



# Cultural Base

Social Platform  
on Cultural Heritage  
and European Identities

## Synthetic Report on Cultural Inclusion

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### **European Identity:**

#### **What kind of *diversity* into what form of *unity*?**

##### **1. Introduction**

One of the most difficult aspects in understanding Europe in the present but also in the past has had to do with the question of European identity. Does a European identity exist? Do the Europeans feel European? And if they do, how their feeling of belonging to Europe relate to other important collective and political identities such as national identity or indeed ethnic or minority identity? Are there multiple or even conflicting ways of identifying with Europe? How much diversity can be integrated within one union? European identity as a concept and a lived experience may indeed enable us to perceive what Europe is about under current circumstances, but it can equally complicate, if not impede our understandings.

This Synthetic paper briefly maps important theoretical perspectives, institutional programmes and research policies undertaken so far on European identity and culture: the aim is not to draft a comprehensive and detailed overview, but rather to identify the dominant conceptions of European identity and culture within them and reveal the gaps and current needs for further research on the links between European identity, diversity, their potential for inclusion/exclusion and the role of culture in this process. The paper concludes by drafting a series of opportunities for further research emerging from our dialogue with non-academic stakeholders and proposes four specific thematic areas for further analysis.



### **2. Theoretical perspectives on European identity: civil and/or cultural, national and/or European?**

One of the most well-known theorists of nationalism today, Anthony D. Smith, wrote in 1995 that a European identity could not possibly emerge as it is national identity that dominates people's primary loyalties (Smith, 1995). Smith could not imagine, and perhaps quite rightly, that any European citizen would be willing to sacrifice her/his life in fighting for Europe in the way in which people had gone to war to defend their nation. For him, this was an ultimate test that European identity would fail. Smith actually appears to assume that a European identity would be of the same kind as a national identity.

This assumption points to an underlying problem in the conventional study of European identity: there is an implicit assumption that European identity is about political loyalty. This assumption has skewed the conceptualisation of European identity and as a result the area of investigation has been largely restricted to the political dimension. In other words, the accumulation of research into European identity so far is now signalling a fundamental problem: the under-conceptualisation of European identity and the lack of diversification when definitions of European identity are provided (Duchesne, 2008).

Indeed, a first question to be asked in our view here is whether European identity is or can be like national identity. National identities can be ethnic in their orientation, based on a belief in common ethnic descent, a common culture and set of myths and symbols, or they can be civic based on a common civic and political culture, a common set of values, a single economic and political system, a common territory. Usually, most national



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identities involve a combination of ethnic and civic elements but are characterized by a stronger presence of one set of elements over the other.

Taking the blueprint of the nation then as a prototype for studying European identity, we would envisage that there could be a cultural form of European identity. In other words, a European identity would have a cultural 'baggage' similar to that of national identity. Hence, links to a common cultural heritage, a common language, myths, symbols and emotional bonds with a territory imagined as the motherland. Indeed such an identity could emerge through a long historical process of the 'classical' nation building type as happened in many nation-states in the nineteenth century.

There could however also be a national type view of European identity that would emphasise civic elements like a set of civic and political values enshrined in a constitution (Weiler, 1999). It could also include the construction of a civic European identity through the gradual emergence of a European public sphere (Risse, 2010) and of a common communicative space where Europeans meet (virtually) and exchange their views. This last view draws from a perspective of Europe becoming, through the European integration process, a state-like entity (perhaps a federal state), and from the Habermas view of constitutional patriotism as the possible 'glue' that can hold a nation or indeed Europe together, beyond and in the absence of a common set of cultural traditions and ethnic bonds.

Habermas has questioned whether we should consider this kind of civic identity as identity at all and whether it should be better conceptualized as transnational civic solidarity among Europeans. Such a civic conception however of a European 'non-identity', Habermas recognized (2006, p. 80-1), 'cannot be produced solely through the strong



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negative duties of a universalistic morality of justice' but through 'a self-propelling process of shared political opinion and will-formation on European issues' that develops above the national level. Thus, national cultural differences can become of secondary relevance and a different type of European collective identity can emerge.

In reality European identity involves both cultural and civic elements but is certainly not a primary political identity in the sense that national identity is, requiring and actually obtaining the primary loyalty of Europeans (as it happens with members of a nation). Anthony D. Smith argued already almost a quarter of a century ago (1992) that Europeans differ among themselves in many respects such as language, law, religion, territory, economic and political system just like they differ also from non-Europeans. However, he conceded that 'at one time or another all Europe's communities have participated in at least some of these traditions and heritages, in some degree' (Smith, 1992, p. 70). He distinguished between families of culture that tend to 'come into being over long time-spans and are the product of particular historical circumstances, often unanticipated and unintentional. Such cultural realities' he argued, 'are no less potent for being so often inchoate and un-institutionalized' (1992, p. 71).

It would be fair to say that there is a lot of truth in Smith's scepticism over the mere possibility and probability that a strong sense of European identity would emerge in Europe, not least because this cultural 'glue' of the nation is lacking. Indeed this reflection brings us to one of the main issues that have prompted the whole discussion about what European identity is or should be and notably what is the relationship between national and European identity.



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There are competing views on this topic. Inglehart (1977) in his seminal study suggested that national and European identities are competing and that people who feel more cosmopolitan would tend to identify less with the nation and more with Europe. From this perspective, this is the reason why European identity is today (still) very weak: because it is in conflict with national identity (Carey, 2002, McLaren, 2006). According to this line of argument, nations possess a strong pulling power over their members for a number of reasons including a set of powerful myths and symbols or the state's capacity of coercion or indeed, protection. The emerging European polity, however, does not possess these qualities and as a result, European identity remains weak. European identity needs to be promoted through the creation of historical myths and political symbols so as to prompt citizens' identification with it. Indeed, European cultural policies such as the adoption of the flag and anthem, and to some extent the introduction of the single currency may also be seen as strategies aiming to foster a common European political identity (Shore, 2000).

While indeed national identity is by definition competing with other primary political identities as it requires the uncontested loyalty of the citizen to the nation, research has shown that national and European identity are compatible and can even be mutually reinforcing. They can in fact be better conceptualized as nested identities (Herb and Kaplan, 1999). Medrano and Gutierrez (2001) argue that European identity is nested in local and regional identity and they are not seen by individuals as competing but rather that a positive identification with Europe can empower a local or regional identity. The reason is that these are two different levels of collective political identity. The lower level which is closer to the individual identity is stronger but the higher level and larger group identity may further add a layer and reinforce that of the smaller group.



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Indeed Spaniards that were studied in the Diez Medrano and Gutierrez study, felt that their European identities symbolized their 'modern' and 'democratic' attributes. They thus reinforced the cultural content and emotional strength of their local and regional Spanish identities. A different but converging explanation of such mutual reinforcement of local, regional and European identities comes also from their contextual character: European identities are activated under different circumstances than regional or national ones. For instance, I am a Spaniard when abroad, an Andalusian in Spain, a Sevillian in Andalusia and so on (see also Risse, 2003).

Indeed, there is a growing group of scholars who reject this conflictive model in which national and European identities are understood to be in an antagonistic or zero-sum relationship. They also however reject the notion of an umbrella type of secondary identity. This is seen as too simplistic to account for the relationship between European and national identities. Some have put forward a marble cake metaphor in which both national and European identities in addition to other forms of identity co-exist, influence and blend into one another (Risse, 2004; 2010). This means that national identification and attachment to Europe go together and blend into one another. Thus there are different national narratives of a European identity. Also Ichijo and Spohn (2005) have argued that national and European identities are entangled and there is now a European dimension in national identities just like there are different national versions of the European identity.

In the early 2010s, European identity takes another twist and becomes particularly relevant for the emergence of regional nationalism of nations without states (Scotland and Catalonia for example) that assert their right to independence. Europeanness for these small nations is adopted as an anchor, against the multinational state (the United Kingdom



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or Spain respectively) from which they want to secede. Their belonging to Europe (and particularly the European Union) appears to provide for the necessary reference point and is actually manipulated in political discourse. While appeals by nations without states about their Europeanness may remind one of the bloody conflict in Yugoslavia in the mid-1990s which also involved references to Europe, the situation today points to less violent and more sophisticated identity discourses whose focal point is a renewed relevance for European identity.

European identity may be conceptualized as a mainly instrumental political identity. Indeed one built on individual interest: a perception of potential gains or losses from membership in a given social group can influence people's identification with that group. This perspective suggests that the more the citizens perceive that they have a net benefit from participating in a group, the more they will identify with it. In addition, if citizens perceive that their own nation state is doing poorly in terms of economic performance and democratic accountability, the more likely they are to identify with a higher level political identity and in this case, with a European identity (Cinnerella 1997, Fernández- Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2001).

An earlier comparative study looked at whether European identity develops in ways similar to national identities and how it relates to them (Ruiz Jimenez et al., 2004). The quantitative survey findings of the project suggested that European identity rests mainly on two instrumental features of the European integration project: the right to free movement and the common currency. More specifically, the study found that national and European identities are compatible mainly because national identities are largely cultural while identification with the European Union is primarily instrumental. The findings of the study, however, also showed that there is



a sufficient common cultural ground for a European identity to emerge. The study confirmed that because national and European identities are different, the development of a European identity does not necessarily imply the transfer of loyalties from the national to the supranational level.

### **3. Institutional Framing of European Identity through Policies and Research within the EU**

#### **3.1 Establishing a transnational identity discourse**

The notion of European identity can be seen as loosely linked to the overall idea of Europe through the centuries and to this day. However the discussion of a European identity enters forcefully into the public discourse in the early 1970s when the then nine member states of the European Economic Communities signed the famous 'Declaration of European Identity' in Copenhagen in 1973. This document stated that:

The Nine member countries of the European Communities have decided that the time has come to draw up a document on the European Identity. This will enable them to achieve a better definition of the relations with other countries and of their responsibilities and the place which they occupy in world affairs.

That declaration already made a reference to the notion that European identity is characterized by internal cultural diversity and that it rather refers to the idea of a wider European civilization understood as a common heritage that involves converging attitudes and ways of life while respecting



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the needs of individuals, the principles of representative democracy, the rule of law, social justice, and respect for human rights. The declaration continues:

The diversity of cultures within the framework of common European civilization, the attachment to common values and principles, the increasing convergence of attitudes to life, the awareness of having specific interests in common and the determination to take part in the construction of a united Europe, all give the European identity its originality and its own dynamism.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed the introduction of the European identity discourse in the 1970s was a political action emerging from the first EU enlargement and aiming at converting an institutionally consolidated system to a community with its own identity, in other words to 'People's Europe' (Bruter, 2005); as a result, any European identity was intended as a political one, even if its referents were cultural and rather vague, and in an endless construction process. As Luisa Passerini (2002) and Robert Picht (1993) note, identity is like health: you become aware of it when it is threatened. Indeed that initial identity declaration at the Copenhagen Summit of December 1973 was brought into discussion at one of the many critical phases of the European unification project in the last decades. The failure to agree on anything led to launching the European identity as a face-saving tool (Schulz-Forberg and Strath 2010: 41), an "escape forward". Strangely, those views may seem out of tune today and highly contested even if the economic and political process of

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration of European Identity, Copenhagen, 14 December 1973, available online at [http://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/02798dc9-9c69-4b7d-b2c9-f03a8db7da32/publishable\\_en.pdf](http://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/02798dc9-9c69-4b7d-b2c9-f03a8db7da32/publishable_en.pdf)



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European integration has since deepened, expanded and enlarged to 28 European countries, with at least a handful more seeking to accede.

The values referred to in the declaration were broad enough to be considered also as overall western values and at the same time allowed for cultural variation within Europe. Thus they did not oppose a vision of European unity that was characterized still by the existence of nation-states with their separate and much deeper national identities. Rather, this view was further reiterated in many EEC and EU documents which pointed out that respect for national and regional diversity and the flowering of the different national cultures of Europe was part and parcel of the valorisation of a common European cultural identity and heritage as mentioned in the Treaty of the European Union signed at Maastricht in 1992 (Commission of the European Communities, 1992).

Through the development of regional and related cultural policies of the EEC and EU in the 1980s and the 1990s (Sassatelli, 2002), the conciliation of an emerging European identity and of antagonistic national identities took a new turn. Internal diversity which embodied both migration related diversity and native minorities, as well as distinct national identities, hence a multi-levelled diversity with different civic or ethnic connotations in each European country, became the distinctive feature of European identity.

The discussion was no longer about how to reconcile unity with diversity through the identification of some commonalities that would form the 'European identity', but rather that the recognition and celebration of this diversity of Europe was a formative part of its unity. This is probably the concept that is embodied in today's slogan of 'Unity in Diversity', launched in the late 1990s. This view of diversity as constitutive of the new European



identity signals the fact that the latter is neither a pre-existing quality nor a historical given, but rather a process in the making, an identity to be achieved.

### **3.2 Establishing a transnational cultural heritage**

The question of course remains whether European identity, beyond the specific European integration process today, should better be conceptualized as a wider notion of a civilizational identity. In other words whether it could be seen as a looser cultural category that points to an orientation of a wider set of values or to a set of historical events but does not have immediate political consequences. Such an understanding of European identity resembles what Smith has called 'families of culture'. While such a view has some historical validity and is concomitant to the notion that Europe is a historically constructed idea with different facets at different points in time, it would today risk neglecting the increasing importance of European identity. European identity was salient in the past decades even if it were for the simple fact that it is contested and denied by many of Europe's residents. Research on the public attitudes of 'Europeans' on Europe shows that there is an increasing effect of political socialisation into Europe through the European integration project (Risse, 2010), and that people build their national understandings and attitudes based on their perception of what Europe is (Medrano, 2003; Bruter, 2005).

Such a view brings us to probe the relationship between European identity and European culture, seeking to unpack what is the cultural luggage that lies behind a notion of a European cultural or also political identity. Linking identity to culture of course open a whole set of related



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questions, notably does a European culture exist? Under what conditions does it express itself, and how it is represented? What values are associated with it? Who defines it and what does it mean to them? And, what sort of power relations does it imply? In both academic and popular understandings, Europe and culture most often raise associations connected with the Enlightenment, belief in progress, freedom of thought and of expression, and tolerance. References to Europe and culture have become interlinked with the concept of democracy, human rights, the notion of rationality and free will. Europe and culture are also associated with education, as any reference to culture immediately ties our understanding of Europe with universities, science academies, libraries, museums and a rich humanistic cultural heritage in landscape, religion, the arts, in music, literature and film.

The Council of Europe has tried to codify these dimensions into definitions, understandings and norms for all countries across the continent, in order to establish common behaviours and further enhance common values. Its initiatives and actions have aimed at recognizing the major role performed by culture in the progress of social knowledge, understanding others and respecting cultural diversity, while furthering common values. Together with democracy and human rights, The Council of Europe has positioned culture as a precondition for a satisfying life, and a source of fulfilment and the 'soul of democracy'.<sup>2</sup> On 19 December 1954, the Council of Europe adopted the Cultural Convention<sup>3</sup> as the foundation for European co-operation in the fields of culture, education, youth and sport. Its aim was to encourage cultural co-operation in all its manifold

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/presentation\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/presentation_en.asp)

<sup>3</sup> <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/018.htm>



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forms, to foster understanding and knowledge between European countries, and to preserve their cultural heritage and treat it as an integral part of a broader “European” heritage.

The Council of Europe, in effect, has tried to emphasise this ‘broader European heritage’ in order to unpack culture from its national affiliations and to strengthen an understanding of a shared regional cultural identity. Apart from adopting heritage conventions for the protection of archaeological sites, the Council has also established an observatory on European heritage policies and values, as well as adopted the so-called ‘European heritage days’.<sup>4</sup> UNESCO has also worked in this direction. By focusing on the continent’s sub-regions, such as the Iberian peninsula or Eastern Europe, as well as Southeast Europe,<sup>5</sup> on which also the Council of Europe had given priority, it has strived to encourage wider understandings of a common cultural heritage that transcends or cuts across national geographic borders bridging peoples, practices, traditions and values at a regional or sub-regional level. Initiatives such as the proclamation of the route of Santiago de Compostela as the first European Cultural Itinerary by the Council of Europe in 1987 and inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage list are aimed at approaching culture as a commonly shared European good rather than an exclusively national possession:

This route from the French-Spanish border was – and still is – taken by pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela. Some 1,800 buildings along the route, both religious and secular, are of great historic interest. The route played a fundamental role in

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<sup>4</sup> <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/ehd-jep/presentation>

<sup>5</sup> Available online at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/venice/culture/safeguarding-cultural-heritage/world-heritage-in-south-east-europe/> (accessed: 21 June 2015).



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encouraging cultural exchanges between the Iberian peninsula and the rest of Europe during the Middle Ages. It remains a testimony to the power of the Christian faith among people of all social classes and from all over Europe.<sup>6</sup>

Apart from adopting heritage initiatives, such as the European Cultural Routes or also the European Capitals of Culture, the European heritage Label has also been established as well as the EU Cultural Heritage Prize ('Europa Nostra Awards'). Moreover, the Council of Europe adopted on 20th May 2014 the 'Conclusions on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe', which actually complement the European Commission Communication 'Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe', published in July 2014.<sup>7</sup> According, thus, to an annotated understanding of how cultural heritage relates with European identity, the former (in its tangible, intangible and digitized forms) is 'an important component of the European project' that 'originates from the interaction between people and places through time and is constantly evolving' and, as a result, 'promotes diversity and intercultural dialogue by contributing to a stronger sense of "belonging" to a wider community and a better understanding and respect between peoples'. Especially in a moment of crisis, it can also 'help to reduce social disparities, facilitate social inclusion, cultural and social participation and promote intergenerational dialogue and social cohesion'.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> UNESCO World Cultural Heritage, available online at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/669> (accessed: 21 June 2015).

<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/142705.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/142705.pdf)



### **3.3 'Unity in Diversity': establishing a concept, overlooking complexities**

Merging conceptions of identity and cultural heritage, the slogan 'Unity in Diversity' reveals the way Europe is understood through a top-down fashion. First and foremost, this slogan and a related set of cultural policies recognizes and valorises the existence of a plurality of collective identities within Europe. Such identities are not necessarily political nor only national in character. They can be local or regional and have culture as their main reference point. But they may also be ethnic and have seeds of political autonomy within them. The level of diversity that is implied is left purposefully vague and unlimited in terms of character and scope.

At the same time the slogan 'Unity in Diversity' implies a self-limitation for both unity and diversity. The unity is self-limited in that it can never acquire a higher level of similarity and osmosis to the extent that these separate and multiple identities are constitutive of the common identity, of the European unity-as-identity. At the same time diversity is self-limited as the slogan posits that none of these interlocking and integrated identities will challenge the very existence of a European unity-as-identity.

Indeed the 'Unity in Diversity' motto seeks to achieve a middle ground between a federalist view of a united Europe with a quasi-national identity that resembles a national identity in its features and functions, and a universalistic view of European identity as a set of moral values that would however fall short from distinguishing Europeanness from a universalistic culture of human rights (Delanty and Rumford, 2005, p. 63-64).

At the same time, there are a few problematic points in this version of European identity that point neither to unity nor diversity but actually



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turn diversity into unity. First, this view risks reifying regional, ethnic or national identities by taking them as given and static. The contestation and amalgamation or tension is recognized only at the European level and the sub-European levels are taken for granted. However, this view overlooks important levels of collective identity contestation and transformation that take place at the national and sub-national levels (see also Spohn and Triandafyllidou, 2003). Such a vision of 'unity in diversity' elevates diversity to a constitutive element of identity (even if this sounds paradoxical), but at the same time makes this higher level of identity merely a reflection of the unity. This concurrently overlooks the capacity of the unity-in-diversity process to generate social change and further transform both European identity and the national, local or ethnic identities that are included within it.

A second risk that the 'unity in diversity' identity model involves is that it eventually completely loses its cultural content and remains an empty shell. It actually is a form of cultural communication and exchange or a way of engaging with cultural diversity but is void of any cultural essence. Such a view conforms to Habermas' idea of constitutional patriotism in that it signals a way of engaging with diversity through public critique and deliberation (according to Habermas). The risk arises that such a type of identity is too 'cold,' too culturally 'naked,' to matter for people. Hence, we run into the risk that European identity becomes irrelevant.

Third, it remains unclear how much diversity is included in the European diversity-as-identity notion. Ethnic minorities, people who may be citizens or long terms residents of Europe, having moved to Europe two or three generations ago (often as part of post-colonial migration waves), put the 'unity in diversity' perspective to the test. How much diversity is included in this unity? Are people of dark or black skin colour considered as



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Europeans? Is 'Europeanness' a civic and territorial identity that can be acquired by anyone or are there some ethnic or racial boundaries that cannot be crossed? Are all Europeans white or Christian? And also what about minorities that are European for a thousand years, like the Roma and still not considered as fully European because they are seen as culturally deviant to the modern European way of life? In the following section we try to deconstruct some of these notions and cast light as to the 'colour' of European identity.

Looking at the history of Europe, racism has been part of both the presumed cradle of European civilization, notably classical Greece with its slavery system, and again very strongly in the Age of Discovery (1700s). While transatlantic slavery was abolished two centuries ago, it was only after the Holocaust that biological racism was repudiated in Europe. Still, despite the spreading of the values of the Civil Rights movement in North America in the 1960s, post-colonial immigration brought the question of 'colour' dramatically to the fore in European political debates again in the 1960s and 1970s. In France, the question of racism and of the construction of 'blackness' was discussed critically already in the 1950s (Fanon, 1952; Genet, 1958). While in Britain the issue acquired prominence from the 1960s onwards and was very eloquently analysed by Paul Gilroy (1987) in his famous book *There ain't no black in the Union Jack* (where the Union Jack is the national flag).

More recent debates (Modood, 1992; 2010) point to how religion and particularly Islam has become the new 'racial marker' as ethnic minorities mobilise on the basis of ethnic and religious disadvantage rejecting an imposed 'black' political identity. While Modood's arguments are mainly informed by British society, they are applicable in other European countries too. Indeed religious discrimination was recognized officially as a mode of



discrimination in the European Directive of 2000 (Council Directive 2000/43/EC, 26 June 2000). The principle of equality and protection against discrimination for grounds of religion and beliefs was further reinforced through the Equality Act of 2006. These changes reflect a growing concern with the phenomenon of Islamophobia or Muslimophobia that has been growing in several European countries during the last 20 years (Erdenir, 2012).

The negotiation of cultural diversity within national identity has become more complicated, perhaps paradoxically, as European identity has been evolving into a salient (even if contested) cultural and/or political category in the 1990s after the Maastricht Treaty which created a European citizenship. The introduction of EU citizenship came at the wake of the 1989 landslide geopolitical changes and the historical reconnection of Europe after the implosion of the Communist regimes. Both the old member states of the European Union and the newly emerging nation-states in Central Eastern Europe had to adapt to the new conditions. They had to re-define their geopolitical and cultural positions within the enlarging European Union (Triandafyllidou and Spohn, 2003).

### **3.4 Research on European identity: Opening Questions, Foreclosing answers**

European Commission has fostered research in the so-called European Research Area through its Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development, also called Framework Programmes. Within this context, already since the late 1980s research in the humanities and social sciences has been considered a favourable platform for the support



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of cultural heritage and for contributing in shaping a new narrative for Europe by examining how a European public sphere and cultural space could emerge. Since a comprehensive list of relevant EU projects (in most cases engaging several national research institutes) is neither desirable nor feasible within the scope of this paper, we will just point out several tendencies emerging throughout the years of EU-funded research. European identity/identities has been a research topic on the European Commission's agenda since the 1990s and the 5th Framework Programme; see, for instance, the IDNET multidisciplinary network 'Europeanization, Collective Identities and Public Discourses',<sup>9</sup> the EURONAT project investigating representations of Europe and the nation in Member States (current and prospective at the time of the project's realization)<sup>10</sup>, or the PIONEUR project ('Pioneers of European Integration from below') studying the interplay between mobility and the emergence of European identity among national and foreign citizens in the EU.<sup>11</sup> The 6th and 7th Framework Programmes (2002-2006, 2007-2013) also included numerous projects having a bearing on processes of identity formation and identification with (in) Europe and the EU, this time (apart from providing more funding, also) from a more multidisciplinary and innovative perspective, both in terms of methodology and scope: EUROIDENTITIES studied the evolution of European identity through biographical methods, MEDIA & CITIZENSHIP examined how transnational television cultures reshaped political identity in the European Union, MeLa was about

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.eui.eu/Documents/RSCAS/Research/ResearchTools/200303IDNETFinRep.pdf> (last accessed on 19th January 2016)

<sup>10</sup> [http://cordis.europa.eu/pub/citizens/docs/eur22009\\_euronat.pdf](http://cordis.europa.eu/pub/citizens/docs/eur22009_euronat.pdf) (last accessed on 19th January 2016)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.obets.ua.es/pioneer/about.php> (last accessed on 19th January 2016)



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'European Museums in an Age of Migrations' and DYLAN explored language dynamics and the management of diversity.<sup>12</sup>

The research findings from these initiatives have been reviewed, synthesized, briefed, communicated and used for providing recommendations to both EU and national officials and stakeholders through policy briefs and targeted events.<sup>13</sup> There have been, however, several misleading predispositions and unfortunately persisting gaps in what concerns the projects' research agendas since the early 2000s: first, there is a constant but unresolved need to locate bottom up research strategies that would allow findings to emerge from methodology and data and would provide those unrepresented subject of research with agency; equally unresolved is the urge to bridge academic research with policy-making, albeit persistent efforts to find ways to link the two; moreover, Europe is in many cases seen as an essential entity founded upon established core values: in this case, top down mechanisms and EU policies are sought that would enhance identification are sought. These gaps and needs have been raised in relevant policy reviews<sup>14</sup> and contributed to the

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<sup>12</sup> For a list of more than 20 diverse research project conducted under the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Framework see [https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy\\_reviews/development-of-european-identity-identities\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_reviews/development-of-european-identity-identities_en.pdf). See also EuroIdentities website containing information on relevant projects <http://www.euroidentities.org/Links/OtherFP7projects/> (last accessed on 19th January 2016)

<sup>13</sup> See for instance FP7 Projects' Synopsis *Pluralism and religious diversity, social cohesion and integration in Europe: Insights from European Research*, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project\\_synopses/pluralism-and-religious-diversity\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project_synopses/pluralism-and-religious-diversity_en.pdf) (last accessed on 19th January 2016)

<sup>14</sup> See 'The Development Of European Identity/Identities: Unfinished Business' (2013), available at [https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy\\_reviews/development-of-european-identity-identities\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_reviews/development-of-european-identity-identities_en.pdf)



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drafting of the current 8th framework known as 'Horizon 2020' and in particular to the cluster on the issue of European identities that is characteristically entitled 'Europe in a changing world: Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies'; departing from the aim of reducing inequality and social exclusion, this call purports to pave the way for the European society to critically reflect upon itself, including its historical, cultural and normative roots. For this reason, it focuses on the transmission of European cultural heritage, identity formation, heritage of European wars, European collections of archives, museums and libraries and most importantly digital opportunities.

However, even if previous omissions and preconceptions have been taken into account, research agendas are still faced with more or less the same challenges: instead of understanding what actually happens, research in many cases is absorbed with what ought to have happened in the past or happen in the future. EU policy needs/agendas and academic research remain still two separate worlds, while the subjects of research (EU citizens along with migrants/ refugees populations) cannot still become part of the research, but rather become gradually more distant. Under current circumstances, when inequality and social exclusion are not imminent threats, but daily routine for many across Europe, research should not aim at eliminating tensions before even accessing or understanding them. Questions should engage with societal conflict, divisions within and across nations, and those non privileged, as it would be them who should indicate what Europe is and is not in practice and how it should be.



### **4. Gathered input from stakeholders and Thematic Areas selected for further research**

In this concluding section, this paper drafts some specific gaps and suggestions for further research departing from the above points and mainly emerging from stakeholders' workshops. The first concern raised by our participants concerned the very topical issue of the links between European identity and Islam; this urged us to reflect upon two thematic axes concerning the instrumentalization of cultural heritage and the role of secularism in the formation and practice of European identity. The second issue debated concerned the rising inequality across Europe as emerging from intra EU mobility, a debate that led to further two thematic axes, one concerning citizens' participation in defining what Europe is and the role of migration cultural heritage as an agent of inclusion.

#### **4.1 The links between European identity and Islam - a debate still open**

During the last 25 years, Europe has experienced increasing tensions between national majorities and ethnic or religious minorities, more particularly with marginalized Muslim communities as well as with intra-EU migrants of Roma ethnicity. Conflicts with migrants and ethnic Muslim minorities have included violent clashes in northern England between native British and Asian Muslim youth (2001); civil unrest amongst France's Muslim Maghreb communities (2005); and the Danish cartoon crisis in the same year following the publication of pictures of the prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper.



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Muslim communities have also come under intense scrutiny in the wake of the terrorist events in the United States (2001), Spain (2004) and Britain (2005) which also contributed to growing scepticism amongst European governments with regard to the possible accession of Turkey into the EU, a country which is socio-culturally and religiously different from the present EU-28 (European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2006). The first decade of the twenty-first century has also been marked by local mosque building controversies in Italy, Greece, and France, Germany or the Netherlands (Saint Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005) and the 2009 referendum in Switzerland which introduced a constitutional amendment banning the building of new minarets in the country.

Tensions rose further after the tragic events in Norway in the summer of 2011 when an extreme right wing supporter put a bomb in the centre of Oslo and then opened up fire in a summer youth camp in the Norwegian island of Utoya, killing in total more than 80 people and injuring hundreds of others. It can be argued that the challenges that cultural and religious diversity pose in European societies have come full circle engaging both Muslim fundamentalists and right wing extremists in violent actions expressing feelings of marginalisation and alienation from a mainstream culture.

The Cartoons debate has become tragically topical again ten years later in 2015 with the killing of 17 people in Paris in early January 2015. The victims included nearly the entire line of editors and cartoonists of the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, a French policeman (of Muslim religion), and four customers in a Jewish grocery shop. The perpetrators were three young and socio-economically disadvantaged French men of Muslim religion, self-proclaimed as jihadist fighters killing the Charlie Hebdo editorial team to vindicate the publication of cartoons and comments



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considered offensive to the Prophet. A similar incident took place in Copenhagen on 14 February 2015 where again a socio-economically marginalized Dane of Palestinian origin attacked a café and killed a film director and then a guard in a Jewish synagogue before being gunned down by Danish police officers. Most recently, on 14 November six coordinated terrorist incidents took place on the same night in the heart of the French capital Paris leaving 118 dead and nearly a hundred persons seriously injured.

The links of such tragic incidents have fuelled debates about European Muslims and the tendency of a tiny but still important number of estranged youth among them to espouse a terrorist vision of Islam, inspired by developments in the Middle East and engaging in such violent acts. Those debates are further intensified in face of the most recent refugee flows from the Middle East to Europe. A number of thinkers and politicians have advanced the claim that it is impossible to accommodate certain minority groups, notably Muslims, because their cultural traditions and religious faith are incompatible with a secular and liberal notion of Europe.

Others have argued that Muslims can be accommodated in the socio-political order of European societies provided they adhere to a set of civic values that lie at the heart of the European identity and that reflect the secular nature of society and politics in Europe. Others still have questioned the kind of secularism that underpins state institutions in Europe. Some writers have also argued that citizen attitudes towards religion in Europe are not secular but rather lean towards individualized forms of religiosity. Hence the tension with Muslims lies at the level of public or private expression of religious feelings rather than on religiosity as such.



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The debate has been intensive in the media, in political forums as well as in scholarly circles. In policy terms, the main conclusion drawn from such debates has been that multicultural policies have failed and that a return to a civic assimilationist approach (emphasizing national culture and values) is desirable. This approach has been also discussed at the European level with regard to the place of Islam within the institutional make-up and the membership of the European Union.

Indeed this has been a question debated in relation to Turkey's accession in the EU. Turkey had been for long one of Europe's historical 'others' as an heir of the Ottoman empire, and the discussion over its accession struck a chord with those that have considered Europe as historically a Christian continent. Back in 2004, a member of the European Parliament put it eloquently:

Leaving aside the cost because they [Turkey] are very backwards ... [it is] Christendom, the area where Christians roughly were during the Middle Ages ... We all [identified with] the Church, whether we [went] or didn't. But Turkey is an Islamic country – it is entirely different ... The real problem is that the differences between Christendom and Islam are quite big (quoted in Lahav, 2004, p. 161)

The discussion on Turkey's 'Europeanness' was particularly centred on Islam and further contributed to showing that the cultural diversity that would be incorporated in a European identity had some limits, even if Muslims are to be found as native minorities in several European countries like Greece, Bulgaria or Albania.



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While a large part of the public and the political debate on Turkey's 'belonging' to Europe may have been driven by political expediency (both for internal consumption by voters who might have opposed Turkey's accession and for external reasons, to negotiate power balances within the EU and beyond), there is certainly a cultural crux, as it puts to the test the assumption that Europe is a 'Christian continent'. In essence, the whole debate rather concerns the type of secularism that is practiced in different European countries, ranging from the concept of *laïcité* in France which leaves no room for religion in public life and constrains the behaviour of people in public places, to the much softer versions of secularism practiced in Britain, Italy or Germany where recognized religions have a public role to play and are supported by the state.

The view that Islam purports a more forceful presence of religion in politics or that the Muslim tradition propagates gender inequality, one that is contrary to both European and national legislation, has fuelled debates on whether and to what extent the claims of European Muslims can and should be accommodated.

### **4.2 The instrumentalization of European cultural heritage and the role of secularism in defining European identity**

Even though there are neither easy answers nor one-size-fit-all policies to address such issues, these debates have paradoxically contributed to making a sense of European identity more distinctive for European secular or Christian majorities thus leaving Muslim immigrant communities or also Muslim native populations in a rather disadvantaged position (Modood et al., 2006; Triandafyllidou et al., 2012). Indeed these views were discussed in



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the Cultural Base stakeholder event and introduced by stakeholders working in the area of European culture and identity. There is a certain ambivalence and questions raised as to whether historically Islam belongs to Europe and as to whether Islam is compatible with core European values. These views of course open up the debate as to which are the core European values on which we can all agree and share. Our stakeholders pointed out the importance of the historical grounding of European identity in unity and diversity, alliances and conflict, but also some core values such as Enlightenment, moderate secularism and democracy.

While a lot of research as well as cultural policy programmes have been devoted to these issues, as seen above, what seems to be needed is a contextualization and re-casting of the questions posed. While most research focuses on evaluating who can and who cannot fit in Europe and attempts to discover ways to introduce more diversity while the main (Christian or secular) core that brings Europe together is maintained, we should shift research attention to what actually Europe is thought to be. Linking the existing gaps in research and policy with our stakeholders' concerns, we consider fruitful, if not urgent in face of current developments to reflect upon and investigate the normative content of 'European identity': what does that mean to be 'European', how has this identity been shaped, by whom, what kind of inclusion and exclusion processes does this trigger- both within and beyond Europe? As a result, we propose the following two Thematic Areas for research:



### ***Thematic Area 1: The instrumentalization of cultural heritage by state actors or semi-state actors for inclusion/exclusion of specific groups in society***

Scholarly literature has dealt with the issue of the instrumentalization of national heritage for the construction of national identity that gives shape to the 'self' and the 'other'. The same applies for the construction of the European identity: transnational, state and semi-state actors make use of specific kinds of material and non-material cultural heritage so as to construct normative types of 'being European' that unavoidably generate dividing lines among different populations both within and beyond Europe. Instead, thus, of measuring levels of identification with the idea of Europe, academic research and cultural practice should unravel the different actors, geographies and power relations engaged in the creation of these identities that form a 'European canon'.

Tangible and non-tangible heritage sites reflect a European identity made out of ideas and practices related to (among others) liberalism, democracy, secularism, rationalization and individual human rights: in what ways are these values understood, used and translated by political parties, national governments and European institutions so as to create outgroups? How does this European cultural heritage paradigm create inequalities within nations, among European states and between Europeans and non-Europeans? For instance, in which ways is the contemporary European identity translated in practice in a culture of mobility, consumption and higher education? Is this lifestyle associated with 'being European' accessible to all age/ gender/ class groups within European states? In which ways did the ongoing financial crisis trigger an intra-European division between the countries of the North and those of the South, which are thought as not having rationalized and progressed enough so as to become



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sufficiently developed and truly European? How do right-wing populist parties, but also national governments instrumentalize liberalism and gender rights as values that differentiate European to Muslim populations?

### ***Thematic Area 2: What is the role of religion or secularism in defining European identity and what kind of exclusionary/inclusionary effect does it have?***

As seen above, during the last 25 years, Europe has experienced increasing tensions between national majorities and ethnic or religious minorities, more particularly with marginalized Muslim communities that have also come under intense scrutiny in the wake of the terrorist events in the United States (2001), Spain (2004) and Britain (2005) and especially the most recent ones in Paris (2015). A claim gaining in popularity both in academic literature and in public understandings of identity issues is that it is impossible to accommodate certain minority groups, notably Muslims, as their cultural traditions set by religious faith are incompatible with a secular and liberal culture prevailing in and characterizing Europe. While there has been a plethora of academic studies and cultural works attempting to engage with the issue of Islam in Europe so as to combat Islamophobia and enhance religious diversity, current events and the rise of exclusionary and anti-Muslim ideas around Europe demonstrate the urgent need for a broader research and practice-based agenda posing a different set of questions.

This cluster forms part of the first topic under discussion that attempts to reveal those core European values that give shape to a normative 'European identity' and its exclusionary functions, while at the same time shedding



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light in particular to the specific question of religion within Europe. On the one hand, research and action projects should engage in discussing the historical roots of Islam in the wider Europe (mentioning, for instance, the role of Moors in Spain or Ottomans in the Balkans) and bringing to the fore the underestimated multi ethnic and multi religious aspects of the European cultural heritage (through its Ottoman, Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires), in an attempt to re-write/re-narrate national histories and alternative European identities. On the other hand, scholars should put into question the dilemma 'secularism vs. religion' by exploring whether this corresponds to people's lived experiences around Europe. To what extent secularism has been identified with progress and rationalization and religion with a 'withering away' remnant of the past, why and what has been the cultural impact of such a binary understanding of identity? What would happen, if we reverse the questions posed, for instance: Can religious feelings and practices enhance values considered to be at the core of the European idea, such as diversity, equality, solidarity, and altruism, values? Or, is it possible that secularism can be instrumentalized and trigger feelings and practices that challenge tolerance or other liberal values associated with Europe?

### **4.3 Mobility, inequality and the role of elites in Europe**

Intra-European mobility can be seen as the quintessence of Europeanness and intra EU movers as the forerunners of a fuller European integration. At the same time, the process of mobility brings with it socio economic and cultural diversity that may create challenges for receiving societies and thus for Europe at large.



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Eurostat data on the number of EU nationals living in a member state other than their own show low levels of overall intra EU mobility (Recchi and Triandafyllidou 2010; Recchi 2013), which, however, has significantly increased mainly after the accession of the new member states of Central Eastern Europe in 2004 and 2007. Earlier studies, i.e. before the integration of the new member states into the EU, show low levels of mobility within Central Eastern Europe (Paci et al. 2007). This may in fact suggest that high mobility from these countries was an exceptional phenomenon, intricately linked with their transition experience and access to EU membership. A 2010 Eurobarometer report on geographic and labour market mobility suggests a rather widespread sedentary attitude among Europeans.<sup>15</sup>

Most recently, however, and in face with the acute protracted economic crisis, there has been an increase of intra EU migratory flows from the Southern European periphery to the European North, as is the case for instance with numerous highly skilled graduates, such as doctors, engineers or academics, moving from Greece to the UK or Germany, the so-called 'brain drain' phenomenon (Labrianidis and Vogiatzis, 2013). Both earlier studies on central Eastern Europe (Paci et al. 2007) and recent ones on southern Europe (Jauer et al. 2014; Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2014) testify indeed that men, younger people and more educated ones are more likely to migrate than women, older and less educated persons. In other words, those who are unemployed and lower skilled are more likely to be stuck into a localised unemployment trap and may not be responsive to regional labour market disparities. Moreover, there has been a lot of attention recently on presumed welfare tourism of EU citizens going,

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<sup>15</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_337\\_sum\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_337_sum_en.pdf) last accessed on 15 November 2015.



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supposedly, to countries with generous welfare states to take advantage of unemployment or family allowances. The debate has been particularly bitter in the UK but not only (REFs to be added). These studies point to the fact that intra EU mobility is a multi-faceted phenomenon engaging different types of EU citizens and impacting in many ways on the labour market and society of their receiving member states.

Moreover, there is a small but significant proportion of EU citizens whose intra-EU mobility is 'unwanted' by the receiving Member States, and for whom moving to another member state is a continuation of their poverty trap. Young Roma people moving across the EU, pose a unique set of challenges to the EU and member states who are often subjected to discrimination and violation of rights. Indeed, the most important cultural diversity challenge in Europe in the 2000s has been posed by the Roma people, particularly those who have been moving among different European countries in search of better life and work opportunities. While concerns about the exercise of the right to free movement have been registered in several countries including Britain and the Netherlands, one of the harshest reactions targeting Roma people in particular came from the French government which repatriated thousands of Romanian and Bulgarian citizens of Roma ethnicity in 2009 and 2010. The issue attracted criticism not only by civil society organizations but also by the EU Commissioner on Justice, Viviane Redding, who asked for written explanations by the French Minister of Interior. The whole issue drew attention to the challenges that intra-European mobility creates as well as to the discrimination that Roma people experience in everyday life and their disadvantaged socio-economic situation across central eastern, southern and western Europe.



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Even if in theory intra EU mobility is considered to be the essence of European identity, especially during the last few years it has been experienced as a reflection of the complexities embedded in such a concept highlighting the dividing lines emerging in the continent: there are 'winners' and 'losers' in the European integration process, both within and across the countries, and their views about what is Europe and whether they are Europeans or who is a European are shaped also due to their socio economic positioning and, as a result, can vary significantly. These diverse and often incompatible views, however, do not appear as relevant and are not recognized or reflected in the public debates on what it means to be European or what the core values of Europe are. That seems to resonate with the enduring debate about the democratic deficit and crisis of legitimacy in the EU, which has been crucially re invigorated during the last crisis-ridden years: while the question whether European Union is democratically legitimate has been hotly debated among scholars already since the early 1990s (Schmidt, 2013), deteriorating economics and increasingly volatile politics since 2008 have combined with EU policy responses that have privileged technocratic solutions over democratic accountability (Bellamy, 2013). Distrust in the EU democratic functioning has been compounded by the imposition of austerity measures by creditor states to debtor states beyond any democratic decision-making mechanisms. Economic disparities have been magnified between the member states and political cultures and identifications of European citizens appear to be gradually disparate, if not conflicting (Streeck, 2015), and thus not easily manageable towards a common democratic system, let alone, identity. According to Eurobarometer public opinion polls (2013), public trust in European Union has recently fallen to historically low levels (from 57% in 2007 to 31% in 2013), while six out of ten Europeans think that their voice does not count in the EU (2015). At a time when inequality and



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social problems (mainly rising unemployment) aggravate across the EU, citizens lose their trust in supranational EU institutions which are perceived as run by unaccountable political elites totally detached from citizens' concerns and involvement. Intra EU mobility thus brings to the fore the larger issue of socio economic inequality and its relevance for our understanding of European identity. The meaning of the Unity in Diversity slogan is once again being challenged: how much intra EU diversity is actually included in Europe, what kind of diversity is actually permitted, and how much is publicly discussed? Under which conditions is diversity related with inequality? In which ways is diversity linked with solidarity? How important are socio economic arguments in enacting European solidarity?

### **4.4 Citizen participation in defining Europe and migration cultural heritage as an agent of inclusion**

The issue of a more participatory approach in the public debate on what it means to be European might appear too theoretical and thus irrelevant during an era of acute economic crisis that deteriorates living conditions and feelings of insecurity for many across the continent; however, it is exactly for this reason that we should urgently deal with it in order to tackle the issue of rising inequality within Europe. This is why several participants in our stakeholder event expressed the need for participation and empowerment of ordinary citizens in Europe, whether they belong to minority or majority faiths/cultural groups/linguistic minorities, different age groups with varying socio-economic backgrounds. Lay people should take an active role not (only) in answering what is European identity, but in setting themselves the questions that should be asked about European identity and especially the importance of culture as a factor of inclusion.



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Towards this respect, many among the participants mentioned the role of artists, cultural operators, curators, cultural associations and networks of youth, people from the artistic professions and from the cultural studies as important agents that should be empowered within such a participatory public discussion. Arising from these reflections voiced during the stakeholders' workshops, a number of research questions to be further explored in the future include: How are elite official discourses and understandings of European identity and culture different from those of ordinary citizens? Which are the young people's views over EU and national cultural and identity problematizations? How do large minority populations, notably Muslims and Roma, conceive of Europe and European identity? In other words, how is European identity understood by different socio economic strata of the population? What is, then, the relationship between European identity and class? Faced with the urgent need to engage citizens' participation into debates on what is European identity and culture and how this should respond to contemporary challenges of terrorism and fundamentalism, both in terms of research and action projects, we propose the following two further Thematic Areas of Research:

### ***Thematic Area 3: Forms and levels of participation of citizens and civil society in debates on European identity and its inclusionary/exclusionary aspects and the role that cultural heritage plays within this***

Against the background of the ongoing protracted economic crisis that marginalizes specific nation-states within Europe, as well as groups within and across nations and sharpens an already declining citizens' trust in European institutions and political elites, research and action projects should shift their focus of inquiry. The question should not be whether



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people feel European or not and, thus, how they could become 'more European', as there is no coherent, homogeneous and static European identity with which one should feel identified. Having dealt above with deconstructing the normative aspects of such a 'European identity' and the instrumentalization of European cultural heritage by state actors within this context (thematic axes a and b), emphasis should now be put, instead, on asking and understanding what it means to be European under current critical circumstances as experienced by ordinary citizens and how can culture respond to contemporary hardships and challenges of terrorism and fundamentalism. Within this scope, we should attempt to decipher which are the aspects of the national and European cultural heritage that are perceived and felt as important and valuable in making people feel related with each other in a horizontal way across Europe and that at the same time are not perceived as in antagonism with their own ethnic, national or cultural identities.

On the one hand, thus, scholars and cultural practitioners should put into question their own analytical categories and ways of thinking so as to engage people not in filling in preconceived and top down inquiries, but in taking an active role in drafting themselves the debates about culture, identity, inclusion and diversity. Towards this end, attempts should be made to actively engage in debates and cultural projects those groups of people that most often remain in the margins of European identity or do not perceive themselves a capable to perform this European cultural heritage in their everyday lives resorting instead to their national, ethnic or religious selves: minority populations across Europe, notably Roma and Muslims; citizens belonging to older age groups that do not have access to processes of intra-European mobility or/and e-resources and social media information; the increasingly populated group of young unemployed and



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precarious people who feel marginalized from the culture of individual rights, consumption, mobility and productivity that forms inherent part of the European identity.

### ***Thematic Area 4: The European migration cultural heritage. What is it, how has it developed, and its inclusionary/exclusionary potential***

Against the background of the rise of far-right across Europe, the perceived failure of multiculturalism, the ongoing refugee crisis and the recent challenges of terrorism fundamentalism, the issue of migration history in Europe as part of the European cultural heritage becomes acute. While there has already been interest in and production both at the academic level (publications and conferences) and the cultural practice level (notably in terms of memory institutions such as museums and libraries) so as to frame migrant experiences as part of the European cultural heritage, however, it seems as further pathways should be traced and different sets of questions posed in order to enhance dialogue and social inclusion.

This cluster forms part of the third topic under discussion that attempts to engage a variety of groups into participating in debates about European identity by focusing on religious and ethnic minorities around Europe. How can the lived experiences and rituals of refugees, migrants, nomadic people and people in transit contribute and shape European cultural heritage? What kind of (diverse) stories do migrants narrate about Europe and Europeans? In what ways have they have already shaped what is perceived to be a European identity (in terms of food culture, rituals, architecture, clothing, but also in religious/ cultural and class terms)? How can migrants' ideas about Europe reveal aspects of cultural heritage that



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might become inclusionary for broader populations under current circumstances? Are their lived experiences related with those of the Europeans having emigrated in the past to other continents or with those of the contemporary youth immigrating within or beyond Europe due to unemployment? In which ways can their grievances, concerns and aspirations be linked with those of native populations?



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