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# NATIONAL AND SUPRANATIONAL IDENTITY IN CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND GLOBALIZATION

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In the last decade, there were many ideas about common European identity in the context of the development and reform of the European Union. Ideas are based on different elements of common identity whether they exist or not. However, it is not so easy to say that common European identity really exists. In this article, the author will try to show in some old and new member states of the European Union different components of national identity and in this framework he will later define the same elements in the system of the European Union as a political system *per se*. There are some elements of national identity, defined by different theories, also within the framework of the European Union. However, based on the Eurobarometer we can dismiss the idea of common European identity, which could be as intensive as the national one. The process of globalization will change the role of national identities and it will probably strengthen supranational identities. However, national identities will be still quite important because of their strong roots in society.



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## **INTRODUCTION**

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According to the process of creation and development of the European Union we are faced with the problem of shaping common supranational European identity. The process of shaping supranational identity is one of the most crucial factors of further development of the European Union. It works like link-

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age between different nations if it succeeds to become the real identity of all Europeans. On the other hand, national identities can cause even the destruction of the European Union in case of a serious crisis of European institutions and lack of democratic legitimacy.

Identity, not important of what kind, is the essence, which determines the action of an individual, state or supranational formation (if there is any possibility to talk about common identity in the framework of such a formation and not only about the convergence of separate identities bound to the representatives of national states). Here it is important not to overlook the role of identity in the development of the European Union as a supranational political system.

The question of common European identity is not only the question of homogenization of opinion and the feelings of European "citizens" but also a question of further development of the European Union. In this article we will define some of the basic characteristics of national identity and then we will try to find the same characteristics in the framework of the European Union. Our thesis is that common European identity in the sense of national identity does not exist. However, in the European Union the framework is not only the sum of member states' national identities. In the process of coexistence they are growing into quasi European identity. We can prove this with the case when everyone is talking about common European identity existence, but on the other hand this European identity breaks up into regional<sup>1</sup> or even national identities when some important difficulty occurs. The most obvious case in recent years was in the field of common European foreign and security policy that fell apart when the United States were searching for allies for the invasion of Iraq.

## **NATIONAL IDENTITY**

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We can say that identity is the composition of psychophysical characteristics upon which one individual differs from others and in consequence these characteristics make every individual unique. Individual identity is a combination of genetic predispositions and environmental influence. On one hand there is the geographical environment, with less (but not unimportant) influence and on the other hand there is the social environment where the individual has been raised and is living and which can very strongly influence the reactions of the individual in different situations (Mlinar, 1995: 69; Ule, 2000).

Before we start thinking about national identity, we have to pay some attention to social identity which is a broader framework bound to the process of socialization and development of individuals and not so much to one political entity – the

nation. Jenkins (1996: 5) in this context exposed reciprocity or interactionism in recognizing an individual's identity. Nobody is able to recognize oneself, as part of a group if one's reference group is not willing to recognize one's status within the group.

In the sense of the historical battle for survival and Hobbes' concept of war of all against all, we can say that group identity was the consequence of group hunting of big animals, or better, of the historical recognition that survival is much easier if individuals are united as a group. When the first communities (not necessarily political – in the beginning communities were created for easier and more successful survival) were created, a common identity was created as well. This identity made people in one group more similar among themselves and more different from other groups (Ule, 2000: 177-178).

Development from tribe to nation is connected with the appearance of different social-integrative factors, such as common religion, language (as a consequence of interpersonal communication), shaping of common cultural tradition and in the final phase of an individual's perception of themselves as members of a group. However, Makarovič (1995: 211-213) understands these integrative factors as necessary, but not sufficient conditions for the creation of a nation as the basis of a national conscience. Makarovič (1995: 212) argues that a nation is created when stratification takes place and an elite, which starts to lead the people, is formed. But we have to state that national identity is quite a recent phenomenon because it receives a more important role in the nineteenth century when it escalates into a mass phenomenon (Dunkerley et al., 2002: 61) known also as "the spring of nations".<sup>2</sup>

National identity can be defined in a number of ways or discussed in a number of aspects. On account of the turbulent situation in the world, it seems necessary to pay some attention to the geopolitical definition. In this framework, national identity represents relations between states or territories and includes concepts as threat, inferiority or superiority and is connected to ideas on joint action against third states or creation of foreign policy (Dijking, 1996: 11). This concept of national identity is accompanied by strong feelings of belonging to the group and separation into others and us; at the same time it strengthens interpersonal ties inside the group. This concept of national identity creation is connected to the states and formations with strong assimilation potential. Dijking (1996: 10) presented a case in the USA and the feeling of "being American"<sup>3</sup> in a New York suburb, compared to Ireland and the feeling of "being European" in a suburb of Dublin, which was much weaker than the former. According to this comparison we can say that the national identity of an American is much

stronger than that of an Irishman who recognized himself first as a member of the local community then of national state and finally also as a member of the European Union (Dijking, 1996: 10).

The next, much more important, concept of national identity is the definition by Adam Smith. This definition will also be used later in the article. As key factors Smith (1991: 14) exposed historical territory, common myths and historical memory, mass culture, common economy and common legal rights and obligations for all members.

Each of these factors can be divided into more components or concrete indicators such as common language, literature, symbolic institutions (in cultural as well as political and economic fields),<sup>4</sup> historical persons such as William Tell in Switzerland, the flag, the anthem and others that can arouse the feeling of interconnection and common belonging to the same group (in Slovenia such is the case of the Triglav Mountain and linden tree).

After a short theoretical discussion we can define some criteria we will use in our analysis of some old and new member states of the European Union and the existence of national identity in them for examining the existence of common European identity.

We will use the following criteria<sup>5</sup> (according to Smith, 1991: 14)

- Historical territory
- Common religion, mythology, ideology
- Common history
- Common culture
- Common language
- Economic unity
- Common political institutions
- Common political actions against third countries
- Common symbols

With these criteria we will try to define the status of (supra) national identity on the level of national states and on the level of the European Union. Because of the nature of national identity creation, it is not enough just to say that these criteria are present in the area of one state at the moment, but they must be recognizable through a longer time period.

Different authors have different lists of criteria and priorities, but it seems that many of them agree on the importance of languages in national identity creation. The most detailed explanation is in the book of Benedict Anderson (1998): *Imagined Communities*. He understands national identity as a product of language and sentiment of interconnection between people that never meet each other, but they know they

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exist and have something in common (ability to communicate in the same language). Similar is the argument of Brubaker (n.d.), despite its specific case of Eastern Europe, when he is talking about the role of language diversity and national consciousness in the area of the Habsburg Empire in the time of its decline. This social constructivism, based on the integrative role of language, where people recognize each other as members of the same community because of the same language that makes them able to understand each other, seems one of the most important approaches to national identity creation. Its validity can be found in the argument that national identity is a product of interpersonal relations and communication (Anderson, 1998). However, we should not mix identity with social role, even though we have different (more or less important) roles and different (more or less strong) identities.<sup>6</sup> In opposition to the "linguistic theory" are some ideas of Hobsbawm (1996: 256), where he stresses that there are many languages spoken by different nations and also nations that speak different languages. In this context he suggested quite a radical idea about the lowest denominator of Anderson's "imagined communities". Hobsbawm (1996: 265) argues that when someone can no longer feel oneself as a member of any other group of people he/she recognizes him/herself as a member of a nation. There is virtually nothing to do to belong to it and it is almost impossible to be thrown out. Most controversial is the argument that people create their national (group) identity through xenophobia or exclusion of others who never were and never will be able to become members of their nation or community (Hobsbawm, 1996: 265).<sup>7</sup>

Complementary to the defined criteria, there is also Južnič's (1981: 140-144) typology of the nation creation process. In this context Južnič (1981: 140-144) differentiates three basic ways of nation creation in relation with creation of national state. The first type is the so-called state-nation, where on a historically more or less unchanged territory common national identity was formed, and was connected to the existence of the state. The second type (nation-state) is opposite to the first one and in this case nation and national identity existed before the formation of state and citizenship. Južnič (1981: 142) distinguishes here two subtypes. On one hand, there are so-called separated nations where nation is divided between two or more states because of the subdivision of one state and on the other hand, there are nations without their own state creating history (experience). The third type of creating nation and national identity is the so-called "states without nation". This type is most common in states developed from former colonies where the nation had not yet built up. In this case Južnič

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(1981: 142) has defined two subtypes again. The first one is typical of colonized states when the nation-building tradition was stopped and it was impossible to develop it into a modern national state after decolonization. The second subtype are arbitrarily created states during colonialism, not taking into account the different ethnic, cultural, language and other specifications of people living in those areas. After decolonization, the existing borders with all their detriment concerning nation-building in this area stayed unchanged (Južnič, 1981: 142-143).

Different approaches described above more or less stress the so-called modernist approach to identity creation, where identity is connected with social structures (such as nation, ethnicity, social class, etc.). In this case, the specific social group is the core pillar of identity and individuals only take over the most acceptable identity that helps them to live in a specific relatively fixed environment (see Ule, 2000). In the case of the postmodernist approach, identity is much more the concern of independent individuals who can have many different (even opposing) and much more flexible identities. This is strongly connected to the process of globalization that with time-space compression enables faster and more frequent "interactions" between different "modernist" identities. Consequently, identities become more flexible and individuals are much more prone to adjust or even change their identity according to their environment. The ability of individuals to select among different identities enables them to live and work more effectively in different environments. A specific case can be connected with the so-called cosmopolite communitarism (see Lacroix, 2002: 197-198), where individuals can adopt the general framework and adjust or change their identity to the specifics of local environment.

Our randomly chosen four old and new member states (Estonia, Slovenia, France and Great Britain) of the European Union will be compared by the defined criteria with the European Union as some kind of quasi-independent supranational entity.

## COMPARISON AMONG CHOSEN STATES

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### Estonia

The area of the modern Estonia has been inhabited approximately since 7000BC. On this territory there were a number of small independent states with elected chiefs. In the Middle Ages, German crusaders were violently trying to Christianize the population (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1992-1994, Vol. 6: 335-338). Estonia was due to its geo-strategic position always

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the object of different occupations and divisions between stronger nations. This was a source of constant foreign cultural influence. Basic Estonian national identity stayed untouched only in the countryside, closed to the foreign cultural influence. It started to spread with national revival in the second half of the nineteenth century (Uniwin, 1999: 152-156). Estonia was an independent country from 1918 – 1939, but after that period came under the Soviet Union (Uniwin, 1999: 151). In 1991 Estonia became independent again. Only after 1991 Estonia has become capable of independent actions against third states. Before it was always part of a greater political system, where it had only limited autonomy. Despite violent assimilation in the time of Soviet supremacy and planned maintaining of economic underdevelopment, Estonia kept its own language and cultural heritage as a consequence of relative isolation from similar language groups and language difference from surrounding languages<sup>8</sup> (Uniwin, 1999: 164). This is one of the reasons why pressures of the Soviet Union and violent assimilation did not succeed in destroying Estonian national identity. In Estonia, despite the parliamentary system, the president of the state has the important role of being premier at the same time (see Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, 1994). Today their identity is stressed in their constitution (article 57) which states that the right to vote and be elected goes only to the citizens of Estonia (Constitution of R Estonia, 1994), excluding a large number of settled Russians, who came there at the time of the Soviet Union's supremacy, and strengthening the assimilation to Estonian culture.

## Slovenia

The Slovenian area was already settled in times before Christ, but South Slavs as direct progenitors came to this area around 500 AD. Despite quite late settlement, the Slavs created on this territory an independent and democratic political entity – Carantania – which was a sample for creating democratic systems even in some other states (Prunk, Ivanič, 1996: 18-27). We can define Carantania as a first attempt at creating an entity that could undertake common actions against third "states" in that area. However, administrative decay in the Middle Ages disabled the efficient creation of a Slovenian national identity (Prunk, Ivanič, 1996: 28-36) and consequently resulted in the inability of taking common actions against third states. Slovenian national identity is based on numerous old written sources such as "Brižinski spomeniki", but the *de facto* turning point in creating Slovenian national identity was the Reformation and Trubar's "Katekizem" and "Abecednik" (as the first book printed in Slovene in 1550). We must mention



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that Slovenes were one of the first nations reading the Bible in their own language (Prunk, Ivanič, 1996: 44-54). After the Middle Ages, Slovenes maintained their own identity through their literature (Prešeren, Cankar...). Literary works in Slovenian history played not only an important cultural, but also political role. Some of them became even symbols of Slovenian nationality. In the political field, the creation of national identity was bolstered by a political program, "zedinjena Slovenija", written in 1848, which was finally realized in 1991 with the proclamation of sovereign Slovenia. This resulted in the ability to take common actions against third states for the first time after Carantania. In times past there was partial autonomy that limited the capability of taking common actions against third states. The development of Slovenia was economically and politically marked by the long period of Habsburg supremacy and socialist Yugoslavia. In the framework of the Habsburg monarchy, Slovenia received a comparative economic advantage, and from former Yugoslavia a stronger feeling for social equity. A strong associative factor is also the Catholic religion and the presence of different natural wonders, such as Triglav Mountain, Bohinj Lake or the linden tree, which have the status of national symbols (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1992-1994, Vol. 17: 493-494). According to Južnič's typology of nation creation we can list Slovenia as a country where nationality was created before the state (government structure).

## France

Though the area of modern France was settled by Gauls already in times of ancient Rome, the name France has roots in the Middle Ages when Franks broke into the West Roman Empire and started to rule. However, common national identity of modern France started to develop in the sixteenth century. France is the most usual example of a state-nation system of creating national identity through the school and tax systems imposed by the central governing structure. The problem of creating national identity this way is the heterogeneity of population, which is still aware of its roots (Bretons, Corsicans). Because of this, there are ongoing disputes on the role of sub-national identities. Seton-Watson (1977: 42) classifies France as the so-called classical nation, where nationality and statehood were created simultaneously. In times of the French revolution religion was put aside while today, when there is lot of Muslim immigrants, religion is not a strong factor of national identity. However, we cannot forget that in the Middle Ages, France was Christian and for some years even the Pope's homeland. In time of medieval feudal decay it is



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not possible to talk about common actions against third states. However, there already were coalitions built on the principle of military power balance and needs (Seton-Watson, 1977: 61-65). The beginning of common actions against third states can be dated into a time of first colonial expansion and centralization of government in the sixteenth century (Seton-Watson, 1977: 65-66). A strong central political government and symbols of the French revolution connected to it, encouraged nationalism and the idea of the supremacy of French language over others. This still helps to maintain "homogeneity" in France, despite different separatist tensions. Also important is France's economic power (France is one of seven economically most affluent states in the world) and at the same time a nuclear and space power (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1992-1994, Vol. 7: 391-419). According to Južnič's (see Južnič, 1981: 140-144) typology of state development, we can classify France as a classical state-nation type, where national consciousness developed in the context of an already existing political entity.

## Great Britain

The British islands were settled already in the early Stone Age. The name Britain is rooted in the times of Julius Caesar's conquests. He founded tribes with the monarchic order and named the province *Britannia*. Britain was importantly marked by the dark Middle Ages, the plague, Viking invasions, imperialism, the loss of the American colonies in North America, and in recent times industrial revolution. The British tradition of evolutive legal and political praxis that created today's Great Britain has roots in documents such as 'Habeas Corpus' and 'Bill of Rights'. Great Britain is a parliamentary monarchy without a written constitution and is an important example of governing a system on the basis of a special state arrangement. Common actions against third states appeared quite late, which is connected with the decline of the British islands (see Seton-Watson, 1977: 43-49). The basis for a strong monarchy, capable of joint action against third states was the development of English language (Seton-Watson, 1977: 49). Until the end of the nineteenth century, common actions against third states were more or less limited to imperial conquests and relations among the colonies and the parent archipelago. Only after the Second World War and decolonization, colonial relations started to change into international. However, relations in the so-called Commonwealth were still more frequent compared to the rest of the world (see Repe, 1998). Despite English being the most important world language, British citizens have no special relation to it. The most important symbols are the royal family, their geo-strategic position as an island, their hi-

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story of the colonial superpower and their economic development. The most disintegrative factors in Great Britain are religion and ideas regarding increased autonomy for local entities such as Scotland and Wales (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1992-1994, Vol. 20: 42-159), which is a consequence of a strong active presence of influential regional identities (see Seton-Watson, 1977: 43-61). According to Južnič's typology, Great Britain, as does France, represents a classical case when nation was created within the framework of the political system.

We can assume that all four briefly described countries have autonomous state institutions and processes on a defined historical territory through a longer period of time.<sup>9</sup> In all four countries, we can find independent economies which, with the common European market and the processes of globalization, are losing their role. Religious tradition differs from country to country, but in all four we can recognize the role of Christianity. Cultural differences are connected to the geographic location and historical development of each nation. The most problematic element is language, where we can see great differences<sup>10</sup> among as within states. However, it is obvious that, especially in small countries, language was the most important factor of national identity creation, because there was no other specific integrative factor that could create the effect of the so-called imagined community (Anderson, 1998). In cases of greater states there were and still are also other factors, such as long historical memory, strong political system and long time of relatively sovereign control over territory.

## **THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS IDENTITY**

Dreams about a joint Europe are as old as Europe itself, but the main problem was in the way to realize these dreams (Pinterič, 2002: 415). From the historical perspective, Europe is a continent of conflicts and differences based on strong national feelings and the idea of one nation's supremacy over others. After the Second World War, there has been a completely new approach to the unification of the Old continent. The attempt to subjugate other nations under one head, was replaced by economic cooperation and creating networks of cooperation among states. This helped to suppress negative feelings at least on a formal level.

The most important characteristic of the creation of a common European identity is its top-down formation.<sup>11</sup> In fact, it is all about connecting economic interests of nation states and the spill-over effect, which has homogenized other policy fields as well. Here, we should not forget the role of the European institutional framework, the creation of different common European spaces (such as common administrative space) and *acquis communautaire*.

From a historical and cultural point of view, we can talk about some common characteristics of uniform European culture marked by Christianity, ancient Greek and Roman civilization and their achievements, ideas of French revolution and the experience of both world wars. On the other hand, Europe is divided by consequences of self-sufficient feudal units in the Middle Ages and nationalisms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Dunkerley et al., 2002: 110-116). According to this, we can say that the so-called common European identity is not only a concept to put people into some kind of common form based on an institutional framework, but this common identity really has some historical background. This background can be assumed as the basis for the creation of a common European identity in future by the bottom up method, when people recognize their roots and can feel they belong to a broader group (in this case to the European "quasi-nation"), especially in relation to non-European nations.

Linguistic diversity is one of the main barriers in the process of creating a common European identity. Language is one of the strongest factors in the national identity creation process. Anderson (1998) understands it as the basis for national identity creation. The European Union has many more languages than member states, if we are not afraid to recognize languages of different national minorities with strong national identity, as independent ones (Basques, the Welsh...). According to some data in the European Union, there are thirty-two nations and sixty-seven languages, without taking in account dialects (Borneman, Fowler in Dunkerley et al., 2002: 121). In this case, if we agree with Anderson's concept of imagined communities, we can recognize sixty-seven different (sub) national identities.

Some data on the existence of a common European identity can be found in the Eurobarometer European public opinion polls. Questions regarding the feeling of belonging to the European Union, the possibility of the existence of a common European cultural identity and the presence of a common European identity show quite a heterogenic picture among citizens of different member states and an outstanding lack of unity among Great Britain and continental Europe. A low level of European identity<sup>12</sup> and a diametrically opposite high level of national identity is characteristic of Great Britain, Scandinavian states and Greece. In accordance with this, it is hard to say that a common European identity exists (see Felfla, 2002: 505-507). Also surprising is the level of agreement on common cultural identity, because there is no European member state where at least half of the people could agree that a common European culture exists. In eight out of fifteen

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member states, more than half of the respondents think that there is no common European culture (see Ferfila, 2002: 507).

The same situation exists among European scientists and politicians who have many different views regarding a common European identity. It is noted that common identity is necessary, and national identities should be protected in some kind of middle ground between these two poles in the image of so-called "cosmopolite communitarism" (Lacroix, 2002: 197-198). Cosmopolite communitarism otherwise is a broader concept of understanding individual identity in the context of globalization, which is not directly connected to the European Union, but is usable also in this concrete case. In the case of the European use of this concept it means a high level of agreement among states on basic issues and values on one hand, and national specifics on the other hand (Lacroix, 2002: 201-203), which seems most similar to the modern situation in the European Union.

The process of creating a common European identity with a strong impact of institutional framework was even more specified with the establishment of common European citizenship<sup>13</sup> in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The formulation, stating that from the Maastricht Treaty on, citizens of every European Union member state are also citizens of the European Union, was written so awkwardly that it was necessary to amend it in the Amsterdam Treaty, where it was stressed that national citizenship still remains the basic citizenship (Weiler, 1999: 324).

Taking into account all the basic components of common European identity gives us quite a confused picture connected to the historical elements of common culture (Greek and Roman culture and Christian religion) versus the disintegrative "spring of nations" (when Europe, from self-sufficient feuds, became a puzzle of national states and numerous nationalisms, which in the first half of twentieth century escalated into the two bloodiest wars ever). After the Second World War we are witnesses of unifying tensions as the answer to fears of the next possible conflict, due to national interests.

According to the Eurobarometer public opinion polls (Eurobarometer 60, Autumn 2003), we can argue that at the moment, it is unrealistic to say that some kind of common European feeling exists among European nations. More or less, at the moment, the system revolves around different institutional mechanisms such as common institutional framework, common policies, European citizenship and how to create it. Here, we should bear in mind the role of the common European currency – Euro. It got the nickname "our money" quickly and, at the moment, it seems to be the most concrete inte-

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grative factor of the European Union and at the same time it seems to be also the greatest symbol of the unified European Union (Dunkerley et al., 2002: 118). However, it is important to note that all European Union member states are not automatically member states of the European Monetary Union and that they did not necessarily give up their national currency, despite being members of the European Monetary Union. Two other symbols of the European Union are the flag and anthem, which, with other elements, are trying to convince the world and even citizens of its own member states, that a common European identity does exist.

On the other hand, we can oppose the existence of a common European identity, especially when we take into consideration the common actions of concluded territory (with population) against third states. This is most obvious in the defense and foreign policy field, where European Union member states are far from unanimous. This was most recently obvious when the USA was searching for support to attack Iraq.<sup>14</sup>

No matter if we are talking about national or supranational identity, today we are not allowed to forget the impact of globalization. Different definitions of globalization give us different points of view. In our case, we will say that globalization is a process of time and space compression (see Larain, 1994: 150-154). In relation to national identities this means one can no longer be safe from more frequent interactions with other identities. It is obvious that there is much more possibility for mixing different cultures and their elements. In this sense we can say that Hobsbawm's (1996: 265) idea about protecting national identity with xenophobia can be verified, but that at the same time globalization is a process of overthrowing xenophobic barriers. Discussion on identity in conditions of globalization leads in several directions. We have already mentioned cosmopolitanism; the second one is pan-nationalism, followed by new local identities. In case of the European Union, pan-nationalism can be understood as so-called pan-Europeanism, which unites different units (nations) into a common political and cultural community on the basis of common characteristics. It can be understood almost as a federative model, trying to create a totally new (id)entity. On the other hand, there are few models of linking broader (supranational) and local identities. This "glocal" mix is quite similar to cosmopolitanism where supranational common characteristics are joined with characteristics of local identity. The main barrier for such "glocal" identity is in rare common elements on the supranational (global) level, if we skip world wars and colonialism, which are far from being a good basis for broader common identity.<sup>15</sup> However, different authors

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(see Lučić, 2003) agree that national identity will change its form and role in the process of globalization and strengthening of the European Union. On the other hand, except extremists, they also agree that the role of the national will not vanish and that it will stay important and recognizable (see also Larrain, 1994: 154-166).

In this context, it seems we should also understand the "real" concept of the common European identity as a flexible mix of different local, national and regional identities. In accordance with the cosmopolite communitarism theory we should understand common European identity as the core value system common to all nations of the European Union upgraded with a flexible part of identity based on preferences of every individual. This flexible part of identity will probably be strongly connected with the individual's national identity but at the same time it will be more flexible due to the individual's chances of changing the environment and adjusting to the habits of the new environment. This flexibility of individuals, connected with space-time compression (globalization) and absence of national borders in the European Union will weaken national identities over time and create a common European identity.

## **CONCLUSION**

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The relationship between national and supranational identity could be discussed without any remark on the influence of other factors. However, forgetting about the basic psychological statements on the identity of every individual, creation and changing of identity, would be at the very least incorrect. A system of shaping individual identity is, in the first place, strongly connected to the system of near social reference frameworks such as family, local community and, only in the context of these two reference groups does indirect conscience of belonging to a broader entity begin. This broader entity is usually called "nation", which differs from other similar entities by its common language, tradition, and lower or higher degree of openness towards other nations. Consciousness of belonging to a broader political entity (usually national state) is called national identity, which is, on one hand, collective (in the sense of existence of integrative factors which an individual recognizes as important for the existence and development of national identity) and on the other hand individual (in the sense of every individual's self-recognition of this identity).

In this article, based on randomly chosen old and new European Union member states, we tried to show that in the case of every chosen state, we could talk about special nation-



al identity differing from others by values of defined indicators of national identity. In the article, we find out that the problem is much more complex than it seems at first glance. In some states, there are strong subnational identities connected to the minorities (Bretons) and oppose the thesis on the existence of national states with a common national identity. On the other hand, there is the strong impact of a common history on the European continent connected to the influence of the Roman Empire and Christian religion in most European states, which interconnects nations even today. However, one must be aware that this analysis was to a great extent based on the modernistic approach to identity.

At the same time, we paid attention to the possible existence of a common European identity, which is often stressed by current politics. According to indicators of common (national) identity we can say that within the framework of the European Union, there exist at least partly common institutions, policies, history and tradition, a faith in common democratic values, symbols and religious foundations. In fact, the only thing that is far from being common is language. Despite these indicators speaking in favor of some kind of common European identity, public opinion polls in the European Union member states show quite a different picture, where there is no significant track of common European identity or rather, the sense of individual national identities is much stronger. As it was said before, this analysis is based on a modernistic approach to the concept of identity. In parts of the article where we were trying to think about common European identity through the postmodernistic approach we could find a much greater chance for the development of common European identity based on the common value system and more flexible identities connected to individuals and not to different social structures.

Is the main reason for this situation in the old biblical story about the Tower of Babylon, in the languages that became the main barrier to building it? Probably not. With regard to the importance of the thesis of individual socialization, it seems much more reasonable that European identity is just one of the identities of every individual. When we accept this, we also have to accept that there must be some kind of hierarchy of identities, where quickly adopted identities have a stronger impact than others and are usually connected to the local community. This identity is then followed by national and supranational identities.<sup>16</sup> It may be added that the process of a common European identity is, at best, fifty years old, when today's national identities have a history of one hundred-and-fifty to two hundred years. The third



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element of a national identity's strength is its former history. According to Eurobarometer data, countries with a longer and "more famous" history have a stronger national identity than younger nations.<sup>17</sup>

To conclude, it seems much more reasonable talking about the existence of this or other identity (especially common European identity) than talking about the presence of different elements of common identity at a certain level.

In the case of the European Union, the relation between institutional system and (supra) national identity can be understood as coexistence and reciprocal conditioning of both (institutional and identity) concepts. Much more common are situations where the state is created on the basis of national identity. On the other hand, there are political systems (usually quite centralized), which are trying to create a common identity through the common policies imposed on the (supra) national level.<sup>18</sup>

All these arguments are in favor of Žagar's (1998: 27) idea about the interweaving of different identities. But at the same time, a greater social problem arises when these interweaving identities are put into the context of globalization. In the case of the European Union we can see that effects of globalization and Europeanization will have long-term consequences concerning national identities and will probably create some kind of common European identity. We can say that the process of globalization will change (but not suppress) the role of national identities in relation to supranational and local ones. However, we will still be asking ourselves who and what we are, where we are from and where we are going to.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Regional refers to South Europe, Scandinavian states, British Isles, Central European states...

<sup>2</sup> Spring of nations is historical label for escalation of different nationalisms in European continent in 1848 connected to the February and March revolution.

<sup>3</sup> We have to be careful when talking about being American – we must not forget that America is the biggest melting pot and the only people who are allowed to call themselves Native Americans are Indians.

<sup>4</sup> National parliament, national bank, national gallery, museums, opera... the scope of institutions differs from state to state.

<sup>5</sup> We are aware that this list is far from complete and represents just the most common national identity criteria.

<sup>6</sup> Social role is what I do in my life; on the other hand, identity is answering the question of belonging and feeling sympathy with a specific group. In some cases role and identity can overlap.

<sup>7</sup> See also Ule, 2000: 177-178.

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<sup>8</sup> Estonian language is Ugrofinnic, and it was surrounded by Slavic languages which are very different.

<sup>9</sup> We have to notice that Slovenia and Estonia have a long tradition of nationality, but a really independent state is for both countries quite a new thing.

<sup>10</sup> English is a special branch of the German language group, French is one of the Romanic languages; Slovene is (South) Slavic and Estonian an Ugrofinnic language (Južnič, 1983).

<sup>11</sup> In this segment it is similar to the creation of French identity, which was created by central government with a common education system and some other policies.

<sup>12</sup> In Luxembourg 20% of the people consider themselves as Europeans in the first place and then Luxembourgian, in other states the percentage of people considering themselves as Europeans is much lower (See Ferfila, 2002: 506).

<sup>13</sup> For some critical reflections on this topic see also Cesarain and Fulbrook (ed.), 1996.

<sup>14</sup> See Antič, 2002: 14.

<sup>15</sup> For some more basic ways of identity development in the era of globalization see Lučić (2003).

<sup>16</sup> On multilevel of individual's identity and role of national and supranational identities see also Žagar, 1998: 27-33.

<sup>17</sup> See before: footnote 10: case Luxembourg.

<sup>18</sup> Such examples are France and the European Union.

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## Nacionalni i nadnacionalni identitet u kontekstu europske integracije i globalizacije

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U posljednjem desetljeću bilo je mnogo zamisli o zajedničkom europskom identitetu u kontekstu razvoja i reformi Europske unije. Te se zamisli zasnivaju na čimbenicima zajedničkog identiteta, postojali oni ili ne. Međutim, ne može se samo tako reći da zajednički europski identitet stvarno postoji. U ovom članku pisac će pokušati pokazati u nekim starim i novim zemljama članicama Europske unije različite sastavnice nacionalnog identiteta te će unutar tog okvira kasnije definirati iste sastavnice u sustavu Europske unije kao političkoga sustava *per se*. Neki elementi nacionalnog identiteta, definirani raznim teorijama, postoje i u okviru Europske unije. Ipak, na temelju eurobarometra možemo isključiti zamisao o zajedničkom europskom identitetu koji bi mogao biti tako jak poput nacionalnoga. Tijek globalizacije promijenit će ulogu nacionalnih identiteta te vjerojatno ojačati nadnacionalne identitete. No nacionalni identiteti bit će još uvijek dosta važni zbog svojih čvrstih korijena u društvu.

## Nationale und übernationale Identität im Kontext der europäischen Integrationen und der Globalisierung

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Im Laufe des letzten Jahrzehnts wurden viele Ideen über die gemeinsame europäische Identität im Kontext der Entwicklung und Reformierung der Europäischen Union vorgebracht. Diese Ideen gründen sich auf verschiedenen Faktoren der gemeinsamen Identität, ob es sie nun gibt oder

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nicht. Selbst hinsichtlich der gemeinsamen europäischen Identität kann man nicht so ohne weiteres sagen, ob sie tatsächlich auch existiert. In diesem Artikel möchte der Verfasser am Beispiel einiger alter und neuer EU-Mitgliedsstaaten die unterschiedlichen Bestandteile nationaler Identität aufzeigen und später in diesem Rahmen ebendiese Bestandteile innerhalb der EU als eines politischen Systems per se definieren. Einige Elemente nationaler Identität, wie sie gemäß verschiedenen Theorien definiert werden, existieren auch innerhalb der EU. Dennoch kann man aufgrund des Eurobarometers den Gedanken einer gemeinsamen europäischen Identität, die in ihrer Stärke einer nationalen Identität gleichkäme, ausschließen. Der Verlauf der Globalisierung wird die Rolle nationaler Identitäten verändern und wahrscheinlich übernationale Identitäten erstarken lassen. Nationale Identitäten werden wegen ihrer festen Verwurzelung in der Gesellschaft jedoch auch weiterhin von ziemlich großer Bedeutung sein.