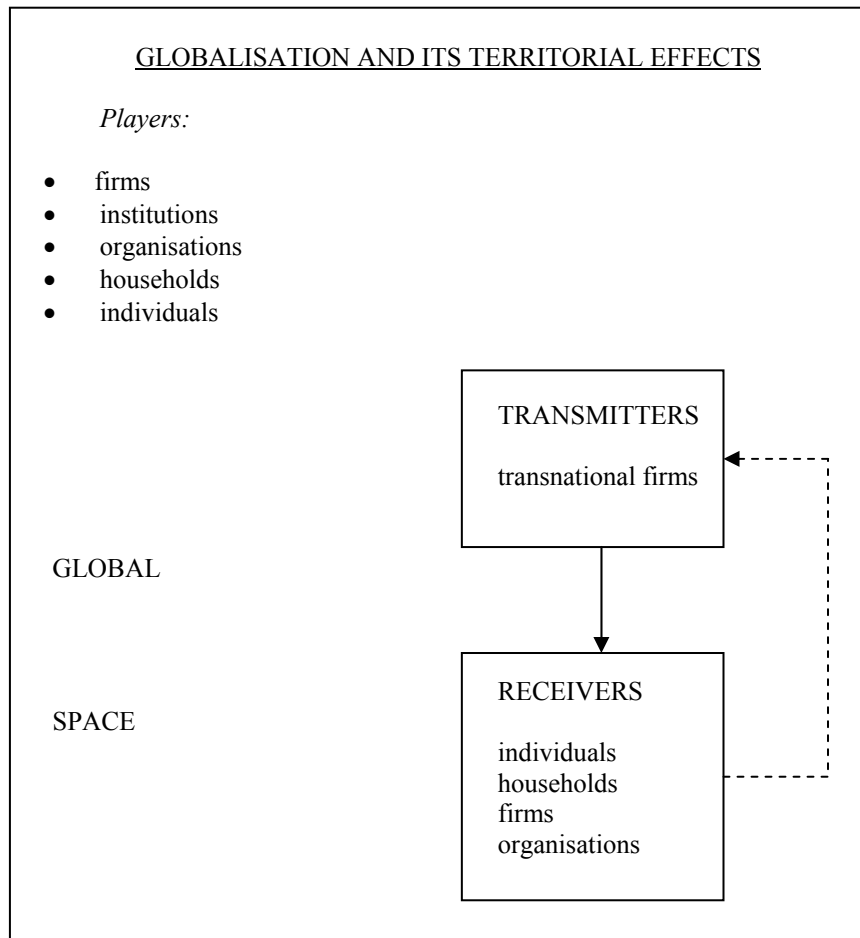
Conclusion

We can hardly find any parallel with the European integration in the history. This ideographical process could be described at its beginning only by external characteristics, such as eco-

[84] European Commision, Eurobarometer: Public Opinion in the European Union (April 2002), p.14-15, http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion
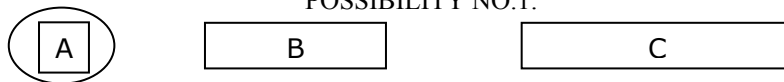
nomic or political integration. An internal connecting link in the form of rising European identity was revealed partly as a consequence of the danger of the growth of nationalistic tendencies and partly naturally, as a qualitatively higher stage of European integration. Official efforts of European administration have found a striking ally in the form of globalisation. Succinctly, European continent currently undergoes the double transformation that fosters the rise and further advancement of European identity and is a fine mixture of intention and spontaneity: European integration and globalisation. This situation creates challenge for various scholars as an amazingly small amount of research has been done on combined effects of those two phenomena.
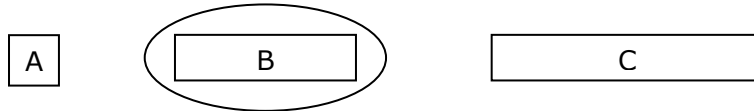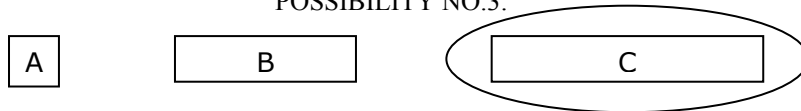
GLOBALISATION AND ITS TERRITORIAL EFFECTS

Players:

- firms
- institutions
- organisations
- households
- individuals

GLOBAL

SPACE

TRANSMITTERS

transnational firms

RECEIVERS

individuals
households
firms
organisations

EXCLUSIVE TERRITORIAL IDENTITIES:

POSSIBILITY NO.1:

(A)   [B]   [C]

POSSIBILITY NO.2:

[A]   ([B])   [C]

POSSIBILITY NO.3:

[A]   [B]   ([C])

MULTIPLE TERRITORIAL IDENTITIES:

POSSIBILITY NO.1:

(A)   ([B])   [C]

POSSIBILITY NO.2:

(A)   [B]   ([C])

POSSIBILITY NO.3:

[A]   ([B])   ([C])

POSSIBILITY NO.4:

(A)   ([B])   ([C])
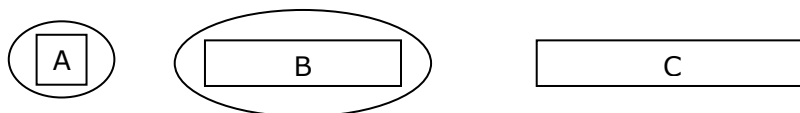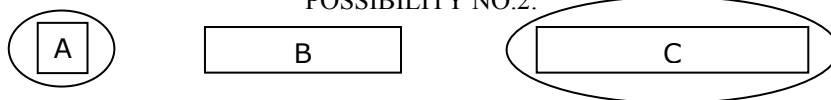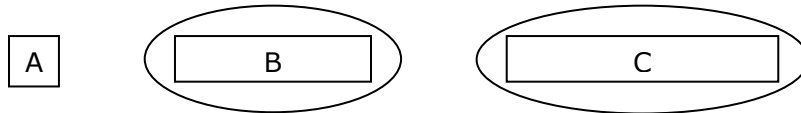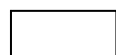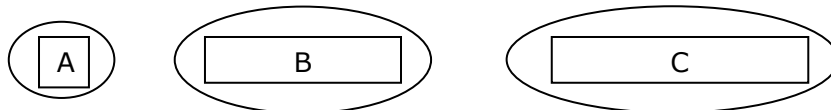
[   ] - TERRITORY   (   ) - IDENTITY

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European and national identity in the European Union

country	% of European and national (multiple) identities	% of national identity	% of European identity
Luxembourg	59	22	16
Italy	63	31	3
France	59	34	5
Spain	56	38	3
Germany	58	40	4
Denmark	58	41	2
EU - 15	50	44	
the Netherlands	51	45	
Belgium	48	45	
Austria	49	46	
Sweden	47	50	
Portugal	45	51	
Ireland	41	55	2
Greece	39	58	2
Finland	39	59	1
UK	26	71	2
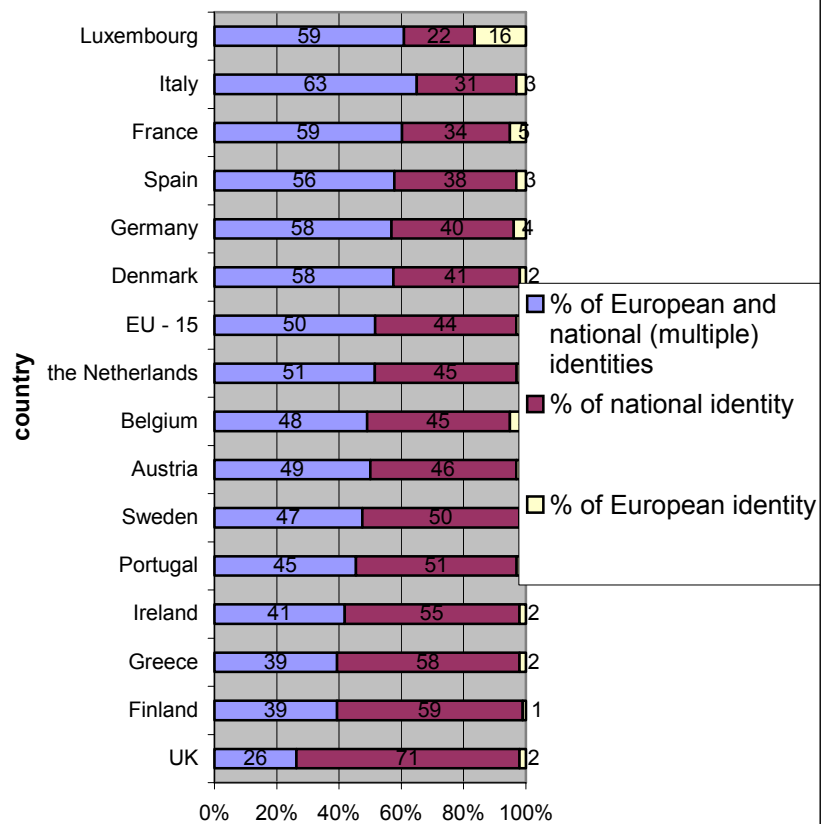
Note: Percentage of people that did not know the answer is not shown

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