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# NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTIFICATIONS: A DUAL RELATIONSHIP <sup>1</sup>.

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## Summary:

Different authors show opposing results concerning the relationship between national and European identities. This article confirms empirically that identification with Europe is directly and yet paradoxically related to national identifications. It also shows that the relationship established between these two identifications has changed over the last two decades in a consistent way. The changes in this relationship are interpreted as a consequence of the dual process at stake when people identify with a territorially based community. The first process refers to the sociologically and politically determined individual disposition to feel like a member of a community rather than an isolated individual: it is cumulative as far as identification with nations and with Europe is concerned. The other dimension, on the contrary, is exclusive: it results from the sociological and political process of community building which is made easier by the delimitation of the community, and is hence fuelled by pointing out some significant “other” such as the European Union. These two processes interact in such a way that the relationship between the two levels of identification is often difficult to spot which explains why there is considerable debate on whether a strong sense of national identity leads the way to European identity or prevents it.

Keywords: national identity; European identity

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For a long time, support for European integration could be analyzed without much reference to the attachments of European citizens to their nations. Beyond the recurring acknowledgement of a strong social determination in attitudes towards Europe, analysts did observe important differences in support among European countries, but these were considered as encompassing all sorts of differences in the countries themselves. There was no need to infer major differences in the ways the different peoples of Europe related to their own country.

Nowadays, most European Union analysts consider that the growing process of European integration has changed the very nature of attitudes towards Europe. From 1994 onwards and the establishing of European citizenship, it has been argued that support for the European Union should be analyzed as a European identity-building process rather than as a set of tolerant attitudes towards a remote and foreign object as used to be the case. Hence, the question of the relationship between support for the European Union and the commitment of European citizens to their own country can no longer be avoided (Diez Medrano 2003). This article will examine the changing relationship between national and European commitment since 1982. This relationship will in turn be apprehended through the notions of national identification and identification with Europe.

### *Concepts and definitions*

The notion of identity has been deeply criticized in political science<sup>2</sup> because of the diversity of meanings and uses (Brubaker & Cooper 2000) associated with it. However, as suggested by the work of Charles Tilly, it is undoubtedly preferable to “get identity right” and to remember that “identities are social arrangements”, and consequential ones, resulting from

collective negotiations about who people are (Tilly 2003, p. 608) rather than renouncing the notion. At a collective level, identity – and in this case national identity – can thus be considered as a complex pattern of meanings and values related to the group whose borders are defined by the state's capacity to intervene and which underlies the varied representations and attitudes of the citizens towards each other and towards others (Duchesne, 2003). At an individual level, identity is taken to be a continuous (re)combination of different identifications, that is, of changing but relatively persistent patterns of references to potential groups of belonging (Duchesne & Scherrer 2003). The notion of identification used in this text represents the link between an individual and the other members of one of his/her many potential groups of reference. Individuals identify with different groups and, while they therefore have different identifications, they have only one identity which may change to a certain extent over time but which is considered to be basically stable. So the notion of identification with the nation or with Europe only refers to whether somebody does in fact feel related to the national or European people, whether they feel concerned by what happens to them, and whether they feel themselves to be part of this citizenry. An individual's identity combines national and European identification with many other possible identifications with groups defined on varied bases such as gender, generation, race, social class, language, geography, ideology, interests, etc.

The focus here will be restricted to the way in which identification with the nation and with Europe relate to each other. A similar point – the observation that an individual identity is the combination of belonging to diverse groups – is made by most analysts of what they nevertheless call European identity (see for example Castano 2004 or Bruter 2005). The choice has been made here to differentiate between identity and identification for conceptual clarity. The distinction is important as the term identification includes the idea that existing senses of belonging at both national and European level will/may change in the middle-term.

The notion of consistent feelings of belonging<sup>3</sup> is relevant when referring to nations as they are old enough for this to be the case. However,, the EU is probably still too young to have aroused deep and consistent feelings of belonging among the majority of its citizens. Writing about European identity may be misleading; identification with Europe rightly emphasizes that it is the process itself which is under discussion here.

### *Current Alternative Hypotheses*

Different hypotheses may be considered regarding how the relationship between national and European identification may develop over time. Generally speaking, the old dream of the EU founding fathers was to see citizens identify more and more with Europe and eventually cease to identify with their own nations – a transfer of attachment which was expected to ward off the nationalist conflicts and wars which have cast a shadow over the continent for several centuries. For the time being, this dream has been proved to be partly inaccurate as revealed by a revival of nationalism in conflicts following the collapse of the Soviet Empire in Eastern and Central Europe, or the long-standing electoral success of nationalist parties in Western Europe. However, there exist at least three alternative hypotheses on the way identification with Europe is increasing in a context of persistently strong national identifications.

Firstly, some scholars believe that the European Union has marked the start of a new kind of political system which is free from any kind of exclusive commitment on the part of its citizens – be it because of the development of a basic global solidarity or because of the transformation of political decision systems from governments to multi-level governance (Meehan 1996; Wiener 1998; Ferry 1998; Neveu 2000; Habermas 2001; Nicolaidis & Weatherill 2003). If this is the case, then identification with Europe – more precisely in this

sense identification with the European Union – would be a unique process, based on different kinds of feelings of belonging than existing identification with a nation. If this hypothesis is valid, indicators of national and European identification should be statistically unrelated (hypothesis one).

Alternatively, other researchers continue to believe that identification with Europe is developing similarly to the way in which identification with nations developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They expect feelings of belonging to Europe to be very similar in nature to the way citizens who identify with their nation relate to it. Such feelings are moreover considered necessary to legitimate the (European) political system and to give rise to much-needed political participation, more particularly, electoral participation. In this case, there are two possibilities. Nations may either be considered to be standing in the way of European integration because the two levels of government tend to compete with each other for the loyalty of European citizens (Dogan 1994; Mayer 1997; Carey 04; McLaren 06): here, one would expect a negative and significant statistical relationship between indicators of European and national identification (hypothesis two).

Or, on the other hand, Europe is seen rather as a complement to the nations, an empowerment. Nations thus constitute a kind of model, an incentive framework of ‘we-feeling’ which encourages citizens to feel and act as members of a political community (Duchesne & Frogner 94, 02; Schild 2001, Citrin & Sides 2004; Diez-Medrano 03; Bruter 05). In this latter case, one would expect a positive and significant statistical relationship between indicators of European and national identities (hypothesis three).

As the references cited indicate, these three hypotheses are indeed supported by existing literature. The first hypothesis is mainly discussed from a theoretical point of view, but empirical evidence is provided for the other two. This means that researchers using empirical

data have proved that national and European identifications tend to be both antagonist and cumulative. Although they focus on support for European integration rather than on identification with Europe, Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks draw a similar conclusion concerning the effect of national feelings: “The paradox that we identified earlier is apparent: national identity contributes to and diminishes support for European integration” (Hooghe & Marks 2004, p.417) They suggest that this is due to the various ways national identity may be constructed and mobilized by political elites. The aim of this paper is first to confirm and then complement their interpretation of this apparent paradox.

### *Indicators and Methodology*

Identification refers to in-depth attitudes as opposed to mere opinions; thus, a complex variety of indicators should ideally be used when working on identification. This would allow a distinction to be made between the different dimensions at work in the constitution of attitudes towards Europe and its nations. To what extent do citizens’ attitudes towards Europe and their nation embody a true feeling of belonging? To what extent are these attitudes dependent on cognition and evaluation? To what extent are they a consequence of more general political orientation? In what way do they reflect extraneous dispositions to xenophobia and/or open-mindedness and tolerance? In order to establish the true extent of belonging as measured by declaration of support for the European Union, one needs indicators which account for a certain degree of stability in the attitude measured and its relative independence from current affairs. The analysis of such a topic is hence strongly dependant on available data. Like most researchers working on European attitudes, we will use Eurobarometer surveys which, although they are not as complete as we would like, are the

only data available and the only data to cover all EU countries throughout the period of time under study.

Until very recently, the level of identification with the nation was measured by the question asked periodically about national pride. Fortunately, this question was precisely the one that Michelat and Thomas showed in France, in the sixties, to be the most suitable for measuring the feeling of belonging to the national group<sup>4</sup> - a feeling which they proved to be relatively independent from the other two main dimensions of national identification: the feeling that one's nation is superior and the attachment to the nation's sovereignty. In their data, these other two dimensions were highly dependent on a general ideological structure (right/left) contrary to the feeling of belonging to the nation.

Measuring the level of identification with Europe is somewhat more complicated. Commission surveys have always asked a series of questions, called "trend questions", in order to measure public opinion on the European integration process. Very few of them however, are related to the affective dimension of individual relationships with the community. During the eighties<sup>5</sup>, they regularly asked one question on respondents' awareness of being European citizens. This question was worded in such a way that identification with the European Community was implicitly considered complementary to identification with one's nation. It was abandoned in 1992 and replaced by another built on the idea of a possible exclusiveness of the two<sup>6</sup>. This unfortunate change makes it difficult to assess whether and if so how the Maastricht Treaty and public debate about its ratification have transformed the relationship between national and European identification<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, the answers to this latter question are far from being as stable as a measure of identification should be. However, given the absence of other questions or datasets covering the same range of countries and time periods, an attempt will be made here to draw some inferences from this

survey series over the last twenty years. Since 2000, other questions have been introduced and these will be used to confirm our analysis.

Of course, skeptical readers of quantitative survey analyses may wonder about the validity of using questions and notions that probably take on rather different meanings in each of the countries studied, as Juan Diez Medrano clearly showed for Spain, Germany and the UK in *Framing Europe* (2003). We will apply what Jan Van Deth names an “inferential strategy” (J. Van Deth 1998, p.1-20): if consistency in the relations between our dependant variables (internal consistency) and others (external consistency), can be observed in the different countries, the questions will be considered to have at least one common dimension of meaning - a dimension that allows comparative analyses to be made - despite the various significations that Europe and the nation may have in the many countries of the sample. Concretely, this means that there will be no attempt to analyze and compare developments and changes in the levels of answers to questions on national pride and European identification. The analysis will instead focus on their statistical relationship. , If some kind of consistency in these relations over time can be demonstrated, the hypothesis that the indicator is valid will become even more plausible.

### *Assessing the Paradoxical Relationship between National and European Identification*

#### TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Table 1 provides the correlations<sup>8</sup> between national pride and the corresponding measure of identification with Europe – namely “how often do you think of yourself as not only national but also European” through to 1988, and then “if you think of yourself in the near future as national only, national and European, European and national or only European”

from 1994 onwards – for each country and each survey. For the first years of analysis, the results are fairly clear: there is hardly any statistical relationship between the two indicators. The data clearly demonstrate that when someone says they are very proud of their nationality, they are not less likely to feel European. In 1982, in the few cases where Kendall's tau-b is statistically significant – Belgium, West Germany, France, Italy and Luxemburg – the relationship is such that the more someone says that they are proud of their country, the more often they are likely to think of themselves as European also (see also Duchesne & Frogner 1994).

In 1992, the indicator of identification with Europe changed. The old and the new questions (whether people feel not only national but also European and whether they see themselves as national and/or European in the near future) were asked in the same survey, but not the question on national pride. Therefore, the impact of the change of question on the measure of the relationship between national and European identification cannot be evaluated. However, in 1994 the interviewees were asked again both about national pride and the likelihood of their feeling European, using the new indicator. A significant negative relationship shows up in most of the countries studied (except for Greece, Ireland and Portugal)<sup>9</sup>.

In 1997, a first quick look at the data confirms the antagonism trend: on the whole, in the weighted dataset, 54 % of the people saying that they there are very proud of their nation see themselves as only national in the near future, with only 43 % of the people saying that they are rather proud, and 38 and 40% of those that are not very or not proud at all. But a closer look at the data set shows that this relationship is not stable from one country to the other. In the two-thirds of countries where the correlation is negative, it is fully significant only in France, Great Britain, Luxembourg, Sweden and West Germany. Moreover, in five other countries, namely Belgium, Greece, Italy, Ireland and Portugal, the relationship is

different. Despite the antagonism implied by the question between thinking of oneself more as national than European or vice-versa, most people in these five countries who tend to feel more European than national nevertheless feel proud or very proud of their nations. The correlation computed on the European sample is thus partially an artifact. This serves as a reminder of the danger of analyzing European data as a whole, without referring to the particular structure of territorial identities in each country, as national differences remain very important.

While until 1988, the available data tend to support the thesis that identification with Europe is independent from national identification, data from 1994 on suggests a (growing?) antagonism between these two levels of identification. Different authors have analyzed the 1994 data as proof of change in the nature of identification with Europe: it would appear that the Maastricht Treaty turned mere opinions on a remote and vague object (the EC) into a real process of identity building, potentially conflicting with other allegiances (Mayer 1997; Blondel, Sinnott & Svensson 1998, Dupoirier et alii 2000). The question arises as to how the negative and significant correlations of 1994 can best be explained and whether this might be linked to the change of question about identification with Europe or a change in the very nature of identification with Europe. A third hypothesis is also possible: the change of context. In 1994, European elections took place following the ratification and the coming into force of the Maastricht Treaty. During that period, nationalist political forces, what the French now call “sovereignist”, did their best to make themselves heard and understood. The impact of nationalist arguments in electoral rhetoric may account for the strength of the correlations observed in the 1994 data. Their ensuing weakness could then be explained by the diminution of public debate as the electoral campaign became more distant. If this interpretation is valid - if the antagonism between national and European identification was significantly due to the

electoral context of 1994 - the same kind of effect should be observable during similar contexts, as long as the corresponding survey questions are available.

Since 1999, the two basic questions – on national pride and whether people feel national and/or European – have been asked every year. Moreover, immediately after the following European election which took place in Spring 1999, they were present in three surveys in a row: Autumn 1999, Spring 2000, and Autumn 2000. It is therefore possible to compare changes in correlations for the period 1994/1997.

In 1999, another year with European elections, a rather strong negative relationship between the two questions can be observed, as in 1994. For the whole (weighted) sample, 58% of the people saying that they were very proud of their country think of themselves in the near future as national only, while this is the case for 41% only of those who say they are fairly proud of their country, and 38% and 37% respectively of those not very proud or not proud at all of their country. Furthermore, the relationship is equivalent, negative and significant, for almost all countries (except Belgium, Finland and Portugal). This pattern of relationship continues in Spring 2000: again, there is more than 20% difference in the proportion of people thinking of themselves in the near future as national only (which means that they do not think of themselves as Europeans at all) depending on whether they are very proud or not of their country (56% of the very proud as against 35% of the rather proud and 34% of both the not very and not proud at all). The relationship is significantly negative in almost all countries, except Finland (again) and Italy.

But things had become slightly different by Autumn 2000. People saying they were very proud of their country were still more likely to think of themselves as only national, but the difference was much smaller (6 points instead of 17 in 1999 and 21 in Spring 2000). Perhaps more importantly, the relationship became more varied across countries. It is fully significant in eight cases out of seventeen – mainly the same as in 1997 (West Germany,

France, Luxembourg, Great Britain, Luxembourg and Sweden) plus Denmark, Spain and the Netherlands. In the other countries, the relationship became insignificant and the minus even became a plus in Portugal and Finland. It would appear therefore that the same effect as in 1994 can be observed in 1999: public debate on the EU had an important influence on the nature of the relationship between identification with one's nation and with Europe. In this context, being very proud of one's nation tends to prevent feelings of being European while this is not the case when public debate fades. Of course, the time periods between the surveys in the two cases analyzed are very different, which makes the interpretation less certain. However, the effect remains nonetheless striking.

In 2001, 2002 and 2003, when the two relevant questions were asked again, the correlation between them increased again considerably. In 2002, Kendall's tau-B reached either its highest level or levels similar to those in 1994 and early 2000 everywhere, except in Ireland and Northern Ireland.<sup>10</sup> It remains quasi stable in 2003 for most countries. These strong negative correlations from 2001 onwards confirm our interpretation of the preceding fluctuations in the relationship between national and European identification according to the intensity of the debate on Europe. During this period, the Euro was introduced in twelve European countries and this brought the EC back to the forefront of public debate. This occurred at the same time as the European Convention and the debate on the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The pattern of correlations observed between the two variables displays a high degree of consistency: the shape of the correlations curve is very similar from one country to the other (cf. chart 1) – which is absolutely not the case for correlations between national pride and trend indicators of support for European integration<sup>11</sup>. This validates a changing relationship between feelings of national identification and identification with Europe: when Europe is not a matter of public debate, the indicators show the two types of belonging – national and

European – to be rather independent from one another. Moreover, considering that the question on identification with Europe implies an antagonism between the two levels, the two identifications could thus even be considered slightly cumulative. However, when public debate focuses on the EC because of European elections, ratification of treaties or indeed the introduction of the Euro, strong national pride seems to hamper the growth of identification with Europe. As Europe evolves from a remote and administrative loosely identified object to a concrete and political system, this second configuration tends to be the norm.

#### CHART 1 ABOUT HERE

This changing and confusing relationship between national pride and identification with Europe could be interpreted as evidence of the superficiality of attitudes towards Europe and the strength of the influence of elites on the way in which citizens see themselves – which is one way of interpreting G. Marks and L. Hooghe explanation of the paradoxical influence of national identity on attitudes towards European integration (Hooghe & Marks 2004). However, another interpretation might be suggested here. Rather than being a result of the strong influence of elites on attitudes which are essentially weak, it could be seen as a consequence of the complexity of identification processes. In the next section, further evidence of this complexity will be given by looking at other indicators of relationships to Europe and the nation, and by suggesting a possible explanation: the duality of territorial identification.

*National or European Identification: Different Processes at Stake*

Since Autumn 2000, the Eurobarometer surveys have also asked people about the extent to which they feel proud of being European, and clearly, except in the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and Greece, being proud of one's nation is far from being incompatible with being proud of being European (see table 2). In all four surveys more than 80% of the people on average who say they are very proud of being European also answer that they are very proud of their nation. About two thirds of the respondents indicating that they are very proud of their country are also very or fairly proud of being European. Great Britain and Northern Ireland are the only places where the majority of respondents who say that they are very proud of their country also say that they are not proud of being European.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

It is difficult to understand why, using the same dataset over the same time period, there is evidence of a negative relationship between national pride and European identification for almost every country, except the UK and Greece, even though national and European pride are clearly positively related. How can a relationship appear to be so highly dependent on the way it is measured and yet be so consistent in the way it changed over the last two decades? The following explanation seems the most likely. The strength of the contextual effect on the changing relationship between national pride as well as the powerful effect of the different measures of identification with Europe are a consequence of the duality of the relationship between national and European identification. This duality is basically a characteristic of the very notion of territorial identification itself. To identify oneself with one's nation or any other group defined by a territory implies two different processes. First, it assumes a natural

tendency to identify with a group. Secondly, it implies the propensity to identify with the specific group defined by this specific territory. At the European level, these two processes of identification may generate contradictory relationships with former national identification: the two levels are generally cumulative when the tendency to identify with a group is concerned; and potentially competitive when the disposition to identify with a specific territorial community is at stake. When observed with aggregated data, the interference between these two processes gives rise, to the paradoxical statistical relationship between measures of identification with the nation and with Europe.

The first process – the natural tendency to identify with a group - is challenged by the growing individualism of modern societies. Norbert Elias (1991) has shown how the recurrent shift of the social survival unit from the very local to the nation, then to the continent and perhaps even mankind, has resulted in a growing level of individualism. However, the last two decades have shown that the nation, however abstract or constructed it may be, still generates strong feelings of belonging. It seems to remain a very effective source of group identification, of self-representation as a group member, which fuels we-feelings in other groups, especially in other territories which have an embedded relationship with the nation. In this process of ‘we-building’, national and European identifications are cumulative: both geographers and political scientists refer to them as “nested” identities (Herb & Kaplan 1999; Risse 2003; Medrano & Gutiérrez 2001).

The second process, which implies the propensity to identify with the specific group defined by a specific territory, involves the delimitation of the group as a strong constituent of group identification. Since Fredrik Barth’s (1969) pioneer work on ethnic identities, the process of ‘other-building’ has been considered to be a basic characteristic of any kind of identity and a well-documented element in the analysis of nation and nationalism, as in

Gellner's most famous work (1983). Here, rather than reinforcing each other national and European identification, are in a competitive relationship.

This hypothesis of a dual process of identification<sup>12</sup> was first elaborated in reference to a qualitative survey on mass-level representations of citizenship conducted at the end of the 1980s in France (Duchesne 1997). The in-depth interviews collected for this research suggested that two distinct models of citizenship should be considered. The first one was constructed around the very notion of national identity, while the second one was built in opposition to any form of belonging to a group, be it territorial or not — that is, in opposition to any form of group identification. If European integration had been nothing more than another stage in the individualization of societies, as Elias considers in his later work, we should have found Europe mentioned mostly in the second model, by interviewees reluctant to profess any national commitment. On the contrary, the interviewees who were more nostalgic of a national interpretation of history mentioned it all the more. Europe appeared to be a fallback position against what was not yet named “globalisation”. It was a defense against the progressive removal of national borders, considered by the same people as inevitable, and against the dissolution of all the elements that, from their perspective, constitute the basis of personal identity. But even though they were hoping for the coming changes, they obviously feared them also and saw the change of allegiance from their nation to Europe as a difficult one. In this sense, Europe was thus also clearly conceived of as an “imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” as Benedict Anderson famously defined a nation.

The analysis of the changing but well-founded relationship between national and European identifications presented above may be interpreted as a confirmation of the hypothesis elaborated with reference to the French case. Regardless of the distinctive character of each nation, identification with one's nation together with the identification in

progress with Europe results from two distinct processes at least: one refers to the disposition of the individual to identify with collectives; the second relates to a possible competition between groups of belonging, which can, under certain circumstances, drive the individual to arbitrate between them. Concerning the relationship between national and European identifications, the first process tends to generate a positive relationship between the two. This is because national and European feelings of belonging feed on the same tendency to identify with a remote and abstract - or “imagined” – group. On the other hand, the second process may very well give rise to a negative relationship if the two political communities, the national and the European, are presented as rivals. This is why the statistical relationship between the two indicators of European and national identification varies, according to a consistent pattern, from negative values in the context of public debate on Europe, when the arguments of Euroskeptics or “sovereignists”<sup>13</sup> are loudly expressed, to almost insignificant values the rest of the time. This is because the two processes – the cumulative and the exclusive ones – have effects that may neutralize each other in the measurement of the statistical relationship between commitment to the nation and commitment to Europe<sup>14</sup>. This is also why different questions about national and European identifications may produce opposing statistical relationships between the two levels: this happens when the questions do not emphasize the same process at work in territorial identification.

Let us return briefly to the introduction and the three hypotheses found in the literature as mentioned above: how does the interpretation above fit into that framework? Hypothesis one is ruled out by the empirical evidence of a persistent, although complex, statistical relationship between the indicators of national and European attachment.<sup>15</sup> Hypotheses two and three actually both correspond to the two processes of identification. Depending on the way elites and the mass media interpret and advertise the European system in progress, European citizens will tend to expect either an encompassing polity aiming to complement

and empower nations or a powerful political system competing with them for sovereignty. The first process – where identifying with Europe means tending to have a ‘we-feeling’ – is not so much taken into consideration by the literature which it undoubtedly should be.

This idea, that people have a variable disposition to identify with groups defined by territories – that is, that there are people for whom the territory does constitute a valid marker of identity while others are incapable of this kind of projection, should be tested with data including questions about the refusal of any kind of belonging. The Eurobarometers 54.1 (Autumn 2000) and the 60.1 (Autumn 2003) provide us with new questions. In addition to the questions about national and European pride, we find a series of questions about the degree of attachment to each of the territories nested in Europe – town, region (despite the heterogeneity of these notions in Europe), nation and Europe<sup>16</sup>. The lack of antagonism in belonging to these nested territories can be investigated once again by a simple cross tabulation between these various attachments. Consequently, this will also provide confirmation that some respondents are characterized by a disposition to reject identification with any level of territorial belonging.

#### TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

In 2003 for instance, 71.5% of the people in the sample who say that they are very attached to their town also say that they are very attached to their country; 79.5% of those who say they are attached to their region are also very attached to their country and 88.9% of those who are very attached to Europe are also very attached to their country.

The correlations computed for each country (see table 3) are (almost) all significantly positive and are even stronger for adjacent questions. For instance, correlations between identification with town and region tend to be much stronger than correlations between

identification with town and country or correlations between identification with town and Europe. Although the correlations between attachment to the nation and Europe are all weaker than the correlations between the attachment to the nation and its infra-territories, they are all significantly positive – apart from Northern Ireland in 2003. However, the strength of the correlation varies strongly from one country to another. In some places, especially Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Greece, the correlations between the national and the European level are much smaller than the correlation with local levels, while in places like East Germany, Denmark, or Sweden, these correlations are very similar. These results are consistent with the findings that Greece, Great Britain and Northern Ireland display a lesser tendency towards a cumulative character of national and European identities than other EU countries. For the UK, at least two different hypotheses can be formulated. First, the cumulative dimension of territorial identifications can be activated only for nested territories. Obviously, the UK is not perceived by most British citizens as nested in Europe, which is frequently referred to as being abroad. Europe remains an “other”, even if sometimes a positive one, in the British context. Secondly, the theory of cumulative identification was elaborated from the French case, where the national link refers very much to the territory: the French “imagined community” is very much described in territorial terms, French soil being at the same time the scene of common history, the common heritage of French citizens and the common graveyard of French people. The first results of a comparative qualitative research on British national identity in England do not display the same reference to the British soil as being a powerful imagined link between the people.

The hypotheses are also consistent with a general decrease in the correlations between the attachment to the country and to Europe from 2000 to 2003 and the contrasting variability in the pattern of correlations between attachment to the country, to the town and to the region, which seem to change quite randomly. Referring to the long term analysis of the correlation

between national pride and the main indicator of identification with Europe, 2000 was considered to be a context of low intensity for antagonism while 2003, on the contrary, displays a high level of the antagonistic dimension between the two types of identification.

*Empirical evidence of the dual processes at stake in the identification with Europe*

It would be appropriate at this point to provide some evidence of the duality of the identification process with Europe. In order to do this, a factor analysis of all the sets of variables in the dataset which refer to territorial identification was computed. Both the Eurobarometers of autumn 2000 and autumn 2003 contain questions on the following: national and European pride; degree of attachment to one's town, region, country and Europe and the current indicator of European identification: 'In the near future do you see yourself as (nationality) only, as (nationality) and European, as European and (nationality) or as European only?' This latter indicator was coded in two categories, distinguishing between respondents who say they feel « national only » and those who say they feel European in one way or another (see Citrin & Sides 2004 for justification). The indicator is called "Euronational". The analysis using the 2003 dataset which is more recent, but has similar results to those contained in the 2000 one are displayed below.

CHART 2 ABOUT HERE

The factor analysis is a principal component one<sup>17</sup> here with normalization of variables. Chart 2 exhibits the first two factors extracting 59,98% of the variance<sup>18</sup>. The circle is the circle of correlations (equal to one): the nearer the variables are to this circle, the more their inter-correlations become statistically significant. Data values on the graph come from Table 3.

#### TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

The first factor explains a little more than one third of the variance. It gathers strong and positive contributions from all the measures of attachment and pride (with loadings contributing slightly more to the factor for the national and sub-national entities). Euronational, which is the only indicator that records a choice between levels of identification, is also the only variable that barely loads on the first factor. The second factor contains strong positive contributions from the questions concerning Europe and negative (although less strong) contributions from all other questions. When the same analysis is carried out at the country level, the results are very similar. The same first two factors appear in the analysis of all countries. The interpretation of these two factors is quite straightforward. The first factor refers to the cumulative dimension of national and European identification, the social desire to belong to any available territorial group, while the second relates back to the exclusive dimension, to the potentially politically constructed antagonism between two political systems, the European and the traditional ones (nation and sub-national entities), competing for legitimacy. However, this competition seems a little less marked between Europe and nation, than between Europe and local entities<sup>19</sup>.

The problem with this kind of analysis and indeed this kind of charts, is that it postulates a linear relationship between the items of each question. In order to check this, a second factor analysis was carried out, a so called “correspondence factor analysis”, which deals with items instead of variables. With correspondence analyses, two items are close if they represent answers given by the same or similar respondents, that is, respondents who give similar answers to the other questions taken into account in the same analysis (Lebart et alii, 2006).

Chart 3 displays the first two dimensions. With correspondence analysis, the points' coordinates do not necessarily indicate their relative weight. The way items contribute to each dimension is indicated as follows: with (1) if they clearly contribute to the first factor, with (2) if they contribute to the second one. This indication is needed in order to decide if an item should be taken into account in the interpretation as its position on the chart is not enough to decide this. Lastly, items are represented thanks to triangles whose proportion is relative to the number of cases.

### CHART 3 ABOUT HERE

On the chart, the « very » items – “very attached to”, “very proud of a territorial level of belonging” – are very close to one another, more so than the other series - the “fairly”, “not very” and “not at all” answers. This means that there is a strong cumulative tendency with these items which is less the case for the other categories. Therefore, respondents who say they feel “very attached to” or “very proud of” one of their territorial communities are likely to feel “very attached to” or “very proud of” their other territorial communities too. So if someone says they are very proud of their nation, they are likely to feel very proud of being European too, and likely to feel very attached not only to their nation, but to Europe, their region and town also. If they answer that they feel “fairly “or not very proud” of their nation, the answers regarding the other questions, and more specifically Europe, are less predictable.

The first factor opposes the “very” items concerning all levels of identification, to the “fairly” and “not very” items corresponding to the national and sub-national levels only. Not only does this factor oppose strong positive identification to answers with less intensity, but it opposes a European, national and sub-national nested identification to national and sub-national cumulative belonging which does not include Europe.

The second factor is more complicated in that it opposes the “fairly attached to” and “fairly proud of” Europe and the nation, as well as what we have called Euronationals<sup>20</sup>, to two series of items: on one hand, the item “national only” and on the other hand, the items “not at all attached to” and “not at all proud of Europe” and “not very attached to the country”. The combination Europe/nation is thus opposed to two different attitudes: on one hand, an exclusive attachment to the nation and on the other hand, a rejection of identification which is more pronounced vis-à-vis Europe than the nation. However, respondents who declare that they are not at all proud of their nation are actually quite rare in Eurobarometer surveys.

These results confirm the first factor analysis, with the same mix of cumulative and exclusive identification. They provide a more complex picture of the possible combinations of identifications although the novelty of identification with Europe plays an important part in the pattern. The first factor corresponds to the process of identification with any available territorial community. Respondents who have a strong tendency to identify with one of them are thus likely to identify with any other, including Europe while those who do not tend to identify strongly with traditional levels of belonging do not display the same tendency to project themselves in newly available levels of citizenry. Indeed, feeling “very” attached or proud corresponds to a different process than less intense feelings of belonging (Duchesne & Frogner, 1995).

It is not surprising then that “very” items do not load on the second factor. The second factor accounts for the competitive process of identification with different potential sovereign territories and more particularly for the competition between the new European polity and older national and even more sub-national political communities.

This analysis therefore provides clear evidence of the complex combination of territorial attachments that result from the dual process of identification with a political community,

especially when a new one develops. The way in which the people of Europe become European – in the subjective sense, i.e., develop a feeling of belonging to the EU – depends on what the EU means to them. For those who have a strong tendency towards a we-feeling, the European Union is likely to be considered as an encompassing territory in which all other senses of belonging are nested. For others, it is more likely to be experienced as a growing power, which is in competition with older sovereign political communities. In this latter case, the framing of Europe, the way elites and mass media in the different European countries account for European integration, strongly influences people's readiness to develop new allegiances and reorder their older ones.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to make sense of the paradoxical statistical relationship between indicators of attachment to Europe and its nations. In the literature, some authors comment on a negative relationship which they consider to be a sign of persistent nationalistic feelings while others observe a positive relationship which they interpret as the consequence of the complex nature of identities – nested, marbled, or multidimensional.

We would argue that European identity should not be considered as a fact. Instead, attachment to Europe should rather be analyzed as a process, a process of identification with a new, growing potential political community<sup>21</sup>. As a consequence, we have proceeded to a diachronic analysis of indicators of attachment to any territorial levels, using Eurobarometer data sets. This shows over time that identification with Europe is directly related to national identification, and that the relationship established between these two types of identification is consistent, despite the fact that it changes according to the context. The changes observed can

be interpreted as a consequence of the duality of the process of identification with territorial political communities.

On one hand, identification is a process which results from the sociologically and politically determined individual disposition to feel like a member of a community, that is, to feel subjectively involved in the community or groups to which one objectively belongs. In this respect, nations still appear to be a powerful vehicle for the development of such a tendency towards a we-feeling which, in particular, can then be extended to other nested territories such as the European Union. On the other hand, identification results from the sociological and political process of community building which is made easier by the limitation of the community, and is hence fuelled by pointing out some significant “other” such as the European Union. In the short term, the exclusive dimension is a direct consequence of the actions of national leaders who endeavor to preserve their power and decision-making space.

These two processes of national and European identification interact in such a way that the relationship between these two levels of identification is often difficult to spot. From 1994 to 2000, it seems possible to trace the effect of European electoral campaigns or other specific public debate on the EU. In such periods, the relationship between the indicators of European and national identification become significantly negative, while outside of these periods, the relationship is weaker or non significant. In these periods of public debate on the EU, the arguments of national anti-European activists activate potential antagonism between Europe and its nations. Between 1994 and 2000, the only available variable to measure European identification is a question which implies competition between the two levels of belonging. The activation of this underlying antagonism therefore has a strong influence on the relationship between European and national identification. In other contexts, i.e., when public debate on European integration is less acute, no statistical relationship between the indicators

of national and European identification can be observed. This can be interpreted as a neutralization effect of both the cumulative and competitive processes at work in territorial identification.

Since 2000, and the introduction of the Euro, enlargement and the European Convention, public debate on the EU has become recurrent. This explains why the relationship between the former indicators remains significantly negative. However, the growing number of interrogations about the nature of European civic commitment has contributed to introducing new questions about feelings of belonging in Europe in the Eurobarometer surveys. Thanks to this, over the same time period but using different indicators, a reversed relationship between European and national identification can be observed: a significantly positive one. This paradox can be interpreted as complementary evidence for the interpretation of the dual process of territorial identification as mentioned above.

What are the consequences of these results? From a scientific point of view, it seems pointless to continue disputing the cumulative or competing character of national and European feelings of belonging: they are both empirically confirmed. It would undoubtedly be more appropriate to analyze the complex combination of identification processes in greater depth.

From a more political point of view, this analysis aims at finding ways to promote a type of European identification in which Europeans feel committed to the EU without being exclusively so. Fear of the xenophobic and exclusive attitudes of nationalists have lead promoters of Europe to frame the EU as a post national, universalistic forward-looking concept (Soysal, 2002). The low turnout in European elections, together with a continuing gap between elites and working class attitudes toward the EU may be interpreted as evidence of the relative failure of this strategy.

This analysis suggests that EU promoters would be well-advised to rely on time. Europe has a common history, geography and culture, even if history sometimes means war and culture sometimes means conflicting values. A more traditional, national-like framing of the EU, which emphasizes, these elements would benefit from a cumulative process of identification and secure a sense of European belonging generated by the inclusive power of we-feeling created by national identities. In this context, European citizens would require nothing more than time to become accustomed to and feel at home in their new political community

Word count 8801 – 26nov2007

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## Charts and tables:

TABLE 1. Correlations between measures of national pride and identification with Europe ( $\tau_b$  de Kendall) by country

Country	1982 March- April	1985 Oct- Nov	1988 Oct- Nov	1994 Nov- Dec	1997 March- April	1999 Oct- Nov	2000 April- May	2000 Nov- Dec	2001 Oct- Nov	2002 March- May	2003 Oct- Nov	2004 oct- nov	2005
Belgium	0.11**	0.03	-0.02	-0.26**	0.09**	-0.07*	-0.10**	-0.02	-0.04	-0.13**	-0.14**	-0.14**	-0.10**
Denmark	-0.00	0.06	0.04	-0.16**	-0.07*	-0.15**	-0.24**	-0.14**	-0.19**	-0.23**	-0.11**	-0.19**	-0.16**
West Germany	0.13**	0.06	-0.04	-0.31**	-0.19**	-0.20**	-0.26**	-0.16**	-0.21**	-0.26**	-0.19**	-0.12*	-0.21**
Greece	-0.2	-0.07	-0.12**	-0.04	0.02	-0.12**	-0.12**	-0.01	-0.17**	-0.24**	-0.21**	-0.07	-0.11**
Italy	0.07*	0.04	0.00	-0.13**	0.01	-0.12**	-0.06	-0.01	-0.08*	-0.16**	-0.15**	-0.05	-0.13**
Spain	-	-0.01	0.08	-0.21**	-0.07*	-0.20**	-0.25**	-0.18**	-0.27**	-0.28**	-0.25**	-0.25**	-0.17**
France	0.12**	0.05	-0.04	-0.17**	-0.13**	-0.21**	-0.16**	-0.15**	-0.16**	-0.17**	-0.17**	-0.13**	-0.13**
Ireland	0.01	-0.05	-0.05	-0.05	0.02	-0.15**	-0.24**	-0.02	-0.22**	-0.13**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.22**
Northern Ireland	-0.00	-0.01	-0.07	-0.22**	-0.10	-0.16*	-0.14	-0.04	-0.11	-0.07	-0.23**	-0.44**	-0.42**
Luxembourg	0.23**	-0.05	-0.02	-0.09*	-0.15**	-0.19**	-0.21**	-0.13**	-0.23**	-0.26**	-0.25**	-0.25**	-0.23**
Netherlands	-0.02	-0.08	-0.07	-0.15**	-0.08*	-0.15**	-0.12**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.19**	-0.08**	-0.19**	-0.12**
Portugal	-	-0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.03	-0.05	-0.19**	0.05	-0.12**	-0.16**	-0.22**	0.04	-0.15**
Great Britain	-0.06	-0.03	-0.05	-0.30**	-0.19**	-0.21**	-0.32**	-0.11**	-0.26**	-0.26**	-0.22**	-0.22**	-0.20**
East Germany	-	-	-	-0.25**	-0.06	-0.18**	-0.13**	-0.05	-0.15**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.14**	-0.21**
Finland	-	-	-	-	-0.05	-0.06	-0.06	0.03	-0.02	-0.08**	-0.09**	-0.07	-0.03
Sweden	-	-	-	-	-0.10**	-0.17**	-0.18**	-0.15**	-0.14**	-0.17**	-0.16**	-0.01	-0.09**
Austria	-	-	-	-	-0.06*	-0.17**	-0.22**	-0.06*	-0.14**	-0.29**	-0.17**	-0.18**	-0.14**

\* correlation significant at 5% ; \*\* correlation significant at 1%

The samples in Luxemburg and Northern Ireland are smaller, thus the correlations are less likely to be significant.

*Note: a positive and significant correlation means that the more individuals are proud of their nationality, the more they are likely to feel European.*

CHART 1.

Correlations between Measures of National Pride and Identification with Europe by Country

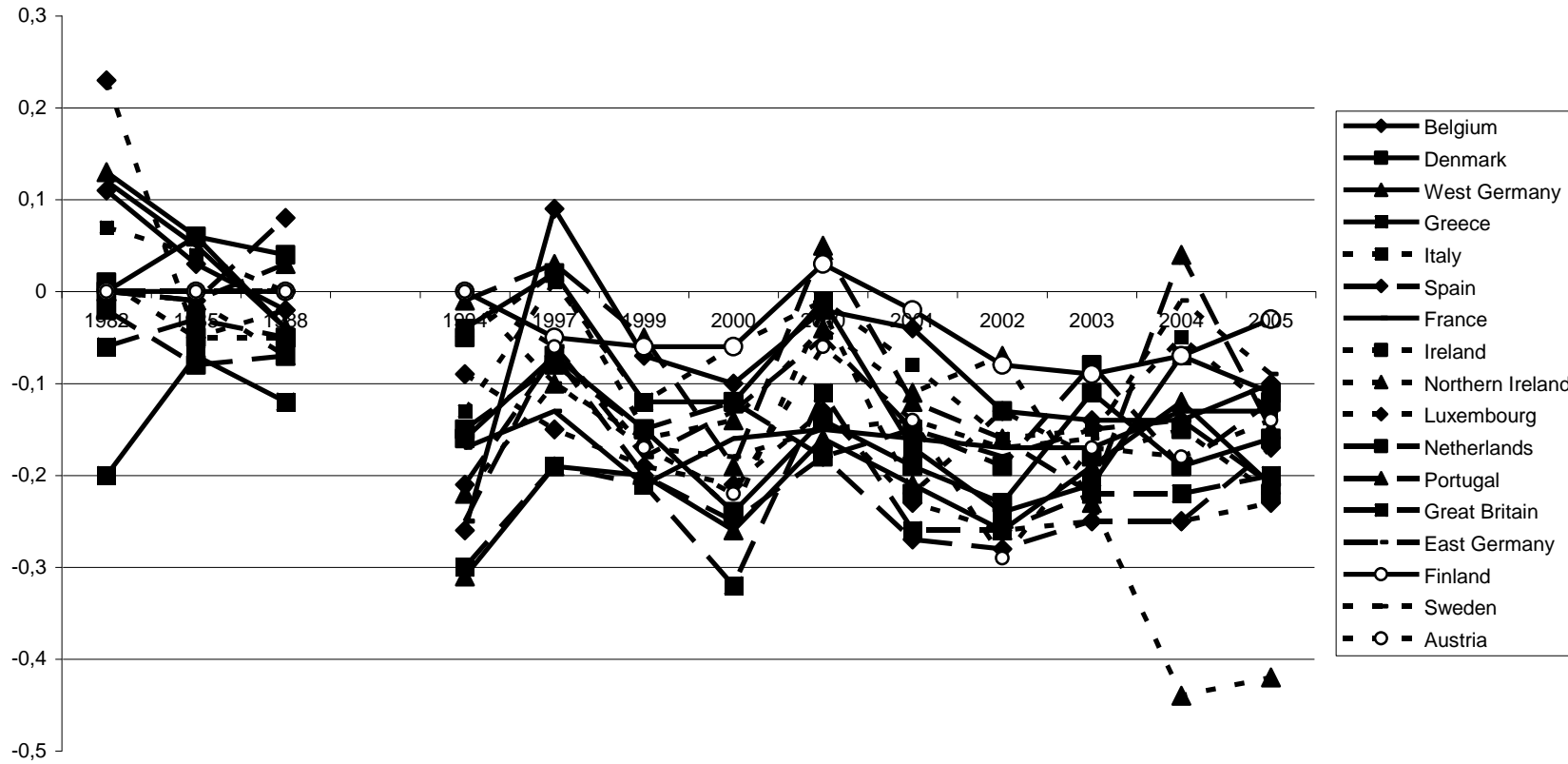


Table 2: Correlation (Kendall's table) between National and European pride:

Country	2000 Nov-Dec	2001 Oct-Nov	2002 Mar-May	2003 Oct-Nov	2004 Oct-Nov	2005
Belgium	0.38**	0.39**	0.33**	0.29**	0.33**	0.39**
Denmark	0.37**	0.35**	0.36**	0.35**	0.29**	0.21**
West Germany	0.52**	0.46**	0.41**	0.55**	0.36**	0.30**
Greece	0.27**	0.16**	0.01	0.05	0.12**	0.09**
Italy	0.33**	0.30**	0.28**	0.33**	0.33**	0.25**
Spain	0.39**	0.36**	0.34**	0.32**	0.36**	0.25**
France	0.29**	0.25**	0.20**	0.21**	0.26**	0.20**
Ireland	0.28**	0.15**	0.19**	0.19**	0.19**	0.23**
Northern Ireland	0.23**	0.12	0.16*	0.09	0.02	-0.17**
Luxembourg	0.42**	0.31**	0.24**	0.29**	0.33**	0.14**
Netherlands	0.42**	0.41**	0.33**	0.33**	0.26**	0.25**
Portugal	0.32**	0.20**	0.22**	0.19**	0.31**	0.21**
Great Britain	0.04	0.04	-0.07	0.04	-0.01	-0.02
East Germany	0.50**	0.41**	0.33**	0.40**	0.39**	0.34**
Finland	0.33**	0.25**	0.22**	0.28**	0.28**	0.16**
Sweden	0.38**	0.42**	0.31**	0.36**	0.42**	0.36**
Austria	0.36**	0.41**	0.29**	0.33**	0.26**	0.36**

TABLE 3. Correlations between measures of attachment to the nation with measures of attachment to the town, the region and Europe (Kendall's  $\tau_b$ ) by country.  
EB 54.1, Autumn 2000

Country	2000			2003			2004		
	Town	Region	Europe	Town	Region	Europe	Town	Region	Europe
Belgium	0.49**	0.58**	0.42**	0.54**	0.61**	0.29**	0.41**	0.51**	0.36**
Denmark	0.33**	0.30**	0.27**	0.33**	0.28**	0.21**	0.29**	0.21**	0.12**
West Germany	0.48**	0.61**	0.47**	0.39**	0.50**	0.36**	0.33**	0.45**	0.36**
Greece	0.55**	0.68**	0.19**	0.61**	0.74**	0.13**	0.50**	0.60**	0.14**
Italy	0.38**	0.35**	0.33**	0.46**	0.53**	0.26**	0.50**	0.58**	0.28**
Spain	0.43**	0.56**	0.34**	0.36**	0.45**	0.28**	0.49**	0.50**	0.33**
France	0.49**	0.51**	0.26**	0.45**	0.55**	0.19**	0.40**	0.46**	0.21**
Ireland	0.43**	0.55**	0.27**	0.58**	0.65**	0.20**	0.57**	0.55**	0.19**
Northern Ireland	0.56**	0.62**	0.15**	0.48**	0.55**	0.03	0.24**	0.34**	0.14**
Luxembourg	0.50**	0.57**	0.37**	0.50**	0.55**	0.40**	0.57**	0.59**	0.38**
Netherlands	0.35**	0.39**	0.33**	0.39**	0.46**	0.25**	0.35**	0.36**	0.24**
Portugal	0.66**	0.68**	0.33**	0.61**	0.68**	0.17**	0.56**	0.63**	0.25**
Great Britain	0.34**	0.48**	0.17**	0.41**	0.47**	0.12**	0.38**	0.44**	0.09**
East Germany	0.39**	0.50**	0.47**	0.43**	0.52**	0.40**	0.35**	0.44**	0.47**
Finland	0.32**	0.39**	0.25**	0.39**	0.42**	0.20**	0.37**	0.44**	0.18**
Sweden	0.39**	0.48**	0.36**	0.39**	0.47**	0.32**	0.37**	0.42**	0.30**
Austria	0.56**	0.64**	0.38**	0.61**	0.66**	0.38**	0.45**	0.50**	0.24**

Chart 2: Factor analysis of the variables of national and European pride, sense of belonging to town, region, nation and Europe and European identification (Eurobarometer 60.1, Autumn 2003)

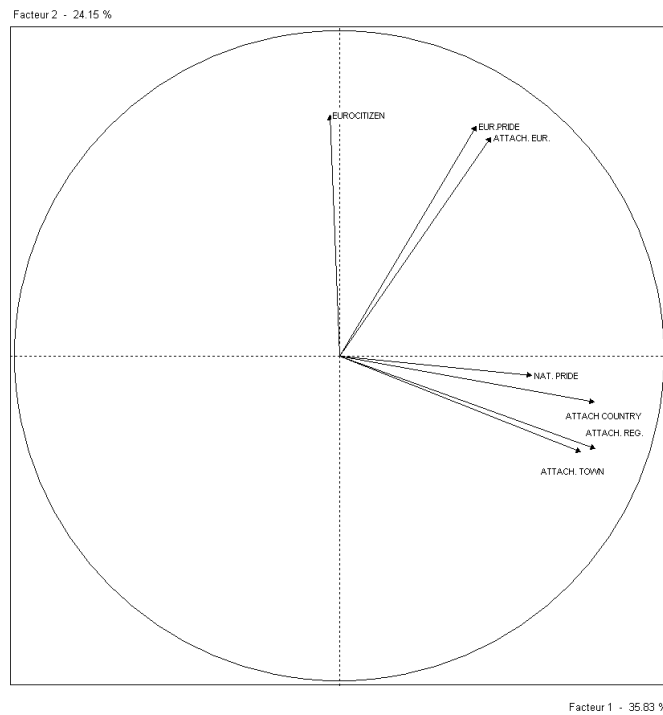
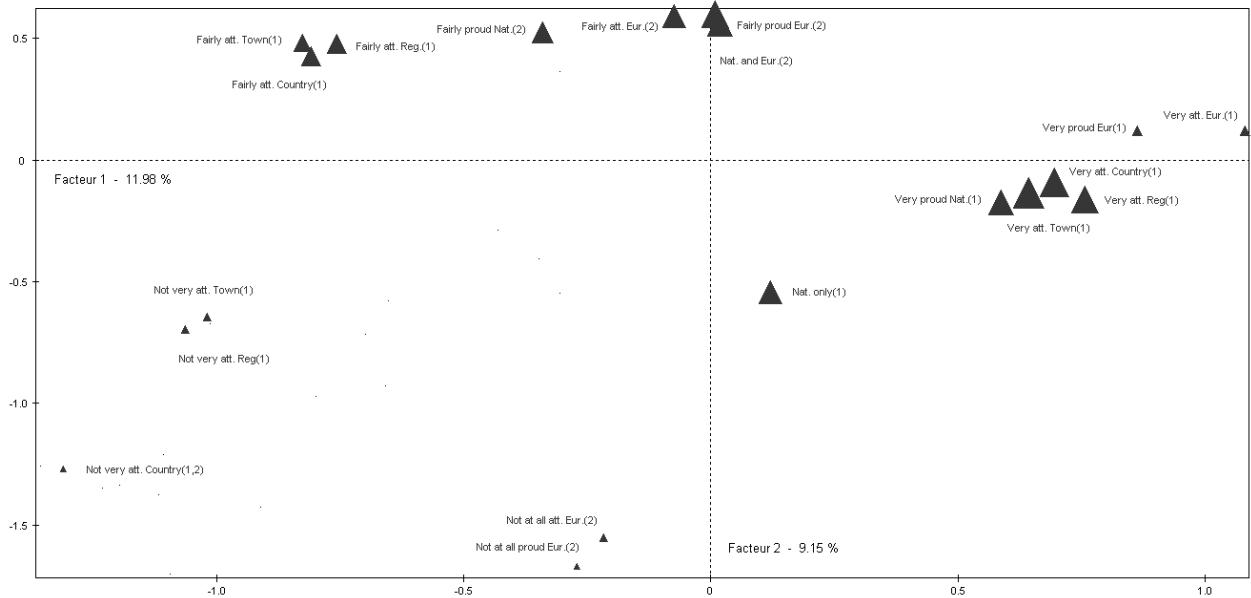


Table 4: First two factor loadings

	Factor 1 (35,83%)	Factor 2 (24,15%)
Nat. Pride	.59	-.06
Eur. Pride	.42	.71
Attach Town	.74	-.29
Attach Reg.	.78	-.28
Attach Country	.78	-.14
Attach Eur.	.46	.67
Euronational	-.03	.74

Chart 3 : Analysis of correspondences between items relative to questions on identities.



NOTES:

<sup>1</sup> We wish to thank Chantal Barry (Sciences-Po, CEVIPOF) for editing this paper in English, and anonymous reviewers of CEP for detailed and fruitful comments.

<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, this is a central and fully accepted notion in social psychology. Social psychology has strongly influenced the concept of European identity. See Breakwell and Lyon 1996 and Herman, Risse and Brewer 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Although globalisation, growing individualism and mass immigration may contribute to eroding national identifications independently from European integration.

<sup>4</sup> Their research tested almost fifty questions related to national identity (Michelat/Thomas 1966). The Eurobarometer wording is slightly different however, due in particular to the fact that the questionnaires are administered differently. The Eurobarometer asks “Would you say that you are very proud, rather proud, fairly proud, not at all proud to be (nationality as specified in the first question)”. While the Michelat/Thomas question was: “Are you proud of being French? Circle the answer corresponding to your answer: always proud, proud, on some occasions, never proud.”

<sup>5</sup> Regularly, if we may say so, as the wording changed quite often. But the sense remained the same, namely: “Do you sometimes think of yourself not only as a (nationality) citizen but also as a European citizen? Does it happen often, sometimes or never?”

<sup>6</sup> “In the near future do you see yourself as (nationality) only, (nationality) and European, European and (nationality), European only?”

<sup>7</sup> In Eurobarometer 64.2, the two questions were asked together with the national pride question. This confirms that the first European identification question, where the two levels are considered complementary, is barely statistically related to national pride, while the second one, where national and European identifications are supposed to be competitive, is significantly and negatively correlated with national pride. Obviously, part of the change results from the change in measurement.

<sup>8</sup> Kendall’s tau-b is one of the most common measures of association for ordinal data. It gives an indication of the strength of the relationship between two questions with categorical answers, and of the sense of the relationship (it varies in theory between +1 and -1, but with such a data set, an absolute value of 0.4 could be

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considered as a very strong relationship – but this is just rule of thumb), with a test of significance of the computed association.

<sup>9</sup> It is interesting to note that this question (“In the near future do you see yourself as (nationality) only, etc.”) is called the “Moreno question”, in pollster jargon from the name of a Spanish political scientist, who currently works on Spanish federalism but completed his PhD in Edinburgh. The conflict between nationalist regions and the nation-state is reflected in the question and here, extended to a potential conflict between the European nations and the EC.

<sup>10</sup> For Northern Ireland and Luxembourg, the results are to be interpreted carefully as the samples are only 300 and 600 people respectively.

<sup>11</sup> Two students of the French national school of statistics (ENSAE), Jeremiah Just and Jonathan Lagier, have confirmed the structure of the relationship between national pride and European identification with a complex model of regression, that is, with a fully appropriate statistical tool. For a complete presentation of this supportive evidence, see Duchesne 2004, p.684-687.

<sup>12</sup> Although we considered them at the time as two dimensions of territorial belonging: see Duchesne & Frognier 1995.

<sup>13</sup> As they would be called respectively in the UK and in France

<sup>14</sup> This could also explain why L. Hooghe and G. Marks, find national identity to have negative and positive effect on attitudes toward integration, when applying a multi-level analysis.

<sup>15</sup> At the mass level: this does not mean that it cannot be true concerning specific segments of the population, as for instance the free moving professional studied by Adrian Favell and his colleagues (Favell 2003).

<sup>16</sup> “People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe. Please tell me how you feel attached to your town or county, your region, your country, to Europe? Very attached, fairly attached, not very attached or not at all attached?”

<sup>17</sup> Confirmatory factor analyses like maximum likelihood technique cannot be used as there is communality greater than 1.

<sup>18</sup> The data shows that only the two first factors exhibit an eigenvalue > 1 and the “scree test” follows suit.

<sup>19</sup> Facing Chart 2, one can easily see that a rotation of the axis does not change the interpretation. A “varimax” or an “oblique” rotation (with a correlation of .102) between the axis (as a dotted line on the Chart) offers two factors with positive contributions of almost all the variables, but with higher loadings for national and sub-national variables for the first factor, and for the European variables for the second vis-à-vis national related ones. The distinction between one cumulative factor and one oppositional becomes a distinction between two factors with two common cumulative components but also more pronounced loadings for the two opposite elements of the former second factor.

<sup>20</sup> That, as we said, combines all declarations of feeling European – national and European, European and national, European on, etc.

<sup>21</sup> Although attachment to the nations (and sub-national levels) are older, the notion of identification suits them better than identities do as we know that they are also the result of a learning process, acquired during the early socialisation phase but constantly reactivated by the media. Michael Billig provides strong evidences of this in *Banal Nationalism* (Billig, 1995).