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**EUROPEAN IDENTITY VERSUS NATIONAL IDENTITY?**

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*Abstract: European identity is a concept that continues to provoke vivid debates. Much of the literature deals mainly in terms of historical or philosophical values and lifestyles common for Europe. Another part of the European speaks about identity as a process of literature addressing psycho- sociological or socio -political citizens' of attachment to the European and the political community. Sociological analysis of the identification of European citizens European political entity, detailed in the last decade through Eurobarometer provides a clearer view of the evolution of multiple identities and the process of shaping the European identity among citizens, based on the total cultural experience, social, legal, and subjective perception of the EU and the values promoted by it. Based on these considerations, we support the thesis that national identity is not contradictory with the feeling of belonging to the European Union, but rather everything that can be seen by analyzing the relationship with the European project in relation to nation building.*

**Keywords: identity, european, national, eurobarometer, cultural experience, political entities, subjective perceptions**

Introducing the concept of identity in the sphere of European studies was the result of surveys, and more specifically Eurobarometer analysts who used it to explain multidimensional support and integrate indicators . Most of this research interrogate - directly or indirectly—existence of a process to identify the interviewees with the European Union , in other words noting the growing influence of history, European history on the opinions and behaviors of its citizens. Each of these works focus on different aspects of relationships that are established or not between the Union and European. Convergences are numerous and all underlines the problematic nature of the concept of "European identity".

As shown by Adrian Severin in his article *European identity - national-statal identity*, the European process - a process consisting of design and build a united Europe capable of exceeding state «Europe-market 'to become a' Europe -Power" - must be seen as a result of a two-way movement. On the one hand it is about moving West to the East European continent - actually called "enlargement" - and on the other hand we refer to the movement of a confrontational diversity of Central and Eastern Europe to the West.

Western Europe reached an identity characterized by political pluralism, social participation, respect for diversity, free and fair competition, rule of law and the primacy of human rights. These values are commonly synthesized as pluralistic/participative democracy, rule of law and human rights, to which must be added and so called "economic democracy" and the sanctity of private property and free formation of prices on the market. They include, of course, equal opportunity and secular character of the state. Western Europe has accumulated also vulnerability rooted in negative behavior patterns. Consumerism, selfishness and lack of labor market flexibility - consecutive an excess of social protection - are just some of them. In the Community structures (European Union institutions), their work adds bureaucracy, lack of transparency and accountable systems for the citizen. On the other hand, Central and Eastern Europe is characterized, still, by insecurity and poverty. So it is that

the trust of citizens from these countries in the Church and the Army goes before confidence in specific institutions of democracy in a secular state.

As things stand now, it can be said that "EU enlargement" (positive Western imperialism) be pseudo or quasi-globalizing obviously keeping us at the scale of the European continent. This design whereas the European integration only as a transfer of its model - the *acquis communautaire* - to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Past experience shows that "identification with the nation-state emerged only after a long cultural and linguistic homogeneity of citizens, wearing wars, establish rights and obligations of citizens, build a picture of the nation equipped with symbols and rituals, the existence of common enemies and the gradual emergence of the education system and the media "(Guibernau, 2004, p. 140). European identity (and citizenship, by the way) can not be based on a homogenization that would cancel diversities, be they linguistic, cultural or legal, as fundamentals can not claim the existence of a common past or geographic boundaries clearly marked.

By coordinating policies and activities of Member States, the European Union confers a particular interest to the mechanism which facilitates the mutual relations between European citizens. Such a mechanism is rebuilding practices related to European citizenship and how access rights and goods is outlined. These practices are formulated as a "dichotomy" nation-state - the EU and involves the introduction of a new type of actors in the defense of fundamental individual rights in a European context. European identity is a precondition of how citizens assume a state of solidarity to foster positive integration. European membership as a form of integration, thus contributing to a social union within and between democratic European societies.

One of the strongest identities, both individual and group or community level, remains national identity. Data that identifies members of a national community with the nation define a set of similarities of interests, beliefs or rules of life, shared by all persons belonging to that group. Identity can become stereotyped in everyday speech, although national identity have difficulty conceptualizing (Stefanescu & Velicu, 2006, pp. 16-17). National identity expresses attitudes, mentalities and behaviors of individuals belonging to the collective results of a national state. Modernist and postmodernist doctrines put into question the appropriateness of the national state, on the premise of national or local integration in supranational structures such as, for example, the European Union.

National identity lies as a matter of utmost relevance in countries integrated for decades in all structures of the European Union, the fundamental process of rethinking the current europeized society. National identities will be redefined through a complex process of renegotiating the place of national cultures in the global identity. "Ethnicity and globalization do not exclude each other, on the contrary, are complementary processes of the contemporary world" (Schifirneț, 2009).

How wrote, a century ago, C. Radulescu-Motru, national identity proved its actuality both through its own concept - politicianism, explaining processes in countries that have recently joined the modernization, and by applying logical postulate of identity in society study. This postulate illustrates the identical meaning of concepts, which should be reflected in replacing old habits and practices, instinctive religious beliefs, with the trust in dialogue

and reasoning. Western peoples identity result from the consciousness control of social relations, previously covered by customs, traditions and superstitions. In the West acts "a social identity cooperation, based on spiritual skills: political and moral, scientific and artistic creations are the work of a thread of continuity. The sense of responsibility is rooted in the soul of every citizen. Citizen deliberating on state affairs, because there deliberation is possible and fruitful" (Radulescu-Motru, 1904, p. 128). Motru asserts the identity of skills and not the identity of terms.

Instead, the emerging European identity is based on shared consciousness of belonging to a political and economic space defined by capitalism, social welfare, democracy, rule of law and human rights. They are the pillars of a European identity built through cultural policies by applying Community law and the work of the European Court of Justice case law and by the wider political culture shared by all EU members.

From the history of the creation of nation states know that political identity requires two essential elements: awareness of citizens to belong to the same political structure, which has the power to make decisions for their lives, and the identification of these citizens with a common political project. European identity is a political category, not a cultural category. "What the EU is currently lacking is a sufficient level of identification of its citizens with the EU, seen as a system of organization to which they belong and whose members are" (Schifirneț, 2009).

We can not comment adequate ratio between the European and national identity without involving in question Jurgen Habermas. In his last works - just remember: *Between Facts and Norms*, *The Inclusion of the Other*, *Post-National Estate*, *The Divided West and Europe*, *The Faltering Project* - theme through Habermas analyzes the possibility of democratic politics beyond the nation state.

Nowadays, even in developed countries, sovereignty can only be maintained in a particular form. The state is the citizens' sovereign people acting collectively and possess the monopoly of legitimate violence but at the same time, the European Union and other international organizations usually follows decisions together. As the Éva Biró-Kaszás, Habermas believes, however, that legitimacy can not be formulated as an analogy federal democratic states, in contrast to the Hoffa's universal federal state because the process is simultaneously individual and collective actors. For example, the UN Charta specifies that the basic principle is the equality of sovereign states, but also the United Nations Security Council has the right to meddle in state affairs, if this is required by human rights. "On this basis, we believe the global organization community» States and citizens ". Similarly, the Brussels Convention has submitted the draft European Constitution in the »name of states and citizens of Europe»" (Habermas, *The Divided West*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006, p. 135, cited Éva Biró-Kaszás, 2011) . Habermas label their own conception as a "global domestic policy without universal government", and this requires a global society without center politically constructed, and the "global governance would remain for state institutions and procedures at levels that are above nations and at levels they traverse them" (Habermas, *The Divided West*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006, p. 135, cited Éva Biró-Kaszás, 2011).

According to Habermas's model of discourse, post-national estate really can mean the transformation of the role the state level, and not just labeling a political tendencies, social:

"The learning faster to new channels and direct interests of" governance without government", the faster they can change the traditional means of diplomatic pressure and military intervention to exercise" soft "power" (Habermas, *The Divided West*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006, p. 176, cited Éva Biró-Kaszás, 2011). The daily experience of mutual dependence and debate of its regular international contact helps people to internalize the laws and the political awareness of belonging to a great community. Habermas believes that this is very important for the EU to succeed, because solidarity felt at this intermediate level, which crosses nations, can generate a larger scale solidarity. Moreover, universal society can not function without political built of this intermediate level. The forming of the European Union is considered by Habermas as a model for building universal society of citizens.

Moving, however, from political philosophy to reality immediate actuality, we can ask the question again in relation to what might lose national identity as a result of such political integration? It affects it, some political integration of national values?

European values are systematized invoked by forming an EU coding system comprising:

- internal rules of each state, human rights, conceived as an expression of the principle of subsidiarity;
- EU countries participating in the international system of human rights protection;
- specific tools developed within the EU. Extra-national center of gravity of the system resulting from the membership of all EU member states in the Council of Europe.

More specifically, there is an amount of tools which help EU implements integration of national identities in European identity, without seeking to make a first robbery. Agents that promote the process of Europeanization:

- Initiatives such as Erasmus and Socrates education that promotes student exchanges between Union countries, promoting trans-European friendship through cultural exchanges and freedom of movement;
- Structural Funds and common policies in agriculture have provided financial support for eligible projects and helped to build a cohesive economic profile of the Union;
- The European Union flag (with the twelve golden stars on a blue background) is now met all over the countries, from state institutions to projects financed by advertisements that marks the Structural Funds, and sights;
- EU anthem, "Ode to Joy" by Beethoven, a celebration of humanity as an entity united in diversity, the famous verse of Schiller's "Alle Menschen werden Brüder" ("all men are brothers"). Anthem is sung without lyrics because of the multitude of official languages;
- The standard format of the European passport, which is a marker of a formal affiliations;
- The introduction of a centralized statistical system by Eurobarometer and Eurostat;
- introduction of the Euro as unified currency;
- cultural cohesion programs such as "European Capital of Culture".

But in the context of globalization, new technology and consumerism, mass communications, are seen as a homogenizing force that undermines national identity. In such circumstances, the national idea and nationalism were forced to change, to evolve towards national imaginary, using as a benchmark Benedict Anderson and his "imagined

communities". How to define national imagined this space? What are its features? There are four levels to consider:

1. First, we have the "story" of a nation, which is formally transmitted (through educational curricula) and informally (through myths of traditions). Symbolic elements such as the classic nation-state institutions (see Parliament), currency, state religion (see the role of the church in Ireland, Italy, Spain, etc.), media (national traditional channels such as BBC) - are all essential ways of defining a national identity.
2. Secondly, we use symbols such as flags, national anthems, national sports, or other less formal, such as food.
3. Thirdly, and essential to our discourse, we have the idea of nation as territorialized geographical area with rich connotations.
4. Fourthly there is the idea of nation and "the Other". Note here that one of the strongest markers of identity of a nation is to define it by what it is not. Drawing mental or symbolic borders is as, if not stronger, than drawing state borders.

The dynamics of globalization thus creates some type of post-national scenario, where local identities are expressed while simultaneously interacting with supranational actors. Regionally, this trend translates into the coexistence of two levels of identity, namely the national and European (in this case), the latter being heavily supported at the political and social policies, programs developed by nationally or supranational. However, conclusions on a common European future are optimistic. The common will of European states can implement the tools to develop a European identity built around a common cultural background, historical past, intercultural communication in a framework in which to consider not only the goals but also points departure (represented by the set of values and attitudes that are found both at the individual and community level national).

Despite seniority political statements on European identity, sociological analysis of the identification of European citizens with European political entity does not materialize really only since the 2000s, with the introduction of the concept of identity in the polls. Analysts Eurobarometer used this concept to explain multidimensional support and integrate indicators (Belot, 2010) also aims to emphasize the subjective dimension of European construction.

On the other hand, sociological analysis of the meaning of European identity, thorough in the last decade through Eurobarometer, provides a clearer view of the evolution of multiple identities, the process of shaping the European identity among citizens, based on the summum of cultural experiences, social, legal, but also on the subjective perception of the European Union and the values promoted by it. So reports the European Commission enshrined the opinion of citizens on Europe include a part entitled European identity, aiming to keep track of the percentage of EU citizens who self-describes as Europeans. Trying to strengthen European identity, beyond the symbolic, meant both increasing the involvement of citizens in decision-making actively and more emphasis on their views through the Eurobarometer.

European Union seeks to provide a framework for understanding different European identity compared to specific nation-state. Although it is assumed that self-identification as a European sense of belonging comes directly from national, this does not mean that European

identity is constructed in the same manner as national identity but rather involves a convergence of national and European feelings, persistent identities National simultaneously with the development of a form of attachment to the European Union. Moreover, the identification with Europe involves maintaining strong links and complex national identification. This is particularly evident for the new Member States that joined the European Union, given that the process does not imply the adoption of a European identity already formed, but rather adding to each new Member State or elements of its national identity European (Schifirneț, 2011a, p. 27).

In the context of accession negotiations lasted nearly 10 years, and Romania's joining of the European Union was achieved on January 1st, 2007, Romanians are satisfied that the accession process was completed legally and over 60% of them feel more secure due to the fact that Romania is a member of EU, according to Eurobarometer 67 (Spring 2007, p. 22). Instead, they are apprehensive regarding their future in the new "system". The only concrete that Romanians consider relevant for European integration impact on society and everyday life is visa-free travel to Europe (54% of Romanian considers this aspect, according to Eurobarometer 70, Autumn 2008). But over time, Romanians were forced to accept that the freedom of movement within the European Union involves building another image on national identity and hence European identity.

Assuming the Romanian European identity is a work in dynamic and Romanians attitudes and opinions about Europe are studied by Eurobarometer surveys in general, but also within national research. Although Europeans became "legally wrong", the Romanians see themselves more as members of a national state as European citizens, especially in the first years after accession. According to a research on identity in Sibiu, conducted in 2007, Romanians identify themselves first of all as Romanian (Dragoman, 2008). Only 4% of respondents said they have a European identity compared to 33.6% who identify with the national level. Romanians can not yet perceive a European identity, as a result of joining the European Union that would limit national sovereignty (p. 74). While, awareness of belonging to the European community was consolidated among Romanian citizens, a fact revealed by the data Eurobarometer 71.3 (Spring 2009, p. 7), from which it follows that in mind Romanians European identity seems to reproduce it on the national essential elements: being born in Romania and Europe (49% versus 47%) to feel Romanian or European (38% versus 36%) and Romanian cultural traditions and European share (40% versus 33%).

Before the financial crisis to impact politically, economically and socially among Member States, European identity was considered a solution for legitimizing the European project in relation to various issues affecting the European Union. The economic crisis has put its mark on the views of European citizens but about the legitimacy of belonging to the European community, becoming less willing to assume part of this community. Therefore, the economic crisis has caused a certain extent and identity crisis, since economic prosperity, the main asset of European construction, remained only a promise for new member countries, at least in the short term. In these circumstances, some Europeans began to show some disorientation regarding the EU's future and its ability to bring welfare entities. The fact that the Union no longer perform was reflected in the inverse correlation between negative economic expectations and confidence of European citizens in the EU. Also during the

economic crisis decreased the percentage of citizens from countries that identify with the European Union, according to Eurobarometer. If in 2007, 42% of European respondents identified themselves only with the national state in 2010 this percentage increased to 46% (Eurobarometer 73, vol. 2, 2010, p. 113). As regards the Romanian, the percentage of people identifying themselves only with Romania was 50%, well above the European average (p.114.).

One possible explanation for the reluctance to taking Romanians European identity that binds their hopes or expectations on improving the social situation proved unrealistic. According to the study expectations and requirements for the European Union, more than half of Romanian (53.1%) say that their situation has worsened compared to the situation before Romania joined the EU in 2007 (Schifirneț, 2011b, p. 74) . As such, the economic crisis led to a decreased availability of Romanians consider themselves Europeans, while the percentage of people who claim membership in the political community is a good thing for Romania decreased over time according to the Eurobarometer, 2007-2010 . Compared with 2007, when 71% of Romanian positively appreciated of membership of the European Union Eurobarometer data 72 (autumn 2009) show that the percentage of Romanians who believe this has dropped to 64%. Given this perception recorded before the economic crisis to make their presence felt by lowering the living standard Eurobarometer 73 (spring 2010) indicates that only 55% of Romanian claim that is a good thing that Romania is part of the Union European and national unuistudiu as of 2011, 46.3% of the Romanian May welcomes the inclusion of Romania in the European community (Schifirneț, 2011b, p.76).

On the other hand, lower living conditions for transnational might create a sense of solidarity between European citizens affected by the crisis and thus to more European identity. This is because positive experiences and exigencies of Europeans living together with favorable conditions constitute European identity. Year 2012, at the European level, marked a return to hope that the road to prosperity will be resumed, and the global economic crisis will eventually find a solution. Against the backdrop vulnerabilities economic, social and political, mental occurred Europeans an identity reconfigurare at national and European level. The only European citizens identify with the national state drops to 38 percent in 2012, while increasing those who see themselves as having an identity "National and European" (41% in 2010, 46% in 2011 and 49% in 2012) ( Eurobarometer 77, Spring 2012, p.24).

Although the economic and financial crisis has generated tension between national and European identity, the two types of identity continues to be associated in such circumstances because of shared European values such as rationalism, individualism and democracy. According to Eurobarometer 75 (spring 2011), more than half of Europeans (ie, 52 percent) believe that their country has benefited from membership of the European Union, while 40% say they have a positive image The European Union, an increase of two percentage points compared to the Eurobarometer 74 (Autumn 2010). As regards the Romanian them, 56% had positive views about the image of the European Union, a percentage well above the European average.

According to the study conducted in 2011 by C. Schifirneț (which takes questions from Eurobarometer surveys in order to make comparisons), Romanians have different concerns to the European Union, but the loss of national identity and national culture, 42

percent, is only 6-7 places in the hierarchy resulting from the research (p. 83). This perception is confirmed by the answers given by the Romanian on the significance of the European Union: freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the European Union, cultural diversity, democracy, the euro (50% of options exceeding answers). Loss of cultural identity gained far fewer percentages (32%), which shows that Romanians associate the EU with cuts in cultural and national symbols (p. 88). At European level, the risk of losing cultural identity is mentioned only 12 percent of EU citizens, according to Eurobarometer 75 (spring 2011).

National identity symbols (anthem, flag, borders, currency, common past etc.) influence the feeling of belonging to a nation, which is why the EU has tried to promote the symbols used by national states to trigger a European identity among its citizens the same purpose. But Eurobarometer data show that European identity is perceived by EU citizens more in comparison with evidence, such as social welfare and democratic rules, and less symbolic and emotional charge elements that underpin national identity. For Romanian as otherwise-for most Europeans, among the constituent elements of European identity are values such as democracy and freedom (37%, 10 percentage points less than the European average), the Euro (36%) and culture (26 %), slightly below the European average values, according to Eurobarometer 82.4 (2014).

National identity reconfigures globalization through multiculturalism, while European identity is in constant training and transformation since the company is developing and needs of citizens are becoming more and more complex. As such, economic and social transformations determined from the Community citizen to become aware of the problems arising from cohabitation to other Europeans, but also the benefits of European Union membership. Although the sense of attachment (Eurobarometer 79.5, 2013) is significantly more pronounced against their own country (91%) compared to the feeling of attachment to the EU (48%), we find that there is already a European identity, despite Eurobarometer reveals European citizens' identification with the nation-state first and second with European Union / Europe. While not equal intensity, national and European identities are compatible, co-exist and can be activated depending on the context in which the European citizens are.

As age increases in the Union, Romanians tend to become more pragmatic in assessing their status as European citizens, with their own way of relating to the European Union. According to Eurobarometer 79.5 (2013), the majority of respondents in Romania (43%) believe that their fellow citizens feel "more European" than 10 years ago, which shows that Romanians are increasingly willing to take on European identity that hope better for them and their country.

From our point of view, national and European identity interact in a complementary manner, and the economic, political and social dictates passing at some point in the foreground. Although, European identity is generally seen as a fragile construction, which is still in its infancy, institutional generated, data from Eurobarometer surveys attest that European citizens in general, and Romanians in particular, feel part of both communities.

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