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United in Diversity or Diversely United?
An Analysis of Federal Identity in the European Union.

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Abstract

In my BA thesis, I am investigating to what extent post-Brexit European Union citizens identify with an EU identity, and I am investigating the unmarkedness of European identity. In the past, identity scholars have discovered that identity is pluralistic, shifting, and can be communally imagined. In this explorative study, I investigated European identity, and the markedness of European identity through a textual analysis of the most recent *State of the Union* by the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker. This textual analysis was supplemented by a textual analysis of interviews with seven European citizens, all of which held citizenship in different member states of the European Union. Overall, the study showed that it is unclear which groups are included in an EU identity, while EU identity revolves around acceptance, freedom, inclusion, and openness.

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1 Introduction

With the United Kingdom leaving the European Union (EU), the remaining twenty-seven European countries question their identities. Are they European or do they have a national identity that is more important to them than a federal European identity?

The government of the European Union is a social construct that has been installed by the governments of the member states as a supranational or federal government over the national governments of the member states as the highest form of government over the region. Foucault states that a government is a “conduct of conduct; a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons” (Foucault 2). A government is an organization that tries to influence the actions of its subjects through policy. A federal government unites smaller polities within the region, and is politically placed above the other polities it unites. These federal governments exist at all levels; it could be claimed that the government of the Netherlands, for example, is a federal government, because it unites the governments of the provinces of the Netherlands. In this thesis, the term federalism will refer to the European Union as this is the highest form of government over the governments of the member states.

All governments of the European Union are democratic; the subjects collectively decide on the policies. Since democratic governments are representations of the will of the people, the people of the European Union have, thus, willfully installed the supranational government of the EU over the national governments, and have united themselves in one larger imagined community instead of the separate communities of the member states. However, the declaratory theory of statehood does not recognize the European Union as a state, because the ultimate sovereignty is not with the federal government, since Article 50 allows member states to opt out of the EU (Crawford 32). The United Kingdom (UK), a federal Union that exists of the four countries England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland, is recognized as a state, because these countries cannot opt out of the UK without a change in policy. Yet, since the right to revolution allows subjects to overthrow a government when it acts against their interests, the

continuity and existence of a state always depends on the will of the people (Locke 137). When no longer represented by the current government, the people may overthrow this government. This is why France, for example, is officially called the French Fifth Republic. As long as the government of the European Union has the consent of the people, the government may enforce law over the subjects. Therefore, this thesis aims to investigate to what extent citizens of a post-Brexit European Union identify as European citizens. In order to answer the research question, theory on identity will first be explored.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

1.1.1 Identity & Imagined Community

In order to define to what extent citizens of the European Union identify as European citizens, identity must first be understood. Bucholtz and Hall claim that identity is based around the concept of *sameness* and *difference*; respectively allowing “individuals to imagine themselves as a group [or] perceive themselves as unlike” (369). Since identity refers to sameness and difference as performed and perceived by individuals who either do or do not belong to a certain group, identity is formed through social interaction, and is therefore a social construct. Because identity is formed through social interaction, identity draws on mutual recognition of each other’s membership in the group. In order to belong to the same group, mutual recognition of a shared sameness is necessary. This mutual recognition can be created through simultaneously inventing similarity and downplaying differences between group members (Bucholtz and Hall 371). Since a group identity is the result of inventing similarity and downplaying difference, performing such an identity is a political decision: “when individuals decide to organize themselves into a group, they are driven not by some pre-existing and recognizable similarity but by agency and power” (Bucholtz and Hall 371). The boundaries between who is included in the group and who is excluded are constructed “by those who benefit from defining and maintaining such boundaries” (Cole and Meadows 123-4). Thus, (not) claiming a certain

identity within a group can either include or exclude individuals to the benefit of the collective of individuals united in a group.

Now the definition of group identity has been established as mutual recognition of group members of each other's membership in the group, how identity is expressed and how it can be observed will be discussed. Since identification with a group revolves around creating sameness and downplaying difference, these aspects of group identity must be expressed. Different identities can be distinguished from another through *markedness*; "some social categories gain a special, default status that contrasts with the identities of other groups, which are usually highly recognizable" (Bucholtz and Hall 372). This means that an identity has a standard that group members collectively recognize as their own. This default identity of the group is known as unmarkedness. The identities that defy the standard or norm within a certain identity are marked identities. These marked identities may be used by a group to which they can juxtapose their own identity. "The perception of shared identity often requires as its foil a sense of alterity, of an Other who can be positioned against those socially constituted as the same" (Bucholtz and Hall 371). An individual can decide to perform certain marked identities to put their own identity in juxtaposition to the identity of the Other. Through marked identities, differences between groups are highly recognizable to the individual, an individual will or will not perform certain group-specific behavior depending on identification with a group. Because group identity is expressed through group behavior, identity is not something that people are, but something that people do, and therefore "identity inheres in actions not in people" (Bucholtz and Hall 376). Thus, identity can be observed through markedness when contextually relevant group-specific behavior is juxtaposed to group-specific behavior of the Other.

Furthermore, identity is pluralistic (Sen 25); an individual may identify as for example a Muslim, homosexual, musician, and a soccer player. These identities may exist at the same time within the same person; identifying as one thing, does not necessarily exclude

identification with another. Identity is made up out of interaction between fellow members. Mutual recognition among members of each other's membership in a certain identity at a certain point in time establishes the existence of the identity. However, since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances (Bucholtz and Hall 376). Within different situations an individual can prioritize certain layers of their identity. For example, in a mosque, identification as a Muslim will be prioritized to identification as a musician. As has been established, members of a group identity need not and will not be identical. In fact, every identity within a community consists of multiple identities that are all heterogeneous, but who experience a considerable overlap among each other.

Since the development of print in the 1500s, many individuals claim their identity through their nationality (Anderson 46). "The development of print-as-commodity is the key to the generation of wholly new ideas of simultaneity" (Anderson 37). In this thesis, a nation is understood as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson 6). Anderson defines modern nation states as: *imagined communities* that are *finite*, and *sovereign* (Anderson 6-7). Opposed to smaller communities before the introduction of the nation state in which people knew most of their fellows, the communities of the nation states are often imagined communities, because the people "will never know most of their fellow members [...] yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 6). Although citizens of the nation state may not know each other, they all seem to identify with the same group. These imagined communities are claimed through an institutionalized state in which one institution, known as the government, has sole power to exercise laws and power over the territory (Anderson 40). The institutionalized state may have sole power over the territory it possesses, and is in that sense sovereign within its geographical borders, but the power is finite, because the nation state cannot control or exercise powers beyond these borders.

Print “created unified fields of exchange and communication [and] gave fixity to language” (Anderson 44). These fixed languages are only available to those mastering the language, which could cause a subjective idea of nationhood and imaged communities. Yet, nationality is not the sole marker of an individual’s identity. The collective of individuals who identify with the imagined community that is based on a nation state are referred to as *the people*; “the particular complex of human culture by which human beings individually and collectively invest particular communities with character” (Elazar 6). European countries are democracies, so the people of the state ultimately define the character of the state through their collective investments in the state. Since it is the people of a state that define the character of the state, “each state will possess its own particular characteristics simply by virtue of it [having been] settled over generations” (Elazar 6). As the people of the state define the character of the state, claiming to belong to a certain people can raise certain expectations about the individual. Anderson comments on this misconception of nationality as “the formal universality of nationality as a socio-cultural concept such that, by definition, nationality is *sui generis*” (Anderson 5). National identity is not a class on its own by which an individual can be defined, because identity is not solitary. Although everyone can have any nationality, it seems that nationality on its own has become a way to classify an individual. Indeed, individuals who claim a certain identity will probably act similarly to their fellows, but will not be identical copies of their fellows. Therefore, identity cannot be defined by a solitary classification, and is not internally homogeneous.

Although nationality cannot be the sole marker of identity and is not internally homogeneous nor static, it is something that can be part of someone’s (pluralistic) identity. Thus, an identity consists of different layers, and these layers may rank differently in importance to the individual depending on the situation.

1.1.2 Federal Identity & Pluralism

In addition to an imagined community invoked on state level, an imagined community can also be invoked on federal level. “Federalism means national unification through the maintenance of subnational systems” (Elazar 2). A federal union is thus a unity of smaller polities within one larger polity. “Every state (as well as the [federal state] as a whole) is a *civil society*”; a politically defined social system that has its own system of justice, has social and economic interests, has responsibility for its people, and can ensure its own maintenance (Elazar 2). Since identity is often evoked through institutions, the citizens of the federal union will probably have some sort of a shared identity. The citizens of all the member states can claim to identify as citizens of the federal state, but identification with one of the civil unions that is part of the federal state is reserved for citizens of the member state. Because of the pluralistic nature of identity, federal identity and state identity can be prioritized depending on the situation. Identifying as part of a state identity or a federal identity may occur at the same time in one individual, but an individual may decide to prioritise a certain identity above the other at certain moments. In short, federal identity is an extra layer of identity that can be expressed by the citizen of the federal state, but the importance of federal identity to the individual will differ based on the priority that is given to the respective identities of the individual.

1.1.3 Federalism & the European Union

Federal unions exist at all levels, since these are unions that unite smaller polities. However, if a federal state is mentioned in this thesis, it will refer to the European Union as federal union that unites the smaller polities of the member states. The government of the European Union is the highest form of government over the European Union, and is thus an institution that could generate an extra layer to the already multilayered identities of European citizens.

In the European Union, multilayered identities are overtly present. Many scholars report that identity is not based on hard borders of physical access to a country, but that there is a deterritorialization of borderlands through soft borders (Cole and Meadows 123; Johnson and

Michaelsen 11; Morley 425; Kaplan 188). Soft borders “are encoded in other types of texts indicating a pre-institutional social reality” (Eder 256). Soft borders, in contrast to hard borders, are not based on geographical lines that define the jurisdiction of a government, but are borders of cultural expressions. Contrary to what Eder articulates about the tendency of soft borders to re-inscribe hard borders (256), soft borders in the European Union do not re-inscribe the hard borders. However, the multilayered identities of the European Union are heterogeneous and cannot be strictly divided into categories. This means that humans cannot be strictly divided into categories, but that in all socially constructed categories, a grey area exists in which individual identity may correspond “neither [to] the one nor [to] the other, but something else besides, which contests the terms and theories of both” (Bhabha 1996 13). A border always creates a situation in which people are excluded, as not all people can be categorized in one of the two binary oppositions. Bhabha extends this in the theory of *Third Space* in which the dichotomy of identity is rejected, as all identities are a result of a “fluctuating movement” (*Location* 21). This Third Space, “though unrepresentable in itself, constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity” (Bhabha, *Commitment* 55). This means that this Third Space is a place in-between the two cultures in which every identity is heterogeneous and that identity is not static nor monolithic. In fact, the hard borders in the EU do not strictly divide citizens on both sides on the hard border of governmental influence, but there are discrepancies through the multiple soft borders that overlap the hard member state borders; the borders of culture are not clear nor static. Since identities are results of fluctuating movements of different cultural expressions, and humans cannot be strictly divided into categories as their identities gradually overlap.

One of the most overt soft borders in the EU is the use of languages. Identification with a modern nation state often happens through language (Anderson 154; Silverstein 7). Although

the European Union consists of twenty-eight countries, twenty-four official working languages are recognized in the EU (europa.eu 2017a). The EU has less working languages than the number of countries, because some languages have official status in multiple countries. This means that the languages used in the European Union do not follow state lines, and that the soft borders in this case are different from the hard borders of governmental influence of the member states. For example, Belgium uses the languages Dutch, French, and German which have official status as the sole working language of its neighboring countries: respectively The Netherlands, France, and Germany. As has been stated before, identity is often based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. Bucholtz and Hall claim that markedness between identities implies hierarchy and could work as justification for social inequality (372-3). However, Sokolovska observes that “linguistic diversity is a common European cultural heritage, and linguistic diversity and equality go hand-in-hand” (40). Rather than imposing a hierarchy, the approach of the EU to linguistic diversity as European heritage helps towards downplaying differences between countries as all official languages are equal, and creates a similar approach to diversity. Although the languages used in the European Union might be different, it is the similar approach of the member states of the EU to allow and protect these differences that actually unites the EU. The performance of the member states to allow for differences within the soft borders of culture in the EU might be what unites the EU.

Several questions arise from the given information thus far. In relation to Sen’s pluralistic identity, how do citizens of the EU rank their federal identity in contrast to their national identity? What are unmarked characteristics of European federal identity? Additionally, based on Bucholtz and Hall’s shifting identities, when and how do European citizens claim their federal identity? These questions will be used as a basis for my research method, and I will aim to answer these through a textual analysis supplemented by interviews.

This study will be conducted in an explorative manner, keeping in mind Bucholtz and Hall's theory of shifting identity, and Sen's theory of plural identities.

2 Method

In this study, both a textual analysis of public discourse and an analysis of interview data will be combined to investigate to what extent citizens of a Post-Brexit European Union identify as European citizens. In order to answer questions on the unmarkedness of EU identity, the textual analysis of the *State of the Union* is necessary to draw conclusions on the default status of EU identity. Whereas, the analysis of interview data grants an insight in when citizens of the EU prioritize their federal identity over the identity of the member state. The textual analysis and the interview analysis will be treated separately. First, a methodology of the textual analysis is given, then a methodology of the interviews will be presented.

2.1 Methodology 1: Textual Analysis

2.1.1 Design

For this study, the most recent *State of the Union* (European Commission) delivered by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, was selected for analysis. The European Commission is the executive branch of the EU, and the only EU institute to have legislative initiative. As has been previously stated, European countries are democracies, so their leaders and the European Union were installed with consent of the public. Therefore, speeches by representatives of the European Union are likely to be in accordance with the opinion of the majority of its citizens. Specifically the *State of the Union*, the annual address of the President of the European Commission to the European Parliament, provides a contemporary view of the union and outlines the culture and vision on the culture of Europeans and presents a roadmap for future adaptations to the EU. The speech is divided into eight sections: Wind In Our Sails, Staying Course, Setting Sail, A Union of Values, A Stronger Union, A More Democratic Union, Our Roadmap, and a Conclusion. The text was alternately presented in English, French, and German, but for the analysis, the English transcription

provided by the European Commission was used. The delivery by the Jean-Claude Juncker took one hour and three minutes, and the transcription consisted of 6224 words.

2.1.2 Procedure

In this study, the *State of the Union* was analyzed qualitatively in order to observe in what way citizens of the EU make sense of their environment. “We interpret texts in order to try and obtain a sense of the ways in which, in particular cultures at particular times, people make sense of the world around them” (McKee 1). From the theoretical framework, categories were derived for data collection. Then the *State of the Union* was analyzed to find examples for these categories. Data were labeled as one of the following categories:

1) Examples of EU Group Identity;

Category one is derived from Bucholtz and Hall’s theory of sameness and difference through which group identity has been established as mutual recognition of each other’s membership in the group. In this category, patterns of sameness and difference will be analyzed to draw conclusions on inclusion and exclusion of EU identity.

2) Examples of Prioritization of Identity;

Category two is derived from Sen’s theory of plural identity combined with Elazar’s theory on federalism. These theories combined show that citizens of a member state of the European Union can identify with the member state as well as the EU. Yet, either identity can be prioritized. In this category, patterns of priority in identity will be analyzed to draw conclusions on situations in which EU identity is prioritized over member state identity.

3) Examples of Default Characteristics for EU Identity.

Category three is derived from Bucholtz and Hall’s theory on markedness. Markedness is what an identity distinguishes from other identities. In this category, patterns on the default status of EU identity will be analyzed to draw conclusions on unmarked EU identity.

The results of these categories will be outlined separately in the next chapter.

2.2 Methodology 2: Interviews

2.1.1 Participants

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with seven participants, and were collected with explicit consent. The interviews were conducted in English as this was the language in which the researcher and all the participants were reasonably fluent. Only one participant was a native speaker of English. All participants were Utrecht University students who had spent at least a semester in a member state other than their member state of origin. Most of the respondents studied at Utrecht University in the Netherlands as part of their stay-abroad, one studied at Lund University in Sweden as part of their stay abroad. The participants who studied abroad at Utrecht University had Danish, German, French, Italian, Irish, and Romanian nationalities, the participant who had studied at Lund University had the Dutch nationality.

2.1.2 Materials

The research question will be answered through a textual analysis supplemented by semi-structured interviews “to focus the data collection” on the subjects of interest (Schleef and Meyerhoff 3). For the interviews, an interview format was created. This format was inspired by Zahbia Yousuf’s methodology in “Unravelling Identities” (360). Yousuf presented his interviewees pictures to spark a semi-structured conversation about identity, whereas interviewees in this thesis were presented questions for the same objective. The interview presented fifteen questions that had arisen from the theoretical framework, and these were categorized into two parts. In the first part, participants could define their own identity without having been introduced to the actual subject of study: European identity. First, participants were asked to describe how they identify and how this is expressed. Then they were given a definition on pluralist identity, after which they could alter their initially stated identity. With the first part, the researcher wanted to see if a European identity was claimed spontaneously. In the second part, participants were asked to reflect on their European identities: do they identify as

Europeans? How is European identity expressed? What do Europeans have in common? And what are the effects of social mobility? The full interview can be found in appendix one.

2.1.3 Procedure

Participants were selected through a Facebook post explaining that help was required for a bachelor thesis project. The post asked for European students studying at Utrecht University who had spent at least a semester in another non-UK European member state. These could be both Dutch students who had studied abroad and continued their studies at Utrecht University or non-Dutch European students at Utrecht University who were studying abroad at Utrecht University. No two participants who held citizenship of the same member state were selected to ensure that participants had experienced different sub-European cultures. Participants were selected in the order in which they arrived. Citizens of the United Kingdom were excluded from participation, since the study focused on a post-Brexit European identity.

To answer the questions on European identity and unmarkedness of EU identity, data were collected from seven European citizens. The interviews were held with each participant separately in order to ensure the authenticity of the participants' answers. The participants had not been told the subject of study (European identity), but they knew the interview was going to be about a post-Brexit Europe. The interviews were conducted at Utrecht University College and at the Utrecht University Science Park Library. The interviews took about thirty minutes each, and were recorded with a smartphone. To allow for a textual analysis, the interviews were transcribed.

2.1.4 Data analysis

The data produced by this interview were analyzed qualitatively; the researcher aimed to find patterns in argumentation. These patterns were supplemented by the abovementioned textual analysis to draw conclusions on a post-Brexit European identity. Data were labeled into the same categories as in methodology one, namely:

- 1) Examples of EU Group Identity;
- 2) Examples of Prioritization of EU Identity;
- 3) Examples of Default Characteristics for EU Identity.

The results of these categories will be outlined separately in the next chapter. This will be done separately for the textual analysis and the interviews. In the conclusion results will be compared.

3 Results

The textual analysis of public discourse and the analysis of interview data will be discussed separately. First, the results of the textual analysis are given, and then the results of the interviews.

3.1 Textual Analysis of the *State of the Union*

For this analysis, the English transcription of the *State of the Union* provided by the European Commission was used. The results of the textual analysis will be divided into three categories as mentioned in the methodology. These categories will be dealt with separately.

3.1.1 Examples of EU Group Identity

The motto of the European Union, United in Diversity, “signifies how Europeans have come together, while [maintaining] different cultures, traditions and languages” (Europa.eu 2017b). This motto promotes equality between member states of the European Union. In practice, however, member states might not be equal. In the *State of the Union*, Juncker calls for equality between member states: “Europe must be a Union of equality and a Union of equals. Equality between its members, big or small, East or West, North or South” (European Commission 6). Juncker here states his wishes for the future of the EU, this signifies that member states in the EU at this point may not be equal, and that he identifies divisions between big/small, Eastern/Western, and Northern/Southern member states in the European Union.

Furthermore, Juncker also identifies inequalities between member states. “In a Union of equals, there can be no second-class consumers. I cannot except that in Central and Eastern Europe, people are sold food of lower quality than in other countries” (European Commission

7). This means that the Western European countries are the economically bigger stakeholders in the European Union and that equality between member states does not exist.

3.1.2 Examples of Prioritization of Identity

For this part, the *State of the Union* was analyzed to draw conclusions on prioritizing EU identity over the identity of the member state. It seems that identification with the EU or with a member state depends on the situation. On dissentious topics, the identity of the member state is claimed, whereas EU identity is claimed when acts of member states are favorable for the reputation of the union. “We have common borders but Member States that by geography are the first in line cannot be left alone to protect them” (European Commission 4). At this moment, the EU is divided on the protection of common borders. Countries that do not have an external EU border within their hard borders of governmental influence do not perform their European identity in claiming responsibility for the common borders. However, the Union does take pride in the actions of Italy to protect the common borders. “I cannot talk about migration without paying strong tribute to Italy. Italy is saving Europe’s honor in the Mediterranean” (European Commission 4). Thus, Europe seems to stand united in actions favorable to the common reputation, but member states do not always take responsibility for dissentious topics. One for all, but not always all for one.

3.1.3 Examples of Default Characteristics for EU Identity

In chapter one of this thesis, markedness has been established as differences between groups that distinguishes a group from another through behavior that group members collectively recognize as their own. Juncker identifies a “Union of values” in which he claims that the EU is based on freedom, equality, and the rule of law (European Commission 6). These identities are performed both in the fight against climate change, and Juncker’s plea for inclusion within the EU.

In chapter one of this thesis, it has been established that markedness of identity often happens through juxtaposition with an Other. In the fight against climate change, the EU

juxtaposes itself to the United States of America (USA). “Set against the collapse of ambition in the United States, Europe must ensure we make our planet great again”. (European Commission 4). In comparison to the USA, the EU does fight global warming. It seems that claiming ownership over the identity of the self, happens when an Other juxtaposes that identity.

Furthermore, Juncker states inclusion to be one of Europe’s values as well. On the policy of free movement within the EU: “we need to open the Schengen area of free movement to Bulgaria and Romania immediately, [and] allow Croatia to become a full Schengen member once all criteria are met” (European Commission 7). On the common currency: “The euro is meant to be the single currency of the European Union as a whole. Member states are entitled to join the euro once they fulfil the conditions” (European Commission 7). Both the view towards free movement, and the view towards to common currency, show Europe’s values of inclusion and openness; if all criteria are met, any country may join the union. Thus, Juncker, as EU representative whilst speaking of the EU, claims EU identity through juxtaposing its values to those who are not European, and these values are based on inclusion.

3.2 Analysis of interviews

The interviews were transcribed to allow for a textual analysis. The results of the textual analysis will be divided into three categories as mentioned in the methodology. These categories will be dealt with separately.

3.2.1 Examples of EU Group Identity

In table 1 below, the spontaneously reported identities of participants are presented. The identities are presented in order of importance to the participant. If the same number follows up the previous number then this indicates that these identities are equally important to the participant and neither can be prioritized over the other.

Participant	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
	Romanian	Dutch	Danish	Italian	Irish	French	German
How would you identify yourself? & Can you maybe rank your identities in order of importance?	1. Human 2. woman 2. Eastern European	1. vegan 2. queer 3. youth 4. Dutch 5. male	Depends on situation: 1. keeping head down or 1. leader	1. Italian 1. European 2. funny	1. Irish 2. student 3. male	1. French 2. student 3. young adult	1. girl 2. open person 3. Dutch 4. German

Table 1. Spontaneously claimed identities.

Five out of the seven participants claimed parts of their identity through nationality. One of the participants claimed a European identity, and one of the participants reported to identify with a regional European identity: Eastern European. Interestingly, participant 7 (P7) identified more strongly as Dutch than as German, while she only holds the German citizenship.

Table 2 presents the answers to the question on whether participants identified as EU citizens.

Participant	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Do you identify as an EU citizen?	Yes, definitely. I do think it is a federal thing.	Yes, I do.	Yes, I do.	Yes.	Yes, I should have probably said that before.	Yes, I consider myself as a European.	No, I would not identify as a European citizen. I think [I] would be more like Northern Europe[an].

Table 2. Do you Identify as an EU citizen?

When directly asked to report on their EU identities, six out of seven participants identify reported to identify with the EU. Yet, when spontaneously asked to report on their identities, only two participants reported to identify with an EU identity.

Although P1 claimed an Eastern European identity at first, when asked directly, she did report to be an EU citizen, identifying with the whole of Europe. “I should have said I identify as European. I am also quite proud of that, because we achieved the European Union and everything considered our history, so I don’t believe there is an Eastern or Central European. We are all just Europeans” (P1). Interesting is the use of *we* in this sentence. The usage hereof suggests a pre-EU institution that may or may not be rooted still in EU culture. This may affect the extent to which she identified as an EU citizen, and could explain the spontaneously reported identity of Eastern European in table 1.

P5 also acknowledged the effects of pre-EU institutions. He believed that although people might identify with their nationality of a member state, these nationalities are all European, and therefore identifying with the member state of origin is inherently linked to identifying as an EU citizen. “[I]t is just easier to identify as your nationality, but then to a lesser extend every nationality is part of the European community” (P5). This would mean that all citizens of member states of the European Union would per definition identify as EU citizens.

However, P7 did not agree with this. Although she spontaneously reported an identity that transcends the juridical area of the country of which she holds citizenship, she could not identify with the whole of the European Union. “The South is really different. I could not really identify with that” (P7). She divided Europe up in certain sub-European groups. Three other participants also recognized that Europe may be divided into certain parts, as seen in table 3 below. These reactions were not articulated in reaction to a certain question, but participants defined these spontaneously.

Participant	P1	P2	P5	P7
Divisions of Europe	Western, Central & Eastern Europe	No strict division, but a fluid scale. Locality: in distance further away, there is less shared history	Western, Central & Eastern Europe But, also Continental & non-continental Europe	Northern & Southern Europe

Table 3. Different Europes.

Interestingly, the participants do not agree on these sub-categories of Europe. Three participants defined certain sub-European areas, whereas P2 acknowledged the differences between countries, but did not want to define a certain area that juxtaposes another, because of the fluid scale between cultures. He also acknowledged that identities can shift, and defines this as an effect of locality: the smaller a target area is, the stronger is the identification with this area.

In general, participants tended not to report an EU identity when asked to report spontaneously on their identity, but when asked directly, most participants could identify as EU citizens, and in that way claim ownership over the target community. Yet, the participants did not agree on what a European identity includes and excludes. If the existence of an identity relies on mutual recognition among members of each other's membership in the group, then based on these data, it is not possible to conclude on the boundaries of a EU identity.

3.2.2 Examples of Prioritization of Identity

Participants were asked to report on situations in which they would prioritize an EU identity over the identity of the member state. The answers can be found in table 4 below.

Situations	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
When do you identify as an EU citizen?	Travel	Inside EU* / Outside EU** Media	[Internal] border crossing work permit residence permit***	Travelling outside of the EU	International crises****	Travel	Intercontinental communication *****

*Inside the EU when presented with similarities in life-style.
 **Outside the EU when presented with differences in life-style.
 ***Especially here [in the Netherlands] I can compare that with other internationals that don't have [these EU benefits]. For example, free residence permit, free labor mobility. Half of friends are not able to get a job, because they would need a work permit, and they will not get it, because they have a student visa.
 **** "As an Irish person from the middle of nowhere my influences would be quite little, but as a European citizen, it is a combination of all the nobodies across Europe perhaps we have bigger power".
 ***** Would use it as a location tag, "but then I would go back to describing the Netherlands again".

Table 4. When do you identify as an EU citizen?

As established in chapter one of this thesis, shared identity is often created through juxtaposition of an Other. This can be observed in the participants' answers as well. P2 stated that he identifies as European when presented with situations in which the features of his own identity are overtly noticeable through juxtaposition with features of other identities. The rest of the participants also reported to identify as European when traveling or living in another member state than the member state of origin. These identifications were also based on juxtaposition with an Other through benefits that Europeans have over non-Europeans within the EU. P3 linked these facilities to an EU identity; I identify as European when "authorities show trust" (P3). Thus, an EU identity is often claimed in comparison to Others who are not European. Both when participants are outside of the European Union, so Europeans are able to compare an EU lifestyle to lifestyles elsewhere, and in comparison to an Other within the EU, as a result of a juxtaposition between people who can and cannot make use of EU facilities.

3.2.3 Examples of Default Characteristics for EU Identity

Participants were asked to report on what they think an unmarked federal European Union identity entails. Table 5 presents what participants recognize as unmarked default status of EU identity.

European Identity	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
What does identification as a European Citizen mean to you?	The full freedoms Equality: universal humanist	Safety Euro-centric privilege	Openness	Cultural similarities between countries with small differences between countries	Accepting of people, irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, background.	Unity	For the North of Europe: very open, very modern.

Table 5. Features of an unmarked European Union identity.

Interestingly, many participants mentioned European identity to revolve around inclusion, openness, and acceptance. Some even stated that the European Union was a step towards universal humanism: the inclusion of all of humanity into one identity. However, when asked if Europe was united in diversity or diversely united, the participants disagreed: three participants reported that the EU is united in diversity, three reported that the EU is diversely united, one remained undecided. As a reason for Europe being diversely united, two participants mentioned the differences between stakeholders within the EU based on power differences between countries. “Because of economic influences the bigger countries have more influence on policies” (P1). Especially Western European countries reportedly dominate European culture, as they are economically more powerful. In short, the unmarkedness of European Union identity relies on inclusion and freedom. Yet, it remains unclear which group(s) include the identity of the European Union.

4 Conclusion & Discussion

4.1 Conclusion

The present study investigated to what extent European citizens of a post-Brexit European Union identify with a European identity and observed what they consider to be an unmarked European Union identity. Elazar analyzes that identity can be evoked through institutions (2), and based hereon citizens of a federal union will probably have some sort of shared identity in addition to their member state identity. Furthermore, Bucholtz and Hall, and Sen observe that identity is pluralistic and that identities can shift depending on the situation (376; 25). The findings of this explorative study show that six out of seven participants do identify as EU citizens, but when asked to report on their identities spontaneously, five out of seven participants claim their identity through their nationality. Thus, based on the results of this explorative study, member state identity appears to be prioritized over the federal identity.

Furthermore, Bucholtz and Hall observe that identity can shift depending on the situation, and that a certain identity is prioritized when in juxtaposition with the identity of an Other (376; 371). This study observed in what situations the federal EU identity is prioritized over the identity of the member state. In this case study, it seems that identities indeed tend to shift, and specifically EU federal identity tends to be claimed when juxtaposed to a non-EU identity. Participants claimed to identify as Europeans when travelling or in intercontinental communication. Moreover, findings of this study also suggest that an EU identity is also prioritized over member state identity when travelling within the EU. When travelling within the EU, EU benefits, such as free travel within the EU, become more important to the individual, as a result EU citizens tend to prioritize the EU identity over the member state identity.

This study also tried to define the unmarked characteristics of an EU identity. Bhabha argues that a hard border attempts to divide people on a binary scale (Commitment 55). Yet, soft borders of culture may not follow these hard borders of governmental influence in the EU; identities within the EU overlap without binary divisions. Therefore, theory suggests that

Europeans might be more united than they might think. Based on this study, however, the reality might be different, since this study indicates that Europeans might be diversely united, rather than united in diversity. EU Identity, in fact, seems to revolve around mutual recognition of group members of each other's membership in an EU identity. Yet, both the *State of the Union* and the participants of the interviews define intra-EU juxtapositions between member states in Northern/Southern, and Western/Eastern Europe. Participants did not agree on which groups to exactly include in European identity, and even divided Europe up into certain sub-European cultures. Such a division between eastern and western Europe was notable in Juncker's speech as well.

Although participants did not agree on which groups to include in an EU identity, the unmarkedness of EU identity seems to revolve around acceptance, freedom, inclusion, and openness. Both the textual analysis and the analysis of the interviews seemed to suggest this. Juncker pleaded to include the whole European continent into the European Union, claimed that the euro was designed to be the currency for the whole union, and promoted equality between European peoples. The participants defined EU identity as promoting acceptance, freedom, inclusion, and openness. Based on these results of this explorative study, it seems that at this point the post-Brexit EU is diversely united, yet with a common goal to bridge these differences. Thus, the abovementioned data of this explorative study seem to hint that the remaining 27 member states of the EU are diversely united at this point, although the member states are united in the common goal to integrate and promote the values of the European Union.

4.2 Discussion

This explorative study aimed to investigate to what extent citizens of a post-Brexit European Union identify as European citizens. In order to do so, it was examined how federal EU identity ranks in contrast to member state identity, what the unmarked characteristics of EU identity are, and when a federal identity is claimed. This was done through a textual analysis of a state of the union address, and an analysis of semi-structured interviews. The results seemed to suggest

that the EU is diversely united at this point, but with a common goal to promote values of the European Union.

At the moment of study, the United Kingdom had not yet left the European Union, but it had announced its withdrawal from the EU. Therefore, continuous research on identity is necessary to define whether the leave of the United Kingdom causes further integration or disintegration of EU identity within the remaining countries.

This study was conducted in an explorative manner. Although the research aimed to include opinions from multiple sub-European cultures, the study was not designed to be fully representative for all citizens of the union due to its participant being solely research university students and under 25 years old.

Furthermore, the study selected the participants on basis of nationality, although it is admitted that nationality is not internally homogeneous. However, in order to ensure that participants had spent a significant amount of time in different sub-European cultures, participants were selected on nationality, since this suggests that the participant spent time in the area of jurisdiction of the member state that issued the passport. This was done to balance the spread of data collection over the European Union. Some participants claimed that European Union identity holds a relation to universal humanism, since different cultures were united in one bigger polity. Further research could observe if a relation between European Union identity and universal humanism exists.

Furthermore, all participants had spent a significant amount of time in another member state than their member state of origin, and all participants claimed that this had affected their identities. Future research could observe if mobility between member states affects the extent to which someone identifies with the federal union.

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6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview Questions - European Identity Interviewee:

Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I'll first ask you some questions, before I'll explain what the topic of the study is. Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

1. Identifying the self

1. How would you identify yourself?
.....

Claiming an identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior.

2. How do you express your identity?
.....

Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time.

3. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identity/identities?
.....

4. How do you express these identities?
.....

5. Looking at your identities. Can you maybe rank your identities in order of importance? One being the most important to you.
.....

6. What do you think are the origins of identity?
.....

7. When is a certain identity expressed / prioritized?
.....

2. Federal Identity & Markedness

We will now proceed to the second part of this interview on Federal Identity.

8. Do you identify as an EU Citizen?
.....

9. What does identification as a European Citizen mean to you?
.....

10. When do you identify as a European citizen? Are there situations in which you would claim a European identity?
.....

Since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances.

11. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

.....

12. What do you think are the origins of a federal European identity?

.....

13. Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

.....

14. Some claim that Europe’s approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different. Hence, Europe’s motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

.....

15. You have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin. Do you think this affects your identity? In what way and when?

.....

This is the end of the interview. I want to thank you again for your participation in this research.

6.2 Appendix B: Transcription P1

Transcription Interview Maria - Romania

Maurice: Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I’ll first ask you some questions, before I’ll explain what the topic of the study is. Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

Maurice: How would you identify yourself?

Maria: You mean nationality-wise?

Maurice: just anything

Maria: Human

Maurice: So you would identify as a human

Maria: yeah

Maurice: Okay. Claiming an identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior.

Maria: Okay. I hope I can perform as human.

Maurice: how do you express your humanness

Maria: Uhm. I think I say human, because I think everyone is equal. So I think that identifying yourself as a wife or as woman is rather divisive.

Maurice: Would you think that you belong to a certain group?

Maria: I mean in society? Yes. I would say Eastern-European, female, I don't know what else.

Maurice: Eastern-European? What do you think eastern implies.

Maria: pretty much everything east from Hungary. SO Hungary is like the cut-off point.

Hungary is central, the rest is eastern Europe.

Maurice: Also, another definition. Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identities?

Maria: maybe woman, I don't know.

Maurice: anymore?

Maria: mmm no.

Maurice: so to summaries. I've got Eastern European, woman, and a human.

Maria: yaaah maybe not so much Eastern European. You know I have been living outside of Eastern Europe for six years now, so that is quite a big part of my life as well.

Maurice: So do you think that living in another country than your country of origin does something to your identity?

Maria: I think it does.

Maurice: in what way?

Maria: I think the biggest difference with people who have never lived anywhere else have such a narrow view on how things are done. If you go to a different country you see that you can also do it another way. There is no right or wrong. So yeah you become more of a world citizen.

Maurice: looking at your identities. Cn you maybe rank your identity in order of importance. One being the most important to you.

Maria: I don't really know. Mmmm. I kind of want to say human, because I am vegan, because that would be a bit hypocritical not to say.

Maurice: then we have got two left...

Maria: just like... all in one rank. I don't think I can rank them. Like for me it is not important that I am Eastern European.

Maurice: What do you think are the origins of identity.

Maria: social construct, because like ultimately we are just like conscious beings and uuhm it is almost a part of life that you put people in boxes like this is a man this a man, this is a woman, this is an adult, this is a child, this person is straight, this person is gay, this person is from here, this person is from there. I think that I struggle more with these things. If you are classified as a woman, you would go for life leading a different life from a life as a man. These things also maybe form a bond between people, so that is the origin of identity I believe.

Maurice: Thank you. When do you think a certain identity is expressed or prioritized?

Maria: I think when it is important to the person?

Maurice: can you imagine any situation in which it is more important to a person to identify as one thing or the other?

Maria: mmmm. Yes. Maybe for oppressed groups. For like black people to identify as yes I am black. Not because they want to be divided from white people, because they want to be yes more equal. Same with a sexual orientation. If you say like you are bi or whatever that is like yes I exist. These are the people to which I am equal.

Maurice: now we proceed to the second part of the interview. This interview is basically on European identity. Do you identify as a European citizen?

Maria: yes, definitely.

Maurice: and is this specifically Eastern European or would you say that is more like a federal thing as in the United States.

Maria: I do think it is a federal thing. I should have said I identify as European as one of my identities. I am also quite proud of that, because we achieved the European Union and everything considered our history, so yeah I don't believe there is an eastern or central European. We are all just European.

Maurice: what does identification as a European citizen mean to you?

Maria: Well the full freedoms primarily. Especially the freedom of movement of people. So like right now there is technically the freedom of movement of people right, but let's say a Polish worker goes to England... well not anymore, but they will face xenophobia no matter what, but if you get rid of nationality per se, and we all identify as European, that makes people just more equal in general, and that is just more democratic, more egalitarian.

Maurice: so you would say that you are in favour of a European identity, because it is more human-like.

Maria: ja. It unifies people. There is less conflict, less war.

Maurice: so this is not a question that is in the interview, but would you think that it is good to expand the EU?

Maria: which way?

Maurice: Eastern?

Maria: throughout the whole Europe? Yes. Because, so far as the Christian world goes, we do hold quite similar values, and perhaps we could also unify with countries like Turkey or Egypt. But I do not think that is possible right now, because their social structures are quite different from ours. And I don't think we have come far enough to accept Eastern European people as Western European people, so how can we accept African people as a European as well?

Maurice: don't you think as an Eastern European you are accepted in the EU?

Maria: not necessarily?

Maurice: you do not think you are necessarily accepted or you do not think you are necessarily unaccepted?

Maria: sometimes I think Eastern European people are not necessarily accepted.

Maurice: in what way and by whom?

Maria: well honestly, from my experience living in Brussels. People are quite xenophobic. There is always this headline story like ooh Polish people are stealing my jobs or Romanian people are coming to Italy, and they are stealing I don't know what. There is always that thing of they are stealing something that is ours. So there's an us versus them.

Maurice: who is the us and who is the them?

Maria: I don't know that is really strange to me, because obviously my family is still living in Eastern Europe, but now I am such a western European person. When I go home, I have quite a few like barriers in communication with people, because I have different kind of values now. So when I am here I am probably on the side of western European. When I am there, I am probably on the side of Eastern Europe.

Maurice: so you would say there is an us versus them in Eastern European versus western European citizens?

Maria: unfortunately yes.

Maurice: What do you think is the border between the two?

Maria: uuhm, there is not necessarily a border so much. There are like divisive groups. For example Hungary has closed its borders for essentially any EU policy, does not want to accept refugees, that is them dividing us versus them. I don't think it is specific borders, just an emergence of European sceptic groups.

Maurice: We have talked about what being a European citizens means to you already, so is there a certain moment in which you identify as European? When do you identify as European and is there a certain situation in which you would identify as European?

Maria: Ooh whenever a fly somewhere. You know in passport control. It is always European versus non-European. I am always like ooh hey I am European, I am part of it.

Maurice: that is only within the European Union or is that also outside the EU?

Maria: well sometimes they have those in Turkey as well. But I have never really travelled outside of Europe?

Maurice: Have you ever been outside the EU?

Maria: EU yes, Europe only once. To Tunisia.

Maurice: So when you were in Tunisia. Did you feel more European?

Maria: I was a child.

Maurice: So since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

Maria: I mean. I very optimistically hope that in the future we can all identify as European, but right now. Yeah probably the airport or university applications are the only places I can think of when you have to identify as European to get certain privileges.

Maurice: So most of the time you feel more Romania than European?

Maria: you mean what I feel or what I like check on a form?

Maurice: what you express, so what you check on a form.

Maria: well often they do not even offer European, so you just check nationality.

Maurice: how do you think about that? Should they offer a European nationality?

Maria: I think they should.

Maurice: because it is in our passports right?

Maria: yes. And there is this whole like debate. When Brexit just started when some Brexit people did not want to lose their EU citizenships there was a whole propositions of making a separate EU citizen passport, but that proposal got scratched, so that is a shame.

Maurice: what do you think are the origins of federal European Identity.

Maria: What do you mean?

Maurice: How do you think that a federal European identity came to being? And what does it rely on? Is there something like that makes us all similar?

Maria: euum. Obviously in the past. Europe used to be a hell of wars. I think the whole point was the desire for unification, so you can start of like how a French and a German person meet and not hate each other and that they are like pretty much the same people. So yeah I think the desire, just be universally human, and obviously economic reasons and things like that.

Maurice: Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

Maria: uuhm. Mmmm. I think it is just the fact that being in the EU has so much more opportunity, so you are not limit to your own country, if you want to study in a different country, you can. If you want to work in a different country, you can.

Maurice: What do you think European citizens have in common? In what way are they similar?

Maria: religion, values, societal structures, things like that.

Maurice: what do you think are the European values?

Maria: I'd like to say. Like compared to the US, where they value individuality more, I think European value egalitarianism more. So they think that everybody should be well-of. Not just everyone works for themselves. Like, we have insurance systems, holidays, paid leaves. I think equality in general is basically the main value.

Maurice: and also part of the question was downplaying difference. Do you think that there is something that is being downplayed by the EU? Or is it just based on similarity?

Maria: I think there are differences, but the fact that we have open borders and that people interact, and that goods from other countries can travel you know, services being provided to other countries. People meet different people, different nationalities, and that is how the differences get erased. So if I like, as a Romanian person, date a Dutch person, and then yeah we have a child, that child would probably be more European you know.

Maurice: Some claim that Europe's approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different. Hence, Europe's motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

Maria: I think in some ways that is important. What I meant by everybody being equal is more like making sure there is no wage gap, making sure that refugees are being treated like white people, of course refugees can also be white, uuhm. I do think it is important to preserve culture. Because personally I think the US doesn't have culture. Because everybody is just a mix, and everyone comes from somewhere else. Europe has such a rich history and for example the thing I really liked when I decided to study law is that when you read a directive, you will have all the languages. You can read the directive in every single languages, because that shows considerations for everybody. And especially now that we are still stuck with English, even though Britain is leaving the EU, we have this whole issue are we going to transfer to French, are we going to keep English? So I do believe in some ways that Europe is united in diversity.

Maurice: now you were talking about peoples of Europe. Because you were talking about being Dutch being Romanian and how the child would be European. Do you still think that we are multiple people united in one similar social structure.

Maria: At this point I think so yeah.

Maurice: but?

Maria: but I hope that in the future... I mean we do not have to get rid of country borders, but maybe get rid of nationality. Like you enter Romania, but you will be a European citizen or you will be born in the Netherlands, but you will still be a European citizen instead of a Dutch citizen, you know.

Maurice: You think this is going to be the near future?

Maria: No definitely not. Not with the problems we are having right now.

Maurice: What countries does it rely on that it is not going to be in the near future? Is it because of Southern European countries or Western European countries?

Maria: just the whole Euroscepticism-thing. People are like, you know, the refugee crisis just showed how European is not united at all, and the financial crisis, it just shows we have some many issues we have to work on before we can proceed to like unifying everything. So unfortunately, not the near future.

Maurice: so we have sort of talked about this already, but it is an official question, so you have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin. Do you think this affects your identity?

Maria: Yeah definitely.

Maurice: In what way and when?

Maria: uuhm. I think you just learn to see the point of view of other people, and so I think bigotry just comes from ignorance, so when you travel and you see the way of life of other people and you get their perspective on something you yeah you can probably get rid of sexism, racism, homophobia, you just see everyone is different and it is fine. So in that way it makes you more of a citizen of the world, rather than a citizen of your own country.

Maurice: This is the end of the interview. I want to thank you again for your participation in this research.

6.3 Appendix C: Transcription P2

Transcription Interview Rik - Netherlands

Maurice: Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I'll first ask you some questions, before I'll explain what the topic of the study is. Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

Maurice: How would you identify yourself?

Rik: As a male or broader than that?

Maurice: you can do it broader:

Rik: A male, a twentier, Dutch, Dutch male, yes I would say that.

Maurice: Claiming an identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior. How do you express your identity? You said you're a male, you are Dutch. How do express those things?

Rik: euhm well I speak Dutch, and I am participating in Dutch society, calender is Dutch, speak Duchth with my friends and family, and maybe the way I dress.

Maurice: what you have already described. Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identity/identities?

Rik: yes, as a homosexual, youth

Maurice: you are part of a youth culture?

Rik: yes

Maurice: so you would say you would belong to a certain age group?

Rik: yeah everyone between twenty and thirty I identify myself with.

Maurice: how do you express those things?

Rik: go to emancipations for the gay community and I share things on facebook. Ooh and I would identify as a vegan. Talk a lot about that with people.

Maurice: Thank you. Can you rank your identity in order of importance to you?

Rik: I have named 5. 1. Vegan. 2. Queer. 3. Youth. 4. Dutch 5. Male

Maurice: what do you think are the origins of identity.

Rik: group behaviour. Including and excluding is always linked to each other. You are trying to express yourself so it is about exclusion I guess.

Maurice: when do you think a certain identity is prioritized?

Rik: you can only identify as something if it is safe to do so. But it is about prioritizing...

Maurice: do you understand what prioritizing means/

Rik: scaling. If it is more important to you. If you are really endangered. If the borders of the Netherlands are being attacked for example, Dutch identity is prioritized.

Maurice: so you would prioritize identity when the identity is sort of suppressed by something else.

Rik: yes.

Maurice: do you have examples of your identities when you prioritize those?

Rik: well homosexuality is accepted, but veganness is not really in the Netherlands. So I try to perform my veganness more. A lot of queer people are already standing up for themselves, so I don't feel the urge to do so.

Maurice: now I proceed to the second part of the interview. It is on federal identity.

Specifically on EU federal identity. Do you identify as a European citizen?

Rik: I would say yes, but I hadn't stated it in the first part, so it seems a bit strange to do so, but yes I do identify as a EU citizen.

Maurice: what does identification as a European citizen mean to you?

Rik: I feel connected with the rest of European, I feel safety, I feel white Eurocentric privilege?

Maurice: what do you mean with white Eurocentric privilege.

Rik: we, ooh I am talking about we so that means identity, citizens of the EU has benefits compared to citizens of China, Brasilia, South America, South Africa.

Maurice: what are the benefits?

Rik: we have access to better education. More people have access to it. Economic benefits. Pyramid of safety. Roof above your head is prioritized above cultural innovation, but everyone has a roof in the EU. Lots of other people in the world do not have that.

Maurice: so benefits compared to other countries. Something that we have that somebody else does not have that defines being a EU citizen?

Rik: yes.

Maurice: When do you identify as a EU citizen? Are there any situations in which you would claim a more European identity?

Rik: when I studied in Lund, I felt it a lot of time, because I was really connected to them. I identified myself as a North Western European citizen. And when I was in India, so I could really compare the lifestyle there to European lifestyle, not especially Dutch lifestyle, but British lifestyle, Spanish lifestyle. And when I see Merkel, I really feel proud of her. So when I look at the media I feel connected as a whole. And when the French president Macron became president. That kind of cases. And also when I hear Timmermans or Juncker in the EU. Last week Juncker said something I strongly disagreed with, but I felt like a EU citizens, because I thought it was also including me.

Maurice: very interesting. You said something about a north western European identity. Is that something that would oppose something else. Because you said identity is about including and excluding people. What do you include in North Western EU identity.

Rik: yeah, part of it is bullshit. Because I identify to be from the South of the Netherlands. There is a lot of behaviour described in that region that can also be described to Belgium, or Spain. Like a siesta, and a lot of eating involved. When you fifty kilometres south from Utrecht, you suddenly do a nap. It is complete bullshit. But you see my identity can shift very much. Also I identify with the Scandinavian countries; working hard, very social society, taking care of the poor. These specific things I link myself to the Scandinavian countries.

Maurice: Would you also identify as a European citizen as a whole which would also include the eastern part of the EU. What do you think about that? Is there something in their lifestyle that would be different from you. Or do you think they share identity?

Rik: It is a bit different. Huge differences between west and east in how it was ruled, communism etc, but communism links to socialism, and we Denmark, Sweden kind of have a social system. You also see that in eastern Europe a bit more. I think we have a shared history, but it gets farther away.

Maurice: who is we?

Rik: the whole of Europe. But you see that in distance it is further away, so there is less shared history.

Maurice: would you define a border with which you would divide the west and the east?

Rik: no, it is a fluid scale. I see there is overlap in a lot of things.

Maurice: so you would say we have a European Identity, but it is inherently different.

Rik: I think there are like, if you say we all have other languages, but we all have Germanic languages, so it is just in the level you think. European identity is in a lot of things.

Maurice: so there is a European identity and who would you exclude?

Rik: I would exclude Turkey.

Maurice: we are talking about the European Union. What do you think about European Union identity?

Rik: it is linked to the political identity. The example I gave about Juncker and Timmermans, it is because it is also concerning me. Maybe the Swedes would feel less connected, because they are out of the Schengen Area. It is not concerning them. The borders of the EU would also partly influence the identity. You are excluded if you are outside the borders.

Maurice: so you say identity in The Netherlands is not the same as in Estonia, but would you say they are different identities, and Hungarian and Estonian identities for example do overlap sufficiently more, but in the bigger picture we are all part of a European identity. So we may all be part of the EU identity, but the way we look at the identity may be different?

Rik: Yeah, I guess. I agree with the last thing. I think there is a shared identity, but I think there is a shared identity all over the human race. And I don't think I share yeah It is built up in language, culture. There is a lot of factors in identity. Someone who lives just outside the EU border, I think I have more shared identity with someone in Estonia v.s someone in Russia. But the biggest part is they do not live within the border.

Maurice: so the question was: when do you identify as a European citizen? If I would summarize it that would be in comparison to an Other. You also said something about being in India. The lifestyle there is so different from yours and you think that lifestyle is part of a EU identity and therefore this excludes them from being part of a European identity.

Rik: yeah.

Maurice: Since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

Rik: Ja, I can imagine that we would erase the borders of countries in the EU, and then I'd identify as the place where I am from in addition to the EU identity, but in daily life I would say More if I'm representing the EU with people from other continents maybe.

Maurice: you would claim a European Identity when you are presented by someone who is not. But what if you were to be in a meeting with other EU citizens?

Rik: yeah, I think we would switch to English, so if we would purely talk about how education is organized on European level, I would identify as a European. But if we were to talk about local things, like food, I would identify as Dutch. It concerns the topic.

Maurice: what do you think are the origins of federal European identities?

Rik: political organization

Maurice: Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

Rik: well we have the shared historical background. Parts of the EU were hegemonial states, they were the world leaders, and I think we just state now that we, the EU have been a world leader, or significant player.

Maurice: and how do you think this process works?

Rik: well we have good education in Europe.

Maurice: want to hear the question again?

Rik: we have some economics regions, and some that are less economic.

Maurice: how can you be less economic?

Rik: Greece is poorer than the Netherlands, but we present ourselves as Europe is wealthy. Presenting Juncker as our leader. The media is part of this process as well.

Maurice: Some claim that Europe's approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different.

Hence, Europe's motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

Rik: I do recognize it for example in the media, but you have this more important states like Germany and France. They invest in the EU. They have a larger influence on the EU than for

example Luxembourg. Because of economic influence the bigger countries have more influence on policies.

Maurice: so what about being united in diversity?

Rik: I recognize it in some points, but it depends on the subject.

Maurice: what subjects?

Rik: languages, cultural organizations, not many top-down decisions.

Maurice: so, we are united in diversity, but some countries have are bigger stakeholders because economic reasons?

Rik: yes.

Maurice: You have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin. Do you think this affects your identity? In what way and when?

Rik: I saw so many comparisons in Sweden. So afterwards I felt more like a Scandinavian person than before.

Maurice: so this is the end of the interview. I want to thank you for your participation.

6.4 Appendix D: Transcription P3

Transcription Interview Peter - Denmark

Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I'll first ask you some questions, before I'll explain what the topic of the study is. Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

Maurice: How would you identify yourself?

Peter: I what regards? If I had to present myself to...

Maurice: just what you would come up with.

Peter: Well obviously, boy, male, young adult. In terms of adjectives: adventurous, hard-working, shy, not outgoing, also not completely introvert, easy approachable. This is how I would characterize myself.

Maurice: Claiming an identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior. How do you express your identity?

Peter: in group behaviour?

Maurice: yes.

Peter. Depending on the group context. If it is just a friend group, I would be the third wheel. Not dominant in anyway. But if it is more important, group work, then I am more dominant.

Not the leader, but if nobody else steps up then I do to delegate tasks. We have a job to do.

Maurice: Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identity/identities?

Peter: Then I would say that even though I would take the leadership role in group work, I do not feel like the leader. I am more comfortable in not being the center of attention. And mainly do it, because I have to.

Maurice: then I think you have also explained how you would express these identities.

Maurice: Looking at your identities. Can you maybe rank your identities in order of importance? One being the most important to you.

Peter: to me personally, I think keeping my head down, and not being a prominent figure is more important to me than being all out there and in the middle of everything, but from an academic point of view, I would definitely rank the leadership drive as most important.

Maurice: When is a certain identity expressed / prioritized?

Peter: it is very context based. Yes, like, well at work I express one identity, in lectures a second, with my girlfriend a third, and in a group of friends a fourth. There is no one thing. Based on where I am and who I am with.

Maurice: We will now proceed to the second part of this interview on Federal EU Identity. Do you identify as a European Citizen?

Peter: yes, I do. I benefit from all the benefits that come with being an EU citizen. Especially here I can compare that with other internationals that don't have that. For example, free residence permit, free labor mobility. Half of friends are not able to get a job, because they would need a work permit, and they will not get it, because they have a student visa.

Maurice: If I were to ask you what does identification as a European Citizen mean to you?

Peter: that would be openness. Not confined to a tiny little area that is Denmark. There is enough opportunities, but I would feel confined if my mobility suddenly got taken away. I do not know another really then the one where I do not have to show a passport when I cross the borders and stuff. So if I suddenly had to show a passport all the time, I would not feel like a European citizen, even though I would technically still be it.

Maurice: when do you specifically identify as an EU citizen.

Peter: when authorities show trust.

Maurice: in what way?

Peter: crossing a border, work permit, residence permit, because I am part of this bigger entity. That is when I really feel like I am European.

Maurice: Since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

Peter: yes. If the Danish government suddenly does something ridiculously stupid, or if the Danish government would have a referendum on leaving the EU then personally, living abroad, I would fight for not leaving the EU. And I think my identification as a EU citizen is more important than as a Danish citizen. But it is limited situations. Mainly if the benefits are threaten or taken away.

Maurice: what are the origins of a federal EU identity?

Peter: eeuuhm. I guess that a while back a lot of important people would think that we were better together, no single little country could do anything significant, but if we joined forces and agreed on certain standardizations then we could functions as a larger entity and actually have a say in world-wide politics. So I think that is mainly what would have been the driving force in creating the EU.

Maurice: so you think it is something that we wanted, so we basically ...

Peter: Yes, I think it is politics yes.

Maurice: Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

Peter: they definitely ... by standardization, they try to make us equal; we have the same rights, same opportunities no matter where we are. And yeah well you had the entire banking crisis in Greek, were the helped them out, because they see Greece as part of us, which is obviously true. In that regard they try to increase the harmony and how we take care of each other. Downplaying differences.... I don't know. I don't have a clear idea of that. It is very obvious that they try to downplay the differences. It is important from a theoretical standpoint, but maybe not from a practical standpoint. It might not be important to tell a Spanish person, you are European, not Spanish. Or a Danish person to tell them you are not Danish, you are European, because Danish and Spanish are two different cultures with different histories. So ... yeah taking those differences away by trying to downplay them, may for me be counterintuitive, because I identify as both. I don't want my Danishness to be taken away, but I also don't want my Europeanness to be taken away.

Maurice: you said that Danish and Spanish cultures were different. Are they still part of one European culture?

Peter: yeah. That was my main point. Just like, I am one person at work, another at school, another at home. You think on a broader scale that also applies to people. You can identify with the home state, but also with the bigger network that is the EU.

Maurice: Uuhm, some claim that that Europe's approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different. Hence, Europe's motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

Peter: I guess that was what I was trying to say. We don't tell everybody that what you do is wrong.

Maurice: You have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin.

Peter: yes.

Maurice: Do you think this affects your identity?

Peter: yes, definitely.

Maurice: In what way and when?

Peter: if I would have gone to university in Denmark, I would have seen all that good things that Denmark does for their students, but not how it also can be done. Obviously the education system is different from country to country, so it is also different way of teaching, examination, grading, then the way it would have been in Denmark. It opens my view on cultural identity.

Maurice: in what way?

Peter: well I have been brought up in this system, and I was thought that this is the way it is done, but now I am here I see it is not necessarily how it is done. It is just like you live with your parents and they tell you how it is done, and then you move out of home and then you realize it can also be done differently. In the same way, coming here, is like, I don't have to fit in boxes. I can just move to other places and go there because there is not boundaries, other than financial of course.

Maurice: Then this is the end of the interview. Thank you.

6.5 Appendix E: Transcription P4

Transcription Interview Filippo - Italy

Maurice: Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I'll first ask you some questions, before I'll explain what the topic of the study is. Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

Maurice: How would you identify yourself?

Filippo: average university student from Italy studying in a foreign country. Funny, I don't know. Do you want an adjective or?

Maurice: anything you can think of.

Filippo: yeah that.

Maurice: that's okay. Identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior. How do you express your identity?

Filippo: if it is about group behavior. I tend to be the funny guy in the group. I try to break the ice in the group, usually. And try to eeuhm tender the opinion of the group, so that everyone can agree on something.

Maurice: Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identity/identities?

Filippo: no, don't think so.

Maurice: looking at your identities, can you maybe rank your identities in order of importance?

Filipo: the Italian definitely first, maybe in general say European. Then funny and then European.

Maurice: so first Italian, second European.

Filipo: Italian and European are on the same level. Like wouldn't make a difference between the two.

Maurice: what are the origins of identity?

Filipo: cultural and family environment.

Maurice: when do you think a certain identity is expressed or prioritized.

Filipo: never. I mean we always change. When we change our identities change with us. I think there is never a moment where it is the same. There is always a moment when you think about yourself and your identity, but the next moment can be different I think.

Maurice: We will now proceed to the second part of this interview on Federal Identity. Do you identify as a European Citizen?

Filipo: yes.

Maurice: what does identification as a European citizen mean to you?

Filipo: it is being part of a bigger community that goes along with cultural similarities between countries. And also that goes with differences, small differences for each country. Being European means bringing it all together in one. That is very nice and fun. Being European is mainly about the culture that we have in all the countries.

Maurice: you say it is a similar culture, but what is part of European culture?

Filipo: history, mainly. Especially in the last century. With that also comes philosophical and scientific environment that affect all Europeans in the same way. Especially in the philosophical part. Most philosophers are from Germany, but they still influence Italians, French, Spanish in the same way. And it is the same for the scientific part in general. Europe has always been interested in that. The different countries have always influenced each other.

Maurice: are there any moments at which you would identify as a European citizen more?

Filipo: definitely when I am in another country.

Maurice: what do you mean with another country?

Filipo: outside the European Union. Especially when you meet other people in other ...

outside Europe. You would first identify yourself as European and then comes nationality.

Maurice: Since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

Filipo: don't know. Maybe when you move, also seem as before outside the EU, you would identify yourself more as a European citizen. Maybe you would also want to interact more with people from the EU, because of the cultural similarities. And I think after that comes the nationality part.

Maurice: what are the origins for a federal European Union?

Filipo: For a very long time Europe has been kind of united, and the kingdoms that have succeeded each other have been bigger than the national boundaries of today. I think it starts back with the roman empire especially. An idea of this whole "being together in one". It is a bit different after the world. In my idea after the second world war, the idea of being you united started. I wouldn't necessarily say one federal state, but being united under something bigger.

Maurice: Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

Filipo: I think similarities are fairly easier to process than differences. If you look at the EU per se, a lot of legislation that has been done, has been done for the similarities part that all started the equal part. But then the differences are still negotiated, because it is harder to find a common ground on differences. That is very hard to harmonize.

Maurice: Some claim that Europe's approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different. Hence, Europe's motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

Filipo: Nice, never thought about it. But definitely, the thing is that I think it is a thin line where differences can make each other closer. A very thin line. It has to be looked at in a critical way. I don't necessarily think that. People can also see that from the other side: we are so diverse why should we unite? I think Europe is walking a very thin line, especially with cultural harmonization. I think there is never going to be one European language per se, because we are too different from each other. Definitely the language defines it. I believe that, but I think it is important to look at it from other perspectives as well.

Maurice: You have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin. Do you think this affects your identity? In what way and when?

Filipo: I think it affects my identity in the way that I am more a European citizen than an Italian citizen. I think it is very good for me, because you explore the small cultural differences that there are between countries and it is very nice to get to know them. Not necessarily to study them but to be part of the same kind of culture, but then each country has a small thing that makes the difference between the countries. Otherwise we would just be the same. That is also the nice part of Europe. We all have this big common umbrella, but then every country has small differences and you can learn a lot from these differences. We should encourage other people to go abroad, so it would be easier to avoid the gap of differences, of the cultural differences.

Maurice: this is the end of the interview, thank you very much.

6.6 Appendix F: Transcription P5

Transcription Interview William - Ireland

Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I'll first ask you some questions, before I'll explain what the topic of the study is. Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

Maurice: How would you identify yourself?

William: as a person or as a nationality?

Maurice: whatever you think of.

William: I see myself as an Irish student. It is a broad question. Male yeah.

Maurice: Claiming an identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior. How do you express your identity?

William: mildly. I don't think I express my identity much, I guess? Euhm. I think that I consider myself as Irish as I have grown up there all my life, and now I think I identify as it, and portray my identity by the way I talk, the way I think. I mean, I am from the countryside, I don't have a big city life.

Maurice: Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identity/identities?

William: I don't think so.

Maurice: Looking at your identities. Can you maybe rank your identities in order of importance? One being the most important to you.

William: Irish, student, male.

Maurice: okay. What do you think are the origins of identity?

William: probably as group behavior, so how people identify themselves due to their similar characteristics, and from there they form as a group, and their norm set a standard, and then someone different from that norm may not fit in that group, and therefore they're excluded.

Maurice: When is a certain identity expressed / prioritized?

William: I think it is sort of whatever norm is influenced by mosts. I think that I see myself as being more Irish, so that is my identity instead of male, because that signifies the nationality is more important to me than gender.

Maurice: We will now proceed to the second part of this interview on Federal Identity.

Do you identify as a EU Citizen?

William: yes, I should have probably said that before.

Maurice: everyone says that for some reason.

William: I think that's because it is just easier to identify as your nationality, but then to a lesser extent every nationality is part of the European community.

Maurice: What does identification as a EU Citizen mean to you?

William: it is accepting, being accepting.

Maurice: accepting of...?

William: of people, irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, background, or at least that is what I hope it would be. The ideal European citizen would be accepting of pretty much everything, allowing other people to have their own opinions and not forcing their opinions on other the other person. Euhm. The opinion of the other person may be wrong, but they won't say flat out you are wrong, they would discuss and come to some sort of agreement. That is how I would like to see the European citizens, but at times it may not be.

Maurice: When do you identify as a European citizen? Are there situations in which you would claim a European identity?

William: if I travel.

Maurice: travel within the EU or outside the EU?

William: Well I mean being Irish has quite a lot of benefits as most people like the Irish I guess. I think if I would put the world in a broader perspective, I would like to identify myself as European, but if I come to my own perspective, I would identify as Irish.

Maurice: and what is your own perspective?

William: my day to day live, I identify as Irish, but if I think about circumstances in the world, I would see myself as more European rather than Irish.

Maurice: Since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

William: yes. Yes. So for like, if I think of international crises, I would like to think of the European perspective, what I as a European should do than what I, as an Irish person from the middle of nowhere who has no influences on society. Because I think, well, I think as an Irish person from the middle of nowhere my influences would be quite little, but as a European citizen, it is a combination of all the nobodies across Europe perhaps we have bigger power.

Maurice: What do you think are the origins of a federal European identity?

William: I think that the idea of a European citizen grew after WWII. Then people started to think: this is not what should be happening, and then hopefully the standard norms. From there the subjects are able to discuss instead of saying: this is the way. And then I guess that grew when the European Union was changed, with the new members of Europe, and stuff like that.

Maurice: what do you mean with new members of Europe?

William: if would say there is three bits of Europe: western, middle, eastern.

Maurice: do you think they are still part of a European identity?

William: I think they could be a special identity of central Europeans, the outside people, that they are kind of like a maybe they have another identity, because they are quite far away from Europe, they do not see the benefits of Europe as much as I think I would.

Maurice: why do you think that is?

William: Well the benefits I see, like in this university there is a huge number of international students who are all accepted, they all have a common tongue in English in addition to their own languages. In Ireland, there is a very limited number of international students, there is some, but I mean not as many, so I am thinking if I would be in Ireland right now, I would still be with the guys from before, and then my interpretation of Europe would probably be quite different from having European friends here than only having Irish friends over there.

Maurice: how would your view be different?

William: I think that I had learnt to accept cultures more a bit. I think that here and in other places of Europe where there is such big European kind of a population of not just the nation self population, but different countries as well, it allows for acceptance of different cultures, acceptance of language, of values. But I think my perspective in Ireland would be something else: Everyone else's culture is something different, but this is our culture, and this is how it should be.

Maurice: you were talking about values. Do you have certain European values in mind that we all share?

William: I don't know how to classify it, but I would say that European values be. I want to say acceptance again, but then I feel like I am repeating myself. Euhm. To be more openminded. I think the ideal European citizen is a lot more open minded, then the average person. I mean there is not a huge immigrant population in Ireland. There is a lot of cautiousness I think. One of my teacher had never seen a black person, until his like thirties or something, because he was from such a small region with so little immigration, that you could tell that their values are solely based on the region's values and not on the world.

Maurice: would you then say European values are universal humanist.

William: you could say that. I think that if you classify European as being one huge amount of land, it is not surprising that that is going to happening, because everyone can move around easily. But when you are from a remote island, there is not so much urge from people, for new people to come there, so then you are restricted to the values that you have. That kind of influences that.

Maurice: Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

William: I think it is just like. I think that. I think it is maybe down to. Well the central Europe has quite a similar stretch on life, as they are so close, and their cultural values overlap quite a lot. I think you could probably group Europe into three different kind of territories. Central, eastern, western. I think that the shared ... I would like to think that the best part of each are shared, and then the bad parts are downplayed, I am not true this happens, it might be my idealistic worldview.

Maurice: this is your ideal situation, but how do you think it really works?

William: probably the perceived ideal values are forced to be shared, and then differences then can be could even create bigger differences, because now there is fear for these due to forced shared values.

Maurice: Some claim that Europe's approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different.

Hence, Europe's motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

William: well you could say that languages kind of have been hierarched. English is quite a common language, most people's second language is English. If you look at the Dutch, I mean they can speak English very well, and German, and then probably French. And I think the Germans speak German well, well they DO speak German well, and they speak English pretty well. You could say that languages are hierarched, and that English is kind of this language. If you speak to an English person, I don't think they can speak another language, but most people in Europe can at least speak two. Well the people in higher education at least can. This might not happen over the whole population, but I have been surprised about the amount of people that can speak English here. In Ireland, some of the old people can't even speak English that well. In certain regions they speak only Irish. I think that in Ireland, the language is pretty much English, and not many people can speak Irish that well, so basically the only language is English. In other countries they speak English to such level that they can communicate quite well, so I think that. Perhaps culture haven't had that hierarchical system, where certain cultures are prioritized. Perhaps there are different cultures, but I think that is perhaps. Cultures becoming more intertwined with another. If you look at Europe, there is a lot more Europe, especially in continental Europe, because they are intertwined more. Partly, I as an Irish person, I see Europe as one big part, instead of the individual cultures.

Maurice: so you do not rally think it is united in diversity?

William: no, I think it is diverse.. maybe in continental Europe it is more united, but I feel like in the outskirts of Europe, it is sort of diversely united.

Maurice: You have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin. Do you think this affects your identity? In what way and when?

William: I think if I had moved at a younger age, I would see myself as more European, but as an originally Irish person, growing up in sort of a rural kind of place, that influences my perspective of Europe.

Maurice: but moving here, how did it affect..

William: ooh. I think it has affected me as in now I see myself more European. I see myself as connected with people more here, because we are all European. Perhaps easier like compared to in.... It is hard... I have never thought about it thoroughly. Moving countries has changed my perspective on Europe, and my own identity. I feel like before I used to think that I was Irish and then European, perhaps now I see myself as a combination of European and Irish at the same time.

Maurice: and if you should rank these two?

William: I think I would be Irish European, instead of just saying Irish and then European. Combined as one sort of thing. Like you can be a Dutch European.

Maurice: and a Texan American.

William: sort of yeah.

Maurice: This is the end of the interview. I want to thank you again for your participation in this research.

6.7 Appendix G: Transcription P6

Transcription Interview Zoé - France

Maurice: Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I'll first ask you some questions, before I'll explain what the topic of the study is. Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

Maurice: How would you identify yourself?

Zoé: Like in general? By identify you mean nationality? Or just identify like?

Maurice: anything

Zoé: I do I consider... well first of all, I am a student. This is my profession. Then I am French, and I am a teenager too.

Maurice: teenager?

Zoé: yaah, I am not an adult. I am not an adult. I mean I am 20 years old, but I am not 40, I don't have a job. So still a teenager. An older teenager, not a young one.

Maurice: I get it. Young adult?

Zoé: yes, young adult if you prefer.

Maurice: Claiming an identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior. How do you express your identity?

Zoé: how I would perform? What do you mean?

Maurice: how you act out these identities.

Zoé: student by the fact that I come to university, study every day, and a goal that at the end of the year, I want to have my BA degree. This is how I perform being a student. Perform being a young adult, teenager, I would say I just moved out from my parents' home, now I live alone, and that is the first time it every happened, so it is exciting how to figure out how to live my life, how to spend my money, going from the young age to the adult euh. And then I said French, this is because I can speak the language, and my mom is French.

Maurice: but you also speak English, but you do not identify yourself as being English?

Zoé: because I am not a native English. On the contrary I learned to speak French when I started talking, and English I learned at school and then I got involved in learning it, because I wanted to learn it, but not because someone in my family speaks it to me in English.

Maurice: Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identity/identities?

Zoé: no I don't see any.

Maurice: and can you maybe rank your identities in order of importance to you?

Zoé: my order of importance... I would say the identity of being French would be the first one, because it is constant. It will always be like that and always stay like that. So on first. Second, I would say like I am a student, because it is going to be like this for a few years I think. And then the last one, was the step from being teenager to young adult, and I think it is going to be complete in a few years, so I would place this one by last. Because the process already started a few years ago, and I am nearly at the end of the process.

Maurice: what do you think are the origins of identity in general?

Zoé: where do they come from? I think about how people feel in their heart, how they are, how they feel they are, then if you consider yourself as a sportive guy then this is one of your identity, you thought about it, you ask yourself how can I define myself, and then you find identity. It is not a proper definition, it depends on the individuals, maybe you can ask someone else the same question you did and they won't answer the same thing.

Maurice: and when do you think a certain identity is prioritized?

Zoé: in general? When you can see it. When you know someone is expressing identity. Well euh, at the airport, I could say. When someone gives his passport. It is an indirect way to show your identity. You are asked to show your passport, but you are showing your identity. Then could be maybe during job interview, when the person that wants to hire you ask how you can describe yourself, who you are. This is maybe showing your identity in another way than at the airport, and eeuhm. At the university when you get your degree.

Maurice: We will now proceed to the second part of this interview on Federal Identity. Do you identify as a European Citizen?

Zoé: mmmh. I will say yes and no. yes, because that I am studying abroad thanks the Erasmus program, I realize that in Europe we can like move from one country to another and it is not like if we were American people that come here to study. They have to get a visa and a health insurance, while if you are in Europe, you don't have to do all this stuff. So now that I moved

from France to here with facilities it is more easy than for other foreigners. Yes, I consider myself as a European. But before no, I felt more French, more than European. Because I couldn't really see Europe. For me it was just France.

Maurice: And what does identification as an EU citizen mean to you?

Zoé: well I think it is when you feel like I said. You don't feel from your country, but you feel that you come from the whole entity. Like you come from Europe, not from your country. You see your country as a whole that goes with all other countries. That is how you identify as a European citizen.

Maurice: when do you identify as a European citizen? Are there situations in which you would claim a European identity?

Zoé: well as I said for moving here for the studies yes, then even for travelling. For instance, I think it is easier to move eeuh. European citizen are going to be more willing to fly around Europe, than outside. For instance, they will prefer, maybe, they will feel safer to go to Spain than to another country that is not European.

Maurice: what about travelling outside the EU?

Zoé: eeuhm. I think it is fine, but most of the time I travel within the European Union. It just seems more easier, but I don't think it is easier. It is just that being European citizen it seems easier to travel around Europe than outside Europe. Like the same thing. It is just that you have got the same currency, and it feels all closer because all the countries are put together. Like if every country was really close next each other. It is really easy. You don't have to travel on your passport. You only take your ID card. Even that is a facility. This way it makes it easier for people to travel.

Maurice: Since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

Zoé: Well in this circumstances right now. That I am like studying abroad thanks to my European status, because if I was only French, it could have happened, but the fact the I identify as a European right now that Erasmus community is a European community, so you have to identify as a European member to participate. In this circumstances I feel more European than the French identity. Living here means that I have to forget a little bit about the French way of life and the French speaking, and just adapt a little bit to everyone that is here. Be a more open, not feel like you just came from one country, but we all come from these countries that are like part of the same thing.

Maurice: do you think there are certain values that are European?

Zoé: I don't know. I think that values come from within the countries, and then in Europe these values are just added to the chart. I don't think there were values invented just for Europe. I think it is just countries that have given some ideas. I don't know, but that is what I think.

Maurice: what do you think are the origins for a federal EU identity?

Zoé: origins? Where does it come from? I don't know.

Maurice: what do you think?

Zoé: what do I know from where it come? It is like a country, like a village?

Maurice: just that some people can identify as an EU citizen. Where do you think it comes from?

Zoé: I think it comes from the fact that people are moving more than before. When you move around, you realize you are not the only one, there are other peoples. Not from the same nationality, but they are just like you. They are all part of the same thing. I think this, by travelling you realize. What was the circumstances...

Maurice: you want to see the question?

Zoé: yes. Yeah, I think travelling leads to a federal European identity.

Maurice: Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

Zoé: the fact that we are European.

Maurice: so you would say that shared sameness comes through higher institutions?

Zoé: yes, I think so. Even similarities on the way of life. For instance, we have all Euro as currency, we all drink coca-cola. We can buy pretty much the same products in Europe. It is not like you go to the United States, where you have completely different food, different way of life. I think that European countries all are different, but with point in common.

Maurice: what do you think about downplaying difference?

Zoé: that's what happens. They are being equalized. I don't know if the institutions try to not show them. I think we do not really talk about it. We now similarities, but we don't know differences, I think.

Maurice: Some claim that Europe's approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different.

Hence, Europe's motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

Zoé: I think it is not a 100% true. I read an article about the fact that all languages are treated equally. This is what they want to make us think, but it is not what is happening. If you go to the European parliament. Normally, there is not official language there. Every country can speak their language to communicate, because there is translators and stuff, because they don't want to accept English as a common language, because no one speaks English.

Maurice: Ireland?

Zoé: they speak Irish too then. By the way. They don't want to install an official language, just to make sure that they treat languages equally, but I think that some countries are left apart, like for instance Romania, Greece, countries that are not really useful to the most powerful countries of Europe, so yeah.

Maurice: so maybe they are culturally united, but they don't have the same power.

Zoé: yeah right, right. I think that like the parliament, like, I think that France has more value, not more value, but more importance than Romania at the parliament, I will guess that more people will speak French than Romanian, because Romanian is a language that no one speaks, not that no one speaks it, but I haven't met many people how speak it while travelling around Europe.

Maurice: You have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin. Do you think this affects your identity? In what way and when?

Zoé: my European identity or my identity in general?

Maurice: general.

Zoé: I think, yes, because, I am not only on holidays here. I am living here, I need to adapt to the way of life here, and to the way people think and live. So I have to change my behavior, and so in a way change my identity. Not like French, not French anymore, like, Erasmus student, international student living here. So yeah I think it changes my identity a little bit, but not too much, because I stay who I am, but it has some change.

Maurice: This is the end of the interview. I want to thank you again for your participation in this research.

6.8 Appendix H: Transcription P7

Transcription Interview Ceci - Germany

Maurice: Welcome! Thank you for participating in this interview. Because of the nature of this study, I'll first ask you some questions, before I'll explain what the topic of the study is.

Because this is scientific research, I would like to add that you may quit the interview at any time for any reason.

Maurice: How would you identify yourself?

Ceci: to which country I would identify myself?

Maurice: the first thing you think of.

Ceci: uuhm. I would identify myself as a German living in the Netherlands, as a girl, as an open person.

Maurice: Claiming an identity in this thesis means: performing contextually relevant group behavior. How do you express your identity?

Ceci: well I am an open person towards other people as well, very curious about new things.

Maurice: and how would you perform being German?

Ceci: I don't really think that, yeah there are of course stereotypes about German people, which I cannot really identify myself with, maybe that is why I went to the Netherlands, like the beer drinking, the not very rude, but it is so overgeneralizing being German, and that is the way you should behave or you are. So I wouldn't really call myself German because of my behavior. Just like, I identify myself, because I lived there most of my life. I identify myself more with the behavior stereotypes of Dutch people, I guess. They are more open to other people, more interested in other people, but of course it depends on who you get to know and the people I lived with in Germany, because it can be the other way around as well.

Maurice: Identity is pluralistic; this means that you can identify as multiple things at the same time. Would you like to add any identities to your initially stated identity/identities?

Ceci: yes, also the Dutch. Because of the last time it has become an important thing in my life. I feel more at home in the Netherlands. I am German because it is my nationality, but in order to like behaviour and were I feel more home, this would be the Netherlands then.

Maurice: How do you express these identities?

Ceci: what is said. The people I got to know in the Netherlands were all very open and interested in other people. When you come to the group these ask you question maybe and I think this is what really appears to me, and this is what makes me feel at home here. And what I am so thankful about what happened to me in the Netherlands, and what I give back to other people as well. This is one of the things with the Dutch people.

Maurice: Looking at your identities. Can you maybe rank your identities in order of importance? One being the most important to you.

Ceci: also the girls identity or only the countries?

Maurice: all of them.

Ceci: all of them. Uhm. Firstly, but this is rather theoretical, I would put the girl first, because it is my nature. Then I would do an open person, and then maybe the Netherlands, and then Germany. Because I don't really think, that the identity of course, the country you live in, form your identity. I think you are still in individual person, the country does not really define you. The most important things are like the characteristics, that is why the countries are down at the bottom.

Maurice: what do you think are the origins of identity?

Ceci: where they come from?

Maurice: uhum.

Ceci: uhm. I think for, this is in yourself. Your identity, your characteristics as well, what you can identify with, what you are interested in, but also the people you are with, so also your family as well, but also the people you get to know in the country, in the area you live in. I think it is both sides, you have to be interested in several things in order to form your identity, because of the interests and the things you went through. Also the people you are with can

form your identity, can form habits that you can identify with. The people you like are the people with the same interests as well.

Maurice: absolutely. When do you think a certain identity is prioritized?

Ceci: I think that depends... it is because you feel happy with the life you live, the people you are with, or if you are happy with yourself, you can really identify with these things and with yourself. For example, I feel more home in the Netherlands, and that is why maybe I feel better in the Netherlands, and that I could identify myself with the Netherlands even though my, I come from Germany and that is my identity on paper, but that is my identity on paper, and not like my prioritized identity.

Maurice: We will now proceed to the second part of this interview on Federal EU Identity. Do you identify as a European Citizen?

Ceci: mmmmh. I don't really know. Just because now I meet so many people from, the Erasmus students, for example there is a guy from Spain, he lives such a different life from mine. It starts at the dinner time, that is so different from our dinner time. And then for example, he is Christian, and he believes in God and stuff, and I would not identify myself with that. So I know that these are stereotypes as well, but I would not identify as a European citizen, because the countries in Europe are still so different from each other that it is hard to identify with all of them, because even seeing Europe as a whole, the countries in Europe are still separate from each other sometimes.

Maurice: you said you couldn't identify with the whole of them, but can you identify with parts?

Ceci: yes, I think it would be more like Northern Europe. And the South is really different. I could not really identify with that. I haven't lived there, but purely based on stereotypes and thoughts I have. I think it is more like northern European countries.

Maurice: what is it in the values of northern European countries that you think you can belong to them?

Ceci: I think it is bit more other people maybe, very open, very modern as well. If we think about the Netherlands for example, it is a very modern country, wants to know everything. And it is like, goes with the time. Because of less money, and maybe more tradition, the south of Europe sometimes has a, yeah like, running behind a bit in several things.

Maurice: what does identification as a northern European citizen mean to you?

Ceci: uuhm. I have never really thought about that. It is not the whole of Europe, rather the northern European countries. Because I lived in Germany, England, and the Netherlands, that I rather think about these countries, because I have lived there and I know the people there, but it is hard to say for for example Sweden. But more Scandinavian countries, maybe you don't really know, you feel kind of more connected to them. When we read or talk to people, I can more identify with these people, like interests and what they think about several stuff. The modern way of thinking more. That would be it for me, I guess.

Maurice: When do you identify as a European citizen? Are there situations in which you would claim a European identity?

Ceci: I have never, but I think it would of you would talk to people from other continents maybe. They have so different cultures. For example in Asia, when you talk to Asian people, they don't know where the Netherlands is, you would probably say: yeah it is in Europe, a special part of Europe. And then you can describe it, but then I would go back to describing the Netherlands again, so I think that is why I don't see myself as a European citizen, because it is so bold. Of course you say I am from Europe, but that is only to people from other continents.

Maurice: Since identity is the process of social interaction, identities may shift and recombine to meet new circumstances. Can you imagine any circumstances in which you would rank

identification as a European citizen more important than your identification with the member state of origin?

Ceci: I think that is hard to imagine, because I don't see myself as a European citizen. I have never used that word, so that is why I would not use it in special occasions. Just like someone for example, would ask me from which continent are you, then I would say from Europe. But I think the countries in Europe differ so much from each other. It is hard to overgeneralize them, because I don't like overgeneralizing, or stereotyping special words or identities, so I don't think I would do that.

Maurice: If there were to be a federal European identity, what would the origins of a federal EU identity be?

Ceci: maybe, this is about politics as well. I would think about politics, because Europe has the name Europe because of politics and trade, and that's why. And I don't know, I think it is maybe like trade and politics, and economics.

Maurice: Since identity is based on shared sameness and downplaying difference. How do you think this process works in the EU?

Ceci: just that word European citizen is such a broad word. What I just said, every single person is so different, because they are from Germany, they are a typical German citizens, but still what is typical German? If you would go further, what is typical European. That is why I never say that, because to me it is more about politics, and people are so different from each other. We would identify ourselves to Europe maybe, because it is modern in terms of economics and politics maybe, but I think people still are so different, even one person from another. Austria and Germany are still so different from each other for example. That is, that would be it.

Maurice: Some claim that Europe's approach to diversity actually unites the EU. All languages, for example, are treated equally, and there is no hierarchy in languages or cultures. So it is not being similar that unites Europe, but the similar approach to being different.

Hence, Europe's motto: United in Diversity. What do you think of this?

Ceci: that is a tough question. I think there is a hierarchy. I just talked about someone from Poland last week. She asked me: where I am from. I said: from Germany. She said: o did you know that the German passport is the number one passport in the world? So this is one example for like: in that case Germans are way more superior. She had difficulties getting in to the UK, because she needed a visa, I don't really have to have that. I think we are different there. This is so different, but it is not how it should be, because we both from Europe. So we should both have a number one passport. So why are the Germans better in that case, more superior? And then again the French language and the Spanish language, why do they teach that in schools and why not Polish for example. I think politics try to say that, but then again these are mostly politicians from countries, from the ruling countries, Germany, for example Angela Merkel really believes in that, but I think it is hard to imagine if you are on the top of the European countries to imagine how it would be for the countries that have less money and are a bit more on the bottom of the hierarchy. Because I really think there is a hierarchy.

Maurice: thanks. Last question. You have studied and lived in another member state than your member state of origin. Do you think this affects your identity? In what way and when?

Ceci: yes. Yeah, I would definitely say so. When I look back to when I came to the Netherlands, I was not completely a different person of course, and I think that some interests have kind of been within me before, but I didn't know about it, but I think the people of the Netherlands embraced a few things within me. And when I think about myself, I am a better person. That makes my identity as well, I think I am more happy with myself now. Not that I was unhappy, but now is better. And what I said in the beginning, when you are happy with yourself and the area you live in, that affects your identity. It really affected mine in that case.

Maurice: This is the end of the interview. I want to thank you again for your participation in this research.