

THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF NATIONAL,  
SUBNATIONAL  
AND EUROPEAN  
IDENTITIES  
IN EUROPEAN  
COUNTRIES



CAHIERS

EUROPÉENS

DE

SCIENCES PO

4

2000

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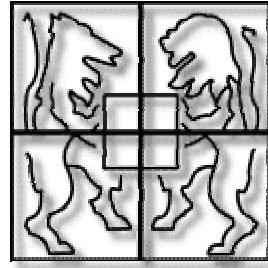
BÉATRICE

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and

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## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL, SUBNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITIES IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

### **I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FEELING OF EUROPEAN IDENTITY.**

Using the trends highlighted by Eurobarometer's surveys, three aspects of attitudes which constitute European identity will be analysed in terms of time and geography:

- *The cognitive aspect:* the way in which information on the European institutions and the citizens' knowledge of these institutions develops;
- *The evaluative aspect:* the way in which the changes in opinions held on the benefits and costs of belonging to the Community change as the EU develops;
- *The emotional aspect:* are we witnessing the emergence of a community which is based on an increasing affiliation with a Europe whose fate lies in the hands of Europeans, and is this affiliation spreading across an ever wider social spectrum class?

#### **I.1. THE COGNITIVE ASPECT OF IDENTITY.**

Two questions allow us to gauge the level of awareness of the European institutions. The first concerns the European Parliament, the legislative body, to which the members have been elected since 1979 by universal suffrage of the citizens of the Member States. The second concerns the European Commission, the executive body, public knowledge of which is totally dependent on coverage of it and its actions in the national media. These two questions are commonly entitled "Awareness of the European Parliament" and "Awareness of the European Commission" and are phrased as follows: "Have you recently seen or heard in the papers or on the radio or TV anything about the European Parliament / the European Commission ?". These are good indicators of potential interest in European affairs and the aspects of this information which are remembered.

## A. Awareness of the European Parliament

**Table 1**  
**Awareness of European Parliament**  
(% of answers 1977-1999)

*Question: Have you recently seen or heard in the papers or on the radio or TV anything about the European Parliament?*

	Yes	No	No answer
1977	49	43	8
1978	50	43	7
1979*	65	27	8
1982	54	42	4
1983	37	59	4
1984*	75	24	1
1985	61	34	5
1986	49	43	8
1987	45	50	5
1988	46	46	8
1989*	55	41	4
1990	52	42	6
1991	44	49	7
1992	55	38	6
1993	45	48	7
1994*	52	43	5
1995	63	33	4
1996	56	41	3
1997	54	40	6
1998	44	50	7
1999*	60	33	7

**Sources:** Eurobarometer 1977-1999

\* *European Parliament election years*

Over the long term there is no significant increase in public knowledge of the European Parliament. Taking into account the fluctuations, to which we shall return, we can ascertain that just over half of Europeans have heard of the European Parliament. The progression of awareness is not linear ; rather it works in cycles based on the length of an MEP's mandate. Every time there is an election, awareness of the Parliament peaks as a result of the electoral campaigns organised in each of the countries prior to the election of its MEPs, numbers which dwindle with media coverage of national campaigns.

Table 2 demonstrates that each election causes a noticeable increase in awareness of the European Parliament relative to the preceding year. The increase in awareness was 15 percent between 1978 and 1979, the year of the first elections using universal suffrage. The same phenomenon can be seen in all the following election years.

**Table 2**  
*Evolution of awareness of the European Parliament in election years compared to the previous year.*

1978-1979	+ 15 %
1983-1984	+ 37 %
1988-1989	+ 9 %
1993-1994	+ 7 %
1998-1999	+ 16 %

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1978-1999

The levels of awareness are not consolidated throughout a mandate. On the contrary, as Table 3 shows, there is a recurrent gradual downward trend of awareness resulting in a large difference between the figures for the last year of the mandate and the election year.

**Table 3**

*Evolution of awareness of the European Parliament during each term*

First term: 79-83	-28 points
Second term: 84-88	- 29 points
Third term: 89-93	- 10 points
Fourth term: 94-98	- 8 points

These results lead us to think that it is the election campaigns held in each country rather than the everyday work of the Assembly itself which gain the attention of the citizens.

The national information campaigns clearly play a decisive role: this is confirmed by the level of awareness of the Parliament in countries during their first year of membership of the Union. This score is always greater than the mean of the Union as a whole. This confirms the impact of the campaigns designed to familiarise the public with the institutions of the EU and prepare them to join. Table 4 shows that in 1986, the date of the enlargement to include Spain and Portugal, knowledge of the Parliament in these two countries was greater than average (57% in Spain and 56% in Portugal respectively compared to an average of 49%). The same phenomenon was seen in 1995 in Austria, Finland and Sweden. Even though national public opinions in the two groups of countries were very different – support for membership was strong in the South whereas the question of "Europe" was a cause of considerable division in Northern Europe - the public was largely familiar with the European Parliament on the date of their country's entry into the Union.

**Table 4**

*Awareness of the European Parliament on the accession date of new member-states*

*(Responses in %)*

EC – 1986 (12 member-states)	Spain	Portugal
49	57	56

EU – 1995 (15 member-states)	Austria	Sweden	Finland
63	70	88	74

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1986 and 1995

The decisive role of individual countries in the development of awareness of the European Parliament is confirmed by the discrepancies between the levels of awareness in the different Member States. Examining the results of surveys taken ten years apart and in years directly preceding European elections to avoid conjectural effects (1978,1988,1998) we find that in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and the Netherlands levels of awareness are always the lowest. The figures are highest in Luxembourg, Italy and, since their accession in 1998, Finland and Austria. Far from seeing a gradual reduction in national variations of awareness of the European Parliament, as its influence in European integration has grown, the dispersion in the levels of awareness across Europe has actually increased over the last 20 years. In 1998 the difference between Ireland (28%) and Finland (69%) was 41%, in 1978 the gap between the United Kingdom (44%) and Denmark (60%) was 16%, and 29% in 1988 between the United Kingdom (36%) and Luxembourg (65%).

In addition to the national variations in levels of knowledge, differences in individuals' levels of education also play their part. Table 5 shows the levels of awareness of the European Parliament by age upon leaving formal education. Taken during years of elections to the European Parliament or in the year after the elections when the results were available, we note first of all that on the cognitive question there is a strong classical relationship between the level of education and awareness of the European Parliament; the higher the level of education the higher the level of awareness of the Parliament. To demonstrate this we shall look to the latest available figures (1998); only 36% of those leaving the educational system

at the first stage had heard of the European Parliament, this rose to 43% of those aged 16-19, and 57% for those who continued studying after their twentieth birthday.

We note above all that the differences in levels of knowledge (with the exception of 1995) remain at about 20 % throughout the period examined, be it in an electoral year or not. Therefore those leaving school earlier are less likely to retain information.

**Table 5**  
*Awareness of the European Parliament according to age at the end of studies.*

	1979	1982	1984	1985	1989	1990	1994	1995	1998
	*	**	*	**	*	**	*	**	***
Under 15	60	47	69	54	62	44	46	58	36
16-19	68	58	77	63	72	52	53	62	43
20 and above	86	72	90	80	87	66	65	71	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>44</b>
Difference between the - 15s and the 20 and 20+	+26	+25	+21	+26	+25	+22	+19	+13	+21

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1979-1998

\* year of European Parliament elections.

\*\* year after election

\*\*\* latest figures

### **B. Awareness of the European Commission**

As regards awareness of the European Commission, we use a number of shorter and discontinuous questions which give us the same tendencies.



**Table 6**  
***Awareness of the European Commission***  
*(% of responses 1987-1996)*

*Question: Have you recently seen or heard in the papers or on the radio or TV anything about the European Commission?*

	Yes	No	No answer
1987	43	51	6
1988	44	60	6
1989	51	44	5
1990	48	46	6
1991	39	55	6
1992	50	43	6
1993	45	49	6
1995	59	36	5
1996	51	44	5

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1987-1996

Paradoxically, even though the Commission's decisions have much greater impact on national systems than those of the Parliament, the public's awareness of it is even lower than of the Parliament. Insofar as we can judge, taking into account the discontinuity of the questions, the Commission benefits from high levels of awareness of the Parliament in election years or in the years straight afterwards. After the European elections in 1989, 51% of those surveyed said that they had "recently read in the newspaper, heard on the radio or seen on the television something about the European Commission"; in 1995 the figure was 59% (no figure for 1994). A survey carried out in eleven of the fifteen EU countries<sup>1</sup> in October 1998 shows that less than a third of European citizens (31%) claimed to have heard of Jacques Santer, the

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<sup>1</sup> Survey by Louis Harris France/*Le Monde* carried out in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom, a total of 11567 European citizens.

Commission President, if only by name. Less than 20% of Europeans knew the President’s fellow Commissioners.

**C. Self-assessment of knowledge about Europe**

A recent question, included since 1997, asks those surveyed to evaluate the level of their knowledge of the European Union, its policies and its institutions on a scale of 1 to 10.

**Table 7**  
*Self-evaluation of levels of knowledge about Europe.*  
 (% of responses on a scale of 1 to 10)

*Question: Using this scale, how much do you feel you know about the European Union, its politics, its institutions? (show card with the scale)*

	1997	1998	1998	1999
Know almost nothing (1-2)	25	22	24	22
Know a bit (3-5)	50	52	50	52
Know quite a lot (6-8)	21	23	23	22
Know a great deal (9-10)	2	2	2	2
No answer	3	2	2	2

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1997-1999

Here Europeans demonstrate a large amount of modesty: the majority of them estimate that they know “a bit” (52% in 1999 between 3 to 5). Then two groups of equal size can be seen: those who say that they know nearly nothing (22% between 1 and 2), and those who say that they know quite a lot or a great deal (24% between 6 to 10).

The responses have hardly changed since 1997, and important national differences remain in this short time. As Table 8 shows, in 1999, compared to the countries of Northern Europe the citizens of the countries of Southern Europe and the UK believe themselves to be the least

knowledgeable on European affairs. The length of time that a country has belonged to the EU has no effect on the spread of the responses.

**Table 8**

*Feelings of knowing “a lot” or “quite a lot” about Europe.  
(% of responses by countries in 1999, in increasing order)*

	1999
Portugal	11
United Kingdom	16
Spain	17
Greece	17
France	19
Ireland	21
Finland	23
Sweden	23
Italy	27
Belgium	28
Luxembourg	28
Germany	31
Denmark	32
The Netherlands	32
Austria	40
<b>EU</b>	<b>24</b>

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1999

## **I.2. THE EVALUATIVE ASPECT OF IDENTITY**

The form of European identity also depends on the evaluation made by the Europeans on the cost to and advantages of membership for their countries. Three questions put regularly over 20 years are pertinent indicators of the evolution of European identity in its evaluative aspect.

The responses to the question: *"Generally speaking, do you think that (our country's) membership of the European Union is a good thing, a bad thing or neither good nor bad?"*, makes it possible for us to evaluate the allegiance to a principle of belonging to a community. The responses to the question: *"Taking everything into consideration, would you say that (our country) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?"* allows us to more precisely evaluate the representations of the benefits brought to the country by belonging to that community.

Finally, the responses to the question: *"If you were told tomorrow that the European Union had been scrapped, would you be very sorry about it, indifferent or very relieved?"*, is according to the reasoning of the Commission itself "a test" to the preceding questions making it possible to estimate the strength or weakness of support for membership of the European Union.

**A. Opinions on the wisdom of a country's membership of the European Union fluctuate relative to three different stages of the construction of the Community.**

**Table 9**  
**Support for European Union membership**  
*(Responses in % from 1973 to 1999)*

	A good thing	A bad thing	Neither good nor bad	Don't know
1973	56	4	19	14
1974	59	6	18	9
1975	59	5	24	8
1976	53	8	26	9
1977	57	5	26	8
1978	53	13	24	10
1979	59	12	21	8
1980	55	15	22	8
1981	50	17	25	8
1982	52	14	28	8
1983	54	13	25	8
1984	55	11	27	7
1985	57	12	24	7
1986	62	9	20	9
1987	60	11	21	8
1988	58	11	25	6
1989	65	12	7	12
1990	65	20	4	12
1991	72	6	17	13
1992	60	12	22	5
1993	60	12	23	5
1994	54	13	25	5
1995	56	14	24	6
1996	54	14	26	6
1997	46	15	30	9
1998	51	12	28	9
1999	49	12	27	12

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1973-1999

In this period as a whole, the absolute majority of those interviewed in EU countries considered that their country's membership of the European Union was "a good thing". Only two years buck this trend. In 1997 and 1999, pro-European opinion fell below 50% (46% and

49% respectively). Table 9 shows that, since 1973, overall opinion can be divided into three phases.

- From 1973 until the mid-1980s, pro-European opinion stood at about 55% without any great change.
- A second period began with the relaunching of Europe in 1986 until the beginning of the 1990s. The fact that one's country is a member of the European Union is seen more and more positively: more than 60% of those surveyed stated that they thought that their country's membership of the European Union was a good thing, peaking at 72% in 1991. After 1989 we notice a return of uncertainty expressed by the response "neither good nor bad".
- Finally, a third phase of a slight reduction in pro-European opinion emerges after 1992. Pro-European opinion falls from 54% in 1992 to 49% in 1999. Their fall is not reflected by a rise in anti-European opinion in the form of seeing the EU as a "bad thing" rather by an increase in uncertain opinion, ("neither good nor bad") surpassing a quarter of those surveyed after 1992.

These three stages stand out in the evolution of public support for the construction of Europe and correspond to three important periods in the history of the construction of Europe.

- The first phase is that of the first enlargement of the Union<sup>2</sup> and of the setting up of the major European policies which had little effect on the everyday life of the citizens (Common Agricultural Policy, the European Monetary System...).
- The second phase relates to the relaunching of European integration with the signature of the Single European Act in 1986 in response not only to the economic crisis, but also to the political crisis in Europe<sup>3</sup>.
- The third phase began in the aftermath of the signing of the Treaty on European Union in 1992 which provoked fears and sometimes deception: the effects of the implementation of this treaty and the preparation of the creation of the Eurozone were felt in all of the countries which were candidates for monetary union because of austere economic policies which national governments blamed on European authorities.

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<sup>2</sup> Accession of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Denmark in 1973.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. The difficulties caused by the British accession and the financial problems which shook the European Community at the beginning of the 1980s.

**Table 10**

*Changes in pro-European opinion in each country during the three phases: European Union membership is a "good thing" for my country.*

	Stage 1973- 1985	Stage 1985- 1991	Stage 1991- 1999
Belgium	+7	+11	-28
Denmark	-13	+32	-10
Germany	-9	+15	-25
Greece*		+31	-22
Spain**		+16	-23
France	+7	+2	-31
Ireland	-1	+23	0
Italy	+3	+7	-17
Luxembourg	+17	-1	-6
The Netherlands	+14	+12	-16
Portugal**		+51	-20
United Kingdom	+6	+20	-26
<b>EU</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>+15</b>	<b>-23</b>

**Source:** Eurobarometer

\*1981-1991

\*\* 1986-1991

The relationship between support for the Union opinion and the history of European integration is confirmed by the fact that the three distinct phases are reflected in national public opinions, as shown in Table 10, which summarises changes in pro-European feelings in individual countries.

Between 1973 and 1985 changes in opinion within individual countries were slight and non-uniform. Conversely, the level of support which typifies the second period (1986-1991) is found in each of the countries apart from Luxembourg which was already in the midst of rise in support in the first period. Finally, in the last period (1991-1999), the downward trend was seen in all major countries.

These parallel movements in national opinion must not however yet be interpreted as a sign of harmonisation of opinion across all of the countries. The national figures measuring the changes in pro-European feeling mostly reflect the European average even though the levels themselves vary. Each country has its own level of positive evaluations which do not converge with the others. For example the United Kingdom is always at the bottom of the table in terms of positive feeling towards Europe, and at the other end of the scale Italians are always above average, notwithstanding fluctuations in their approval ratings.



## **B. Perceived benefits of European Union membership**

The progression in support for the European Union is equally evaluated through the perceived collective benefits from EU membership for a country and is measured by the question *"Taking everything into consideration, would you say that (our country) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?"*. Over the whole period, positive opinions are in an absolute, or at least relative, majority.

As Table 11 shows, the perception of the benefits brought about by Community membership reflects the opinions on support for European integration.

The three periods highlighted above remain important for this question. Until the middle of the 1980s, there is a noticeable stability of positive opinions on EU membership at about 50%. From 1987 to 1991 there is an upward trend in positive opinion peaking at 60% in 1990 and 1991. From 1992, reversal of the trend is clear, with pro-European sentiment no longer constituting a relative majority, sitting at an average level of 45%. The fall in positive responses is at times mirrored by a rise in negative responses (about a third) and those giving no answer.

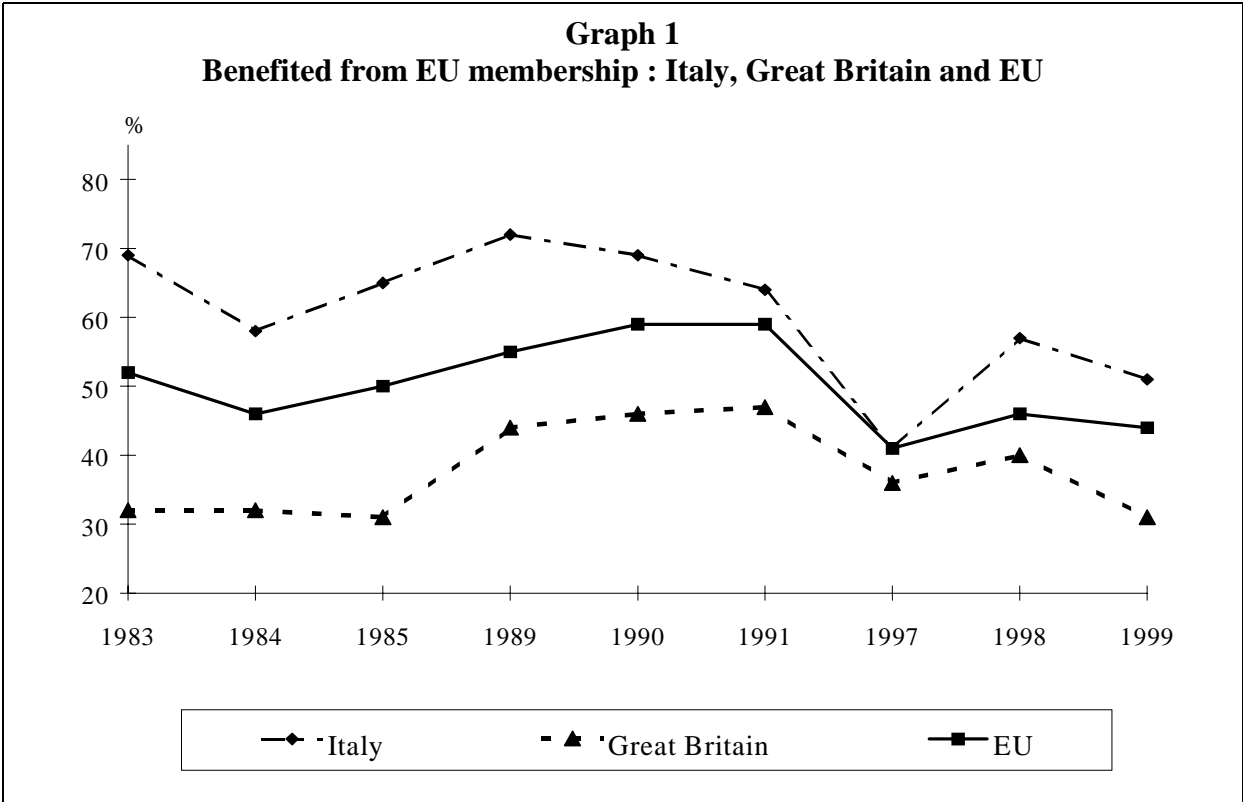
The changes in the level of those perceiving benefits of membership is not the result of contradictory national trends. As with the level of support for the European Union, trends in individual countries closely follow the general trend, without the disappearance of national differences.

**Table 11**  
***Benefit from European Union membership***  
*(Responses in % from 1983 to 1999)*

	Benefited	Not benefited	Don't know
1983	52	25	23
1984	46	30	24
1985	50	32	18
1986	46	32	22
1987	53	30	17
1988	52	30	18
1989	55	28	17
1990	59	24	17
1991	59	24	17
1992	49	33	18
1993	48	35	17
1994	47	34	19
1995	46	36	18
1996	44	35	21
1997	41	36	22
1998	46	32	22
1999	44	29	27

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1983-1999

The differences in opinion between countries display the same stability as in the previously analysed question. Returning to the example of Italy and the United Kingdom, we see that a belief that European Union membership has brought benefits to the country is always less than the Community average in the UK, higher in Italy, and that the fluctuations in these countries mirror those of the Community average (cf Graph 1).



Source : Eurobarometer 1983-1999

In the light of this we can investigate the effect of the accession of the five new member countries on the level of perceived benefits of Union membership throughout this period. Table 12 shows that an “accession” effect is clearly visible on the perception of these benefits. If we look at it over a period of two years of belonging to the Union, the positive assessment by nationals of the new members rises systematically: very steeply in the case of the two countries which joined Europe in the dynamic phase of 1986-1991 (Spain and Portugal), less so in those countries which entered the Union during the more difficult times after 1992 (Austria, Finland and Sweden).

**Table 12**

*"Accession effect": perception of benefits at the date of accession, or the first available date and two years later*

	Benefits at accession	Benefits two years later	Change in two years
Spain (1986,1988)	9	24	+15
Portugal (1986, 1988)	37	58	+21
Austria (1997, 1999)	32	37	+5
Finland (1997, 1999)	37	43	+6
Sweden (1997, 1999)	17	21	+4

**Source:** Eurobarometer

### **C. Feeling towards the possible disappearance of the European Union.**

The question *"If you were told tomorrow that the European Union had been scrapped, would you be very sorry about it, indifferent or very relieved?"* allows us to appreciate what the process of European integration means to individuals. The percentage of those who would be "very sorry" if the Union were to be abandoned is always lower than the percentage of those who believe that EU membership is a good thing or that their country has benefited from membership. As Table 13 shows, a level of regret amounting to a relative majority of about 40% was established at the beginning of the period, and remained until the end of the 1980s, rising slightly in difficult years, 1990 and 1991. The fall in the expression of regret began in 1992 at the same time as the perception of support for European integration fell. This decline corresponds to the rise in indifferent responses which came to dominate in 1998.

Support through time for European integration, the perception of the resulting benefits and regrets expressed if the construction of the EU were to be scrapped tend to evolve in a parallel fashion.

Furthermore, opinion on European Union membership and the evaluation of benefits for the countries in the EU vary according to the same social logic: differences in opinion are strongly tied to the "cultural capital" of those questioned. In 1989, of those who had been in education for a considerable length of time, two thirds (66%) declared that membership of the EU was a "positive thing" for their country. Of those who had pursued short degree courses, less than half (41%) believed this to be the case, a difference of 25 percentage points. This notable divergence of opinion did not change over the period analysed.

**Table 13**  
***Attitude if European Union were scrapped***  
*(Responses in %)*

	Very sorry	Indifferent	Very relieved	Don't know
<b>1973</b>	41	36	10	13
<b>1974</b>	48	27	13	12
<b>1975</b>	50	30	9	11
<b>1977</b>	45	32	12	11
<b>1981</b>	37	36	16	11
<b>1982</b>	40	36	12	12
<b>1983</b>	41	39	9	11
<b>1984</b>	38	39	10	13
<b>1985</b>	41	38	11	10
<b>1986</b>	42	36	8	13
<b>1987</b>	42	37	9	12
<b>1988</b>	42	36	10	12
<b>1989</b>	43	38	8	11
<b>1990</b>	48	34	8	10
<b>1991</b>	50	35	6	9
<b>1992</b>	45	34	12	9
<b>1993</b>	42	38	11	9
<b>1995</b>	39	38	13	9
<b>1998</b>	36	39	13	12

Source: Eurobarometer

Similarly, those who have undertaken post-16 education are continually more numerous in declaring their countries' EU membership as beneficial: in 1998, 69% of those who stayed in education until the age of 20 or more gave positive responses ("benefited") whereas only 37% of those who left the system before turning 16 shared this opinion (Table 14 and Table 15).

**Table 14**

***Support for European Union membership***

*(% of responses according to terminal education age – 1975, 1991, 1998)*

	A good thing	A bad thing	Neither good or bad	Don't know
<b>1975</b>				
15 <	52	11	24	13
16-19	63	7	24	6
20 +	80	4	14	2
<b>1991</b>				
15 <	59	9	23	9
16-19	69	7	20	4
20 +	79	5	14	2
<b>1999</b>				
15 <	41	16	31	12
16-19	48	13	31	8
20 +	66	9	21	5

**Source :** Eurobarometer 1975, 1991, 1998

**Table 15**

***Benefited from European Union membership***

*(% of responses according to terminal education age – 1991 et 1998)*

	Benefited	Not benefited	Don't know
<b>1991</b>			
15 <	49	29	23
16-19	60	25	15
20 +	69	18	13
<b>1998</b>			
15 <	37	38	25
16-19	45	33	22
20 +	59	24	17

**Source :** Eurobarometer 1991 and 1998

From this analysis of the evaluative dimension of European identity, we can conclude that the three indicators used give converging results, that they evolve together and that they show general trends valid for all the countries concerned. We can also devise a classification system which divides the countries into three groupings according to national public opinion on the performance of the European Union in 1998. Table 16 shows that in eight of the fifteen countries the three positive opinions are systematically more common than the European average, demonstrating considerable confidence as regards the Union. In five other countries – Austria, Belgium, Finland, Great Britain and Sweden – the reverse is true: opinions are consistently less positive than the average. In both France and Germany, two of the original signatories of the Treaty of Rome, which have played a leading role in the construction of Europe, there are mixed feelings: the people are less favourable than average in their appreciation of Union membership and of the benefits membership brings to their countries. However a greater number of them say that they would be "very sorry" if their country were to pull out of the EU.



**Table 16***Synthesis of three indicators: "A good thing", "Benefited" and "Very sorry" (1998)*

	A good thing	Benefited	Very sorry	Synthesis
Austria	-	-	-	-
Belgium	-	-	-	-
Denmark	+	+	+	+
Finland	-	-	-	-
France	-	+	+	~
Germany	-	-	+	~
Great Britain	-	-	-	-
Greece	+	+	+	+
Ireland	+	+	+	+
Italy	+	+	+	+
Luxembourg	+	+	+	+
Portugal	+	+	+	+
Spain	+	+	+	+
Sweden	-	-	-	-
The Netherlands	+	+	+	+

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1998

+ = score above the average; - = score below the average

Over the period of 1991-1998, few countries changed their opinions overall on European performance. Only in Belgium did appreciation decline on the three indicators, in France and Germany the mixed feelings remained and there was a positive convergence of the three indicators in Denmark (Table 17).

**Table 17**

*Synthesis of three indicators : "A good thing", "Benefited" and "Very sorry" (1991)*

	A good thing	Benefited	Very sorry	Synthesis
Belgium	+	+	-	~
Denmark	-	+	-	~
France	=	-	-	~
Germany	-	-	+	~
Great Britain	-	-	-	-
Greece	+	+	+	+
Ireland	+	+	+	+
Italy	+	+	+	+
Luxembourg	+	+	+	+
Portugal	+	+	+	+
Spain	+	=	+	+
The Netherlands	+	+	+	+

**Source** : Eurobarometer 1991

+ = score above the average ; - = score below the average

### I.3. THE EMOTIONAL ASPECT OF IDENTITY.

Besides the utilitarian outlook measured in terms of cost/benefit which are examined above, membership of the EU can take the form of a more emotional attachment to or identification with Europe. The request quoted below, posed in the 1980s, points to this aspect: *"People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe as a whole. Please tell me how attached you feel to them"*.

Table 18 shows that in 1999 more than half of Europeans declared themselves as "fairly" or "very" attached to Europe (56%). However, in comparison to attachment felt towards more local areas such as the town or village (86%), the region (86%) and the country (90%), attachment to Europe still seems weak.

**Table 18**

*People's attachment to their town/village, to their region, to their country and to Europe*  
(*"Very" or "Fairly" attached - %*)

	<b>1991</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
To the town or village	86	87	86
To the region	86	90	86
To the country	90	89	90
To Europe	47	42	56

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1991, 1995, and 1999.

Yet in the 1990s, feelings of attachment to Europe increased by nearly ten per cent and gained in intensity. This is shown in Table 19 which distinguishes between "very attached" and "fairly attached".

**Table 19**  
***Attachment to Europe***  
*(responses in % - 1991, 1995, 1999)*

	"Very attached"	"Fairly attached"	Total
<b>1991</b>	12	35	47
<b>1995</b>	9	33	42
<b>1999</b>	18	38	56

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1991, 1995, 1999.

Table 20 shows that from 1991 to 1999 attachment towards Europe increased in all countries of the Union except in Greece. In this country, the proximity to the wars in Yugoslavia and the Macedonian and Cypriot questions brought about increased nationalism and a decline of identity with a Europe which, in the eyes of the Greek, does not do enough to protect national interests and concerns. However, attachment to Europe rose by over 20 percentage points in six countries and by between 10 and 18 in a further six.

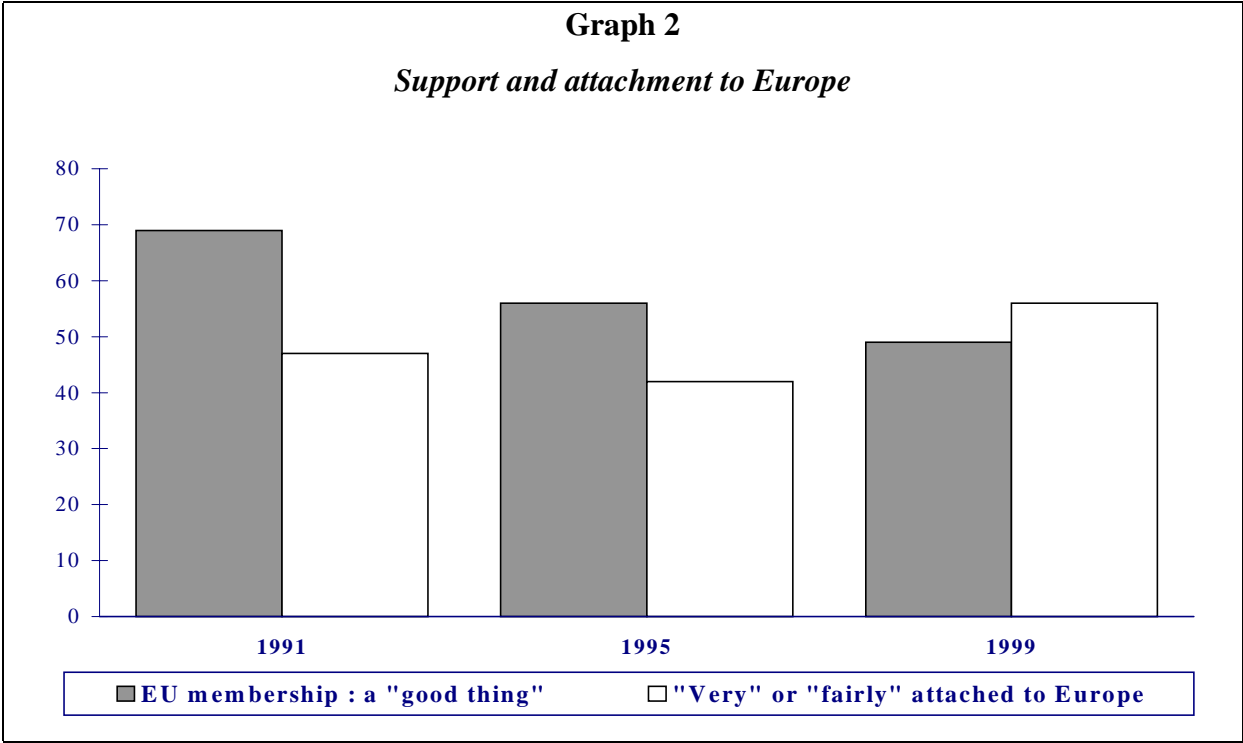
**Table 20**  
***Attachment to Europe***  
*(change calculated for 1991 to 1999)*

	Change 1991-1999
Luxembourg	+36
Sweden*	+26
Ireland	+23
Finland*	+23
Portugal	+20
The Netherlands	+18
Spain	+16
Belgium	+15
Austria*	+12
Germany	+12
Denmark	+10
Italy	+6
France	+3
Great Britain	0
Greece	-11
<b>EU</b>	<b>+9</b>

**Source:** Eurobarometer

\* Change between 1995 and 1999

Until 1995, positive opinions regarding the evaluation of benefits from European integration went hand in hand with increased attachment to Europe itself. As of this date the two aspects, evaluative and emotional, move independently. Graph 2 shows that in 1999, compared to four years previous, a greater number of Europeans consider themselves "attached" to Europe whilst the number of positive evaluations of the countries' membership of the EU fell and settled, for the first time, at a level below that of attachment.



**Source:** Eurobarometer 1991, 1995, 1999

In every country we are witnessing the development of an emotional attachment to the European Union, similar to those felt towards national communities, even though people are generally less pleased with the Union's performance. This growing sense of attachment to Europe has doubtless sharpened Europeans' expectations as well as criticisms concerning Europe's running which has been constrained yet further by the introduction of monetary union.

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1. The cognitive dimension of identity is formed by means of national information, essentially during campaigns for European parliament elections. This information does not lead to any long-term familiarisation with the institutions apart from amongst those who have received the greatest amount of formal education.
2. Since the beginning of the 1980s we have observed a drop in positive opinions on the performance of the Union as regards national interests.
3. At the same time, an irreversible attachment to a new European “community” amongst Europeans seems to be emerging.
4. As far as the evaluative and cognitive dimensions of European identity are concerned, national political cultures constitute a decisive filter in the construction of opinions as regards Europe. These opinions tend not to homogenise.

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## **II. RELATIONS BETWEEN SUBNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITIES.**

In a multilevel governance system which prevails in Europe, it is useful to assess the construction of a European identity as it measures up against competing offers of other identities. The identity of Nation-States is one example ; multi-secular historical and cultural roots on which this identity frequently relies legitimate the decisive position that States continue to hold in the organisation of the national political community. Yet another example is that of identity offered by new powers which are at the sub-national level emerging within the frame of the general process of decentralisation - undertaken by States and encouraged by the European Union.

What relations exist between the national and the European identity? What is the place of the European identity with respect to regional identities, the latter featuring the idea of territorial proximity bound to facilitate the citizens' adherence to new political communities?

### **II. 1. NATIONAL IDENTITIES LOSING VITALITY**

The identification of the relation which unites the European identity and the national identity requires, in the first place, an assessment of the vitality of national identities throughout the period of development of the European construction here examined.

Eurobarometers assess this vitality by means of an indicator measuring the intensity of national pride demonstrated by citizens of a given country, and formulated by the following question : "Would you say that you are very proud, not very proud, not proud at all to be (nationality)?" . Results feature in Table 21, which measures this "patriotic" aspect of national identity.



**Table 21**  
*National pride (in %)*

	Very proud	Fairly proud	Not very proud	Not proud at all	No answer
1970	55	27	8	5	5
1982	37	37	14	5	7
1983	38	39	13	5	5
1984	36	43	12	5	4
1985	41	39	13	4	3
1986	41	38	12	5	4
1988	36	42	13	5	4
1994	30	41	14	6	9
1997	27	44	17	7	5
Development 1970-1997	-28	+27	+11	+2	=

**Source:** Eurobarometer

Covered by nine measurements, a time period of almost 30 years shows substantial weakening of the force of national identities assessed in terms of the answer "very proud to be (nationality)".

The only measurement available for the 70s decade shows that an absolute majority of European citizens demonstrated at the time a strong sense of belonging to their national community (55% in 1970). The same measurements taken between 1982 and 1986 show that this intense identification loses ground to the point where it becomes henceforth identifiable with a more moderate allegiance measured in terms of the answer "fairly proud". From 1988 onwards, the increasingly less intense sentiment of national identity translates itself into a still positive yet less engaging answer ("fairly proud"), to the point where this latter comes to permanently dominate.

On the whole, the answer "very proud" falls back by 28 points throughout this period, to the advantage of the response "fairly proud" (+17 points), and responses featuring distance and rejection ("not very proud" and "not proud at all", which increase by 9 and 2 points respectively).

This general trend of receding vitality of strong national identities is perceived as present in almost all countries in Europe, even though the level of national pride varies significantly from country to country.

**Table 22**  
***Sense of national pride in 1997***  
*(% of "very proud" responses by country)*

	1997	Evolution 1997-1983
Ireland	70	-18
Greece	63	+6
Finland	46	
Denmark	44	+5
United Kingdom	42	-15
Spain	40	
Luxembourg	38	-13
Sweden	37	
Portugal	35	
Austria	29	
Italy	27	-13
The Netherlands	23	-11
France	21	-15
Belgium	12	-12
Germany	7	-10
Average	27	

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1983 and 1997

Table 22 shows strong variations in the intensity of national pride in different countries. In only two of them does an absolute majority of citizens in 1997 express great pride in belonging to their national community : Ireland (70%), whose status of an independent State - related to the civil war in Ulster, is the most recent of all European countries, and Greece (63%), where the question of national identity is nourished both by the presence at its borders of conflicts tearing up the Balkans and permanent tensions with Turkey. In all other countries the sentiment of great national pride concerns less than one citizen in two, while it concerns in

six countries less than one citizen in three: Austria (29%), Italy (27%), the Netherlands (23%), France (21%), Belgium (12%), Germany (7%).

Even though today one distinguishes countries more "patriotic" than others, the sense of national pride has in the space of the last two decades experienced a collapse everywhere in Europe, with the exception of Greece. In most countries, this fall amounts to at least 10 points between 1983 and 1997, independently of the level of intensity at which it was expressed.

## **II.2. EUROPEAN IDENTITY WITHOUT DYNAMISM**

In the Eurobarometer surveys, one aspect of the European identity is measured by an indicator of the sense of citizenship, whose formulation has varied. During the 80s, this sense of citizenship is assessed on the grounds of an indicator of intensity, implying compatibility of national and European citizenship, formulated as follows : "Would you think that you are not only a citizen of (country), but also a citizen of Europe? Often, sometimes, never". From 1992 onwards, the question concerning European citizenship became prominent. By means of two proposed answers, it furthermore implies the possibility of antagonism between the feeling of belonging to the national community and the European community. The formulation is the following : "In the near future, do you see yourself as : (nationality) only, (nationality) and European, European and (nationality), European only?".

Table 23 shows that, during the first half of the decade, the dominant feeling is that of complete absence of identification with Europe as a community of citizens (circa 40% of answers), while the feeling of intense belonging to the community which is Europe (response "often") remains weak and stable (between 16 and 19%). Between the two extremes, the listless "sometimes" regroups a little over one third of the answers.

**Table 23**

*Evolution of the sense of European citizenship from 1982 to 1986 (in %)*  
*(The feeling of being a citizen of one's nation as well as of Europe)*

	1982	1983	1985	1986
Often	16	16	19	19
Sometimes	37	34	36	37
Never	43	46	41	41
No answer	4	4	4	3

**Source :** Eurobarometer, 1982 - 1986

Featuring this new indicator in use throughout the 90s, Table 24 shows that the dominant feeling throughout this period is that of double allegiance - of affiliation, that is to say, to both one's State and to Europe. This sentiment dominates the claims of both an exclusively national citizenship (43%) and an *a fortiori* European one (4%).

During the years which follow the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht, the evolving trend is that of a decreased sense of citizenship as being shared between Europe and one's nation ; the change favours instead the choice of an exclusively national citizenship. The year 1994 alone represents a brief exception to the rule, as it was the year in which were elected the deputies to the European Parliament.

**Table 24**  
***Development of the sense of European and national citizenship  
from 1992 to 1998 (in %)***

	European only	(Nationality) and European	<i>Subtotal "European only" and "European and (nationality)"</i>	Nationality only
1992	4	55	59	38
1993	4	52	56	40
1994	7	56	63	33
1995	5	52	57	40
1996	5	46	51	46
1997	5	46	51	45
1998	4	50	54	43

**Source:** Eurobarometer, 1992 - 1998

Europe does not benefit from the context of general weakening of allegiances to national communities, evoked and discussed earlier on.

The acceleration of political European construction after the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam, as well as the effects of the process of integration into the Union - increasingly more felt in the everyday life - play to the disadvantage of accepting a double citizenship and to the advantage of the feeling of an exclusively national citizenship, even though this latter is increasingly less supported by a sense of "patriotic vibe".

Strong differences which exist between the different States on the question of relation and compatibility of the sense of European and national citizenship are demonstrated by the classification produced in Table 25 on the grounds of responses collected in each State in 1997. Furthermore, the results reflect relatively well the classification of the countries throughout this period, during which there is no convergence of opinions across national borders.

**Table 25**  
*Sense of citizenship by country in 1997 (1) (in %)*

	European and national citizenship / European citizenship	Exclusively national citizenship
Luxembourg	74	21
Italy	64	33
France	64	31
The Netherlands	59	40
Spain	52	44
West Germany	50	45
Belgium	47	50
Ireland	47	50
Austria	47	50
Northern Ireland	46	48
Greece	46	54
Denmark	44	55
Sweden	42	55
Finland	42	57
East Germany	40	55
Portugal	39	58
Great Britain	38	57

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1997

(1) That year's Eurobarometer (survey 47.1) included the question on national pride (cf.II.3.)

The idea of double citizenship, that is to say of European citizenship associated with national citizenship, is only dominant in five countries : Luxembourg, Italy, France, the Netherlands (founder countries of the Community in 1957), and Spain. The idea, on the contrary, of an exclusively national citizenship is massively privileged in nine countries whose membership of the European Union differs according to the given country. Germany is split between its

western part which assumes the position of other founder countries of the European Community, and its eastern part where the idea of double citizenship is in clear minority.

**II.3. NATIONAL PRIDE AND EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP : CONFLICTING RELATIONS**

Because the indicator of the sense of citizenship has changed, it is not possible to follow through time relations between national pride and European citizenship. Two recent Eurobarometer surveys feature, however, simultaneously a measurement of national pride and one of European citizenship presented in its prominent renewed formulation (1994 – Table 26 – and 1997 – Table 27).

**Table 26**  
*Sense of national pride according to choice of citizenship in 1994 (in %)*

Citizenship	National citizenship alone	European citizenship and national and European citizenship	Don't know
National pride			
Very proud	47	52	1
Fairly proud	33	66	1
Not very proud	22	71	7
Not proud at all	17	73	10
Don't know	21	68	11
Overall	34	63	3

Source : Eurobarometer 1994



**Table 27***Sense of national pride according to choice of citizenship in 1997*

Citizenship	National citizenship alone	European citizenship and national and European citizenship	Don't know	Total
National pride				
Very proud	<b>54</b>	43	2	100
Fairly proud	43	<b>55</b>	2	100
Not very proud	38	<b>58</b>	4	100
Not proud at all	40	<b>50</b>	10	100
Don't know	36	<b>51</b>	13	100
Overall	45	52	4	100

**Source** : Eurobarometer 1997

The analysis of the results reveals a major fact : strong national pride impedes both the expression of both a European citizenship and a double citizenship. The choice of double citizenship is in fact negatively correlated to the level of national pride. The observation made is that among individuals “very proud” to belong to their particular national community only a minority accepts the idea of a double citizenship (43%), while a clear majority (54%) defends the idea of an exclusively national citizenship.

Among those who are “fairly proud” of belonging to their national community, this relation favours more the idea of a double citizenship (55% against 43% of exclusively national citizenship), favoured even more 58% (against 38%) by the sense of weak national pride.

Another observation points to the fact that among individuals rejecting all idea of national pride (“not proud at all”), affirming double citizenship is less than average, and that 10% do not manifest any privileged choice. On the whole very few in number (7%), these individuals express a certain distance with regards to the process of identification with any political community whatsoever.

In a context of decline of national identities at the end of the 90s, those who on the contrary declare themselves to be “very proud” of their nationality insist on national pride in an exacerbated fashion which is incompatible with the general trend of opening up to other political communities.

This opposition is furthermore explained by the fact that the feeling of national pride and the prominence of double citizenship are fruit of two very different manners of social thought.

In fact, it turns out that, no matter the year of analysis, the greater the age of the individual and the lower the level of his or her culture, the stronger the patriotic feelings : in 1997, 35% of those most advanced in age proclaim themselves “very proud” of their nationality, while only 24% of those younger than 24 do the same. Similarly, intense patriotism characterised that same year 36% of those least educated, and only 21% of those who pursued their education past the age of 20 (Tables 28 and 29).

**Table 28***National pride according to age in 1997 (in %)*

	Very proud	Fairly proud	Not very proud	Not proud at all	Don't know
15 – 24 years	24	47	16	6	7
25 – 39 years	23	44	20	8	6
40 – 54 years	25	45	19	8	4
55 and over	35	41	15	6	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>

**Source** : Eurobarometer 1997**Table 29***National pride according to age at the end of studies in 1997 (in %)*

	Very proud	Fairly proud	Not very proud	Not proud at all	Don't know
Less than 15	36	41	15	5	3
16 to 19	25	44	18	8	5
20 and over	21	46	20	8	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>

**Source** : Eurobarometer 1997

It is the level of education that on the contrary strongly influences identification with European citizenship: in 1997 like in 1994, the sense of double citizenship – both national and European – varied by some 30 points between individuals who had pursued long years of studies (66%) and those whose educational experience was relatively short (38%) (Table 30).

**Table 30**

*Sense of national and European citizenship according to time spent in formal education in 1997 (in %)*

Age at the end of studies	European and national citizenship	Exclusively national citizenship
15 years or younger	38	<b>58</b>
16-19 years	51	45
20 years and over	<b>66</b>	30
Average	46	45

**Source:** Eurobarometer 1997

Similarly, the prominence of double citizenship is in the first place advocated by young individuals – which is the contrary of the case of patriotic feelings. It thus regularly decreases with age, and becomes a conviction of a minority past the age of 55 (Table 31).

**Table 31**

*Sense of national citizenship and European citizenship according to age in 1997 (in %)*

Age at the end of studies	Double citizenship, national and European	Exclusively national citizenship
15 – 24 years	<b>58</b>	38
25 – 34 years	<b>57</b>	38
35 – 44 years	<b>55</b>	41
45 – 54 years	<b>54</b>	43
55 – 64 years	47	<b>51</b>
65 years and over	37	<b>60</b>
Average	46	45

**Source :** Eurobarometer 1997

The idea of double citizenship is vastly established among the different kinds of elite, in general little inclined to patriotism : 70% of higher staff and 60% of those in liberal profession see themselves as future European citizens. On the contrary, the idea becomes less prominent the lower the individual's position in the social hierarchy : it is welcomed by only 40% of workers in the secondary ("blue collar") and tertiary ("white collar") sectors of production - social groups which, moreover, are the first to manifest great national pride.

The concepts which testify on one hand of the patriotic feelings and on the other hand of adherence to the notion of double citizenship are beyond any doubt fruit of two radically different types of social logic.

#### **II.4. THE RELATION BETWEEN REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITIES.**

If national pride in the 1980s does not seem to have facilitated the emergence of a sense of European citizenship, one may wish to consider the role played in that respect by regional identities.

Europe's process of entering the phase of political construction (middle of the 1980s) is accompanied by a general process of decentralisation undertaken by European States. Under the generic name "region", novel intermediary entities between the local and the national level have by now come to rival the States as sole agents of political and social integration of populations. The more so as European authorities have chosen to make of these novel entities, around which everyday life is increasingly being organised, privileged territories of EU's correctional politics of territorial inequalities, and to institutionally acknowledge them with the Treaty of Maastricht within the Comity of the Regions. This new deal of competing identity offers which are proposed to Europeans will in the first place be explored by an indicator of attachment to different territories : "Would you say you feel very attached, fairly attached, not very attached, not at all attached to your village or town / your region / your country / Europe ?".

Among the six member countries of the European Community which exhibit complete political regionalism or decentralisation<sup>4</sup>, attachment to national and infra national territories continues to be more frequent than attachment to Europe. This latter is at its highest at 29%, in Austria and Spain (Table 32).

**Table 32**  
*Levels of attachment to territories in the six countries  
 where political regionalism is complete  
 (answers “very attached” in %)*

	Europe	Country	Region	Village or Town
Austria	29	60	59	65
Belgium	23	35	48	50
France	15	47	42	50
Germany	18	41	43	53
Italy	20	49	43	55
Spain	29	61	67	69
<b>Average in Europe of 15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>52</b>

Source : Eurobarometer

More so than to their region or their country, citizens of these countries (complete political regionalism) remain most attached to the territory closest to them – the town or village as place of residence.

When seeking to classify these attachments to different territories, it is the diversity of national situations which imposes itself as the key to identifying different models.

In order to well appreciate the importance of attachments to each of the territorial levels in the six countries where the process of decentralisation of the State is the most accomplished (political regionalism and local decentralisation), levels of attachment have been represented by "+" when superior to the average of the 15 European countries, or by "-" when inferior (Table 33).

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<sup>4</sup> Regions are in those cases governed by Assemblies elected by universal suffrage.

**Table 33**

*Models of relation between territorial identities  
according to countries with completed process of regionalism (in %)*

	Europe	Country	Region	Town
Austria	+	+	+	+
Spain	+	+	+	+
Germany	+	-	-	+
Italy	+	-	-	+
Belgium	+	-	+	-
France	-	-	-	-

**Source :** Eurobarometer

+ = level of attachment superior to average of the 15 countries of EU

- = level of attachment inferior to average

Four models are identified :

- 1<sup>st</sup> model : general predisposition to territorial attachment which represents a sort of privileged social link, whatever the degree of abstraction of the territory in the eyes of individuals : Austria and Spain.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> model : model of territorial attachment polarised between two extremes : the territory of great proximity – village, town – and Europe. The two countries which illustrate this model –Germany and Italy – share an element of precocious socialisation to the European construction as founder countries, and an ancient tradition of lively local communities nourished by political and economic opposition to recent centres of the State (second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> model : model of territorial attachment polarised between Europe and the region is that of Belgium alone. Similarly to the 2<sup>nd</sup> model, Belgium demonstrates the weakness of a recent centre of the State, and an early socialisation to Europe (equally a founder country). It distinguishes itself, however, by a cultural and economic heterogeneity of its three communities – Flemish, German speaking and Walloon, whose identity claims have led to the creation of distinct regions and to the transformation of the State from a unitary to a federal form.
- 4<sup>th</sup> model : the model of the decline of territorial attachment, illustrated by France. In this country of long unitary and centralising tradition where the national level has for a long time played the central role in the process of forming territorial identities, the decline of national identity – more substantial than the European average (see the above data on

decline of national pride), is accompanied by a general receding of the idea of territorial attachment, more important in France than in any other country in Europe.

Another indicator of the Eurobarometers (Mega, in 1996) measures the sense of belonging to regional, national and European political communities no longer by means of affective attachment to territories, but by adherence to the political community as measured by an indicator of citizenship. The very formulation of this indicator presumes possible rivalry in terms of identities associated with the different territorial levels. It obliges the person questioned to hierarchically classify their allegiances with an eye to the future : “In the near future, do you see yourself as a citizen of the EU, a citizen of (respective country), a citizen of your region? Answer in order of preference”. This indicator (Table 34) shows, in the first place, the vitality of the sense of national citizenship with respect to other forms of citizenship.

**Table 34**  
*Hierarchy of feelings of citizenship (in %)*

	1 <sup>st</sup> response	2 <sup>nd</sup> response
European citizenship	16	21
National citizenship	<b>61</b>	32
Regional citizenship	22	<b>42</b>
No response	0	5

**Source:** Eurobarometer Mega Survey – 1996

When compared to the sense of regional citizenship (22%) or European citizenship (16%), national citizenship is clearly privileged as first choice (61%). The second place goes to regional citizenship with its relative majority of answers over the third, least advocated response – that of European citizenship.

Table 35 displays, by groups of countries, the hierarchy of ideas of citizenship. All groups without exception demonstrate the supremacy of the idea of national citizenship.



**Table 35**  
***Hierarchy of the sense of citizenship by countries***  
*(1<sup>st</sup> answer in %)*

	Citizen of EU	Citizen of your country	Citizen of your region
<i>Countries with complete political regionalism</i>			
Austria	11	70	18
Belgium	14	52	32
France	16	61	22
Germany	13	59	28
Italy	30	54	17
Spain	10	51	39
<i>Countries with partial political regionalism</i>			
The Netherlands	15	67	7
Great Britain	14	71	15
Greece	10	74	16
Portugal	9	64	27
Denmark	7	79	13
Finland	4	78	19
<i>Countries with administrative regionalism</i>			
Luxembourg	25	63	11
Ireland	16	77	7
Sweden	6	69	25
<b>Total of EU</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>22</b>

**Source :** Eurobarometer Mega Survey - 1996

The intensity of the sense of regional citizenship appears little correlated with the length of time during which a country has experienced political regionalism or the degree to which the latter is developed. Within the group of countries where this regionalism is the most accomplished, the intensity of the sense of regional citizenship in Spain and in Belgium contrast with its feeble level in Austria and in Italy. Furthermore, Italians consider themselves more frequently citizens of the Union (30%) than of any given region in Italy (17%). This particular model is only found in two other countries where the offer of regional identity is missing : Ireland and Luxembourg.

An examination of "citizenship pairs" imposes itself with the analysis of relations between European, national and infra national identities. These "pairs" result from the crossing of the first and the second answers, and confirm the general pre-eminence of national citizenship over its other kinds (Table 36).

**Table 36**  
*Relation between different senses of citizenship*  
*(1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> answers in %)*

Citizen of one's country and region	59%
Citizen of one's country and of Europe	32%
Citizen of Europe and of one's region	4%

**Source :** Eurobarometer Mega Survey - 1996

National citizenship is most frequently coupled with the sense of regional citizenship (59%), and with European citizenship (32%) in the second place. The couple of European and of regional citizenship is an absolute minority : 4%. In other words, mere 4% of individuals exclude from their two answers their allegiance to national citizenship.

The couple European citizenship/regional citizenship is almost absent from all of the countries of the European Union, including those countries where political regionalism is complete. The couple regional citizenship/European citizenship is at its highest with 6% of answers (Table 37), in countries where regions benefit from important political powers - Germany, Belgium and Spain (the entirety of federal States of Belgium and Germany, and partially in Spain in autonomous communities of special status), as well as there where regions make use of efficient European strategies of circumventing the centres of the State.

**Table 37**  
***Relations between different senses of citizenship***  
*(1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> answer in %)*

	National and regional citizenship	National and European citizenship	Regional and European citizenship
<i>Countries with complete political regionalism</i>			
Germany	57	2	6
Austria	56	26	3
Belgium	65	24	6
Spain	<b>74</b>	17	6
Italy	43	<b>50</b>	4
France	59	34	2
<i>Countries with partial political regionalism</i>			
Denmark	70	23	1
Great Britain	59	33	4
Greece	72	25	2
The Netherlands	54	34	5
Portugal	76	20	2
Sweden	79	17	2
<i>Countries with administrative regionalism</i>			
Finland	<b>81</b>	16	2
Ireland	44	<b>51</b>	2
Luxembourg	25	<b>49</b>	5
<b>Total of EU 15</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>4</b>

Source : Eurobarometer Mega Survey - 1996

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1. The observation of a period of almost thirty years shows considerable general weakening of the strength of national identities in Europe, even though the level of national pride varies strongly from one country to another.
2. Europe does not benefit from the context of general weakening of the sense of allegiance to national communities. Adherence to a double, that is to say national and European citizenship, grows weaker throughout the 1990s, in favour of a sense of an exclusively national citizenship.
3. Intense national pride acts as an impediment to the representation of a double citizenship (national and European).

Besides, national pride and double national and European citizenship originate from opposing social manners of thought : the former idea is advocated by individuals of advanced age and less substantial cultural level, while the latter is typical of younger individuals as well as those whose educational experience has been longer.

4. Attachment to national and infra national territories continues to be more frequent than an attachment to Europe. Even in those countries where political regionalism has been realised, people continue to feel more attached to the territory in their immediate proximity - one's village or town.
5. The sense of belonging to regional, national and European political communities measured by the privileged idea of citizenship is proof of the supremacy of national citizenship. Only a small minority of Europeans see themselves in near future as European citizens in the first place.

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