How Does an "Envisioned" European Identity Correspond to a "Realized" European Identity?
A Critical Analysis of the Efficacy, Effectiveness, and Outcomes of European Union Policy-Based Construction of a European Identity

Kelly Soderstrom

Kelly Soderstrom, 26, from Boulder (Colorado, USA), is a graduate who received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science/International Relations (cum laude) at Carleton College (USA) in 2011. In 2013, she obtained an MSc in International and European Politics (distinction) at the University of Edinburgh (Scotland). She wrote her Master's Thesis on the efficacy of elite-driven European identity construction. In 2014, she was a Research Fellow at the University of Hohenheim conducting a research project of youth immigrant integration non-profit organizational structures. Currently, she works as an MBA Program Management Assistant and Social Project Coordinator at the Mannheim Business School in Mannheim, Germany. Her academic interests include migration studies (especially citizenship, integration, and asylum/refugee policy), European Union studies, and non-profit organizations.

ksoderstrom89@gmail.com

Abstract

As European integration progresses, scholars have become increasingly interested in the definition and development of a collective European identity. Based upon analysis of European Union (EU) policies and viewed through the lenses of constructivism and collective identity theory, this paper examines construction of an emergent European identity and why it differs from that initially envisioned by the EU. Due to the intersubjective and context-dependent nature of collective identity, policies not explicitly intended for identity construction have had a profound impact on the ultimate constructed identity. While somewhat subtle, the difference and, perhaps, contradiction between the initially envisioned and emergent European identities can change the effectiveness of EU domestic and international policies. This impacts not only relations among those living in the EU, but also interactions between the EU and the international community as a whole.

Key words

citizenship, collective identity theory, constructivism, EU enlargement, European Union, international relations.

Originally published in Volume 29 (March 2016), pp. 247–266. Corrected November 2026: volume and issue numbering.
https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.29.15

Introduction

Collective identity is a complex, multifaceted social construction, which has moved to the forefront of European studies since the 1993 Treaty of Maastricht. Creation of the European Union (EU) through this Treaty effectively broadened the initial economic and regulatory focus of the European Community to include political and social characteristics. This new manifestation of the EU demands a certain amount of democratic legitimacy, which can potentially be fostered through the construction of a European identity (Bee, 2008; Garcia, 1993). An open question is the ability of the EU as a political institution to create such a collective identity. This paper examines EU-driven construction of a European identity through policies based on an "envisioned" identity, how it differs from a "realized" identity, and implications of the differences for policy effectiveness.

A broad academic literature currently examines construction of a collective European identity and the role of EU institutions in its construction. Using constructivist ontology, scholars view European identity construction as originating in two key places: at the elite level and in mass public opinion (Miles and Thränhardt, 1995; Ozkirimli, 2010). This identity is based on populist sentiments and is often constructed to engender public support and cohesion. However, the role of the public in such identity construction is generally seen as secondary, especially in a socially constructed community such as the EU. Because the primary impetus for collective identity construction comes from elite policy decisions (Herrmann, et al., 2004), the majority of current European identity literature has focused on the role of the EU in constructing a European identity.

In general, literature on the role of elites in European identity construction focuses on two broad research questions: (1) What steps has the EU taken to construct a European identity; and (2) What kind of domestic and international European identity is constructed through existing policies. Some scholars normatively describe the type of European identity that should be constructed and how elites might be able to create it (Eder and Spohn, 2005; Delanty, 2005). In general, these studies treat policy and identity as independent or dependent variables, ignoring the dialectic relationship between the two. Studies that recognize the existence of this dialectic relationship (e.g., Green, 2007) fail to consider implications of this relationship for both the identity construction process and policy effectiveness. These analyses therefore lack the connections necessary to address the broader, more salient, question of EU efficacy and effectiveness in European identity construction.

This paper develops a theoretical framework for understanding supranational collective identity construction through purposeful, elite-driven policy design. The analysis focuses on EU-driven, policy-based identity construction, and how that process is affected by confounding policies and social construction mechanisms. Section 1 develops the theoretical framework and provides the analytical approach. Section 2 describes the EU "envisioned" European identity through analysis of EU Treaties and communications. Section 3 examines a major "explicit" policy (Union citizenship) used by the EU to construct the *de jure* and *de facto* identities that result. Section 4 describes EU "spillover" policies, specifically EU Enlargement Policy, that were put in place for other purposes, but nevertheless have a profound impact on European identity construction. Section 5 describes the "realized" European identity that is created in light of EU "explicit" and "spillover" policies, compares it to the "envisioned" identity, and discusses implications for the

effectiveness of EU policy associated with the gap between "envisioned" and "realized" European identities.[265]

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the relationship between "envisioned" and "realized" European identity, requires understanding the central assumptions within a collective identity. In the context of constructivism, the European Community, with the EU at its head, can be seen as a socially constructed "imagined community," made up of strangers (Anderson, 2006). At its core, these strangers are held together with social cement composed of common beliefs, values and norms; which in turn constitute the foundation of all collective identities. According to primordialist nationalism scholars, common myths, cultures, and memories are also vitally important to the construction of a collective identity (Deutsch, 1966). Rooted in a shared history, these myths and memories create a deep sense of community, thereby amplifying a sense of loyalty necessary for legitimizing identity (Holmes and Murray, 1999). A shared culture also offers common customs and actions, thereby creating a common discourse space, and foster a sense of history. These common values, myths, and memories are therefore understood to compose the ultimate foundations of all collective identities (Worchel, 1998), and thus are also at the core of a European identity.

According to collective identity and social categorization theories, three main methods of identity construction help to transform these core common beliefs, values and norms into a collective identity: othering, intersubjective understanding, and performative reiteration (Durkheim, 1976; Tajfel, 1982; Worchel, 1998). "Othering," the process of identifying membership through delineation between members and non-members of a given community, is vital to collective identity construction (Hogg, 2003; Hegel, 1977; Wendt, 1994; Neumann, 1996; Marcussen et al., 2001; Eder, 2009). Sharing of common values, symbols and memories helps to define the "self," or the subjective definition of an identity from within the community. The boundary between this "self" and non-members is then drawn through identification of an "other," or non-member. Collective identity construction, therefore, occurs through identification of what constitutes the community ("self") and what characteristics do not describe the community ("other").

Collective identities are constructed intersubjectively, or through a process of unconscious mutual understanding, created internally through interactions between members and externally between members and non-members (Risse, 2001). In essence, interactions with "others" can change both the "self" and the" other," as both attempt to act and react in a rational manner (Malici, 2006). Since such interactions happen constantly, identities are continuously renegotiated and become very context-dependent (Rosamond, 2001).

Constructed collective identities are also made and reinforced through performative reiteration. Through ceremonies, shared histories/memories, common symbols, institutionalized policies, as well as everyday actions by community members, core values are reinforced and clarified. This facilitates greater internal cohesion and consistency when interacting with non-members (Butler, 1995; Peters, 2003; Hermann and Brewer, 2004; Eisenstadt, 1998).

[265] For definitions of *de jure* and *de facto* identity, policy designations, as well as an outline of the theoretical framework, see Figure 1.

As described above, collective identity theory and social categorization theory describe many of the necessary *a priori* elements of a collective identity, such as common culture, values, and memories, and highlight various mechanisms used to construct a collective identity. These tools and mechanisms build two main collective identity components: *demos* (members of a political community) and *ethos* (shared values, norms, and memories). According to traditional social identity theory, collective identities need both *demos* and *ethos* in order to the support the legitimacy of a political community and its leadership structure (Delanty, 2005). Therefore, in order to build legitimacy, it is in the best interest of the EU as a fledgling political and social entity to foster both a *demos* and *ethos* through the use of these collective identity construction mechanisms. Based upon these theories, the next section explores how the EU has used formal mechanisms to identify and build upon these core elements to derive a collective European identity.

Declaration on European Identity

The 1973 Copenhagen Summit adoption of the "Declaration on European Identity" is arguably the first attempt by the EU to construct a European identity and explicitly state a vision of what should constitute such an identity (Kostakopoulou, 2001). Although the Declaration was explicitly intended to state the EU's "envisioned" European identity on the international stage, the core values expressed are the same for internal and overall identities. Based on the idea of common interests and experiences stemming from the wars of the 20th century and the Judeo-Christian and humanist traditions, the Declaration identifies the fundamental elements of a European identity as unity, cooperation, democracy, rule of law, social justice, respect for human rights, and individual rights (European Commission, 1973).

Treaties and Charter of Fundamental Rights

The most powerful and clearly-defined sources of "envisioned" European identity are the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Due to the legally binding nature of these documents, the values and characteristics described in them can be considered the agreed-upon building blocks of a European identity. These values are also consistent with the Treaty of Rome (Kostakopoulou, 2001). This stability over time points to their strength and importance as identity constructors.

The preamble to the Treaty of Lisbon constitutes the most overt declaration of core principles to underpin an "envisioned" European identity. This Treaty is the current legally binding EU treaty and thus constitutes the foundation of current European identity construction efforts. According to the Treaty, principles that lie at the heart of a European identity are those of "liberty, democracy, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and of the rule of law" (European Union, 2007, preamble). Of these core values, "rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law" are further emphasized as universal and inalienable (European Union, 2007: preamble). In general, the EU sees itself as creating an internal space characterized by "freedom, security, and justice," while externally, the EU presents an identity based on "peace, security, and progress" (European Union, 2007: preamble) All of these characteristics are seen as developing from the "cultural, religious, and humanist inheritance of Europe" (European Union, 2007: preamble), thereby alluding to a common history and common cultural base.

The 2010 Charter of Fundamental Rights, codified in conjunction with the Treaty of Lisbon, extols characteristics of European identity similar to those described in the preamble to the Treaty. Although the Charter can be seen as a policy manifestation of "envisioned" European identity, its influence is indirect, since secondary legislation is needed to legalize ideas expressed in the Charter. It thus serves as a mirror of "envisioned" identity, reflecting EU-driven "envisioned" European identity construction rather than providing an "explicit" policy.

In general, the Charter states that "the Union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity; it is based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law" (European Commission, 2010: preamble). By providing rights for all people in the EU, not just citizens, the Charter helps to emphasize the importance of universal fundamental rights in an "envisioned" European identity (Guild, 2010). The Charter is a step towards an "ever closer union" in its guarantee to bring the core values of the Treaty of Lisbon to the people, thereby helping to construct a European identity based within the people. The Charter views such guarantees of rights as "creating an area of freedom, security, and justice" within the EU (European Commission, 2010: preamble).

Although both the Treaty of Lisbon and the Charter sound like a simple list of modern idealistic democratic characteristics, it is possible to uncover the core values of an "envisioned" European identity from their text. Of the listed characteristics, the most frequently cited and longest standing set of characteristics (since the Treaty of Rome) consist of "rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law" (preamble to the Treaty of Lisbon). As many of these characteristics are reiterated in the Charter, they arguably comprise the most important values in an "envisioned" European identity. These characteristics, coupled with the universal human rights inherent in the Charter, constitute the core of an "envisioned" European identity.

Explicit Policies: Union Citizenship

In order to assess the connection and conflict between "envisioned" and "realized" European identities, we must examine EU policies used to explicitly construct the EU's "envisioned" European identity. While the exact wording of EU policies may not state that they are meant specifically for identity construction, subsequent programs and communications directly link policies with identity construction. EU policies thus constitute legal manifestation of the EU's "envisioned" European identity and are an active attempt to push that identity on its members. Although many policies can be counted as "explicit," such as Community symbols, [266] Union Citizenship constitutes the most visible and powerful of these "explicit" EU policies. Union citizenship itself can be seen as an institutionalization and codification of membership within a community. The EU has subsequently used Union citizenship to define a "European people" (or *demos*) with a common European identity by acting as a legal manifestation of the "self" that actively excludes non-members and provides positive freedoms and rights for members (Delanty, 2005). This combination of explicit identity border definition, rights, and symbolic community membership gives Union citizenship power in identity construction.

[266] For an in-depth analysis of Community symbols as European identity constructing policies, see Armstrong (2001), Laffan (2004), and Elgenius (2011).

Article 8 of the Treaty of Maastricht (1993), entitled "Citizenship of the Union," constructs identity by explicitly indicating the borders of Union citizenship. Article 8(1) states "every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union." By restricting Union citizenship to those who are already citizens of a Member State, the EU clearly delineates membership and explicitly defines who it sees as the "self" (members) versus "others" (non-members) By placing the ultimate power of deciding who should hold Union citizenship in the hands of the Member States, the EU is also reiterating its "envisioned" core values of diversity, unity and recognition of state sovereignty.

Union citizenship detailed in Article 8 is later used explicitly by the EU as a direct tool for European identity construction. After 1993, in an attempt to decrease the democratic deficit and increase political participation, efforts to connect the EU with the masses shifted from the "people of Europe" to the "citizens of Europe." This represents a consolidation of self-identification from all "people" in Europe to just "citizens," and places an emphasis on citizen-based democracy as being especially important in EU-driven identity construction. This new focus on the "citizen" rather than the "people" of Europe as a vital part of European identity construction became especially apparent with the creation of the Europe for Citizens Program (2007-2014). According to the "Objectives of the Europe for Citizen's Program" (2013), the main purpose of the program is "developing a sense of European identity, based on common values, history and culture," and to bring citizens and the EU closer together. The creation of this multi-year, multi-million Euro program illustrates how strongly the EU believes in the power of Union citizenship as a European identity construction mechanism.

The EU furthered its use of Union citizenship as an identity constructing tool when it declared 2013 as the European Year of Citizens, as part of the Europe for Citizens Program. The purpose of the European Year of Citizens is to "stimulate debate, increase knowledge of Union citizenship rights, and increase participation" (European Commission, 2013a: 1) in the belief that these actions will reinforce "a sense of a common European identity among Union citizens based on the core values of the Union as enshrined in the Treaty of European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union" (Decision No. 1093/2012/EU, Article 2(c)).This statement is especially important because it directly connects the EU "envisioned" identity described in the Treaties and the Charter with Union citizenship and identity construction. In this sense, the EU views Union citizenship as a performative reiteration tool used to promote the core values of an "envisioned" European identity.

Finally, the 1992 "The Citizens' Europe" report states that Union citizenship constitutes "a trans-national display of the Community's firm attachments to basic civic and democratic rights" (16). Implicitly, this passage links Union citizenship to the EU's "envisioned" identity characteristics of democracy, universal human rights, and solidarity across all Member States. Supplementary Commission communications, such as the 1993 "Report from the Commission on the Citizenship of the Union," similarly describe Union citizenship as an important tool for linking the public with the EU and "with the aim of fostering a sense of identity with the Union" (European Commission, 1992: 2). In essence, even though Article 8 of the Maastricht Treaty does not explicitly state that constructing a European identity is one of the purposes of creating Union citizenship, "othering"

and performative reiteration effects coupled with the basic human and democratic rights elements indicate that Union citizenship is an important European identity building policy.

De jure European Identity in the Context of Union Citizenship

Traditionally, citizenship provides rights and dictates obligations for members of a particular political community (Bruter, 2005; Marshall, 1950). However, Union citizenship differs. Many of the rights described by Article 8 were already available to EU members through past legislation, and secondary legislation is needed for newly added rights to become fully realized (Vraken, 1999; Kostakopoulou, 2001). For example, the 1989 Social Policy Agreement, and European Court of Justice decisions in the 1989 *Cowan v Le Tresor Public* and 1985 *Gravier v City of Liege* cases, laid the foundation for protection from discrimination, thereby providing a sense of universal rights before Union citizenship came into effect (Kostakopoulou, 2001; Bellamy, et al., 2006). Additionally, rights to petition European Parliament and the Ombudsman are provided by Articles 138(d) and 138(e) in the Treaty of Maastricht independent of Union citizenship (Dobson, 2006). Supplementary articles were also added in the Treaty of Nice which gave residents of the Union freedom from discrimination based on nationality (Article 12) and non-discrimination measures in other areas (Article 13) (Dobson, 2006). Work rights also have been built into the Treaties since the founding of the European Economic Community. For example, Articles 48 and 51 for the Treaty of Rome provided freedom of movement for workers, and Council Regulation 1612/68 provided freedom of movement for members of the Union (Bellamy et al., 2006; Huysmans, 2001). Given the existence of many Union citizenship rights outside of Article 8 of the Maastricht Treaty, scholars have interpreted this generally "empty" nature of Union citizenship as proof that Union citizenship itself is, in fact, designed to be symbolic rather than provide specific rights (d'Oliveira, 1995).

However, Union citizenship is more than symbolic. The exclusionary nature of Union citizenship plays a vital role in constructing a European identity by legally defining the border between "self" and "other." Moreover, Union citizenship reinforces Member State citizenship by providing an extra layer of rights for Member State citizens, especially in relation to the four fundamental freedoms of the EU (Dobson, 2006; Weiner 1998). Given its symbolic and exclusionary nature, the EU added Union citizenship to the Treaties for reasons beyond simply providing rights for its members.

Union citizenship creation can also help construct a European *demos*. Given its symbolic and exclusionary nature, Union citizenship can help the EU to construct a *demos* that will support its fledgling political and civic identity (Giesen and Eder, 2001). According to the "no-*demos*" thesis, such a pan-European *demos* does not yet exist (Dobson, 2006; Delanty, 2005). Instead, Europe consists of multiple *demoi* based in the nation-state. If the EU views its legitimacy as originating in European citizens, then it is important for the EU to build a European *demos* even in the face of pre-existing, state-based *demoi*. Indeed, construction of a European *demos* alongside Member State *demoi* reinforces diversity, solidarity, and adds individual rights alongside a focus on state rights as core characteristics of a European identity.

Similarly, Union citizenship can increase member participation by creating a place in the bureaucratic structure for political participation and discussion (Chryssochoou, 1996). Similar to individual rights, avenues for political participation predate Union citizenship (Kostakopoulou,

2001; European Commission, 1989). While addition of voting rights to Union citizenship did not actually increase the rights available to Union citizens, Union citizenship created official channels for member participation, providing a discussion space that facilitates sharing of ideas across the heterogeneous transnational community. According to Dobson (2006) and Smith (2010), increased participation and potential for discussion play vital roles in strengthening internal social cohesion and Europeanization. These objectives are a key feature of the Europe for Citizens Program. For example, town twinnings and locally-based discussion groups constitute a large part of the funding for the Program (European Commission, 2013b). EU is thus using Union citizenship as a means by which to increase public participation by opening additional, institutionalized, and "members only" means of communication.

Finally, Union citizenship provides a symbol of membership that forms the emotional basis for a deeper sense of solidarity, loyalty and belonging within Europe. In its traditional sense, citizenship, denotes membership in an exclusive community (Smith, 2010; Eder and Giesen, 2001). The emotional connection that comes with legally recognized membership has the potential to lay the foundation for increased legitimacy for the EU.

De facto European Identity in the Context of Union Citizenship

Although the EU uses Union citizenship to construct a European *demos*, increase participation, symbolically/legally delineate the "self" from the "other," and reinforce the core values of solidarity, diversity, individual and state rights in a European identity, structural and conceptual characteristics of Union citizenship construct a European identity that differs from that envisioned by the EU.

While the attempted construction of a European *demos* has the potential to support the core EU values of diversity and solidarity, a sense of "Europeanness" remains subordinate to Member State *demoi* structures. This is especially true since the Member States hold the ultimate power in determining who is allowed to be a citizen. Therefore, the EU does more to support Member State sovereignty than promote a sense of diversity and solidarity (Kostakopoulou, 2001).

In addition, the creation of a Union citizenship has not, as of yet, achieved an increase in participation. While participation in the sense of voting in European Parliamentary elections has been steadily decreasing, there has been an increase in the number of EU citizens who enjoy their freedom of movement and residence (European Commission, 2012). These increases suggest that a European identity stemming from Union citizenship does not manifest in the same way as in traditional statist citizenship regimes. Instead, a European identity becomes more subtle in that more people are making use of their rights, thereby reinforcing a European identity through performative reiteration. The more they use their rights, the more these rights, the underlying values, and European identity, are reiterated and perceived as the status quo. According to Robyn (1995), an identity becomes truly accepted when it is internalized by the population to the point of being considered normal. The fact that Union citizenship has helped to internalize a European identity (in terms of values and rights), thereby causing the rights to become the status quo, illustrates the power of Union citizenship as an identity constructor. Union citizenship has not helped to promote the EU value of democracy in the traditional sense through political participation, but rather has created a subtle, subconscious European identity rooted more in the European core values of the rule of law.

Furthermore, the universality inherent in an EU "envisioned" European identity is undermined by the *de facto* identity constructed through implementation of Union citizenship policy. According to Eder and Giesen (2001), one of the objectives of Union citizenship is to facilitate the universalisation of EU rights for its members. However, secondary legislation and persistent xenophobia have hindered such universalisation. Hall (1999) argues that this secondary legislation turns denizens into second-class citizens. For example, while freedom of movement, residence, and rights to political participation are provided by the Maastricht Treaty, states retain the ability to limit denizen movement based on public policy, security and health (Directives 90/366, 90/356, 90/364) (Dunkerley et al., 2002). Additionally, denizens only have the right to vote in local and European Parliamentary elections, but not in national elections. Voting rights provided to citizens also have the potential to be restricted by Member States based on residency requirements (Directive 94/80/EC, Article 12; Kostakopoulou, 2001). Restrictions on voting, movement, and residence succeed in maintaining Member State sovereignty, but undermine the universality and non-discrimination aspects of an "envisioned" European identity.

"Explicit Policy" Summary

Union citizenship indeed fails to construct the overt, statist-style *de jure* European identity that the EU envisions; however, it does create a European identity that is a more subtle, europeanizing force. It provides a common discussion forum, participation potential, and a common language through which members can communicate. Additionally, Union citizenship helps to construct a European identity by highlighting the boundary between "self" and "other," and reinforcing the status of the EU as part of the status quo through performative reiteration. Therefore, the EU appears to have successfully constructed a loosely linked *demos*, but still lacks a strong and consistent underpinning *ethos*. This *demos* without overt *ethos* creates a more subtle European identity based more in adherence to the rule of law than any common cultural identity or history. Such a post-national character, coupled with subtly and underpinned by loyalty to the core value of the rule of law results in an identity more similar to Habermas' (1998) "constitutional patriotism," Toennies' (2001) "Gesellschaft," and Risse's (2004) "civic identity."

EU Enlargement as "Spillover" Policy

While the EU explicitly designs and uses policies, such as Union citizenship, to externalize and construct an "envisioned" European identity, additional factors and policies can affect the creation of a European identity. EU policies that were never overtly intended for European identity construction can have a profound impact on the character of the final "realized" identity. The influence of these "spillover" policies is especially vivid in frontiers of political interaction, or border policies such as EU Enlargement Policy, in which the EU is forced to define who constitutes "self" versus "other" (Campbell, 1992).[267]

EU Enlargement Policy constitutes a declaration of who can apply for and gain membership in the EU. Even though EU enlargement is not an explicit European identity constructor, the fact that it profoundly influences who constitutes the "self" and who is "othered" illustrates the power

[267] Other examples of spillover policies include the Common European Asylum System or Member State-based citizenship through investment schemes (Gowlland-Debbas, 2001). These types of policies create areas of contradiction that can undermine traditional EU values.

of enlargement policy to shape the construction of a "realized" European identity (Schimmelfennig, 2001b; Eder and Spohn, 2005). One of the primary criteria for applying for membership in the EU is that a country is "European" (Neumann, 2001; European Council, 1993). Therefore, simply allowing a state to become a candidate country, or even progress through the ascension process, impacts the make-up of the "self," subsequently affecting European identity as a whole.

As Sedelmeier (2003) argues, EU enlargement policy is informed by European identity core values of democracy and respect for human rights. In fact, frequent European Council declarations have proclaimed that promotion of democracy and human rights is a characteristic goal for EU enlargement, especially eastern enlargement (Sedelmeier, 2003; Eder and Spohn, 2005; Miles, 2004; European Commission, 1996). Manners (2002) argues that promotion of such core values can be seen in other enlargements, such as the Mediterranean enlargement, as the addition of countries such as Greece and Italy was for political integration rather than economic reasons.

The Copenhagen Criteria codifies these core values and transform them into compulsory criteria for membership in the EU (European Council, 1993). According to Sedelmeier (2003), "by defining and spelling out the criteria for membership, the EU explicitly articulated the fundamental characteristics that it ascribed to itself" (7). Through this codification of the EU vision of "self," European identity becomes extended to countries that wish to gain membership in the EU.

However, the very nature of including previously defined "others" into the imagined community and membership in the collective identity inherently changes the characteristics of the "self" and "others." New members bring new histories, memories, and customs that can alter the composition of the "self." Similarly, the EU is expected to recognize new Member States' past relationships with third countries, thereby causing EU international relationships with "others" to evolve (Miles, 2004). Most importantly, countries that previously were considered "others" have come to be part of the "self." For example, the Eastern Enlargement of 2004 heralded the transition of 12 eastern European countries from Cold War era "others" to constituting part of the EU "self" (Schimmelfennig, 2001a). In essence, each enlargement, coupled with the normative influence on candidate countries, profoundly changes the physical and cultural composition of the EU, thereby subsequently influencing the construction of a European identity.

Constructed "Realized" European Identity

Given the complex, subjective, context-based, and fluid nature of collective identity construction, it is impossible to paint an exact picture of the current experienced European identity. However, by assessing the *de facto* identities created by EU "explicit" policies, such as Union citizenship, and "spillover" policies, such as EU Enlargement Policy, we can begin to understand the European identity that is experienced in reality. The "realized" European identity has evolved into a subtle, influential identity similar to Billig's "banal nationalism" or Habermas' "constitutional patriotism." It is more of a civic identity that lacks sufficient grounding in culture. This civic identity manifests itself not in Billig's "hot" nationalistic gestures, but rather in everyday acceptance of the EU and its laws and rights as being the status quo. Union citizens may not be willing to lay down their lives for the EU (a test of true nationalistic identity, according to Deutsch (1966)); however, Union citizens do reiterate and reinforce their European identity by partaking in the rights, responsibilities

and privileges afforded to them. The subtle nature of the identity allows it to be simultaneously nesting and cross-cutting, similar to Risse's (2005) "marble cake model" or Bauman's (2001) "liquid identities," thereby allowing it to be flexible and facilitate the EU's "unified in diversity" ideal. The ubiquitous nature of such a subtle European identity also facilitates "Europeanization," or the filtering of EU values into the national level (Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003). If anything, a European identity created through EU "explicit" policies and influenced by other "spillover" policies can be described as a "banal" constitutional patriotism based in cosmopolitan values, framed in a communitarian light.

Green's 2007 survey-based analysis of European identity provides evidence of this "banal," civic European identity. Green concludes that a European identity does, indeed, exist, but varies across Member States and is "generally a minority sentiment" (127). While respondents cite peace as a fundamental European value, democracy, human rights, and socioeconomic solidarity also constitute important values. Additionally, subjects consistently reference a common history, heritage, and commitment to diversity, multiculturalism and tolerance as underpinning European identity. Green (2007) concludes that while all of these values and characteristics are important, a European identity is much more cognitively than emotionally driven. Similarly, results in Robyn (1995) support the notion of European identity as primarily based in a political identity. A European identity thus lacks emotional connection, but still exists as an important part of the current socio-political status quo in Europe.

Recent Eurobarometer surveys results show a larger proportion of respondents view themselves as Europeans in addition to their own nationality rather than solely their own nationality (Eurobarometer, 2013). When asked what the European Union meant to them, survey respondents most frequently listed freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU (Eurobarometer, 2012). Taken together, these results support the notion of a European identity that reflects more of an allegiance to rights and law, as is suggested by constitutional patriotism, rather than a sense of common culture, values, or history. However, while a European identity does appears to exist, Eurobarometer data indicates that the majority of respondents describe their identity as more national than European (Eurobarometer, 2013). Thus, the dominant outlook for Europeans is "country first, but Europe too" (Citrin and Sides, 2004: 183; Hooghe and Marks, 2001).

How "Envisioned" and "Realized" European Identities Compare

In light of the observed, experienced European identity evident in recent studies and Eurobarometer survey data, coupled with the "realized" European identity constructed through EU "explicit" and "spillover" policies, we can conclude that European identity is, indeed, a subtle, "banal" identity, that exists subordinate to Member State national identities. Such identity is also characterized by the core values of "rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law" (European Union, 2007: preamble). Peace is at the ultimate core of its value pantheon, with democracy and solidarity as other important values. European identity appears to be experienced as an influential factor based more in a civic, constitutional patriotism identity structure.

The most visible gap between the "envisioned" and "realized" European identities concerns the cultural and civic aspects of a collective identity. "Envisioned" European identity emphasizes a common European culture and history. However, given the lack of a unifying European history, pan-European culture, or pan-European *ethos*, a "realized" European identity does not have this cultural aspect. Therefore, the "realized" identity is much more civic, and manifests as more subtle than the identity initially envisioned by the EU.

Another visible gap lies in the core values described in the "envisioned" European identity that do not appear to manifest in a "realized" European identity. The ability of the EU to incorporate a sense of equality and universalism into Union citizenship is severely hindered by a persistent adherence to Member State sovereignty. However, on the whole, core values such as peace and democracy have successfully become heavily associated with the EU and a European identity (Green, 2007).

A third visible gap occurs in relation to member participation. The EU envisions a European identity in a more traditional sense, where members are expected to participate. By creating Union citizenship, the EU is implicitly attaching membership to a set of obligations – namely participation in the EU political process and European society. The EU sees citizen participation as reflecting the nation-state model through voting, communicating with the bureaucratic structure through petitions, and engaging with other members of the European community. However, member participation in a "realized" identity is based more in personal interactions with EU law than through direct, conscious participation. Members may not be turning up in droves at the polling booths, but they are actively engaging with their rights as citizens, especially the rights to freedom of movement, residence, study and work.

The fact that a European identity is heavily influenced by external interpretations of EU actions and values, "spillover" policies, and a dogmatic adherence to the maintenance of Member State cultural and political sovereignty severely inhibit the effectiveness of EU "explicit" identity building policies (Pinder, 1995; Martiniello, 1995). This issue is compounded by the fact that the EU insists on creating "explicit" policies following the 19th century nationalism model. The fact that the EU is not a nation-state, but continues to attempt collective identity construction as a nation-state severely inhibits its identity constructing potential. The EU may be able to initiate the creation of an "envisioned" European identity, but because "realized" European identity is so heavily influenced by other factors (such as "spillover" policies), it is experienced by both members and non-members of the European community as something different. This gap can then be understood as evidence of a lack of EU elite-level efficacy in European identity construction leading to a potential decrease in all policy effectiveness.

Implications and Conclusions

As has been demonstrated by the above examination of EU-driven European identity construction, a substantial gap exists between the EU "envisioned" and "realized" European identities. If we assume that core values and understanding of "self" inform policy decisions, then it stands to reason that the EU would base its policy decisions, both internal and external, on its "envisioned" European identity. However, if the EU is basing its policy designs on an identity that differs from reality, it is possible that these policies will not be as effective.

This identity gap has the potential to impact not only EU policy implementation, but also European society as a whole. It has implications both within the EU and in the role that the EU plays on the world stage. This gap causes the EU to send mixed signals to both its citizens and the international community, thereby decreasing the effectiveness of EU policies generally. Domestically, it creates a separation in the sense of "self" between the trans-national EU and the masses. This difference in the sense of "self" enhances the democratic deficit, which over time threatens to widen the separation. Internationally, the result of policy outcomes failing to reflect an "envisioned" European identity is a decrease in legitimacy, appearance of discontinuity, and ultimately a weakening of the EU's power in negotiations with countries outside of the EU. To remedy this reduction in policy effectiveness, the EU must gain a better understanding of "realized," European identity and use it as its basis for policy decision-making rather than its "envisioned" identity.

References

Secondary Source References

Anderson, B. (2006): Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. Revised Ed. London: Verso.

Armstrong, J. (2001): 'Myth and Symbolism Theory of Nationalism', in A. Leoussi (ed.) and A. Smith (consultant advisor) Encyclopaedia of Nationalism. London: Transaction Publishers.

Bauman, Z. (2001): Liquid Modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bee, C. (2008): 'The "Institutionally Constructed" European Identity: Citizenship and Public Sphere Narrated by the Commission', Perspectives on European Politics and Society 9(4): pp. 431-450.

Bellamy, R., Castiglione, D., and Shaw, J. (2006): Making European Citizens: Civic Inclusion in a Transnational Context. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Billig, M. (1995): Banal Nationalism. London: Sage.

Bruter, M. (2005): Citizens of Europe? The Emergence of a Mass European Identity. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Butler, J. (1995): Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative. New York: Routledge.

Campbell, D. (1992): Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

Chryssochoou, D. (1996): 'Europe's Could-Be Demos: Recasting the Debate', West European Politics 19: pp. 787-801.

Citrin, J. and Sides, J. (2004): 'More than Nationals: How Identity Choice Matters in the New Europe', in R. Herrmann, T. Risse, and M. Brewer (eds.) Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Delanty, G. (2005): 'The Quest for European Identity', in E. Eriksen (ed.) Making the European Polity: Reflexive Integration in the EU. New York: Routledge.

Deutsch, K. (1966): Nation-building. New York: Atherton Press.

Dobson, L. (2006): Supranational Citizenship. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

D'Oliveira, J. (1995): 'Union Citizenship: Pie in the Sky?' in A. Rosas and E. Antola (eds.) A Citizens' Europe: In Search of a New Order. London: Sage.

Dunkerley, D., Hodgson, L., Konopacki, S., Spybey, T., and Thompson, A. (eds.) (2002): Changing Europe: Identities, Nations and Citizens. London: Routledge.

Durkheim, E. (1976): The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. 2nd ed. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Eder, K. and Giesen, B. (2001): 'Conclusion: Citizenship and the Making of a European Society', in Eder K. and Giesen, B. (eds.) European Citizenship between National Legacies and Postnational Projects. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eder, K. and Spohn, W. (eds.) (2005): Collective Memory and European Identity: The Effects of Integration and Enlargement. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.

Eder, K. (2009): 'A Theory of Collective Identity: Making Sense of the Debate on a "European Identity"', European Journal of Social Theory 12(4): pp. 427-447.

Eisenstadt, S. (1998): 'The Construction of Collective Identity: Some Analytical and Comparative Indications', European Journal of Social Theory 1(2): pp. 229-254.

Elgenius, G. (2011): Symbols of Nations and Nationalism: Celebrating Nationhood. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Featherstone, K. and Radaelli, C. (eds.) (2003): The Politics of Europeanization. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Garcia, S. (ed.). (1993): European Identity and the Search for Legitimacy. London: Pinter Publishers.

Giesen, B. and Eder, K. (2001): 'Introduction: European Citizenship', in Eder, K. and Giesen, B. (eds.) European Citizenship between National Legacies and Postnational Projects. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Guild, E. (2010): 'Fundamental Rights and EU Citizenship after the Treaty of Lisbon', Justice and Home Affairs, Liberty and Security in Europe Papers 1: pp. 1-9.

Gowlland-Debbas, V. (2001): 'European Asylum Policies and the Search for a European Identity', in Cederman, L-E. (ed.). Constructing Europe's Identity: The External Dimension. London: Lynne Reinner Publishers.

Green, D. (2007): The Europeans: Political Identity in an Emerging Polity. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Haas, E. (1964): Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Organization. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Habermas. J. (1998): The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory. Edited by C. Cronin. and P. De Greiff. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hall, S. (1999): 'European Citizenship – Unfinished Business', in L. Holmes and P. Murray (eds.). Citizenship and Identity in Europe. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

Hegel, G. (1977): Phenomenology of Spirit. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Herrmann, R., Risse, T., and Brewer, M. (eds.) (2004): Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Hogg, M. (2003): 'Social Categorization, Depersonalization, and Group Behaviour', in M. Hogg and R. Scott Tindale (eds.) Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Holmes, L. and Murray, P. (1999): 'Introduction: Citizenship and Identity in Europe', in L. Holmes and P. Murray (eds.) Citizenship and Identity in Europe. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

Hooghe, L. and Marks, G. (2001): Multi-Level Governance and European Integration. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.

Huysmans, J. (2001): 'European Identity and Migration Policies', in L-E. Cederman (ed.) Constructing Europe's Identity: The External Dimension. London: Lynne Reinner Publishers.

Kostakopoulou, T. (2001): Citizenship, Identity, and Immigration in the European Union. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Laffan, B. (2004): 'The European Union and Its Institutions as "Identity Builders"', in R. Herrmann, T. Risse, and M. Brewer (eds.) Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Malici, A. (2006): 'Reagan and Gorbachev: Altercasting at the End of the Cold War', in M. Schafer and S. Walker (eds.) Beliefs and Leadership in World Politics: Methods and Applications of Operational Code Analysis. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Manners, I. (2002): 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?' Journal of Common Market Studies 40(2): pp. 235-58.

Marcussen, M., Risse, T., Engelmann-Martin, D., Knopf, H-J. and Roscher, K. (2001): 'Constructing Europe? The Evolution of Nation-State Identities', in T. Christiansen, K. Jorgensen and A. Wiener (eds.) The Social Construction of Europe. London: Sage Publications.

Marshall, T.H. (1950): Citizenship and Social Class: and Other Essays. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Martiniello, M. (1995): 'European Citizenship, European Identity and Migrants: Towards the Post-National State?' in R. Miles and D. Thränhardt (eds.) Migration and European Integration: The Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion. London: Pinter Publishers.

Miles, R. and Thränhardt, D. (eds.) (1995): Migration and European Integration: The Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion. London: Pinter Publishers.

Miles, L. (2004): 'Theoretical Considerations', in N. Nugent (ed.) European Union Enlargement. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Neumann, I. (1996): 'Self and Other in International Relations', European Journal of International Relations 2(2): pp. 139-174.

Neumann, I. (2001): 'European Identity, EU Expansion, and the Integration/Exclusion Nexus', in L-E. Cederman (ed.) Constructing Europe's Identity. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Ozkirimli, U. (2010): Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction. 2nd Edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Peters, B. (2003): 'Collective Identity, Cultural Difference and the Development Trajectories of Immigrant Groups', in R. Sackmann, B. Peters and T. Faist (eds.) Identity and Integration: Migrants in Western Europe. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.

Pinder, J. (1995): European Community: The Building of a Union. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Risse, T. (2001): 'A European Identity? Europeanization and the Evolution of Nation-State Identities', in M. Cowles, J. Caporaso and T. Risse (eds.) Transforming Europe. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Risse, T. (2004): 'Social Constructivism and European Integration', in A. Wiener and T. Diez (eds.) European Integration Theory. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Risse, T. (2005): 'Neofunctionalism, European Identity, and the Puzzles of European Integration', Journal of European Public Policy 12(2): pp. 291-309.

Robyn, R. (ed.) (1995): The Changing Face of European Identity. New York: Routledge.

Rosamond, B. (2001): 'Discourses of Globalization and European Identities', in T. Christiansen, K. Jorgensen and A. Wiener (eds.) The Social Construction of Europe. London: Sage Publications.

Schimmelfennig, F. (2001a): 'Liberal Identity and Postnational Inclusion: The Eastern Enlargement of the European Union', in L-E. Cederman (ed.) Constructing Europe's Identity: The External Dimension. London: Lynne Reinner Publishers.

Schimmelfennig, F. (2001b): 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union', International Organization 55(1): pp. 47-80.

Sedelmeier, U. (2003): 'EU Enlargement, Identity and the Analysis of European Foreign Policy: Identity Formation Through Policy Practice', EUI Working Paper, RSC No. 2003/13.

Smith, A. (2010): Nationalism. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Tajfel, H. (1982): 'Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations', Annual Review of Psychology 33: pp. 1-39.

Toennies, F. (2001): Community and Civil Society. Edited by J. Harris. Trans. by J. Harris and M. Hollis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weiner, A. (1998): "European" Citizenship Practice: Building Institutions of a Non-State. Oxford: Westview Press.

Wendt, A. (1994): 'Collective Identity Formation and the International State', American Political Science Review 88(2): pp. 384-396.

Worchel, S. (1998): 'A Developmental View of the Search for Group Identity', in S. Worchel, J. Morales, D. Paez, and J. Deschamps (eds.) Social Identity: International Perspective. London: Sage.

Primary Source References

European Documents Referenced

Economic and Social Consultative Assembly (1992): "The Citizens' Europe" Report. ESC-92-011-EN.

European Commission (1973): "Declaration on European Identity." Bull. EC No.12. Luxembourg.

European Commission (1984): "A People's Europe: Implementing the Conclusions of the Fontainbleau European Council." COM(84) 446 Final.

European Commission (1985): "Communication from the Commission to the Council on a People's Europe." COM(85) 640 Final.

European Commission (1989): "Amended Proposal for a Council Directive on voting Rights for Community Nationals in local elections in their Member State of Residence." COM(89) 524 Final.

European Commission (1993): "Report from the Commission on the Citizenship of the Union." COM(93) 702 Final.

European Commission (1995): "Report on the Operation of the Treaty on European Union." SEC(95) 731 Final.

European Commission (1996): "Reinforcing Political Union and Preparing for Enlargement." COM(96) 90 Final.

European Commission (2010): "The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union." OJ C83/389.

European Commission (2012): "Standard Eurobarometer 78: European Citizenship Report." Directorate-General for Communication.

European Commission (2013a): "European Year of Citizens 2013." http://europa.eu/citizens-2013/en/about. Accessed: 20 May, 2013.

European Commission (2013b): "Objectives of the Europe for Citizens' Programme, 2007-2014." http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programmeme/objectives_en.php. Accessed: 17 May, 2013.

European Council (1968): Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 of the Council of 15 October 1968 on freedom of movement for workers within the Community. OJ L257/2.

European Council (1989): Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers. Bull. EC 12-1989, Presidency Conclusions.

European Council (1990): Directive 90/364 on the right of residence, OJ L180/26.

European Council (1990): Directive 90/365 on the Right of Residence for Employees and Self-Employed Persons who have Ceased their Occupational Activity, OJ L180/28.

European Council (1990): Directive 90/366 on the Right of Residence for Students, OJ L180/28.

European Council (1993): Copenhagen European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 12 June 1993. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_DOC-93-3_en.htm?locale=en. Accessed: 12 July 2013.

European Council (1994): Directive 94/80 on the Right to Vote and Stand as a Candidate in Municipal Elections, OJ L 368/38.

European Council (1999): Helsinki European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 12 Nov 1999. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/ec/pdf/hel_en.pdf. Accessed: 7 July 2013.

European Parliament and European Council (2012): "European Year of Citizens." Decision No. 1093/2012/EU. 12 Nov 2012. OJ L325/1.

European Union (1957): "Treaty Establishing the European Community (Consolidated Version)." http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b39c0.html. Accessed: 24 May 2013.

European Union (1993): "Treaty of the European Union (Consolidated Version)," Treaty of Maastricht. OJ C325/5.

European Union (2000): "Treaty of Nice, Amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties Establishing the European Communities and Certain Related Acts." OJ C80/01.

European Union (2007): "Treaty of Lisbon Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community." OJ C306/01.

European Court of Justice Cases Referenced

Cowan v Le Tresor Public (Case 186/87) [1986] ECR 195; [1990] 2 CMLR 613.

Gravier Francoise Gravier v City of Liege (Case 293/83) [1985] ECR 593; [1985] 3 CMLR1.

Eurobarometer Surveys Referenced

Eurobarometer (2012): "Standard Eurobarometer 78: Public Opinion in the EU – Autumn 2012." European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/index_en.cfm. Accessed 25 July 2013.

Eurobarometer (2013): "Standard Eurobarometer 79: Public Opinion in the European Union – Spring 2013." European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/index_en.cfm. Accessed 25 July 2013.

Appendix

Figure 1: Paper outline flowchart: "envisioned" European identity to "realized" European identity and policy designation definitions. Source: Author.

