

Ever Challenged Union: Exploring Ways Out of the Crises

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European Identity ‘on the go’: the Case of Transnational and Non-Transnational Europeans.

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Abstract: The freedom of movement, the lack of barriers or the advantage of travelling carrying a national ID, in other words, the increase of European citizens’ rights due to the process of the EU integration, has encouraged and facilitated intra EU-mobility. The EU has experienced intra-European migration waves since the beginning of its implementation. Lately, the financial struggles in the Eurozone triggered EU mobility among those countries that experienced the highest rates of unemployment (Ireland, Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal). According to the Eurostat there are approximately 13 million European citizens living in a different EU member state (2.7% of the total population). Despite that this number has steadily increased, the consequences of European transnationalism has not been adequately studied (Fligstein 2009; Recchi *et al.* 2011; Kuhn 2015). Through a deductive approach analysing four waves of the Eurobarometer (2013, 2009, 2004, 2003) this work aims to offer a better comparative understanding of European identity among EU transnational and non-transnational European citizens.

Keywords: European identity, citizenship, transnationalism, EU mobility

Introduction

Globalised societies are characterised by the dynamism and changes taking place at political, economic and cultural levels. In the European case this is not an exception. Once the idea of a European project was forged (early 1950s), Europeans moved a step forward from sharing a common history (Delanty 2002) to being bound by a common political and economic framework. The process of the European integration has had (and still does) an enormous impact on its people. Demographically speaking, the population of the countries gathering the EU28 has grown approximately 100 million since 1960, from 407 to 507 million (Eurostat 2014). Furthermore, European citizens have witnessed major political and economic implementations: a common currency (i.e. euro), the abolishment of frontiers and the use of a passport, European educational projects (e.g. Erasmus exchange, Bologna process), the flourish of low-cost European airlines, the adhesion of new member-states, access to other European health systems, etc.

The influence that the implementations of the European integration have on its citizens has been a recurrent topic in the academic debate. Originally, scholars were interested in citizens' attitudes towards the support of the EU integration (Inglehart 1970; Gabel 1998), EU membership support in relation to European and national political performance (Eichenberg & Dalton 1993; Anderson 1998; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Rohrschneider 2002) and the interrelation of different identities with the European identity (Duchesne *et al.* 1995; Díez Medrano 2003; Ruiz Jiménez *et al.* 2004; Bellucci *et al.* 2012). In 2009 the Eurobarometer (EB 71) showed that the percentage of Europeans who believe that being part of the EU is 'a good thing' during the 2000s fluctuated from 48% (2001) to 58% (2007). Furthermore, criticism towards austerity measures imposed by EU authorities during the financial struggles in the Eurozone have not diminished citizens' perception towards the EU, since the latest Eurobarometer (81, November 2014) revealed that 56% of the Europeans are in favour of the EU membership as opposed to 31% of its citizens.

However, from a political perspective, scholars have casted doubt on the efficiency of the European Union as a democratic system, stating that the EU has strongly prioritised elitists' concerns as opposed to citizens' interests (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993). In the same line, others have questioned the effectiveness and legitimacy of its democracy due to a weak inclusion of the civil society and political participation within the European arena (Wallace 1995; Schmitt and Thomassen 2000). In the light of these concerns, would it be accurate to

state that European citizens are politically disaffected? How could European democracy and its identity be strengthened?

Continuing the steps of other academics (Fligstein 2009; Muxel 2009; Recci *et al.* 2011), this paper aims to contribute to the comprehension of this socio-political concern binding together concepts like transnationalism and European identity. At present the freedom to reside in another EU member-state is more likely to occur among Europeans than in the past. Even though transnational Europeans are an underrated group in the study of European identity, a closer approximation to these citizens might elucidate European identity formation and its political implications in the current European context (Muxel 2009). Therefore, the main hypothesis presented in this paper is:

H₁: EU transnational citizens are likely to present higher levels of European identification than non-transnational Europeans.

This hypothesis emerges from the main research question of my thesis “Does transnationalism foster feelings of European identity?” In my Ph.D. I have incorporated a mixed-methodology based on the Eurobarometer and in-depth qualitative interviews. However, this work will exclusively focus on the quantitative section. For this reason, the results presented of this first hypothesis (H₁) should be deemed as an opportunity to gain a broad perspective in the relation between European identity and transnationalism from a descriptive point of view.

The structure of this paper is as follows: firstly the main theories and previous studies on European identity will be presented; secondly a description of the methodology will be offered; then the main results obtained from testing H₁ will be displayed and the last section will be dedicated to the main conclusions, reflections and future steps in the field of European identity. As a final reminder, the reader should bear in mind that this is a working progress and that results might be modified in the future. All comments are welcome.

Theoretical Approaches on European Identity

The study of identity is a contested task. Not only is a subject present in several disciplines (e.g. Psychology, Politics, Sociology, Anthropology), but there is still an enormous lack of consensus among European identity theorists’ (Hanquinet & Savage 2013) that adds to the difficulty of its study. Since its origin, research on European identity has oscillated from a top-down to bottom-up approach. While the first one believes that identity is strongly

influenced by elite groups (Rokkan 1975; Gellner 1983; Rokkan and Urwin 1983; Subotic 2011), a bottom-up approach sustains that the emergence of feelings of identity towards a political community relies on its society (Deutsch 1969; Brubaker 1992; Breuilly 1994; Diez Medrano 2003; Fligstein 2008; Recchi *et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012). In this section, the main bottom-up literature on European identity will be reviewed.

Attitudes towards the European Union

It has been previously stated that there is a lack of agreement within European identity theories'. Part of this literature struggle stems from the fact that in the early stages of the EU integration process, European identity research was strongly associated with EU membership support. The line between European attitudinal and identity theories' has not always been clear. From these two main clusters, one can distinguish three different types of attitudinal theories: cognitive mobilisation, instrumental rationality and judgmental heuristics¹.

The term *cognitive mobilisation* was firstly coined by Ronald Inglehart (1970). This author analysed the Eurobarometer to understand EU support and the ability of Europeans 'to relate to a remote community' (1970: 47). According to his findings, highly educated citizens tend to be more exposed to cosmopolitan circumstances in society and will embrace the EU integration the most. Two decades later, Sophie Duchesne and André-Paul Frogner (1995) based their research on the *cognitive mobilisation* approach but including more socio-demographic variables (e.g. post-materialistic values, democratic satisfaction). Similarly to Inglehart, Duchesne & Frogner (1995) findings' highlight that although a sense of belonging to the European community is extremely low, support towards the European integration project should be still considered a relevant factor to understand attitudes of the European society.

The second group, *instrumental rationality*, is based on the idea that European attitudes' vary depending on the cost and benefits that citizens perceive as members of the EU. Citizens' evaluation has been traditionally measured through the following items: economic conditions, membership support, national pride, political perceptions (Eichenberg & Dalton 1993; Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998; Carey 2002, Hooghe & Marks 2004). According to *instrumental rationality*, in order to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the EU membership, Europeans need to have certain knowledge of the economic and political reality at national

¹ This typology echoes with the one offered by Bellucci *et al.* (2012). However in their literature review, the authors do not distinguish between attitudes and identity as the main two typologies.

and European levels. For this reason, it could be stated that explaining EU integration through a utilitarian theory (Gabel 1998) (i.e. instrumental rationality) is partially rooted on *cognitive mobilisation*. The majority of the results that authors in this approach provide emphasise a strong connection between Europeans' instrumental approach in the support for the EU integration.

The last cluster, *judgmental heuristics*, conceives European attitudes' based on national performance. It should be noted that findings in this category are not in harmony. In 2000 Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca studied the influence between trust on European and national institutions with the performance of national institutions. The author determined that low political performance at national levels might instigate citizens to perceive European politics as an ideal alternative. Although there are authors who conducted similar research (Ray 2003) supporting Sánchez-Cuenca's results, Rohrschneider (2002) obtained opposite conclusions. According to Rohrschneider (2002), corruption exerts a bigger impact on EU evaluation than it was stated by Sánchez-Cuenca. Therefore, it is not clear the direction of the relation between national performance and EU perceptions' even when this is considered another influential variable.

Feelings of belonging, feeling European

Leaving behind theorists interested in European attitudes, the next paragraphs discuss literature describing the emergence of feelings of European identity. Prior to the political construction of the EU as it is known nowadays, Europeans shared aspects such as a common history, strongly shaped by WWI and WWII, or a geographical territory. To Gerard Delanty (2002), cultural and historical values are basic components of his model *European cosmopolitanism*. The genesis of his approach comes from cultural and historical conflicts as part of the European legacy. Therefore Delanty (2002) understands European identity as a conscious deliberation in which Europeans have 'forgotten history' (2002: 355), and part of their national identity, in the name of the developments of European feelings.

In an effort to offer a comparative study Juan Díez Medrano (2003) conducted 160 in-depth interviews in Germany, the United Kingdom and Spain. Although Díez Medrano (2003) sought a qualitative understanding of EU integration support (discussed in the previous section), in his interviews he discovered the influence that being informed on EU issues, history and culture had on citizens' portrayal of the EU. On top of this, Medrano and Paula Gutiérrez shed light on the existence of nested identities (2001) among Spaniards. Their

findings support the idea stressed by Inglehart (1970) that European identity is more likely to appear among citizens with high levels of education.

In the last decade, academics have increasingly adopted the idea of conceptualising European identity under two dimensions: civic and cultural (Bruter 2004, 2013; Ruiz-Jimenez *et al.* 2004; Recchi *et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012). Broadly speaking *cultural or ethnic* identity refers to cultural heritage, language, myths, symbols and emotional bonds (Ruiz-Jiménez *et al.* 2004), and feeling of closeness towards other groups (Bruter 2004; Fligstein 2009), while *civic* identity echoes with the notion of citizenship, its duties and rights within the EU.

Although establishing a clear frontier between these two dimensions is methodologically and theoretically complicated, Michael Bruter (2004) believes that this distinction is more sensible in the European case than at national levels. In his study Bruter (2004) proposes a set of grounded and specific quantified items that measure civic and cultural identity dimensions from a less abstract point of view facilitating respondents' answers with approachable questions. Bruter's (2004) pilot study established a milestone in the operationalisation of European Identity. His main conclusions are: a) EU integration support and European identity should not be analysed as part of the same variable, b) civic and cultural identity are correlated but should be considered differently in theory and praxis, c) respondents tend to answer European cultural identity questions based on Europe as a whole and not necessarily the EU, d) European language skills and living in a different EU member-state has a positive impact on the rise of European identity and, finally, e) political perceptions, right-wing Europeans, are more likely to present higher levels of cultural European identity. In the same line and with similar results, Ruiz-Jiménez *et al.* (2004) analysed the Eurobarometer 57.2 (2002) comparing cultural (ascriptive) and civic (achieved) items. Their findings proved that respondents highlight differently civic and cultural items at local, national and European identities, encouraging future research under this approach.

The last theory-testing and comparative work that will be highlighted comes by Paolo Bellucci, David Sanders and Fabio Serricchio (2012). In their work, Bellucci *et al.* (2012) the study of European identity is compared through four different pillars rooted in the literature: cognitive mobilisation, instrumental rationality, political mobilisation or judgmental heuristics and affective/identitarian. In addition to this, they incorporated gender, age, occupation and religion views as control variables with macro contextual (e.g. communist background) and macro-micro contextual items (e.g. quality of governance). Thanks to the

Eurobarometer and data collected through the UNITE project, Bellucci's *et al.* (2012) provide one of the most updated comparative European identity results. Their findings stress that: a) countries with a communist past tend to identify less with the EU, b) cognitive mobilisation has a small influence on EU citizens, c) instrumental rationality (i.e. individual's evaluation of the cost/benefits as members of the EU) and judgmental heuristics have an impact on citizens' identity, and d) relations of trust among other EU citizens encourage feelings of European identity.

Transnational Studies and Identity

This section is dedicated to the most relevant literature that contributed to build the bridge between European identity (i.e. civic and cultural) and transnationalism. The number of researchers who explored European identity in EU transnational citizens is very limited. Although the amount of EU citizens living in another EU member-states has increased over the last decades (Recchi *et al.* 2011; Kuhn 2015), this phenomenon has not been sufficiently covered. However, the idea that EU transnational citizens are embedded with a certain level of civic activeness (e.g. use of freedom of residence) and how this could influence Europeans' identity have attracted the curiosity of academics. The work of three main researchers will be introduced: Anne Muxel (2009), Neil Fligstein (2009) and Recchi *et al.* (2011)

Interested in the political attitudes of EU movers, Anne Muxel (2009) used different datasets (European Social Survey (2004), European Values Study (1999) and EIMSS) to analyse two main research questions: 1) are there usual correlations between social integration and political integration or is there a specific effect of the experience of mobility? and 2) do EU movers share particular political attitudes and behaviours? (2009: 158). In order to test these hypotheses, she created a 'politicization index' with 7 political and socio-demographic variables applied to four EU member-states: Germany, Britain, Italy and Spain. Muxel's (2009) findings stress a significant contrast between EU transnational citizens' political interest and the political performative side (i.e. voting) of it. For instance, the existence of a political interest among EU transnational citizens is not reflected in the turnout of most elections. Furthermore, EU transnationals citizens who are highly educated and present leftist perceptions tend to be more politicised.

One of the reasons behind the study of EU transnational citizens lies on the idea that identities are constructed through social interaction (Deutsch 1969). The case of transnational

Europeans is of particular interest because they are highly exposed to interact with other Europeans which might be one of the main foundations of the European identity (Fligstein 2009). Fligstein (2009) highlights a number of variables that affect European identity among transnational Europeans: a) age (i.e. younger people are more prone to travel), b) holding left-wing political views (i.e. citizens' with conservative perceptions might be reluctant to interact with people from other cultures), c) occupation (i.e. managers and white collar are more likely to travel within the EU), d) income (i.e. the higher the salary the more likely to travel), e) gender (men are in a more advantageous position to be transnational citizens). It should be noted that Fligstein (2009) believes that citizens with those characteristics belong to a privilege class of the society and emphasizes instrumentalism or being able to benefit from the EU as a pushing factor in the emergence of European identity. As a final note this author states that European identity has not developed further because the population that belongs to this group of citizens is still a niche (Fligstein 2009).

The last work reviewed in this section is framed under the EUCROSS project "Crossing borders Making Europe". This extensive comparative project consists of a bottom-up approach based on telephone interviews in six EU member-states. Following a bi-dimensional (i.e. civic and cultural) (Ruiz-Jiménez 2004; Bruter 2004) and social constructivist conceptualisation (Kohli 2000; Rise 2010) of European identity, Recchi *et al.* (2011) aim to unravel the influence between transnationalism, European identity and cosmopolitanism. Their main conclusions support the idea that citizens with higher educational levels, women, older people, travelling within the EU, possessing a European social network, language skills and personal perceptions or interests are more prone to present stronger levels of European identity. Although the influence of these variables on European identity have been also found in previous work, Recchi's *et al.* (2011) contributed to confirm those to the specific group of transnational Europeans.

Methodology

The measure of European identity, the dependent variable, is based on questions from the Eurobarometer (EB). In order to be able to analyse the impact of the financial struggles in the Eurozone (2008), four different periods along the 2000s were considered: 2013 (EB 80.1), 2009 (EB 71.3), 2004 (EB 62) and 2003 (EB 60.1). Due to the enlargement during the European integration, the number of EU countries from the dataset varies. For instance, the countries who belonged to the EU until 2004 were: Austria, Finland, Sweden, Spain,

Portugal, Greece, Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. In 2004 the EU increased in 10 the amount of member states adhering the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Cyprus. After this date, three more countries joined the EU. Romania and Bulgaria in 2007 and Croatia being the latest in 2013. The current number of EU member states is 28.

Apart from the variance in the number of countries in the data, it should be noted that the Eurobarometer offers similar, but not identical, questions on European identity. As it can be seen in table 1, three type of questions were included in the study of the dependent variable:

Table 1. European Identity Items.

Eurobarometer	Item	Question/Answer Wording
80.1	QD5	Q: Do you see yourself as...? A: Nationality only; Nationality and European; European and Nationality; European only.
71.3	QE4	Q: I would like you to think about the idea of geographical identity. Different people think of this in different ways. People might think of themselves as being European, nationality or from a specific region to different extents. A: Sense of belonging: European: to a great extent; somewhat; not really; not at all.
62, 60.1	Q43	Q: In the near future do you see yourself as...? A: Nationality only; Nationality and European; European and Nationality; European only.

Source: Eurobarometer 80.1 (November 2013), 71.3 (July 2009), 62 (November 2004) and 60.1 (November 2003).

The different formulations of the dependent variable (European identity) on this study represents one of its weaknesses. However, the similarities of the answers in three of the datasets allow gathering items and compare them within the sample. Although the Eurobarometer is a strong analytical dataset in comparing EU member states over a period of time, it is a limited tool. For this reason, the analysis and results presented should be seen as an approximate and descriptive picture from a macro perspective. Such outcomes represent the tip of the iceberg of a broader study, a starting point for future in-depth qualitative studies².

² The qualitative study will be focusing on the case study of Spain that will be included on my Ph.D. thesis as part of a mixed methodology.

This study includes seven independent variables. The most characteristic independent variable is transnationalism, which will establish a comparison among the sample. Respondents who were interviewed in a member state different than their nationality will be labelled as ‘transnational’ citizens, whereas those who have the same nationality where the questionnaire was responded will be labelled as ‘non-transnational’ citizens. The other variables (see table 2) are socio-demographic and political.

Table 2. Independent Variables

Variables	Categories
Transnationalism	Transnational
	Non-Transnational
Age	15 – 17 years
	18 – 30 years
	31 – 40 years
	41 – 60 years
	61 – 70 years
	71 – 98 years
Gender	Male
	Female
Level of Education	Up to 15
	16 – 19
	20 +
	Still studying
Occupation	Self – Employed
	Managers
	White Collars
	Manual Worker
	House Worker
	Unemployed
	Retired
	Student
Type of Community	Rural
	Urban
Political Self-Positioning	Left
	Right

Source: Eurobarometer 80.1 (November 2013), 71.3 (July 2009), 62 (November 2004) and 60.1 (November 2003).

The use of these independent variables is justified by the literature explained previously. On several occasions academics have demonstrated that European identity tends to be higher among:

- Younger (Díez-Medrano 2003; Fligstein 2009) and older populations (Recchi *et al.* 2011),
- Highly educated groups (Inglehart 1970; Gabel 1998; Bruter 2004; Díez-Medrano 2003; Fligstein 2009; Recchi *et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012),
- Citizens with left-wing political preferences (Fligstein 2009; Muxel 2009),
- Managers and white collar workers (Fligstein 2009),
- Men (Fligstein 2009) and women (Recchi *et al.* 2011) and
- Large and urban areas (Favell 2008; Bellucci *et al.* 2012)

Taking into consideration the hypothesis tested in this paper, *EU transnational citizens are likely to present higher levels of European identification than non-transnational Europeans*, it should be noted that the number of items used for the dependent and the independent variable generates sub-hypotheses. The subsequent sub-hypotheses are:

H_{1.1}. *Younger EU transnational citizens are likely to present higher levels of European identification than younger non-transnational Europeans.*

H_{1.2}. *Male EU transnational citizens are likely to present higher levels of European identification than male non-transnational Europeans.*

H_{1.3}. *High educated EU transnational citizens are likely to present higher levels of European identification than high educated non-transnational Europeans.*

H_{1.4}. *EU transnational citizens with white collars and manager positions are likely to present higher levels of European identification than non-transnational white collars and manager Europeans.*

H_{1.5}. *EU transnational citizens living in urban areas are likely to present higher levels of European identification than non-transnational Europeans living in urban areas.*

H_{1.6}. *EU transnational citizens with leftist views are likely to present higher levels of European identification than non-transnational Europeans with leftist views.*

Results

The evidence here presented refers to a descriptive snapshot among transnational and non-transnational Europeans during the 2000s, specifically in the years 2003, 2004, 2009 and 2013. Two of the Eurobarometer datasets were conducted prior to the main European

financial struggles' (2008) and the other half took place after this phenomenon. Comparing transnational and non-transnational Europeans during this period is particularly interesting since the Eurocrisis pushed many citizens from southern Europe to the migratory path to northern EU countries (LaFleur 2015).

The first aspect that the reader might notice is the gap in the sample among transnational and non-transnational EU citizens (see table 3). Although these number increases overtime, there is a smaller sample of EU transnational citizens. Still, this figure is coherent with the percentage of EU citizens living in another EU member-state, approximately 2.4% of the total of EU28 population (2.7% according to the Eurostat 2014). Broadly speaking there are significant differences among transnational and non-transnational European identities. These differences are plausible in the table 3 along the four waves analysed. For instance, EU transnational citizens present higher feelings of European identity than non-transnational ones. In 2013, 26.3% of EU transnational citizens manifested EU identity feelings, while only 6.4% of the nationals interviewed shared that perception. This percentage is also significantly higher in 2009 (87.5% vs. 76.2%), in 2004 (44% vs. 5.2%) and in 2003 (53.3% vs. 8.6%).

Firstly, if we direct our attention towards the rest of the independent variables, feelings of European identity are displayed unequally in all of them. EU transnational citizens that fall into the age of 18 to 40 years express higher levels of European identification. However, the age among non-transnational respondents corresponds to younger groups (15 to 30 years). Secondly, there is a gender gap on feelings of European identity. For instance, in 2013 EU transnational men have a 28.6% of EU feelings opposed to 7.5% in the sample of EU non-transnational men. This percentage remains higher in 2009 (86.8% vs. 78.2%), 2004 (55.1% vs. 9.2%) and 2003 (60.1% vs. 10.9%). Thirdly, the results support the idea that respondents with managerial positions obtain bigger percentages, still EU feelings are more prominent among EU transnational citizens. Fourthly, the type of community has a stronger impact on non-transnational EU citizens. National citizens living in larger communities manifest higher feelings of European identity, while these feelings present low changes among EU transnational citizens; in other words, the type of community among EU transnational citizens does not seem to have an impact on their European identity.

		EB 80.1 (2013)		EB 71.3 (2009)		EB 62 (2004)		EB 60.1 (2003)	
		Trans (623)	Non-Trans (26529)	Trans (567)	Non-Trans (25955)	Trans (238)	Non-Trans (13296)	Trans (362)	Non-Trans (15341)
Population	26.3***	6.4***	87.5***	76.2***	47.9/44***	7.4/5.2***	53.3***	8.6***	
Age groups									
15 - 17 years	18.5*	12.5***	100	80***	57.1/37.5	9.4/8.1***	42.1	10.4***	
18 - 30 years	22.4*	9.1***	85.7	79.9***	42.6/52.5	8.5/6.3***	50	10.9***	
31 - 40 years	28.8*	7.2***	91.4	78.9***	51.1/51	7.6/5.4***	54.9	10***	
41 - 60 years	31.1*	6***	88.8	76.6***	49.4/47.4	8.3/5.4***	59.3	8.4***	
61 - 70 years	27.5*	5.3***	83.7	73.9***	47.1/15.8	5.4/4.3***	45.9	5.9***	
71 - 98 years	7.5*	3.7***	75	68.2***	42.1/11.1	4.9/2.8***	50	4.5***	
Gender									
Male	28.6	7.5***	86.8	78.2***	55.1/39.5*	9.2/6.6***	60.1	10.9***	
Female	24.2	5.6***	88	74.6***	39.6/47.5*	6/4.1***	47.1	6.5***	
Education									
Up to 15	18.9*	3.2***	89.1	63.8***	51.9/45.5	4.6/3.1***	57.3*	5.6***	
16-19	24.6*	5.7***	83.4	75.2***	45.7/45.3	7.1/4.5***	43.4*	7.9***	
20+	32.6*	8.1***	90.7	84.8***	49.2/42.4	9.5/7.2***	64.6*	10.8***	
Still studying	20.4*	11.5***	89.8	83.9***	48.6/42.1	9.8/7.7***	53.1*	13.5***	
Occupation									
Self-Employed	33.3	8.6***	97.7	78.5***	56.3/(44.4*)	10.2/7.9***	53.6	11.1***	
Managers	27.4	8***	89.5	87.8***	60/(27.3*)	10/6.8***	58.6	13.1***	
White Collars	35.1	7.2***	93.9	81***	48.1/(29.2*)	6.8/5.4***	56.6	8.9***	
Manual worker	24.2	5.8***	86.5	76.2***	40/(55.6*)	7.3/4.0***	60.7	7.3***	
House worker	30.8	5.1***	86	67.2***	47.6/(60.9*)	6.4/3.8***	45.2	5.3***	
Unemployed	27.1	7***	79.6	70***	60/(69.2*)	7.4/6.1***	50	9.8***	
Retired	22.1	4.4***	81.9	71.7***	50/(32.1*)	5.5/3.9***	46.6	6.3***	
Student	20.4	11.5***	89.8	83.9***	46.9/(38.9*)	10.1/7.9***	51.6	13.3***	
Type Community									
Rural	26.5	5.7***	88.1	74.5***	45.5/48.7	6.9*/4.3**	56.3	7.6**	
Small	26.7	6.6***	85.3	76.3***	47.8/33.3	7.2*/5.6**	51.2	8.7**	
Large	25.7	7.1***	88.5	78.3***	50.7/53	8.4*/5.9**	52	9.8**	
Political self-position									
Left	.	.	89.1	77.9***	48.8/41.5	10.2***/6.1	48.8	11.8***	
Centre	.	.	91	77.2***	45.6/48	6.7***/5.4	47.7	7.6***	
Right	.	.	84.1	80.9***	43.9/24.1	6.6***/5.1	59.3	7.8***	

Note: Figures show relative percentage within each subgroup. Level of significance on Pearson chi-square, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001. Source: Eurobarometer 80.1 (2013), 71.3 (2009), 62 (2004), 60.1 (2003).

In most cases, the last independent variable (political self-position) reflect more positive values among citizens with leftist perceptions, particularly in transnational EU citizens. More specifically, in 2013 89.1% of leftist EU transnational citizens considered themselves more European than non-transnational Europeans (77.9%). The results in 2004 were 48.8% of EU transnational as opposed to 10.2% of non-transnational. It should be noted that in 2009 EU transnational citizens with central political views expressed 1.1% more European feelings than EU transnational leftist citizens. Surprisingly, in 2003 the highest percentage of EU feelings among EU transnational corresponds to those who feel closer to centre political views (59.3%), while in the case of non-transnational Europeans this belongs to respondents with leftist preferences (11.8%).

Conclusions

This paper reflects on European identity under the prism of transnationalism. Based on the theoretical foundations that identity is actively and socially constructed (Simmel 1909; Deutsch 1969), the study of transnational Europeans present an ideal group of study. However, even when statistics show that there are more Europeans living in another EU-member state, the consequence of this phenomenon has not been sufficiently studied (Recchi *et al.* 2011; Kuhn 2015). Due to their circumstances, transnational Europeans are highly exposed to living the “European experience”, interact with other EU citizens, speak other languages, experience different European cultural aspects (e.g. food, music), situations that according to research seem to shape citizens’ identity (Fligstein 2009; Muxel 2009; Recchi *et al.* 2011; Kuhn 2015). From a civic perspective, transnational Europeans are active users of their rights as Europeans (e.g. freedom of residence, participating in local elections).

Although my work supports the conceptualisation of European identity under civic and cultural items, the work here presented refers exclusively to the cultural side of it. My results offer evidence that European identity and transnationalism are correlated. However, it cannot be stated that there is a causation between these two variables. This outcome should be considered as a descriptive contribution to previous studies. Four out of six hypotheses obtained positive results. For instance, highly educated, managerial, leftist and male EU transnational citizens presented higher feelings of European identity than non-transnational EU citizens with the same socio-demographic profile. These results are in accordance with past studies (Díez-Medrano 2003; Fligstein 2009; Muxel 2009; Recchi *et al.* 2011; Kuhn 2015). On the other hand, the variables of age and type of community were inconclusive.

Firstly, levels of European identification are higher among younger non-transnational than transnational Europeans. Secondly, living in a larger community seems to have a bigger impact among non-transnational Europeans, while levels of European identity remain very similar among EU-transnational citizens regardless of the type of community they reside.

Despite the difficulty of drawing consistent statistical conclusions in the field of European identity, these preliminary results should be interpreted as a starting point for future research. During the course of my Ph.D. thesis I intend to test a second hypothesis focusing on the civic essence of European identity. Then, I will dive on qualitative research and analyse the case study of transnational and non-transnational Spaniards, a population that has reproduced the European migratory path of their ancestor, especially after the financial struggles of the Eurozone. Considering the lack of comparative qualitative research on European identity, I intend to contribute to this academic gap and provide a better understanding of the formation and application of citizens' feelings towards the European Union.

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