

~ ABSTRACT ~

In February 1992, the twelve member states of the European Union ratified the Treaty of Maastricht, and thereby decided to introduce a common European currency by 2002, the euro. Whereas this was mainly a monetary act of union, previous literature has often assumed that the euro also has implications for European identity within the participating countries. Evidence from opinion polling data seems to point in the same direction: when Eurozone citizens are asked what symbolises the EU for them personally, a large majority states that this is the euro. However, this thesis argues that the impact of the euro has in fact been marginal – at least initially. The thesis uses three in-depth case studies to formulate a hypothesis about the influence of the euro on European identity in all EU countries. The case studies are France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for the period 1992-2013, examined through data from opinion polls and newspaper articles. A second section of the thesis tests the hypothesis through comparative analysis of data from three Eurobarometer questions. The results suggest that Eurozone citizens did feel more European at first, but that this sentiment of Europeanness has declined quickly with the advent of the euro crisis since 2009. From then onwards, the opposite of what was expected seems to be the case: non-Eurozone citizens have more positive feelings connected to the European Union.

Discourses of European Identity: The Impact of the Euro

Three Case Studies

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List of Abbreviations

CBS	Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (NL)
EB	Eurobarometer
EBISS	Eurobarometer Interactive Search System
EC	European Community
ECB	European Central Bank
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EMU	European Monetary Union
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ONS	Office for National Statistics (UK)

Introduction

Un jour viendra où la France, vous Russie, vous Italie, vous Angleterre, vous Allemagne, vous toutes, nations du continent, sans perdre vos qualités distinctes et votre glorieuse individualité, vous vous fondrez étroitement dans une unité supérieure, et vous constituerez la fraternité européenne.

- Victor Hugo in a speech at the International Peace Congress
Paris, 1849¹

Scientific relevance

Much research has yet been done on the development of European identity in countries of the European Union (EU); not only by Eurobarometer, the Public Opinion Analysis sector of the European Commission,² but by academic scholars as well.³ Whereas collective identities are complex phenomena that are influenced by many factors, the impact of the euro on European identity is still an underexplored area. This does not mean necessarily that there is little correlation between the two, for when European citizens in eurozone countries are asked what the EU means to them personally, a large majority mentions the euro as a response.

Purpose of the research

The aim of this thesis is to examine whether people resident in eurozone countries feel more of a European identity than their counterparts outside the eurozone, and what kind of triangular relationship exists between European identity, the euro and the euro crisis. First, this will be studied on a smaller scale by means of three case studies. From those case studies, a hypothesis for European identity in all EU countries will be extrapolated.

Scholarly debate and theoretical framework

The phenomenon of collective identities is a form of solidarity amongst people,

¹ 'L'Idée de l'Europe', http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/evenements/textes_victor_hugo.asp. Retrieved 11 June 2013.

² For more information, see its website: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm. Last viewed 11 June 2013.

³ A small selection: Martin Conway and Kiran Klaus Patel eds., *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century. Historical Approaches* (Hampshire 2010); Jeffrey T. Checkel and Peter J. Katzenstein, *European Identity* (Cambridge 2009); Michael Bruter, *Citizens of Europe? The emergence of a mass European identity* (New York 2005); Neil Fligstein *et al.*, 'European Integration, Nationalism and National Identity', in: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 50 (2012) 106-22; and Richard Herrmann, *Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU* (Oxford 2004) 248-53.

triggered by the feeling of a fundamental similarity.⁴ While they are ‘identical’ with a certain group, they differ at the same time from ‘the other’; identity is thus established as well by excluding others, or even in opposition to others.⁵ With what or whom people identify themselves is influenced by the groups in which they live. “Gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality, social class, and age have all been the basis of people’s main identities.”⁶ Recent empirical studies have shown that identity has a positive-sum nature, i.e. that one can have multiple identities on different levels.⁷ This means that Europe, the national identity and the local identity are all ‘imagined communities’.⁸ The different identities are not distinct; they overlap and lapse into one another and are often very compatible. They are triggered in specific situations and activated under certain social conditions.⁹ This means that identity is not fixed, but fluid; its character can change significantly over time.

Academic literature has generally separated collective, transnational identity, and especially European identity, in two. Scholars make a division between elite and popular, top-down and bottom-up identity,¹⁰ civic and cultural identity.¹¹ On the one hand, elites try to create a collective identity that mainly focuses on political citizenship and rights, on the liberalisation of national markets and on globalisation.¹² They are therefore people from the highest socioeconomic classes; people that often travel, work and live abroad.¹³ On the other hand, there are blue-collar workers, older people and conservatives that respond to mass politics. They focus especially on social citizenship and cultural legitimacy.¹⁴ Those people are more likely to hold on to their own nation and do not want to be linked to their neighbouring countries. When looking at Europe, the former category calls itself ‘European’ more often than the

⁴ Göran Therborn, *European Modernity and Beyond: The Trajectory of European Societies, 1945-2000* (London 1995) 227 *et seq.*

⁵ Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, ‘Beyond “Identity”’, in: *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29 (2000) 5.

⁶ Fligstein, ‘European Integration’, 110.

⁷ See for example Herrmann, *Transnational Identities*; and Jim Caporaso and Min-hyung Kim, ‘The Dual Nature of European Identity: Subjective Awareness and Coherence’, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (2009) 19-42.

⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York 1991).

⁹ Fligstein, ‘European Integration’, 116.

¹⁰ See for example Checkel and Katzenstein, *European Identity*; John Fossum and Agustín Menéndez, *The Constitution’s Gift* (Lanham 2011); and Thomas Risse, ‘The Euro between national and European identity’, in: *Journal of European Public Policy* Vol. 10, No. 4 (2003) 487-505.

¹¹ See for example Bruter, *Citizens of Europe?*

¹² Checkel and Katzenstein, *European Identity*, 12.

¹³ Fligstein, ‘European Integration’, 113.

¹⁴ Checkel and Katzenstein, *European Identity*, 11-12.

latter. Those people associate themselves more easily with other highly educated people within Europe, with whom they share the same interests and professions.¹⁵

Although it is hard to pin down an ever-changing concept as ‘identity’ by concrete factors that can be analysed, there are certain characteristics that seem to be relevant for European identity, reappearing in different academic disciplines. First, there are cultural elements, such as a shared history, and linguistic differences. Although it has often been argued that one single language is of great importance for national identity,¹⁶ the opposite is the case for European identity; multilingualism is in fact what distinguishes Europe from other federalist countries.¹⁷ Sociological factors are important for collective identities as well, i.e. sharing common values. “Values of liberty and reason, solidarity and social justice.”¹⁸ These human values are fundamental for the European community, and are linked to political factors of European identity. Member states have a comparable form of state structure, one in which all citizens have rights and duties.

Especially important in the European unification process was Europeanization in the monetary sector, from the 1960s onwards.¹⁹ The European Commission sought to extend its responsibilities in an economic union and wanted Europe to be independent from the United States.²⁰ Since the Second World War, European currencies were connected to the US dollar in the Bretton Woods monetary system. When the US dollar lost value in the 1960s, Europe was forced to look for another way to provide monetary stability.²¹ Furthermore, France was searching to balance out economic powers in Europe, for it feared that it might be outweighed by a growing Germany.²² Some scholars claim that this acceleration of economic integration led to a fragmented and dispersed European identity.²³ The big enlargements of the EU in 2004 and 2007, with great influxes of migration as a consequence, the defeat of a European constitution in 2005 by Dutch and French referenda, the ongoing debate about the accession of Turkey, and the economic crises

¹⁵ Fligstein, ‘European Integration’, 113.

¹⁶ At least that is what most modernists argue. See for example Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 122.

¹⁷ Kristína Bocková, ‘Language As One of the Most Important Elements of the European Identity’, in: R. Gura and G. Rouet, *Expressions culturelles et Identités européennes* (Brussels 2010) 303-11.

¹⁸ Mario Soares, ‘European identity and political experience’, in: *Reflections on European Identity*, 59.

¹⁹ Guido Thieme, ‘Europeanization in the Monetary Sector, 1968-92’, in: Conway and Patel eds., *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century*, 172-85.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 173-5.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 175.

²² *Ibid.*, 176.

²³ Checkel and Katzenstein, *European Identity*, 2.

more recently – these were and are all events, partially non-monetary, that contributed to this while triggering a revival of national identity and eurosceptic attitudes.²⁴

Whereas the primary goals of the founders of the EU were mainly two things – the creation of a common market and the free movement of goods, service, people and capital – the EU has greatly enlarged its responsibilities over the past few decades. In 1992, with the Maastricht Treaty, the EU went beyond its previous goals of especially political and economic integration: one of its objectives was the realisation of an “ever closer Union amongst the peoples of Europe”.²⁵ The establishment of a single currency, the euro, was the ultimate symbol of the renewed European integration, next to a concrete function in terms of travelling and working within the EU.

The Maastricht Treaty was not received positively within all EU countries. Denmark rejected it, and in France it only passed after a close referendum. Previously, European policymaking did not have a large impact on the personal lives of citizens, but now, with the EU’s new policies and treaties, a fear of losing independence rose, with a decline in public trust consequently.²⁶ Nonetheless, as public opinion polls such as Eurobarometer show, support recuperated in the late 1990s, notably when European currency exchange rates were fixed against one another in 1999.²⁷ However, the latest results of the survey, from 2010, show a decline again – which could be linked to the advent of the euro crisis.²⁸ In 2009, triggered by the financial crisis of 2007-2008, concerns arose about the sovereign-debt of eurozone countries, particularly Greece; it appeared that the country had published falsified statistics about its economy for years. The European Central Bank (ECB) required Greece to set its public finances in order. In May 2010, the eurozone proposed an aid package worth 110 billion euro to Greece. The intervention was

²⁴ Markus Thiel, *The Limits of Transnationalism: Collective Identities and EU Integration* (New York 2011) 2.

²⁵ Treaty on European Union, Preamble.

²⁶ Thiel, *The Limits of Transnationalism*, 3.

²⁷ EB, ‘European and (nationality)’,

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showchart_line.cfm?keyID=266&nationID=11,1,27,28,17,2,16,18,13,6,3,4,22,7,8,20,21,9,23,24,12,19,29,26,25,5,14,10,30,15,&startdate=1992.04&enddate=2010.06#2. Retrieved 28 February 2013.

²⁸ For a detailed overview of the development of the sovereign-debt crisis, see the interactive timeline of *The Guardian*, ‘Eurozone crisis’, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/interactive/2012/oct/17/eurozone-crisis-interactive-timeline-three-years>. Retrieved 10 June 2013.

however not enough to reverse the falling exchange rate of the euro, and turmoil in eurozone countries continued growing.

Can one conclude from this that there exists a link between the introduction of the euro and the ups and downs of European identity? Research on this topic shows that there might be one. Thomas Risse argued in 2003 that the “causal arrows from the euro to collective identities flow in both directions.”²⁹ A year later, Matthias Kaelberer confirmed this line of thought, arguing that the relationship between the euro and European identity is reciprocal. “On the one hand, money is a purposeful political tool in the construction of identities. On the other hand, in order to function properly, money requires some degree of collective identity among its users.”³⁰ He states his argument that money can help to construct a national identity with examples from the history of France and Great Britain.³¹

This thesis will not take into consideration a possible reciprocal influence, but will mainly focus on what impact the euro had and has on European identity, from the Maastricht Treaty until the present euro crisis.

Methodology

This thesis makes use of a historical as well as a political scientific approach. In order to understand the general tendencies that are identified in Eurobarometer statistics on European identity, case studies on a smaller scale can offer an explanation. All countries have had different attitudes towards Europe, which can also explain their enthusiasm (or the lack of it) for the euro. However, there are overlapping factors of European identity in many countries. By means of an in-depth analysis of three case studies, those common factors will be determined.

A case study of France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom will be presented. Those three countries are selected because they present a heterogeneous landscape of European identity. France is a country that stimulated the European integration process from the start, even since the eighteenth century under the reign of Napoleon. In spite of this, they still have a rather strong national identity, which does not seem to be threatened by an enlarging EU. In the Netherlands, a national identity is less present in a society that has been characterised by cultural diversity for a long

²⁹ Risse, ‘The Euro between national and European identity’, 488.

³⁰ Matthias Kaelberer, ‘The Euro and European Identity: Symbols, Power and the Politics of European Monetary Union’, in: *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2004) 161.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 167.

time. As a smaller country, the Netherlands has much to gain from a strong international network and is therefore pro-European to some extent. The last case that will be examined is the United Kingdom, that occupies a particular place within the EU. The UK entered the EU only in 1973 and decided in 1992 not to adopt the euro. Torn between wanting to be a European superpower and the demand not to lose its sovereignty, it has had a hesitant attitude towards the unification process.

Citizens' attitudes in the three countries towards the introduction of the euro will be examined from around 1992, with the Maastricht Treaty, onwards. Special emphasis will be placed on important years for the introduction of the euro: 1999, when European exchange rates were fixed against one another; 2002, with the launch of euro coins and bills; and from 2009 onwards, when the euro crisis arose. Source material will consist of opinion polls and opinion articles from national newspapers.³²

By means of the themes that emerge from these case studies, the following hypothesis for all EU countries will be tested: **'People have a stronger sense of European identity in countries that have adopted the euro and that are more affected by the euro crisis'**. Testing the hypothesis will be a comparative analysis of the results of three Eurobarometer questions on European identity between eurozone and non-eurozone countries.

Source criticism

Whereas the usage of opinion polls for research can be rewarding in the sense that they provide a great source on public opinion, there are some limitations to it as well. The risk of using polls is that they can insist on a conceptual unity of processes that mean different things in different contexts. In this way, they may create the attitudes they report, since people wish to provide answers to questions that are posed.³³ Moreover, a certain answer can be triggered by a biased or strategically framed question.

Different public opinion tracking institutions will be used, of which Eurobarometer is most important. In general, Eurobarometer provides source material that is quite reliable. Since 1973, Eurobarometer has been tracking public opinion on different topics of European citizenship in all EU countries. In 'Standard Eurobarometer', the same kind of questions is posed between two and five times a

³² For more information on the selection and application of the source material, see the below.

³³ Checkel and Katzenstein, *European Identity* (Cambridge 2009) 10.

year, of which a twice-yearly publication follows. In each member state approximately 1000 citizens of 18 years and older are interviewed face-to-face. However, questions do vary over the years; some have proven not to be as effective as predicted, others had to be reframed as the European Community (EC) changed.

One Eurobarometer dossier is of particular interest for this research: ‘Public Opinion and the Euro’.³⁴ The goal of the surveys held within this theme is to “monitor the state of public opinion on the euro and understand the underlying factors which influence it” since the introduction of the euro in 2002.³⁵ These data are gathered through ‘Flash Eurobarometer’: ad hoc telephone interviews on specific topics.³⁶

The different national public opinion tracking organisations have a comparable approach. Samples usually consist of roughly 1000 national citizens of at least 15 years of age that are interviewed via telephone. However, there are some trackers that use Internet surveys for their results. Those surveys are less reliable, since not all social classes and groups are active on the Internet. As the Dutch Central Agency for Statistics (CBS) has put it: “Je probeert iets te zeggen over een populatie vissen in twee vijvers, door een steekproef te nemen uit één vijver, en dan alleen van de vissen die uit het water springen.”³⁷ This kind of Internet based public opinion tracking will therefore be avoided where possible.

Surveys have been selected on the basis of their topics; they either report attitudes towards the EU or to the euro, or ask more specific questions related to European identity.³⁸ There is not always continuity in the space of time when Eurobarometer or national trackers pose the same question. Therefore, this thesis uses measuring point of once a year, in October or November every year, in order to obtain a more stable and uninterrupted overview of the course of the data. Summary charts can be found in the Appendices (43 *et seq.*).

Opinion articles will then be used to interpret the tendencies that the results of the surveys show. However, the media do not truly reflect the opinion of the masses; they

³⁴ See: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/topics/euro_en.htm.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ The following surveys in the eurozone were used for this research: Flash EB 139, 153, 165, 175, 193, 216, 251, 279, 306, 309, 335, 362. For non-eurozone countries, of which the United Kingdom, Flash EB 98 (2001) and 121 (2002) were consulted.

³⁷ “You try to say something about a fish population in two pools, by taking a sample survey in one pool, and then only of the fish that jump out of the water.” Jelke Bethlehem, in: Mark van Baal, ‘Kleinste steekproef gaf beste voorspelling’, in: *Technisch Weekblad 2* (2006).

³⁸ For a complete overview of the questions that have been taken into account, see Bibliography.

influence public opinion, and therefore add to its construction.³⁹ They are usually precursors, and are often written from an ‘extreme’ point of view; they are generally more negative, positive, conservative or progressive than the opinion of ordinary citizens. Furthermore, the authors reflecting upon the case of European identity are often highly educated journalists or professors. It is therefore more likely that articles have an elite perspective than a popular. Nonetheless, the articles can help us explain the underlying tendencies for how the course of public opinion develops, while identifying the themes that correspond to the rises and declines in European identity.

French, Dutch and British opinion articles have been selected for the case studies by means of the LexisNexis News Database.⁴⁰ Search terms included ‘European identity’, ‘euro and European identity’, ‘introduction of the common currency’ and ‘Maastricht Treaty’, in all three languages. From these, sources have been selected firstly by the credibility and independence of the national newspaper, secondly by the credibility and independence of the author, thirdly by whether it expressed an opinion, and last by relevancy for this thesis. Special attention has been paid to the years around the Maastricht Treaty (1991-1993), the introduction of the euro (1998-2003), and since the start of the crisis (2009 onwards).⁴¹

Structure

Chapter 1 will be the case study of France. It will become clear that in France, European integration is generally seen as a positive undertaking that does not form a threat to the national identity. The French perceive the newest trait of the integration process, the euro, as a European symbol. However, European identity in France has not increased much since the introduction of the common currency. It is influenced by other factors as well, mainly by French anti-Americanism and the rise of nationalism through the fear of immigration. On the other hand, the French do not see the euro as the end of the integration process; Europe also needs to become a political union.

In chapter 2 on the Netherlands, comparable pillars on which Dutch European identity is founded are visible. Again, newspaper articles underline that the EU needs to integrate more on the political level. Furthermore, resistance to immigration is

³⁹Thiel, *The Limits of Transnationalism*, launches a new theory in ‘Chapter 6: Newspaper Discourse and Public Spheres’, 127 *et seq.*, namely that the media not only construct public opinion, but are a reflection of it as well.

⁴⁰ Online accessible with a university ID and password at <http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/search/newssubmitForm.do>.

⁴¹ For a complete overview of the articles that have been taken into account, see Bibliography.

rising as well over the past few years. This does however not have negative consequences on Dutch European identity. The euro definitely has had an impact; the Dutch themselves state they feel more European since using the euro.

The United Kingdom presents less of a European identity, and one that is still declining. The isles have had a eurosceptic attitude since the beginning of the European integration process, for the UK wanted to remain sovereign. That is one of the reasons it decided not to adopt the euro. The fact that British European identity is weakening nowadays could be explained on the one hand by their continued use of the pound sterling. On the other hand, different factors contribute to this decline as well, such as the fear of too many immigrants and the current sovereign-debt crisis.

Whereas all three countries are characterised by a different discourse of European identity, there are five themes that return in all cases. Those will be discussed in Chapter 4, which will furthermore present a hypothesis that follows from these elements. First, the three countries emphasise that economic integration should be accompanied by political integration; the latter is not necessarily a result of from the former. Second, when citizens know less about the structure of the EU, they are less enthusiastic about its expanding responsibilities. This lack of knowledge of the project results in suspicion towards it and is reinforced by the gap between the people and the elite initiators of the project. Third, in all countries there has been a rise of xenophobic nationalism since around 2005, when the Eastern EU enlargement occurred. Fourth, people generally seem to feel more European in the countries where the euro has been introduced. On the other hand, the launch of the euro has not led to the reinforcement of European identity in all cases. Fifth, newspaper articles demonstrate that the euro crisis has an impact on European identity as well. Whereas it binds the eurozone countries together, it drives the non-eurozone country further away from the EU.

From these five themes, the following hypothesis can be extrapolated for all EU countries: **‘People have a stronger sense of European identity in countries that have adopted the euro and that are more affected by the euro crisis’**. By means of evidence from three Eurobarometer questions on European identity, this hypothesis will be partially falsified.

1. The Euro, European Identity and France: Case Study No. 1

L'Europe est un Etat composé de plusieurs provinces.

- Charles de Montesquieu, 1727⁴²

Montesquieu is not the only important Frenchman that has pleaded for France to tighten the bonds with its European neighbours; many have preceded and would follow him. This can explain why the French have always had somewhat of a pro-European attitude. This first chapter examines in detail the discourse of French European identity. Whereas one might assume that this pro-European attitude would lead to great support for the euro, evidence from polling data and news articles about the euro show that this is not the case. On the contrary, the influence of the common currency on European identity in France appears to be minimal; generally, the French have a quite stable European identity.

1.1. French attitudes towards Europe before 1992

The French seeds for a 'United States of Europe' had already been planted at the end of the eighteenth century, through the consequences of the Napoleonic Wars. Some of these are still of great importance for the EC (or even beyond it), such as the Napoleonic Code and the reform of the metric system, but especially the spread of nationalism under Napoleon, after the French Revolution. This nationalistic sentiment became very strong in France, and is an important part of French identity. It even evolved into extreme patriotism in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century.⁴³

In the course of the nineteenth century, certain central figures were already committed to the idea of a unified Europe, including the writer Victor Hugo. As a result of his lobbying, the French Assemblée Nationale called for a United States of Europe as early as March 1871.⁴⁴ The First World War subsequently increased the need for a politically unified Europe that would create a peaceful environment, but the Second World War was of greater impact. In 1943, Jean Monnet, the French political and economic adviser who is often seen as the founder of the EU, dedicated himself to the cause of European integration to regain and retain peace. He declared:

⁴² Montesquieu, 'Chapitre XVIII', in: *Réflexions sur la monarchie universelle en Europe* (Paris 1727).

⁴³ Girardet Raoul, 'Pour une introduction à l'histoire du nationalisme français', in: *Revue française de science politique*, Nr. 3 (1958) 509 *et seq.*

⁴⁴ For this and more general information about the history of France (and other member states) in the EU, see <http://en.strasbourg-europe.eu/france,13345,en.html>. Retrieved 29 May 2013.

Il n'y aura pas de paix en Europe si les États se reconstituent sur une base de souveraineté nationale (...). Les pays d'Europe sont trop étroits pour assurer à leurs peuples la prospérité (...). Leur prospérité et les développements sociaux sont impossibles, à moins que les États d'Europe se forment en une fédération (...).⁴⁵

This federation was established firstly in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952, where France, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany agreed to confer powers over their steel and coal production. When the EC expanded thereafter, France always played an initiating part in it. Especially when it came to more economic integration from the 1960s onwards France took the lead; for the French, this was a way to control and reduce West Germany's power in Europe, which had grown when the value of the Deutschmark increased in the mid-1960s, while the exchange rate of the French franc had not ceased to devalue since then.⁴⁶ The main objective of this economic integration was to create more equal and stable inter-European relationships.⁴⁷ From that period onwards, an integrated Europe meant for France the German ally, '*l'Amitié franco-allemande*'.

In spite of these pro-European elite initiatives, French citizens only narrowly supported the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty after a referendum in September 1992, also known as the '*petit oui*'.⁴⁸ Generally though, the French are of the opinion that their membership to the EC is a good idea (Appendix A).

1.2. The launch of the euro: support and opposition 1992-2012

This '*petit oui*' at the time of the Maastricht Treaty ratification is reflected in data available from opinion polls, both from Eurobarometer and from the French public opinion tracker TNS Sofres. The polls show that the support of the French for a common currency used to be slightly more than the majority, i.e. 55% à 58%, with an undeniable dip in 1992.⁴⁹ In newspaper articles a similar tendency is visible. Authors express their concern about the launch of the euro, for it mainly emphasises European economic integration. Over the past twenty years, many articles have argued that a

⁴⁵ 'Jean Monnet, l'unificateur', http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/founding-fathers/pdf/jean_monnet_fr.pdf. Retrieved 29 May 2013.

⁴⁶ Thiemeyer, 'Europeanization in the Monetary Sector' 177.

⁴⁷ Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, 'The Euro Crisis: A Historical Perspective', in: *LSE IDEAS* (2011) 9.

⁴⁸ 'Elections/Les résultats'. Online available at [http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Referendums/elecresult__referendum_1992/\(path\)/referendum_1992/000/000.html](http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Referendums/elecresult__referendum_1992/(path)/referendum_1992/000/000.html). Retrieved 29 May 2013.

⁴⁹ EB, 'Single European Market hope or fear' (1988-1996) and 'One European currency for or against' (1995-1997). Online available via the Eurobarometer Interactive Search System (EBISS), retrieved 28 February 2013.

more profound political integration, with a stronger democracy and social cohesion as a consequence, is the condition for the success of the euro – and of the EU.⁵⁰

The lack of explicit enthusiasm for the euro can be explained by the fact that French citizens believed themselves not to be very well informed about the launch, and were therefore unaware of the possible positive effects. Only after 1998 did a majority believe itself to be rather well informed about the new common currency; beforehand the opposite was the case.⁵¹ The writers of opinion articles are well aware of this gap of knowledge, which is often expressed in a call for more disclosure: “Il est donc urgent de mettre en place une véritable campagne de sensibilisation, qui prenne en compte la dimension véritablement affective de la monnaie (...).”⁵²

Although the French have not always been very enthusiastic about this new trait of European economic integration, they have been realistic about it. Even during the last five years, despite the sovereign-debt crisis, there is a kind of ‘acceptance’ of the status quo in French newspaper articles. “Même si les prix ont augmenté, les Français ont compris que l’euro les protégeait.”⁵³ Despite extreme right-wing parties such as Front National under the guidance of Marine Le Pen wishing that France would leave the eurozone, many newspaper articles acknowledge that this is an unattainable goal – in fact, they even want France to keep the euro. An opinion poll by TNS Sofres in 2011 reflects this tendency: a majority of 67% wants France to remain in the eurozone.⁵⁴

1.3. The euro and European identity in France

The French people have thus accepted the euro as a part of their daily lives. In fact, the euro has become an important symbol of Europe for the French.⁵⁵ When citizens are asked at what moments they feel European the most, the majority answers that this

⁵⁰ See for example Jean-Dominique Lafay, ‘Perspectives et problèmes de la monnaie unique; L’Europe, géant économique, reste un nain politique’, in: *Le Figaro* (15 January 1999).

⁵¹ EB, ‘Informed about the European currency’ (1995-2001).

⁵² Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, ‘Il faut une voix forte et claire pour l’euro’, in: *Les Echos* (2 May 2001) 77.

⁵³ Didier Micoine and Henri Vernet, ‘Il faut débattre de l’identité européenne’, in: *Le Parisien* (9 May 2011).

⁵⁴ TNS Sofres, ‘Le sentiment européen chez les Français’ (2011), http://www.tns-sofres.com/_assets/files/2011.05.12-europe.pdf. Retrieved 14 May 2013.

⁵⁵ TNS Sofres, ‘Les Français et la citoyenneté européenne’ (2008), Question 3, <http://www.tns-sofres.com/points-de-vue/B4F6B60463434C96B2944DD8029890BF.aspx>. Retrieved 14 May 2013. The same point of view becomes clear as well when reading newspapers; see for example Frédéric Fritscher, ‘Pas d’Europe sans symboles européens’, in: *Le Figaro* (6 February 2008).

is when they think of the euro.⁵⁶ Furthermore, they think the euro stimulates a common bond between European citizens of the different member states.⁵⁷

However, there is no clear-cut answer to the question whether French citizens feel more European since using the euro; responses to this Eurobarometer question fluctuate. In absolute terms, positive responses have only grown slightly; from 19% in 2002 to 21% in 2012 (Appendix B). In other words, ten years of using the euro did not necessarily increase the French feeling of Europeanness. These absolute data therefore seem to contradict the answers to more detailed questions about the euro and Europe posed by TNS Sofres.

1.4. Development of a European identity in general in France

The data mentioned above show that the reinforcement of a European identity in France as a consequence of the euro is minimal. Data about French European identity in general corresponds to this tendency. Appendix C demonstrates that the percentage of French citizens that say they feel French and at the same time European is relatively stable. However, since 2005, there is a sudden decline, reaching the lowest percentage from the moment that the question has been asked. Unfortunately, there are no data available between 2005 and 2010, which makes it more difficult to explain this.

Recent newspaper articles about European identity present a tendency that does not necessarily correspond to polling data from 2005 onwards. The accomplishments of Europe are underlined; its military forces, its human rights system, and its strong economic power.⁵⁸ However, authors remain critical of the integration process and actively propose possible alterations for a more democratic and successful EU, of which further political integration specifically is seen as unbearable for its survival or reinforcement, especially with the advent of the crisis. “Plus que jamais depuis l’apparition de la crise, l’urgence d’une nouvelle idée européenne, d’une idée civique et politique, d’une nouvelle formulation de ce qui fonde l’identité européenne se fait criante.”⁵⁹

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Question 7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Question 4.

⁵⁸ See for example Joseph Nye, ‘Quel avenir pour l’Europe?’, in: *Le Figaro* (17 June 2010) 14.

⁵⁹ Sylvie Kauffmann, ‘A la recherche de “l’Homo europeus”, cet inconnu’, in: *Le Monde* (9 May 2013).

A specific characteristic of French European identity is that it is often opposed in the media to Americanism. French public opinion trackers have also conducted surveys about this topic. A strong form of anti-Americanism has always distinguished the French national identity.⁶⁰ The French used to feel threatened by the power of the United States, and wanted to keep out American cultural influences. Nowadays, European unification has improved the position of France compared to the US. With the introduction of the euro, the French assumed that the economic power of Europe in the world would increase.⁶¹ One could therefore suppose that the French would feel strongly connected to the euro, but no extremely positive attitude is discernable. A possible explanation for this could be that the French do not perceive a concrete link between the euro and anti-Americanism. Although this phenomenon is remarkable, it is not the topic of this thesis and will therefore not be discussed in more detail.

1.5. Interpretations and conclusions

In French opinion polls, many questions about European identity and about the euro are asked. This means that these topics are important to the French. Although the charts show that France has never been a fervent supporter of the euro, French citizens themselves say that the euro symbolises Europe for them. They do not want the euro to disappear, and this is a point of view that returns in newspaper articles as well. One might therefore expect that European identity would have grown since the introduction of the euro, since the French are more exposed to European symbols with the advent of the common currency. However, opinion polling does not support the idea of a clear emergence of European identity. On the contrary, a downward movement since 2005 is discernable.

A possible explanation for the relative stability of French European identity can be that the influence of the euro on the latter is balanced out by other factors. A collective identity is built from many different elements.⁶² The impact of the euro apparently does not outweigh the share of the other factors, nor is it strengthened by the French anti-Americanism of today.

⁶⁰ Philippe Roger, *L'ennemi américain. Généalogie de l'antiaméricanisme français* (Paris 2002). The book offers a genealogy of the French anti-Americanism from the mid-eighteenth century until nowadays.

⁶¹ EB 71, 'Euro more powerful than dollar' (2009) 158. 58% of the French think that this will be the case, compared to 25% that do not agree with the statement. 17% did not answer the question.

⁶² See introduction.

The decline since 2005 in the percentage of French citizens that feel European too can be clarified by means of newspaper articles on this topic. In France, the popularity of nationalistic political parties has been rising, especially as a result of the influxes of illegal immigrants into the EU from 2009 onwards, through Spain, Italy and Greece in particular, and the possible prospect of Turkey entering the EU.⁶³ Europeanness is often opposed to nationalism, and can come under pressure because of this rising nationalistic sentiment.

However, the media remain fairly positive, though critical of the EU. They want the euro to succeed – and see no other option for France than to make it succeed. They practically think of ways to reach this goal: by creating more powerful European political institutions. But in spite of this positive realism, the first counter thoughts about scrapping the euro are rising.⁶⁴

⁶³ See the results of the presidential elections in 2007 and 2012, where the popularity of for example the FN and MPF clearly rises. 'Elections/Les résultats', [http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Referendums/elecresult__referendum_1992/\(path\)/referendum_1992/000/000.html](http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Referendums/elecresult__referendum_1992/(path)/referendum_1992/000/000.html). Retrieved 29 May 2013.

⁶⁴ See for example Arnaud Rodier, 'L'euro, dans nos poches depuis une décennie; Difficile anniversaire', in: *Le Figaro* (30 December 2011) 20.

2. The Euro, European Identity and the Netherlands: Case Study No. 2

[W]ij begrijpen de zorgen van de Nederlanders. Over het verlies aan soevereiniteit. Over het tempo van verandering, zonder dat burgers zich daarbij betrokken voelen. Over onze financiële bijdrage.

- Dutch Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende, 1 June 2005⁶⁵

In a referendum in 2005, 61.5% of the Dutch people voted against the establishment of a European Constitution. Whereas the Dutch had previously been rather positive towards European integration, this big ‘no’ was an indication for politicians that the European unification process was accelerating too quickly for Dutch citizens. In spite of their previously positive attitude, the feeling of Europeanness in the Netherlands is not that strong. However, the euro did have a positive influence on Dutch European identity; it reinforced it, especially – and surprisingly – since the development of the sovereign-debt crisis.

2.1. Dutch attitudes towards Europe before 1992

As a country bordering the sea and therefore located at the geographical boundaries of Europe, the Netherlands has been a nation characterised by a trade economy, especially from the colonisation period onwards. Traditionally, it therefore benefited from international cooperation and diplomatic relationships. But despite its grand colonial past, it never became an economic or political superpower within Europe. Its sea location resulted in an ongoing struggle against water, which unified Dutch people in a common goal.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, Dutch identity was never marked by a chauvinistic sentiment like French identity. A factor that contributed to this is that the Netherlands received many immigrants, in the past and nowadays. Today, foreign-born residents of this country make up 20% of its population.⁶⁷ The constant influx of migrants made Dutch identity more volatile and changeable.

Historically, the Netherlands was involved in some European conflicts, in particular with its southern neighbours (Belgium and France), Spain, and Great

⁶⁵ “[W]e understand the concerns of the Dutch. About the loss of sovereignty. About the rapidity of change, without the citizens. Feeling involved. About our financial contribution.” ‘Statement Balkenende’, <http://nos.nl/artikel/120643-verklaring-balkenende.html>. Retrieved 18 June 2013.

⁶⁶ Niek van Sas, ‘Geschiedenis-Herinnering-Identiteit. De historici en het Nationaal Historisch Museum’, in: *BMGN Low Countries Historical Review*, Vol. 124 No.3 (2009) 429.

⁶⁷ CBS, ‘Bevolking; kerncijfers’, [http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?VW=T&DM=SLNL&PA=37296ned&D1=a&D2=0,10,20,30,40,50,60,\(1-1\),1&HD=130605-0924&HDR=G1&STB=T](http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?VW=T&DM=SLNL&PA=37296ned&D1=a&D2=0,10,20,30,40,50,60,(1-1),1&HD=130605-0924&HDR=G1&STB=T). Retrieved 6 June 2013.

Britain, but this changed in the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. During the First World War it took in a neutral position, conserving its trade relationships. In the Second World War it aimed for a similar arrangement, but could not remain neutral. The War left great marks on the Netherlands, forcing it to redouble its efforts in the reconstruction of the nation, and drove the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg together in the establishment of the Benelux in 1943, the first European unity in a customs agreement and economic community.⁶⁸ Thenceforth, the Netherlands remained closely involved in the further process, and was, like France, a founding member of the ECSC.

The support of Dutch citizens for their country's membership of the EC has always been high; around 72% on average (see Appendix A). There was no referendum about the Maastricht Treaty in the Netherlands, but because of this high support it can be assumed that in general people were in favour of the Dutch ratification of it; in newspapers one does not find evidence of fervent opposition.

2.2. The launch of the euro: support and opposition 1992-2012

Generally, the Dutch people were always in favour of their country joining the eurozone. When Eurobarometer asked between 1995 and 1997 whether citizens were for or against all member states having the same currency, the average support of this by the Dutch was 62%.⁶⁹ This is reflected in newspaper articles. But although the majority of the authors are in favour of this next step in the process of European integration, they do have some critical suggestions. Like in France, Dutch opinion articles underline that economic integration alone is not enough. Authors plead for cooperation on multiple levels; for a political union next to an economic one, a common policy for foreign affairs and security, and cooperation on the level of police and justice.⁷⁰ However, in 2005 it became clear that Dutch public opinion did not support this extensive progress in political integration, when the referendum the European Constitution did not pass. Yet many of the 'no'-voters had different reasons

⁶⁸ 'Histoire', http://www.benelux.int/fr/bnl/bnl_geschiedenis.asp. Retrieved 3 June 2013.

⁶⁹ For source reference, see footnote 49, 14.

⁷⁰ This is a theme that recurs over the years. See for example Edmond Wellenstein, 'Niet langer met de rug naar Europa', in: *NRC Handelsblad* (10 December 1991); or Arjo Klamer and Laurent van der Maesen, 'Euro moet politiek nog worden waargemaakt; geloofwaardigheid hangt af van Europese politieke unie', in: *De Volkskrant* (20 December 2010).

for rejecting the European Constitution; for example to utter their dissatisfaction with the government at that time, or the fear of Turkey entering the EU.⁷¹

Over the past five years, since the sovereign-debt crisis came about, more articles discuss who is to blame for the crisis. Many exposés recognise that it is easy to point the finger at the EU. They themselves mainly accuse the individual member states. Whereas in the 1990s and early 2000s they called for more political integration together with economic integration, they now assume that it was the lack of the former that caused the crisis. They therefore plead for more federalism if Europe wants to overcome the recession. They are definitely not thinking of scrapping the euro. “Sneuvelt de euro, dan sneuvelt ook de Unie.”⁷²

2.3. The euro and European identity in the Netherlands

The fact that those newspaper articles all plead for saving the euro could imply that Dutch citizens feel attached to their new currency, and therefore as well to the EU. Evidence from opinion polls shows clearly that the euro contributes to the Dutch feeling of Europeanness (Appendix B). Compared to 2002, Dutch citizens say they feel more European since using the euro. The recent sovereign-debt crisis did not influence this rise in a negative way. In fact, it might even have contributed to the Dutch European identity, for when Dutch citizens are asked what represents the EU for them the most, the euro is most frequently mentioned since 2009.⁷³ That the crisis contributes to a shared bond amongst European citizens is visible in a few newspaper articles as well. The Bismarckian welfare state, the state structure that caused the current economic problems, is something all EU countries have in common. That is where European roots can be found: “Of de gezamenlijke cultuurgeschiedenis en de joods-christelijke achtergrond voldoende is voor een levensvatbare Europese identiteit kan iedereen voor zich beslissen. Maar Bismarck bindt dezer dagen alle Europeanen.”⁷⁴

⁷¹ Maurice de Hond, ‘Europees Referendum 31 mei’ (2005) 2.

⁷² “If the euro falls, the Union falls too.” Guy Verhofstadt and Daniel Cohn-Bendit, ‘Zonder de euro sterft Europa’, in: *NRC Handelsblad* (3 October 2012).

⁷³ EB, ‘Meaning of EU’. Online available via EBISS, retrieved 20 May 2013

⁷⁴ “Whether the common cultural history and the Judeo-Christian background are enough for a sustainable European identity is something that everyone can decide for themselves. But it is Bismarck that binds all Europeans these days.” Michel Kerres, ‘Bismarck en de Maagd Maria; Grenzeloos’, in: *NRC Handelsblad* (27 May 2010) 7.

At the same time, a contradictory tendency in the newspapers occurs. At the beginning of the 1990s, many authors assumed that the introduction of the euro would reinforce a shared European identity. Since a few years however, authors have the idea that Dutch citizens are not attached at all to the euro. “Nederlanders hebben weinig met de euro en dat uit zich in ons taalgebruik. Waar de gulden ons inspireerde tot allerlei liefkozende bijnamen, (...) komt de gezamenlijke Europese munt niet veel verder dan ‘pleuro’.⁷⁵ Het gebrek aan bijnamen zegt iets over de waardering.”⁷⁶ Emphasis is placed on the fact that the development of collective identities is a bottom-up process, it is not something that can be forced or accelerated by the installation of common institutions.

This contradiction of tendencies is remarkable: on the one hand, the Dutch themselves say that they do feel more European since using the euro (measured by means of public opinion surveys), but on the other, newspaper articles argue that the Dutch do not feel European at all.⁷⁷

2.4. Development of a European identity in general in the Netherlands

A small majority of Dutch citizens perceive themselves as European next to their Dutch nationality (Appendix C). This majority has been growing since 2004, although it is hard to predict whether this increase continues; the chart does not provide information between 2005 and 2010, and from 2010 onwards, nor do Dutch national opinion tracking institutions.

As the previous section has demonstrated, many newspaper articles state that Dutch people generally do not feel very European. The explanation they offer for this phenomenon is that citizens do not have a solid orientation point, for most national politicians do not know themselves how to handle Europe.⁷⁸ Dutch people are not very involved in European politics, for they are not offered the opportunity; Europe is still an elite project. If national citizens were given the chance to participate more in

⁷⁵ Corruption of the Dutch word for pleuritis.

⁷⁶ “The Dutch have very little in common with the euro and that is reflected in our language. Whereas the guilder inspired us to all kinds of affectionate nicknames, (...) the best the common European currency can do is ‘pleuro’. (...) The lack of nicknames tells us something about appreciation.” ‘Munt met laag knuffelgehalte’ in: *De Telegraaf* (28 December 2011) 24. The ‘affectionate nicknames’ are mostly diminutives, such as ‘dubbeltje’, for the small 10-cent coin, or ‘joetje’ for the 10-guilder note.

⁷⁷ See ‘Munt met laag knuffelgehalte’; Martin Mevius, ‘Patriot én Europeaan’, in: *NRC Handelsblad* (14 May 2009); and Hans Schlaghecke, ‘De Europese identiteit groeit van onderop’, in: *Het Financiële Dagblad* (29 December 2001).

⁷⁸ Michelle de Waard, ‘Angst voor Europa; op kousenvoeten naar Kopenhagen, of: Wie zal dat betalen?’, in: *NRC Handelsblad* (7 December 2002).

European politics, they would possibly feel more European as a consequence. These writers are of the opinion that the structure of the EU has to change and that a European identity is not (yet) established. They try to think of ways of how the EU can be improved and Europeanness can be created. In other words, they might have a rather negative point of view at the outset, but there is no mentioning of leaving the EU or eurozone; they accept the idea of a unified Europe, but are more critical of how it is implemented.⁷⁹

2.5. Interpretations and conclusions

The Netherlands has been pleased with their membership to the EC from the start. The small country used to have a rather strong economy, but always depended on its relationships with neighbouring countries for its trade. It never became a major power within Europe, like Germany, France or the United Kingdom. Its society was and is characterised by multiculturalism, which has made the Dutch nation relatively open and tolerant to foreigners.

Because of this multicultural society and emphasis on transnational relationships, Dutch national identity never became very strong or delimited. This could be an explanation for why Dutch citizens have always been positive about their country's membership to the EU, and also for why they are more susceptible to the development of European identity through the introduction of a European symbol, the euro.

Even with the rise of nationalism all over Europe nowadays, reinforced by populist parties responding to the growing fear of massive immigrant influxes, no loss of a common European identity is visible in evidence from public opinion data (Appendix C). As a matter of fact, there is a rise in the share of citizens that would call themselves European. At the same time, Dutch citizens say to feel more European since using the euro. Since 2009, this sentiment has been on the rise (Appendix B). This can be explained by the development of the sovereign-debt crisis from that year on; the euro binds all participating countries in their economic problems, Greece's economic illness is the concern of the whole of Europe. This feeling of all countries being connected can lead to the increased feeling of a European identity.

⁷⁹ See Klamer and Van der Maesen, 'Euro moet politiek nog worden waargemaakt'; 'Over de drempel', in: *NRC Handelsblad* (2 January 2002); De Waard, 'Angst voor Europa'; and Verhofstadt and Cohn-Bendit, 'Zonder de euro sterft Europa'.

In conclusion, the Dutch do feel more European indeed since the euro has become their currency. However, Dutch European identity is not (yet) very strong. This is something that is acknowledged in opinion articles, but it is said that closing the gap between the initiators of the project and European citizens can solve it. In this way, citizens will become more involved, and a European identity will be the natural consequence of that involvement.

3. The Euro, European Identity and the United Kingdom: Case Study No. 3

We're not in the euro and I'm glad we're not in the euro. We're never going to join the euro and we're never going to give up this kind of sovereignty that these countries are having to give up.

- British Prime Minister David Cameron, 9 December 2011⁸⁰

The United Kingdom is traditionally a eurosceptic country that does not feel strongly connected to the continent. This is one of the reasons why it never introduced the euro as their currency; the opposition to the euro is closely linked to a negative or suspicious attitude towards Europe in general. Because of that, this chapter's second section treating the reactions to the introduction of the euro on the continent will be rather brief. Since there is not that much data available from opinion polls on a possible link between the euro and British European identity – since the British do not use the euro – it is difficult to assess how preserving the pound influenced the British European identity. Whatever the case, it will become clear that European identity in the UK has generally declined during the past twenty years.

3.1. British attitudes towards Europe before 1992

It is no news that the UK has always occupied a particular place within Europe. (Moderate) British anti-Europeanism has a long history. As a superpower, Britain was keen to keep Europe divided, so that there was no one dominant power that could threaten its independence. It would therefore usually support smaller European nations or powers against the larger ones.⁸¹ In the course of the eighteenth century, Britain allied with anyone who was against France in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). This continued at times of Napoleon, the latter being one big figure as a reason for the British to be adverse to a unified Europe historically.

For most of the nineteenth century, Britain had a policy of 'splendid isolation', as it had a global empire and played the 'great game' against Russia.⁸² The rest of Europe lagged behind in terms of naval power until the 1890s, when the new German Empire began to compete. As an island, it was influenced to a lesser extent by

⁸⁰ Bruce Crumley, 'Euro Treaty Takes Shape, but Without Britain', <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2101975,00.html>. Retrieved 18 June 2013.

⁸¹ This is a 'tactic' that still has its equivalent in our days; UKIP argues that all countries should retain their national democracies.

⁸² Chris Gifford, *The making of Eurosceptic Britain: identity and economy in a post-imperial state* (Ashgate 2008) 11 et seq.

developments on the mainland (and vice versa) and it therefore developed a society of its own. 1848, an important year for the European mainland, did not affect Britain. Britain was the most modernised industrially at the time in comparison to the continent, and it was going in a different direction politically. This increased the British distrust of Europe. Even nowadays, the UK still differs in many ways from the continent; for example, it is more traditional, with a more pronounced social class structure as a consequence.⁸³

However, the Second World War and the threat from the USSR of a communist takeover stimulated the UK to participate in the unification process. In 1946, the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill called for a “United States of Europe”, but he did not initially see Britain as being part of this new union:

We British have our own Commonwealth of Nations. (...) And why should there not be a European group which could give a sense of enlarged patriotism and common citizenship to the distracted peoples of this turbulent and mighty continent and why should it not take its rightful place with other great groupings in shaping the destinies of men? (...) France and Germany must take the lead together. Great Britain, the British Commonwealth of Nations, mighty America and I trust Soviet Russia – for then indeed all would be well – must be the friends and sponsors of the new Europe and must champion its right to live and shine.⁸⁴

Nonetheless, the UK helped found the Council of Europe in 1948 with the Treaty of London. In the further process towards a more unified Europe, the UK watched more from the sidelines. It did not become a member of the ECSC; many coal and steel industries had just been nationalised and the government did not want to lose control over those industries. The UK only joined the EEC in 1973, after two unsuccessful applications in 1961 and 1969 that both were vetoed by France. The latter feared that British membership to the EEC would weaken the French voice within the Community, and that “close Anglo-American relations would lead to the United States increasing its influence in Europe”.⁸⁵

The UK’s participation in the European integration process had therefore a rocky start, and over the course of many years the UK would remain hesitant. When

⁸³ Mike Savage *et al.*, ‘A New Model of Social Class: Findings from the BBC’s Great British Class Survey Experiment’, in: *Sociology*, Vol. 47 No. 2 (2013) 219-50.

⁸⁴ Winston Churchill, ‘A British Patriot for Europe: Winston Churchill’s Speech on Europe University of Zurich, 19 September 1946’, in: *Zeit Online*, http://www.zeit.de/reden/die_historische_rede/200115_hr_churchill1_englisch. Retrieved 29 May 2013.

⁸⁵ ‘Parliament & Europe’, <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/parliament-and-europe/overview/britain-and-eeec-to-single-european-act/>. Retrieved 6 June 2013.

Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979, she opposed the further development of a political European union.⁸⁶ The issue of European integration was also troublesome during John Major's Government from 1990 to 1997. When the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) was established in 1994, with the first plans for a single European currency, the UK obtained an opt-out from joining EMU in return for agreeing to the Maastricht Treaty. At first, Major opted out for its social policy provisions, but through a very narrow Parliament motion the Treaty was ratified in 1992.

3.2. The euro on the continent: reactions of the United Kingdom 1992-2012

British politicians were never eager to introduce the euro in the UK. Prime Minister Tony Blair stated that before the UK would consider joining the euro, the EMU would have to pass 'five economic tests'.⁸⁷ When those tests were met, he promised to hold a referendum on whether or not adopting the common currency. The tests are not yet met.

British citizens always spoke quite firmly against the introduction of the euro in their own country; they have been opposing it by around 65% on average over the past twenty years.⁸⁸ This opposition has been very stable over the last two decades (Appendix D). However, a very large majority did think that it was inevitable that this would happen eventually.⁸⁹ Whereas in 1999 the British thought the euro was not really a success for the participating countries – which can be explained by its extremely low exchange rate right after its introduction – they did expect that this would change in the future, and that the euro would very well be able to compete with the dollar.⁹⁰

Newspaper articles have been divided about whether or not the euro should become the British currency as well, and if not, what role the UK should play in European politics. Generally, many newspaper articles express an anti-euro attitude in

⁸⁶ Simon Lightfoot, 'European Integration and the UK', in: *BBC News* (22 November 2004), http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/bbc_parliament/2638513.stm. Retrieved 6 June 2013.

⁸⁷ The five economic tests are on convergence, flexibility, investment, UK's financial service industry and the effect on UK employment. For more detailed information, see 'UK Membership of the Single Currency', http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/euro_assess03_repexecsum.htm. Retrieved 7 June 2013.

⁸⁸ See Ipsos MORI, 'Joining The Euro - Trends Since 1991' (2007); and EB, 'For or against one European currency'.

⁸⁹ Ipsos MORI, 'Joining The Euro' (2000-2002), Q4.

⁹⁰ Ipsos MORI, 'Attitudes to Europe' (1999), Q5-6.

the sense that they want to keep the pound sterling. Cartoons and other propaganda reflect this attitude.⁹¹ The most important reason for this is the fear that Europe might become too powerful and deprive them from their national sovereignty.

3.3. The euro and European identity in the United Kingdom

If the UK would join the euro, it would have to give up a part of its responsibilities for policymaking. This is the largest obstacle for the UK, not only concerning their membership of the eurozone, but of the EU in general as well. “Sovereignty cannot be shared or pooled. It is either here, in our hands, or elsewhere in those of other institutions.”⁹² When asked in opinion polls, it becomes clear that not only the opinion precursors think that this will be the case, but the British electorate as well.⁹³

This fear of the UK losing its independence is linked to the fear of losing national identity. Between 1995 and 1997, Eurobarometer posed the question: “Do you believe that the European currency will or will not imply that (our country) will lose (too much of) its (national) identity?”⁹⁴ A stable 62% average said that this would be the case for the UK, whereas in other European countries, this share decreased from around 40% initially to 35% in 1997. This is one of the reasons why the British do not want to adopt the euro; they want to maintain their sovereignty and national identity. On the other hand, they do think that introducing the euro is a further step towards European integration, and that it will create a link between Europeans;⁹⁵ a process of which they will not be and do not want to be a part.

However, there are also articles that advocate a different approach from the UK towards the EU. As French and Dutch newspapers have shown, the euro is often seen as more than just an economic project; it has a political impact as well. Since 2008, with the advent of the sovereign-debt crisis, more articles are pleading for the UK to play a more active part in the euro crisis. The euro crisis would be a good opportunity for the UK to extend its influence in the EU, by mediating between

⁹¹ See for example Michael Cummings, ‘No thanks, I’m a family man!’, in: *The Times Magazine* (21 June 1997), <http://www.cvce.eu/viewer/-/content/4c5efeaf-b441-4d71-9c37-cf4e6ce7a673/en>.

⁹² Norman Tebbit, ‘Hijack on the Euro express’, in: *The Guardian* (12 November 1991).

⁹³ See EB, ‘Agreement with statements about consequences of euro’ (1995-2001). Online available via EBISS.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

France and Germany, two big economic players that have opposite perspectives on how the crisis should be handled.⁹⁶

In 2008, there are quite a few articles that opt for the UK to enter the eurozone. The sovereign-debt crisis has had repercussions in the UK as well, and some authors are of the opinion that entering the eurozone would help to overcome the financial problems. This is however not the only argument that they come up with: more importantly, they think that the eurozone will very probably overcome the crisis, and become stronger and more unified in the process. Then, there only will be a place at the margins for the UK.⁹⁷

In spite of these recent counter-developments, a large majority of newspaper articles think that the crisis will certainly lead to the downfall of the euro – and the disintegration of Europe consequently. Europe was not ready for a monetary union in the first place. The UK should stay as far away as possible from the future “black swans.”⁹⁸ Had the UK joined the eurozone in 2003, the EU would probably have been scattered already.⁹⁹

3.4. Development of a European identity in general in the United Kingdom

The rejection of the euro by the UK can be explained by the UK’s anti-European attitude overall. The UK does not see the euro alone as a threat to their sovereignty and national identity, but is afraid of a more prominent EU in general. A further step towards European integration by using the euro as their currency would therefore mean a further step towards the loss of national identity as well. Evidence from Eurobarometer, shows that that this fear has increased by 10% over the last ten years.¹⁰⁰

Not only this fear has increased, so has the negative attitude towards Europe in general. Until October 2008 the most frequent response to the question what the EU means to British citizens personally was ‘Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere

⁹⁶ See for example ‘The euro crisis is a political one and Britain should play its part’, in: *The Independent* (22 May 2010) 42.

⁹⁷ Will Hutton, ‘Europe will thrive. But we could be doomed to a life on the fringes’, in: *The Observer* (10 June 2012) 36.

⁹⁸ Rachel Sylvester and Alice Thomson, ‘You should let the EU destroy itself, which it eventually will’, in: *The Times* (26 May 2012) 26-7.

⁹⁹ Larry Elliot, ‘Analysis: What if Britain had joined the euro in 2003?’, in: *The Guardian* (3 June 2013) 23.

¹⁰⁰ EB, ‘Fears regarding the building of EU’ (1995-2006). Online available via EBISS.

in the European Union'. Since June 2009, that has shifted to 'A waste of money', followed since November 2011 by 'Bureaucracy'.

Since January 2013, the UK's membership of the EU is even more often debated, because Prime Minister David Cameron promised a referendum on British membership of the EU in 2017 if his party would return to power after the next elections. This would be the second referendum on this topic, the first one being held in 1975, which indicates that the British commitment to the EU has been in doubt for many years.¹⁰¹ Evidence from polling data confirms that the UK's enthusiasm for the EU lies far lower than the EU-average (Appendix A). Since the UK has never had a very pro-European attitude, we can assume that they do not feel very European as well. Moreover, the percentage that feels both British and European has even declined over the past twenty years (Appendix C).

3.5. Interpretations and conclusions

The United Kingdom has always had a difficult relationship with the rest of Europe, and especially with France. As an island, it was never completely involved in or influenced by the events on the continent, but was more occupied with unification problems within its own Kingdom. Initially, it did not play an active part in the European unifying process after the Second World War, and it has stood at the sidelines ever since. The fear of losing its sovereignty and national identity to a stronger EU prevented it from getting too involved, and is a major reason why it decided not to adopt the euro. When European integration increased over the past few decades, British European identity moved in the opposite direction.

An explanation for the British lack of enthusiasm for the European project, besides evidence from history, is that British citizens are generally not very well-informed about European institutions. In this respect, they occupy the lowest rank of all EU countries.¹⁰² The fact that this lack of knowledge contributes to negative attitudes towards the EU is a phenomenon that other European countries show as well (but to a lesser extent), where it is a theme that frequently returns in newspaper articles.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ An interesting overview on this question is offered by BBC News, 'UK and the EU: better off out or in?', <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-20448450>. Retrieved 9 June 2013.

¹⁰² EB, 'Awareness of the EU institutions'. Online available via EBISS.

¹⁰³ See for example Jean-Louis Levet, 'L'Europe est elle communautaire?', in: *Les Echos* (23 April 1993) 33; De Vabres, 'Il faut une voix forte et claire pour l'euro'; and De Waard, 'Angst voor Europa'.

What contributes to the British current anti-Europeanness is a development seen in France and the Netherlands as well, namely an augmented polemic attitude towards immigration influxes. Since 2000, migration flows into the UK increased drastically compared to the century before.¹⁰⁴ The British fear that when the EU has more to say about each member state's policymaking, they will not have the possibility anymore to decide on their own migration policy, with more immigration in the UK as a consequence.

Whether there exists a correlation between the decline of British European identity (Appendix C) and the fact that the euro was not introduced in the UK is hard to say. Inevitably, the factors mentioned above also contributed to this development, and it is difficult to filter out the influence of the euro from that context. Furthermore, this is of course not an all-round picture of the British European identity; there are many other relevant factors as well. A cautious conclusion from these data could then be that preserving the pound sterling was one of the contributing factors to a declining sense of European identity in the UK. However, this does not mean necessarily that there would have been a more pronounced European identity in the UK had the euro been introduced; as newspaper articles indicate, this could have led to even more opposition to the EU because of the sovereign-debt crisis and to the eventual downfall of the euro and the EU.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ ONS, 'Long-term Migration into and out of the United Kingdom, 1964-2011', <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/interactive/theme-pages-1-1/index.html>. Retrieved 9 June 2013.

¹⁰⁵ Larry Elliot, 'What if Britain had joined the euro'.

4. Attributing the Case Studies: Hypothesis for all EU countries

When looking at those three European countries, three different discourses of European identity are revealed. However, there are five main themes return in each case. The last two of those themes, on the euro and the euro crisis, will be used to establish a hypothesis for all EU countries. This hypothesis on the euro, euro crisis and European identity will then be tested by means of three Eurobarometer surveys in the whole of the EU, to see whether there is a difference in European identity discernable between eurozone and non-eurozone countries.

4.1. The three case studies in a nutshell and five recurring themes

In France, Europe is generally seen as a positive undertaking and European integration does not form a threat to the national identity. French citizens feel European to some extent and are happy with the euro as their currency, which is visible in the way they perceive the currency: as a European symbol. However, the French European identity has not increased much since the introduction of the common currency. It is influenced by other factors as well, mainly by French anti-Americanism and the rise of nationalism through the fear of immigration issues. On the other hand, the French do not see the euro as the end of the integration process; Europe needs to become a political union as well.

In the Netherlands, there are comparable pillars on which Dutch European identity is founded. Here, newspaper articles underline too that the EU needs to integrate more on the political level if it wants the economic union to succeed. Furthermore, resistance to immigration has been rising as well over the past few years. However, this does not have negative consequences on Dutch European identity. In fact, the Dutch even feel more European compared to two decades ago. The euro definitely has had an impact, as the Dutch themselves state when asked if they feel more European since using the euro (Appendix B). An explanation for the success of the euro and the reinforcement of European identity in the Netherlands could be that the Dutch never had a very strong national identity in the first place.

The United Kingdom presents less of a European identity, and it is still declining. The island has had a eurosceptic attitude since the beginning of the European integration process, for it wanted to remain sovereign. From polling data we can conclude that British citizens feel threatened by the EU, in the sense that ‘too

much EU' might compromise their national identity. It is therefore not surprising that the UK decided not to adopt the euro. The fact that the British European identity is getting weaker nowadays could be explained on the one hand by their preserving of the pound sterling. On the other hand, different factors contribute to this decline as well, such as the fear of too many immigrants and the current sovereign-debt crisis.

These three discourses represent three different perceptions of the European integration process. This indicates that the matter at hand is complex. Collective identity is volatile and influenced by many factors, and this goes for the diverse discourses of European identity as well. The traditions of the different countries create the conditions under which European identity floats – or sinks.

Despite the variations in European identity, there are certain themes that return in all three cases. First, all countries, including the UK, emphasise that the EMU can only flourish when the EU is integrated politically to some extent as well, and when its tasks and responsibilities are more clearly defined. However, the different countries do each have different approaches to what a political union should look like, from a collection of sovereignties to a hardcore federal state.

Second, when citizens know less about the structure of the EU, they are less enthusiastic about its expanding responsibilities. There is a gap between the people and the elites that initiated the European integration project in the first place. Because people are not aware of all the aspects of the EU, either advantageous or disadvantageous, this lack of knowledge of the project results in suspicion towards it. This explains why pro-Europeans plead for a European awareness campaign in their countries.

Third, in all countries there has been a rise of xenophobic nationalism since around 2005, which has led in some cases to a decreased feeling of Europeanness. However, this is not the case in the Netherlands, where European identity has not declined very much.

Fourth, people feel generally more European in the countries where the euro has been introduced. On the other hand, the launch of the euro has not led in all cases to the reinforcement of European identity.

Fifth, newspaper articles argue that the euro crisis has had an impact on European identity as well. Whereas it binds the two eurozone countries, it drives the non-eurozone country further away from the EU.

4.2. Hypothesis for European identity in the EU countries in general

These five themes are of course a simplified representation of the European identity problems at stake. Since the first three themes are outside the scope of this thesis, the hypothesis that can be extrapolated from the previous case studies concerning the euro and European identity is: **‘People have a stronger sense of European identity in countries that have adopted the euro and that are more affected by the euro crisis’**. This hypothesis will be tested for the whole of the EU, with data from Eurobarometer in all EU countries. At the outset the first part of the hypothesis may seem obvious, if reasoning that eurozone countries had to be pro-European in the first place, for otherwise they would not have introduced the euro. This is however not the case. The choice of whether or not to adopt the euro in a member state is usually one of the individual governments, which make their decisions without first consulting their citizens. Citizens therefore do not necessarily support the introduction of the euro in their country.

In order to test the hypothesis of whether there is a difference indeed between European identity in eurozone and non-eurozone countries, those two categories will be compared. The zones will both be considered as one entity; we will not look whether there are individual differences between countries that for example have joined the EU more recently than others. The entity of the eurozone countries consists of the seventeen EU member states that have adopted the euro, namely Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Cyprus, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain. The ten EU countries that still use their own currencies are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

While it was rewarding to look at different kinds of source material for the three cases, the sources for this chapter are based on evidence from Eurobarometer opinion polls alone. The sense of European identity will be measured by means of three main questions. The most important question is whether citizens feel that they not only have a national identity, but a European one as well (examined before in Appendix C). Because of the fact that Eurobarometer does not pose that many questions about European citizenship and identification with the EU, other questions that indicate a feeling for Europeanness have also been taken into account. Therefore, attitudes towards Europe will be examined, namely whether eurozone countries

perceive the EU in a more positive way than non-eurozone. A last question will measure how the EU is symbolised in the different countries; do citizens from eurozone countries more often use positive symbols to describe the EU? These three surveys of the whole of the EU only partially offer insight into the matter of European identity in general. It is somewhat of a simplification of the complexity of measuring collective identities, in order to make it more attainable to test the hypothesis.

4.3. Feeling both (nationality) and European

In eurozone countries, the number of respondents expressing simultaneously European and national identity lies approximately 10% higher than in the non-eurozone (Appendix E). Although within the two zones the countries vary to a large extent, the range of the percentage of citizens that feel European in addition to their own nationality in the eurozone lies roughly between 40% and 70%, while that is between 30% and 60% in the non-eurozone.

What is remarkable is that whereas the number of respondents expressing simultaneously European and national identity fluctuates over the years in both eurozone and non-eurozone countries, the distance between the two zones remains the same. In technical terms, the two graphics of the eurozone and non-eurozone run very parallel (Figure 3). This means that, in spite of having the euro, citizens react approximately in the same way to events that happened in those years. It is, however, difficult to establish a solid correlation between those events and the dates that are mentioned, for there could be countless reasons for it. Explaining the fluctuations of the curves is not the aim of the current research.

Whereas it is clear that citizens resident in eurozone countries feel more European, this does not imply that they feel more European *because* they have the euro as their currency. In eurozone countries, citizens already felt approximately 10% more European before the euro was introduced. Not in any important year for the euro (1992, 1999, 2002¹⁰⁶) eurozone citizens react more positively to the idea of European identity than their non-eurozone counterparts. In fact, responses to this Eurobarometer question would be proof that the euro is not that important for the feeling of Europeaness, since all countries seem to react similarly over the years.

¹⁰⁶ See Introduction for why these years are important.

The euro crisis does not seem to have had a different impact on eurozone countries compared to non-eurozone countries. After 2005, European identity declines in both zones, as could have been expected from the three case studies. Unfortunately Eurobarometer does not provide more detailed information about the period 2009-2013, which could tell us if this downward movement continues or not. When however examining individual eurozone countries that are particularly affected by the crisis, i.e. Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Slovenia and Cyprus,¹⁰⁷ it becomes clear that they feel far less European compared to 2005. Especially in countries that suffer severely from the crisis, European identity weakens quickly: compared to the 6% average decline, it declines in Greece by 7%, in Italy by 10%, in Slovenia by 22% and in Cyprus by 13%. Based on these data, the euro crisis seems to have a negative influence on European identity in the countries that are most affected by it. To help achieve the understanding of this development, other source material could provide more insight for the period 2005-2010, and 2010 and onwards.

4.4. Positive image of the EU

People usually feel more attached to their country when their attitude towards it is positive. How European citizens perceive the EU could therefore tell us something as well about their European identity. When looking at the eurozone, it is clear that the positive view of the EU decreases drastically after 2009, in all countries. This decline is less apparent in non-eurozone countries. In fact, since 2010, non-eurozone countries have a more positive view of the EU than the eurozone (Figure 3).

The most probable explanation for this drastic decrease in eurozone countries is the euro crisis that started in 2009-2010. When examining again the countries that suffer most from the crisis, the enthusiasm for the EU in those countries drops in one year by at least 20% after either 2009 or 2010, or in the case of Greece by 30% after 2009. These data could help predict the further course of European identity (Appendix E); it is very probable that the decline has continued since 2010.

Interesting is that citizens' attitudes towards the EU in non-eurozone countries are apparently less affected by the crisis, although the recession has had repercussions in those countries as well. An explanation for this could be that those countries remain sovereign to some extent and are therefore less affected by euro problems, while still

¹⁰⁷ See footnote 28, 7.

having the benefits of their EU membership. One of those advantages is the possibility to travel.

4.5. Symbols of the EU

As became clear from the case studies of France and the Netherlands, many citizens of those two countries see the EU symbolised in the euro. One might thus assume that they have a stronger European identity since they use the euro, and are therefore confronted with Europe every day. There are other symbols and phenomena that could translate the feeling of Europeanness as well. When Eurobarometer posed the question what the EU means to citizens personally, they offered a variety of answers next to the option to suggest spontaneous responses. The set answers had connotations that are generally seen as positive (such as ‘Peace’ and ‘Economic prosperity’), negative (such as ‘Unemployment’ and ‘Waste of money’), and arguably both or neither (such as ‘Euro’ and ‘Cultural diversity’). While in eurozone countries the option ‘Euro’ was mentioned repeatedly, there was one answer that was most frequently mentioned in nearly every country: ‘Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the European Union’.¹⁰⁸ In non-eurozone countries, the percentage that gives this as a response is higher than in eurozone countries (Appendix G), and leaves a large distance between that answer and all others. In eurozone countries, the percentages of the different answers lie often very close to one another.¹⁰⁹ This could indicate that in those countries European identity is built up of many different factors and therefore probably more complex, while in non-eurozone countries freedom to travel is a particularly important building block of their European identity.

Appendix H demonstrates that freedom to travel is important to both zones. What is more remarkable is that there are no large differences in percentages of positive symbols between the two categories, and that respondents from both zones react similarly over time. Since 2009, opinion in the two zones started to diverge (Figure 3). Whereas the hypothesis assumed that eurozone citizens would see the EU visualised more frequently in positive symbols, in fact the opposite is the case: people from non-eurozone countries use slightly more often positive symbols to describe their European citizenship, especially since 2009. This confirms that 2009, the start of

¹⁰⁸ For more on the influence of travelling and tourism on the formation of national and transnational identities, see Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday. A history of vacationing* (London 1999).

¹⁰⁹ See for more information the answers of the individual member states, online accessible via EBISS.

the crisis, is a turning point of European identity. Again, the hypothesis is contradicted: the euro crisis does not reinforce the feeling of a shared identity in eurozone countries – it rather weakens it.

4.6. Interpretations and conclusions

In testing the hypothesis ‘**People have a stronger sense of European identity in countries that have adopted the euro and that are more affected by the euro crisis**’, the first part of the hypothesis can be confirmed based on the data displayed in Appendix E. However, this does not mean that eurozone citizens feel more European *because* they use the euro. Since Eurobarometer does not provide continuous data European identity, it becomes difficult to examine whether the decline in the feeling of Europeanness has continued as the crisis intensified. When looking at the other two Eurobarometer questions that could clarify the matter of European identity, a turning point in 2009-2010 is visible. Since that point, non-eurozone countries have in general been more positive about the EU, in the way they perceive it, and what symbols they connect to it.

The euro crisis is probably the cause of the decrease in European identity and positive view of the EU. In the eurozone, stronger countries share the burden of the economic problems of the weaker, while the latter are dependent of the help of the former. In the end, citizens will have to save the economy and the euro through increased taxes. What could contribute to this is that during the five years that the crisis has been ‘dragging on’, no suitable and solid solution has been found.¹¹⁰ In non-eurozone countries, citizens share less of the responsibility to improve the economy and the euro. Whereas journalists and academics might think that the crisis forces a bond between euro-using citizens, in practice this is not visible. This underlines again the difference between elite views and those of the masses – a discrepancy that is also visible in the case studies.

In short, based on the available source material, it can be stated that the hypothesis is partially true. Initially, eurozone citizens did feel more European than their non-eurozone counterparts. This was already the case before the euro was introduced. The euro did not, however, reinforce European identity in those nations,

¹¹⁰ Angela Merkel warned in June 2012 that it would not be possible to solve the crisis quickly. ‘Merkel waarschuwt voor grote beloftes van snelle oplossingen’ (27 June 2012), http://www.europaanu.nl/id/vj0pia022smn/nieuws/merkel_waarschuwt_voor_grote_beloftes?ctx=viuteb8r4izb. Retrieved 11 June 2013.

for euro- as well as non-eurozone countries responded similarly to events that happened in time. Only with the advent of the crisis, eurozone citizens reacted stronger to developments than those outside of it. European identity thus seems more related to economic prosperity (or recession) than to a common currency alone. So in fact, the opposite of the assumption in the hypothesis is the case: since 2009-2010, with the advent of the sovereign-debt crisis, non-eurozone citizens feel more positively connected to the EU than those inside the eurozone.

Conclusion

This thesis has proven that although there seems to exist a correlation between European identity and the euro, this is not truly the case. People who use the euro as a currency feel more European than those who do not, but already did so before the euro was introduced. Evidence from polling data demonstrates that both eurozone and non-eurozone countries react very similarly over the decades. However, since 2009-2010, non-eurozone citizens perceive their European citizenship in a more positive way than their euro-spending counterparts. The advent of the sovereign-debt crisis triggered this development, forcing eurozone countries to share responsibilities for trying to master economic issues, while the non-eurozone was less involved in and affected by it.

The main theoretical tenets of this study and the formulated hypothesis have been built upon the insights of three detailed case studies of France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Every country presents a different discourse of European identity that can mainly be explained by means of their historical background and national identities. In France, an anti-American, moderate European identity is typical; in the Netherlands, there exists an open attitude to the EU because of the absence of a strong national identity; and the UK has shown a eurosceptic, hesitant approach from the start.

Despite these great variations, certain themes recur in all three cases. Foremost, newspaper articles argue that with an economic union, a political union has to be established additionally. Economic integration can only succeed when it is monitored intensively by common policies and legislation.

Another important motif is the recognition that there exists a gap between the elite initiators of the project who are commonly pro-European, and the masses. The latter group cannot fully comprehend the effects of the integration process, partially because there has not always been sufficient information provided. In articles, arguments recur for a European awareness campaign in EU countries.

In addition, anti-immigrant nationalism rises in the three countries. Since 2005, extreme right-wing and left-wing populist parties responded to this fear of massive migrant influxes, which strengthened nationalist sentiment.

Furthermore, in France and the Netherlands, both eurozone countries, citizens felt more European than in the UK. In the Netherlands, citizens stated that the launch

of the euro even reinforced their feeling of Europeanness, in spite of economic problems since 2009.

Finally, many newspaper articles assumed that the euro crisis would force a bond between eurozone countries stimulate and therefore the development of a European identity. The UK, while not having the euro, would end up at the margins when the eurozone would have survived the crisis.

From the case studies, it is possible to derive the general hypothesis that **‘People have a stronger sense of European identity in countries that have adopted the euro and that are more affected by the euro crisis’**. This hypothesis was tested for all EU countries by means of three Eurobarometer questions about European identity. When citizens were asked directly if they felt European in addition to their national identity, eurozone countries scored 10% higher averagely indeed. Unfortunately, this first Eurobarometer question did not provide continuous data, and was asked for the last time in 2010. These last years are especially crucial, for the other two surveys about the image and symbols of the EU show a relative increase in positive attitudes since 2009-2010 in non-eurozone countries compared to the eurozone. The sovereign-debt crisis therefore certainly has an influence on European identity, but a negative one. Positive attitudes in countries that have adopted the euro drop drastically with the advent of the crisis. The second part of the hypothesis is therefore falsified.

A remarkable observation is that for all three surveys, opinion in eurozone and non-eurozone countries runs almost completely parallel; eurozone respondents did not react to important euro developments in 1992, 1999 and 2002 with increasingly positive attitudes towards Europe (Appendix E). This means that there is little difference in the way both zones respond to important events or issues that face the EU and their country. It also implies that the euro alone does not truly influence European identity, probably because it is balanced out by many other factors. Economic changes are more strongly connected to European identity.

In conclusion, the hypothesis is partially falsified. It is correct that eurozone countries feel more European, because they already felt it before the introduction of the euro. When the euro crisis occurred, this shifted however, resulting in more positive attitudes towards the EU in non-eurozone countries than in the eurozone. Be that as it may, we must not forget that in both zones European identity decreases after 2005;

and especially after 2009. In terms of influence, the euro did not affect European identity initially, only after the advent of the euro crisis – in a negative way.

Yet, this is not the final answer to the question of European identity and the impact of the euro. Further research needs to be done on different case studies. Furthermore, there are interesting factors of European identity linked to this study, especially the issue of the current rise of nationalism and anti-immigration attitudes. It is very probable that this and other aspects have repercussions as well on the recent downfall of European identity. Finally, it might be too soon to fully comprehend the implications of the crisis. Within a few years (hopefully), studies may be able to examine this more clearly from a distance. The last word has not yet been spoken on the volatile European identity.

Appendices

Appendix A

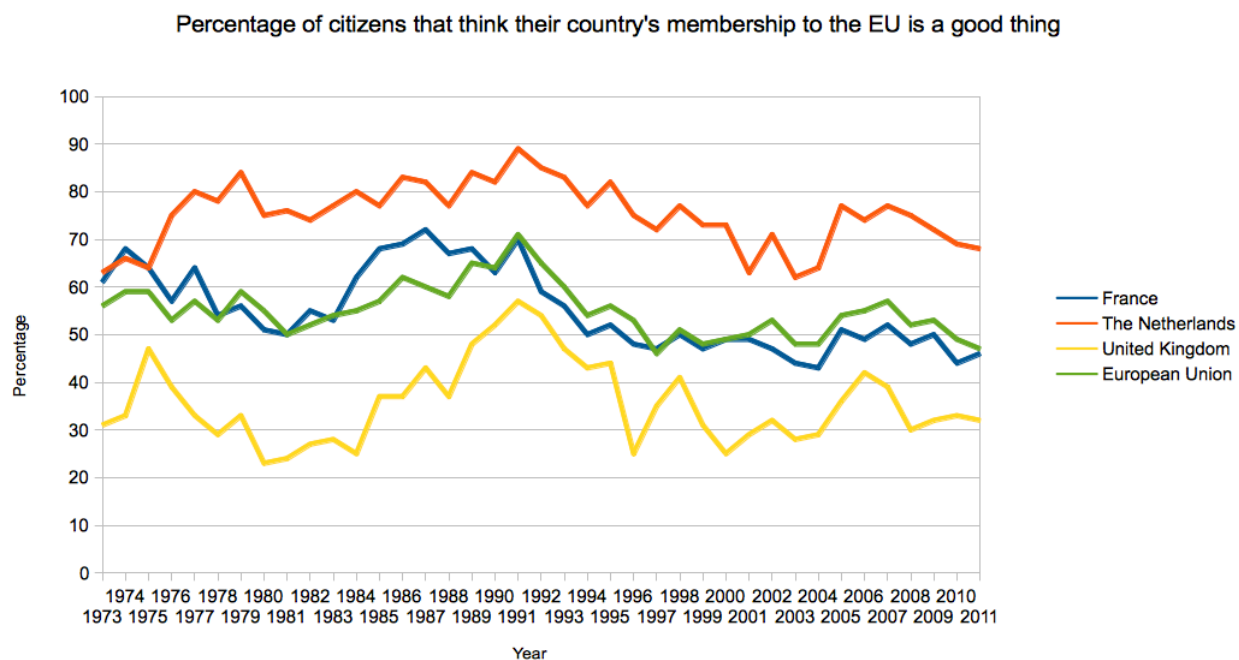
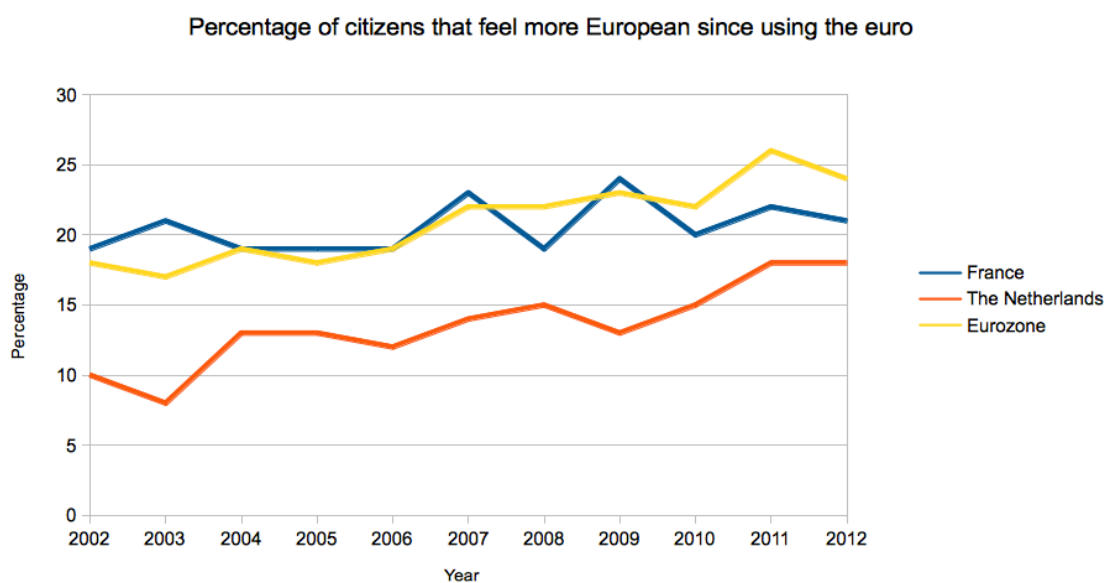


Chart based on the following question (1973-2011): ‘Generally speaking, do you think (your country’s) membership to the European Community (Common Market) is... A good thing; A bad thing; Neither good nor bad; Don’t know?’

Data available via EBISS, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showchart_column.cfm?keyID=5&nationID=16,6,10,15,&startdate=1973.09&enddate=2011.05. Retrieved 28 February 2013.

Appendix B



Flash Eurobarometer 139, 153, 165, 175, 193, 214, 237, 270, 296, 329, 349.

Chart based on the following question (2002-2012): ‘Since using the euro, do you personally feel a little more European than before, a little less European than before or would you say that your feeling of being European has not changed?’

Reports online available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/topics/euro_en.htm; under ‘Euro-area countries’. Retrieved 28 February 2013.

Appendix C

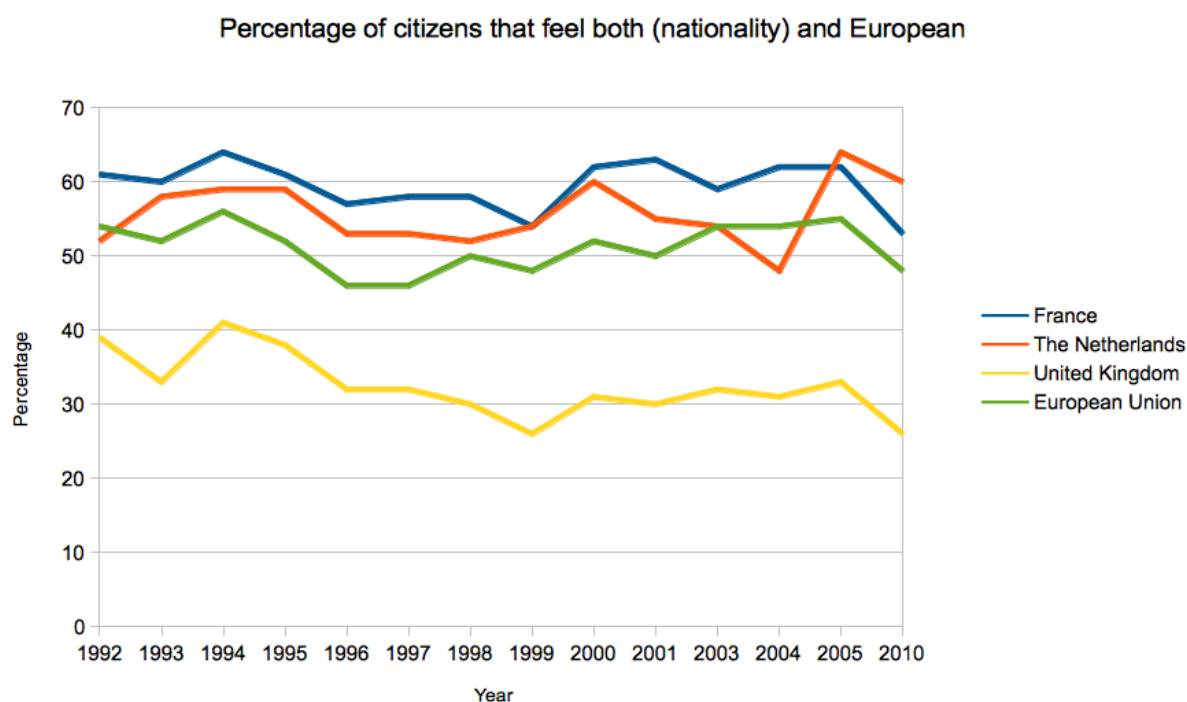


Chart based the following question (1992-2010): ‘In the near future do you see yourself as... (Nationality) only; (Nationality) and European; European and (Nationality); European only; Don’t know; None (SPONTANEOUS); Refusal (SPONTANEOUS)?’ The percentage displayed in the chart is combined of the answers ‘(nationality) and European’ and ‘European and (nationality)’. The first answer forms the majority of this combination.

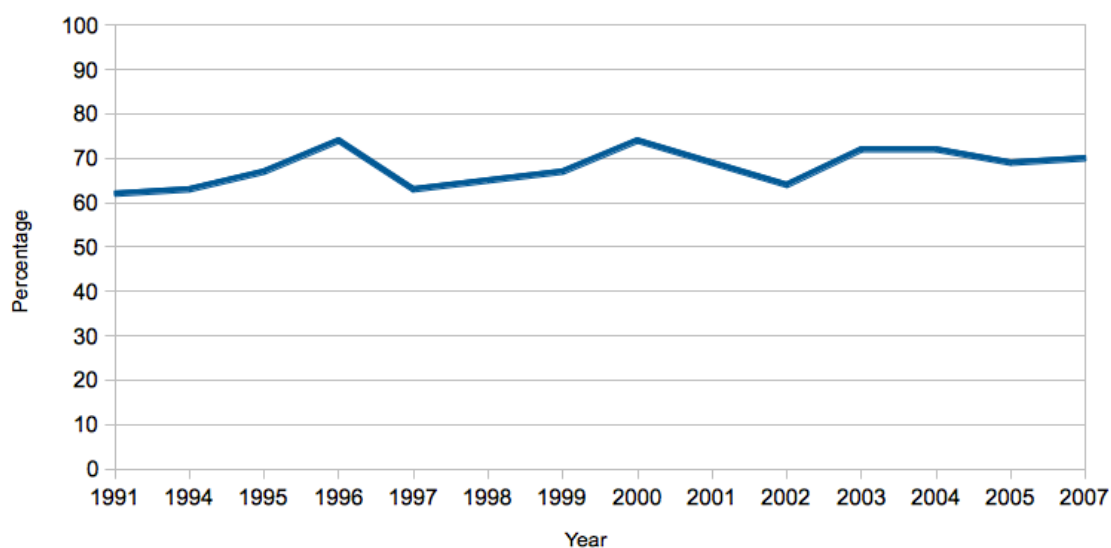
Data available via EBISS,

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showchart_column.cfm?keyID=266&nationID=16,6,10,15,&startdate=1992.04&enddate=2010.06. Retrieved 28 February 2013.

No surveys on this topic in 2002 and between 2005 and 2010.

Appendix D

Percentage of British citizens that are against the introduction of the euro in their country



Ipsos MORI, 'Joining The Euro - Trends Since 1991' (2007).

Chart based on the following question (1991-2007): 'If there were a referendum now on whether Britain should be part of a Single European Currency, how would you vote?'

Online available at <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/78/Joining-The-Euro-Trends-Since-1991.aspx?view=wide>. Retrieved 14 May 2013.

No surveys on this topic between 1992 and 1993 and in 2004.

Appendix E

Figure 1

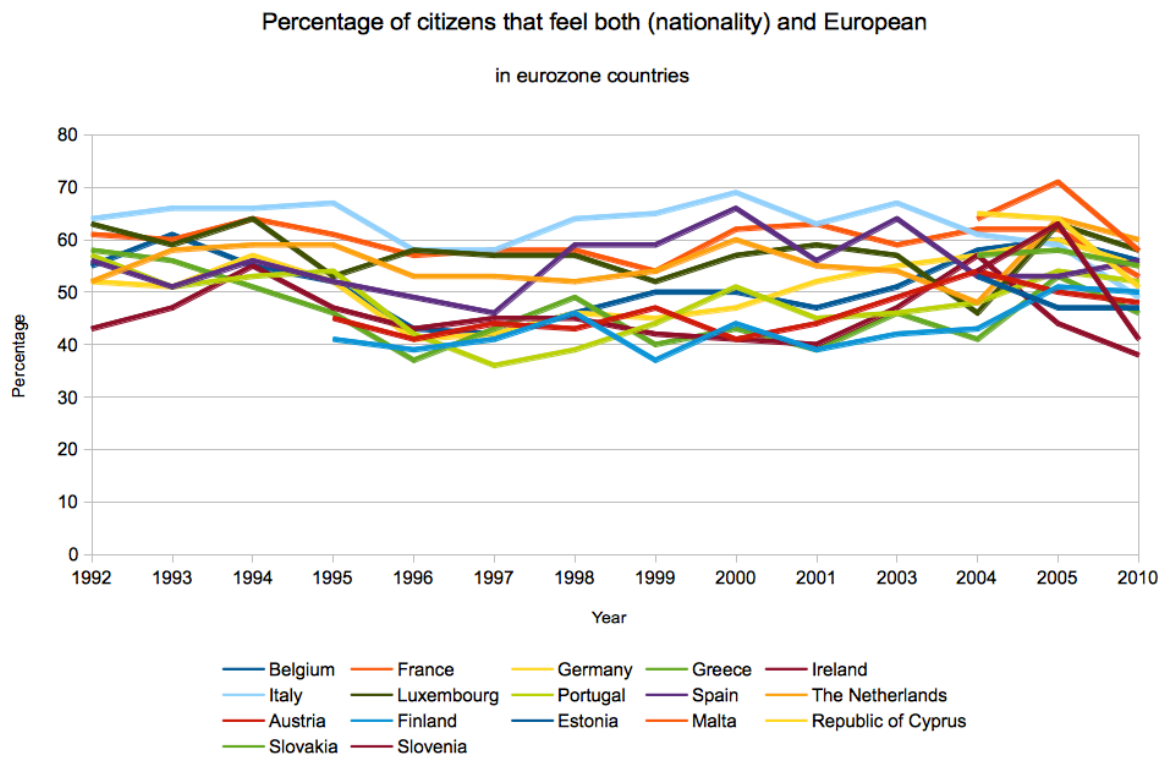


Figure 2

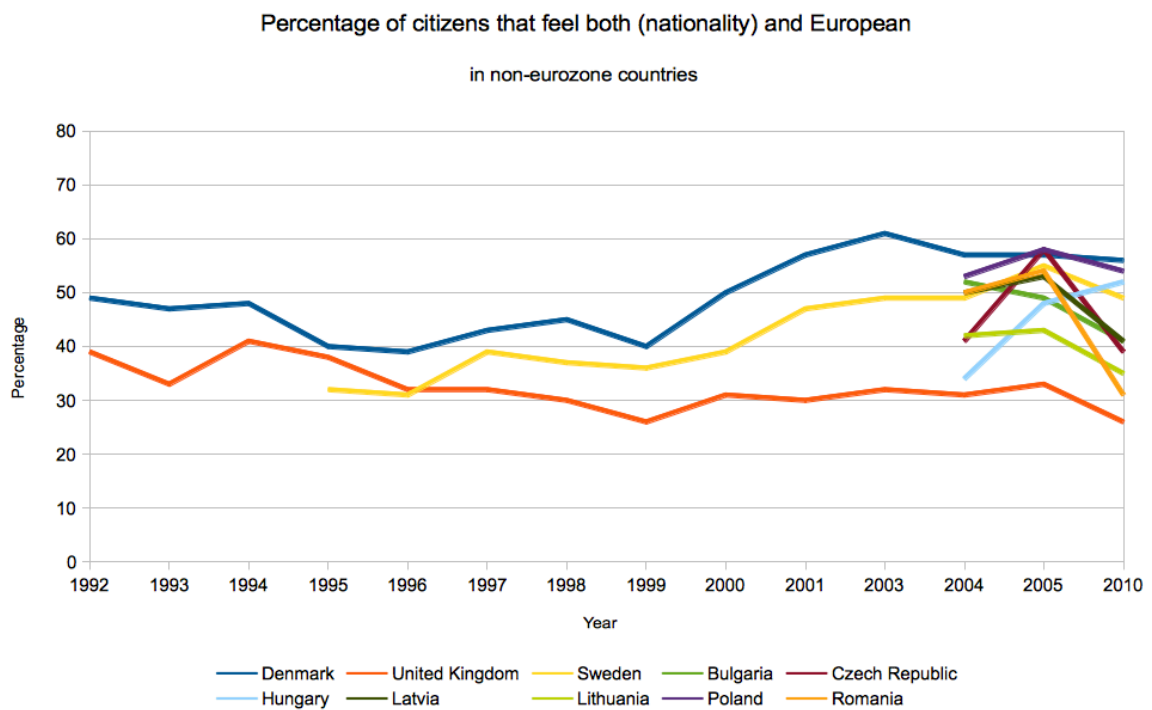
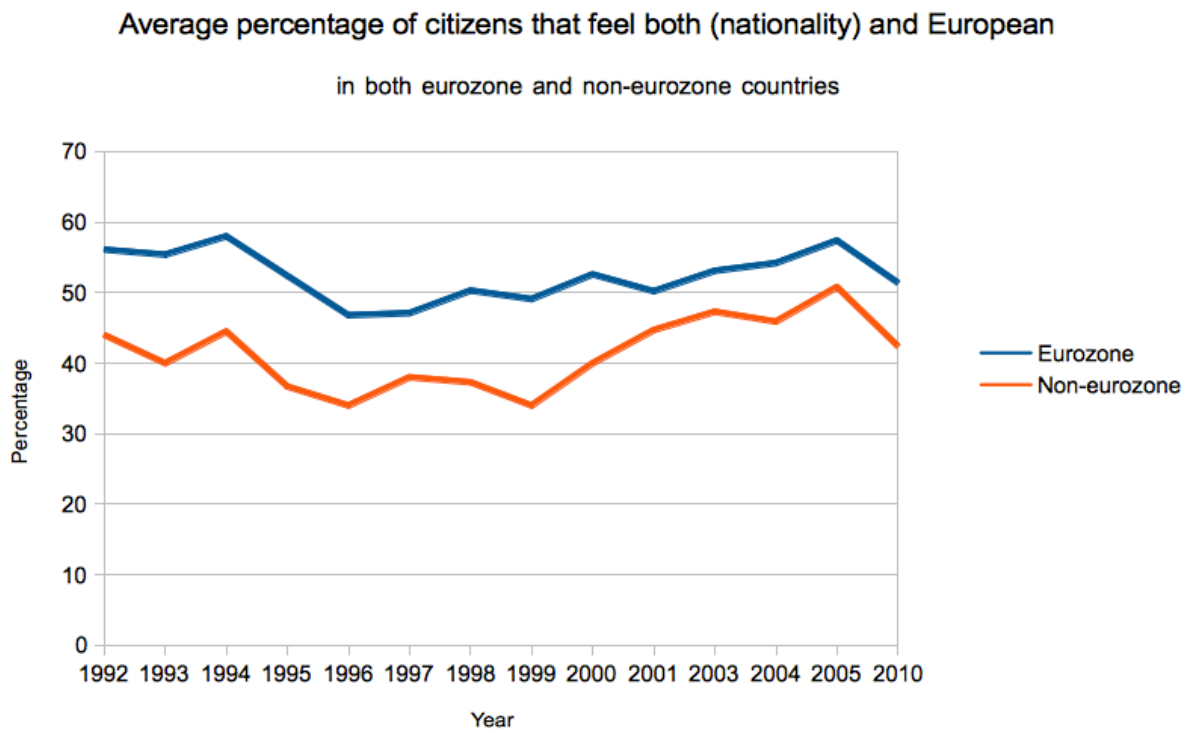


Figure 3



For source reference, see Appendix C (45).

Appendix F

Figure 1

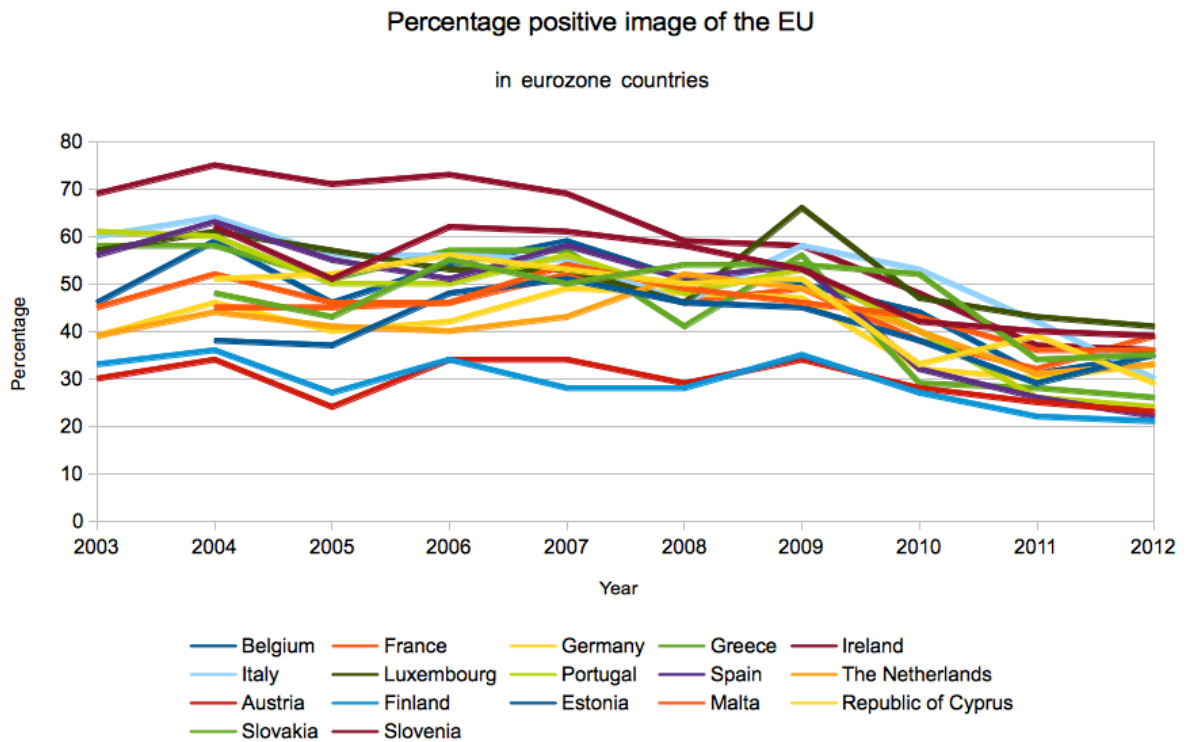


Figure 2

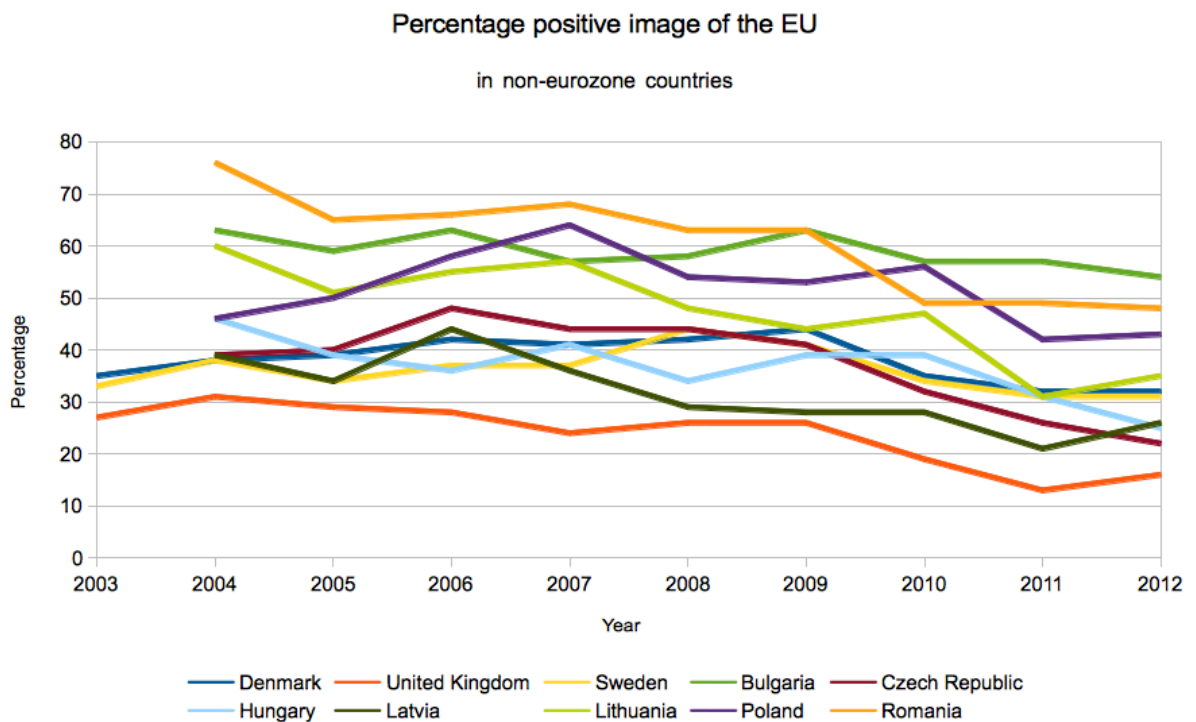
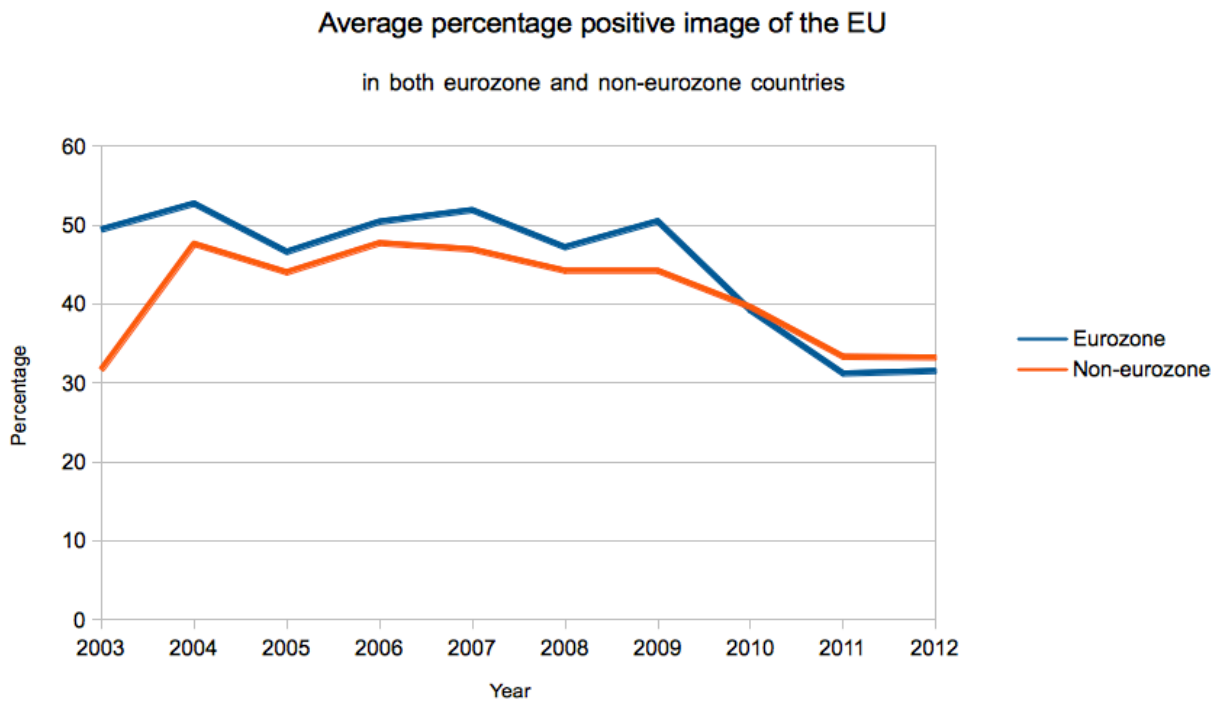


Figure 3



Charts based on the average of positive answers to the following question (2003-2012): ‘In general, does the European Union conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?’

Data available via EBISS, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showtable.cfm?keyID=2202&nationID=27,17,2,22,20,21,24,29,14,15,&startdate=2003.11&enddate=2012.05. Retrieved 9 June 2013.

Appendix G

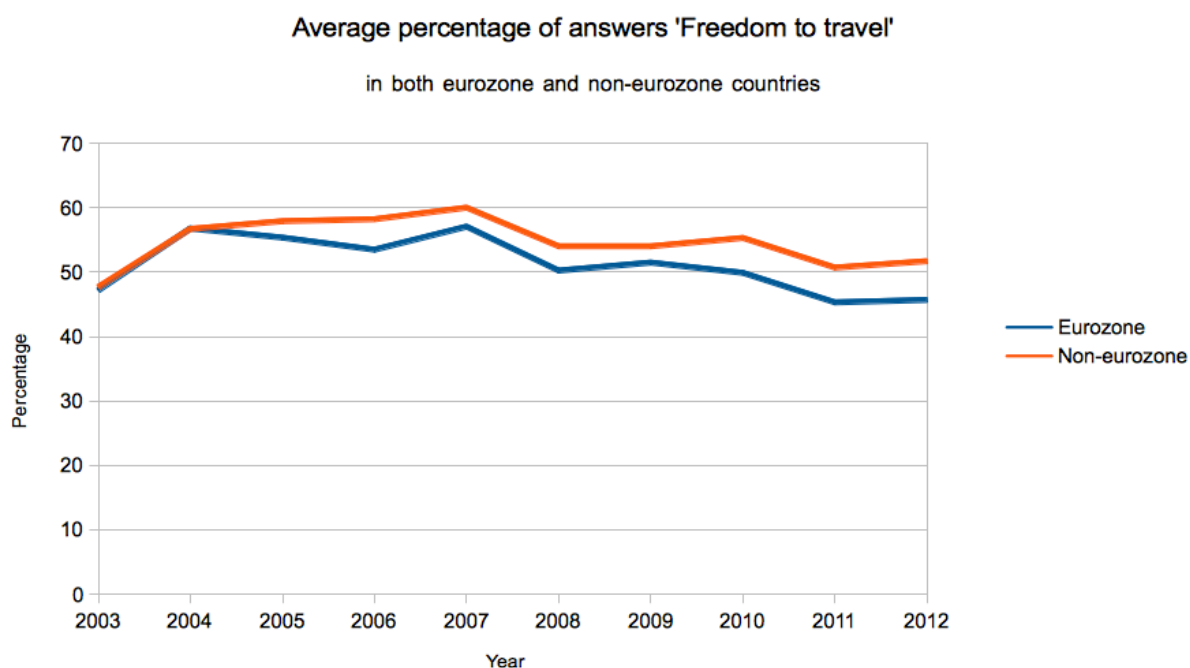


Chart based on the average of the answer 'Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU' to the following question (2003-2012): 'What does the European Union mean to you personally?'

Data available via EBISS, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showtable.cfm?keyID=2203&nationID=11,1,18,13,6,3,4,7,8,9,23,12,19,26,25,5,10,&startdate=2003.11&enddate=2012.05. Retrieved 9 June 2013.

Appendix H

Figure 1

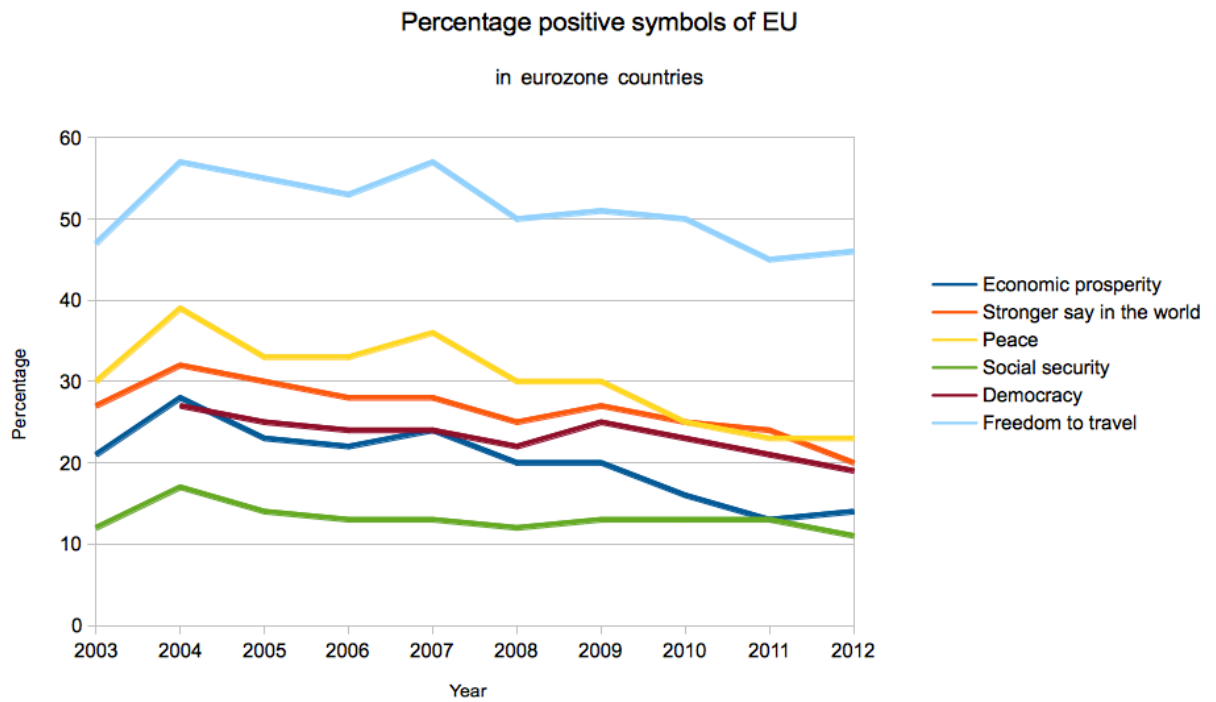
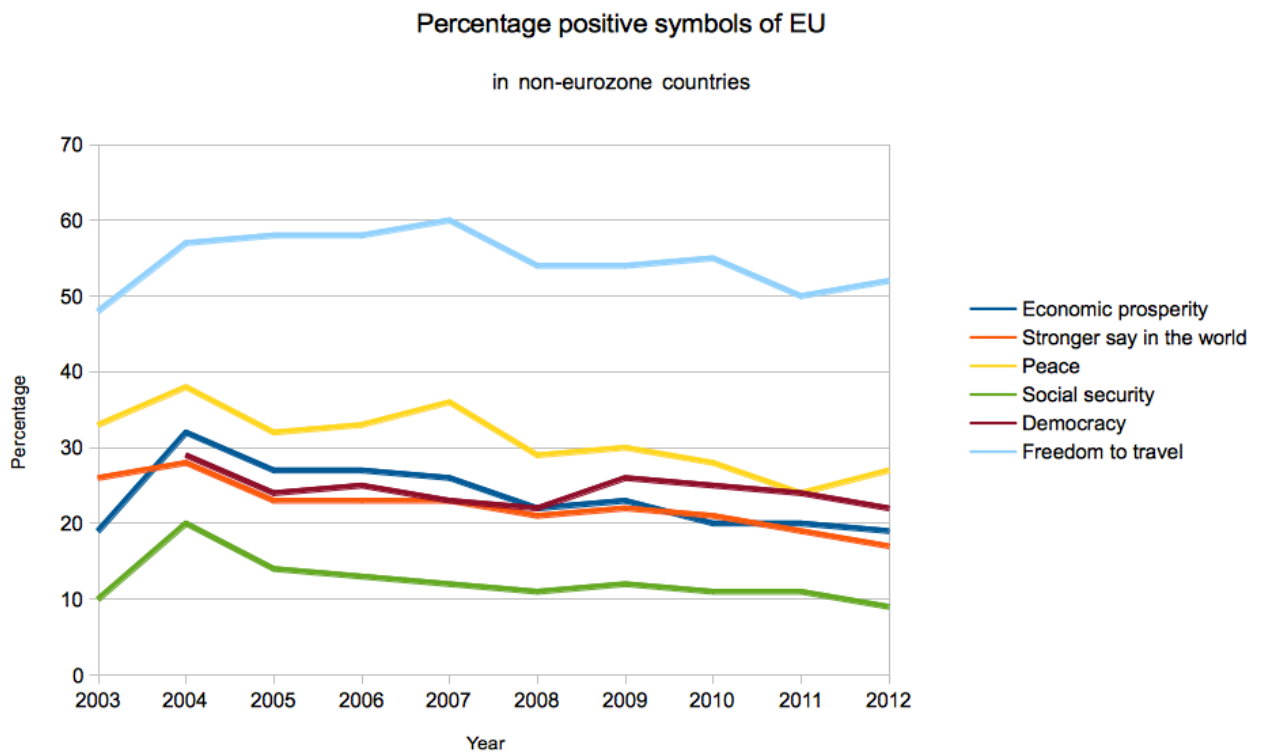
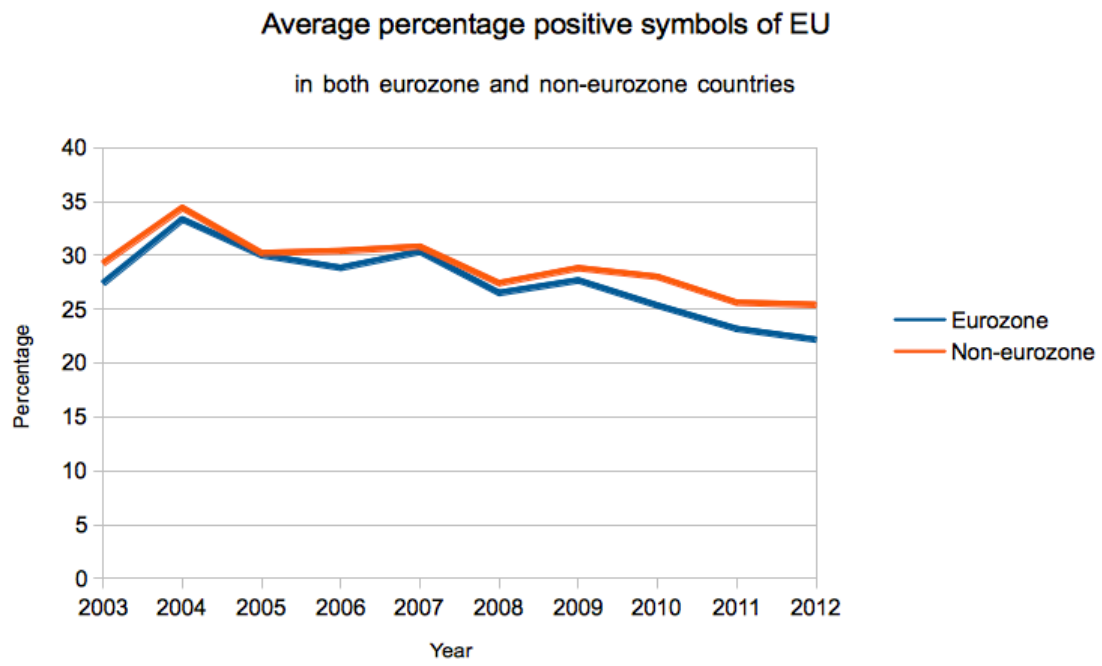


Figure 2



N.B. The percentages of individual categories are rounded to integers.

Figure 3



For source reference, see Appendix G (51).

Appendix I

Overview of English translations of Dutch quotations in this thesis.

Page number	Footnote	Translation
10	37	“You try to say something about a fish population in two pools, by taking a sample survey in one pool, and then only of the fish that jump out of the water.”
19	65	“[W]e understand the concerns of the Dutch. About the loss of sovereignty. About the rapidity of change, without the citizens. Feeling involved. About our financial contribution.”
21	72	“If the euro falls, the Union falls too.”
21	74	“Whether the common cultural history and the Judeo-Christian background are enough for a sustainable European identity is something that everyone can decide for themselves. But it is Bismarck that binds all Europeans these days.”
22	76	“The Dutch have very little in common with the euro and that is reflected in our language. Whereas the guilder inspired us to all kinds of affectionate nicknames, (...) the best the common European currency can do is ‘pleuro’. (...) The lack of nicknames tells us something about appreciation.”

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