



The relationship between national and European identification, and trust in EU institutions

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Summary

Trust in governance institutions is of crucial importance for the stability of democratic political regimes. Hence, explanations for decreases and fluctuations in trust in EU institutions have increasingly become the subject of academic and political discussion. Identification has been highlighted as an important explanation for variation in citizens' trust in EU institutions. Citizens with a stronger European identity are more likely to trust EU institutions because they do not just want to be governed competently; they also prefer that members of their own community provide this governance (Harteveld et al., 2013). Having a strong national identity, to the contrary, predicts lower levels of trust in the EU as this implies a gap between the community identified with and the governance level.

While these empirically observed antagonistic correlates with European and national identification match theoretical expectations and intuitions, this recurring observation provides a puzzle since we also observe that citizens most often identify as both national and European. Hence, the question is how a combined national and European identification relates to trust in EU institutions. To solve this puzzle, the IntUne Mass Survey 2009, which covers 16 EU member states, is used. It is shown that it is useful to distinguish between civic and cultural types of European and national identity to examine whether and to what extent trust in EU institutions is related to European and national identification. The analyses show that national and European identity coexist in varying constellations, yet most often respondents attribute the same meaning to national and European identification. The explanatory analyses show that the relationship between national and European identification and trust in EU institutions depends on the meaning one attributes to each group membership.

Since the end of WWII and with a boost in the 1990s, governance has increasingly become situated beyond the national level (Zürn, 2018). Particularly in Europe, we witnessed a dual move of authority to the supranational (EU) level on the one hand, and the subnational level on the other (Hooghe & Marks, 2001). This movement of competences, especially to the EU level, is also increasingly contested (Grande & Hutter, 2016; Hobolt & Wratil, 2015). Concerns are raised about the risk that moving competences and decision-making to higher governance levels could decrease the democratic legitimacy of policies if citizens do not perceive the authority of the institutions at these governance levels as legitimate. Such concerns become especially apparent when decision-making at the higher level addresses matters of high electoral salience (Ehin, 2008; Føllesdal, 2006; Moravcsik, 2002). As such, concerns about the legitimacy of the EU, as perceived by EU citizens, have grown alongside the expansion of the EU's competences (Cerutti, 2008).

As a reaction to these trends, scholarly attention to public opinion about the EU and its impact on EU integration increased (Hobolt & Wratil, 2015; Marks & Hooghe, 2009). Empirically, trust in EU institutions has often been studied in order to better understand why some Europeans perceive EU-level governance as more legitimate than others do (Harteveld et al., 2013; Wessels, 2009). Political trust expresses the belief – affective or rational – that one can rely on an institution because it operates according to one's normative expectations (Hetherington, 1998; Norris, 2011). As this closely links to the definition of perceived legitimacy as the “perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions.” (Suchman, 1995: 574), political trust is regularly used as a way to inquire individuals' perceptions of the legitimacy of a certain political institution or system of institutions.ⁱ The current contribution follows in this tradition.

Three main groups of explanations for variation in trust in EU institutions have been identified in the literature. Evidence is observed for both macro- and socio-economic explanations (Armingeon & Ceka, 2014; Ehrmann et al., 2013; Foster & Frieden, 2017; Harteveld et al., 2013; Kaltenthaler et al., 2010; Kumlin, 2009; Wessels, 2009), citizens are observed to use cues from the national level and extrapolate or compensate for their experiences with and attitudes about institutions on the national level, (Armingeon & Ceka, 2014; Arnold et al., 2012; Bücker & Kleiner, 2014; Carey & Burton, 2004; Harteveld et al., 2013; Kumlin, 2009; Obydenkova & Arpino, 2018; Wessels, 2009; Pannico, 2017), and both national and European identification are shown to explain trust in EU institutions (Foster & Frieden, 2017; Harteveld et al., 2013).

While the current study examines a broad range of explanations, its main contribution lays in the way in which it approaches the relationship between European and national identification, and citizens' trust in EU institutions. On the one hand, it has been observed that citizens with a stronger European identity are more likely to trust EU institutions because they do not only want to be governed competently; they also prefer that members of their own community provide this governance (Harteveld et al., 2013, p. 546). On the other hand, having a strong national identity predicts lower levels of trust in the EU as moving competences to the EU-level decreases the self-governance within the member state one identifies with, and as a result the likelihood that political institutions closely reflect one's normative expectations, values and beliefs.ⁱⁱ Yet, these opposing correlates with European and national identity regarding levels of trust in EU institutions provide a puzzle, since it is also observed that citizens most often combine both identifications (Bruter, 2005; Duchesne & Frogner, 2008; Risse, 2003; Westle & Buchheim, 2016). The guiding research question in this paper is therefore how this relationship between identification and trust in EU institutions can be understood, if we take into account that European and national identity coexist in citizens?

A first step to solving this puzzle is inquiring in which cases European identity and national identity are combined. Next, the paper will show how a combined national and European identification

is related to trust in EU institutions. First, to clarify the interplay between national and European identity, this paper integrates the meanings citizens attach to being part of their national (member state) community and the EU community into the analysis. Citizens (can) attribute civic and/or cultural meaning to being European and to being a national of one's country (Antonsich, 2012; Bruter, 2004; Kohn, 1944; Pichler, 2008). Identification with a community based on civic characteristics is more inclusive and has been expected to be less likely to clash with identification with other communities, than identification with a community based on common cultural traditions (Delanty, 2002; Habermas, 1992; 2011). Hence, the meaning citizens attach to the community they feel part of might explain why they have a solely national or European identity, or why they hold a dual identity. In contrast to these theoretical expectations, the analyses show that civic identification is not that more inclusive to other identifications and that cultural identification is not particularly exclusive. Rather, when respondents combine national and European identifications, they most often attribute the same meaning to both group memberships.

Second, the paper shows how the interplay between different types of European and national identification affects individuals' trust in EU institutions. It is observed that both civic and cultural European identification are significantly and positively related to trust in EU institutions. Respondents with a stronger cultural national identification tend to have less trust in EU institutions. Holding a civic national identity is not significantly related to trust in EU institutions. Specific combinations of national and European identification do not substantially moderate these relationships. Yet, the higher regression coefficients for civic and cultural European identification, compared to cultural national identification, suggest that European identity is a stronger driver of trust in EU institutions than national identity inhibits it.

With this focus, the paper aims to provide three contributions to the literature. First, the paper improves our understanding of the relationship between European identity and national identity by bringing in the meanings citizens attach to these identifications in a large N study in 16 EU member states. Second, the relationship between both European and national identity, and trust in EU institutions is empirically inquired. This scrutinizes the long-standing assumption that European identification is related to having more positive attitudes about the EU, while national identification relates to more negative attitudes. Third, the paper contributes to our understanding of variation between individuals' trust in EU institutions more broadly by including alternative explanations in the inquiry (rational utilitarian considerations and cueing from the national level).

To do so, the paper will first discuss the concept of European identity, its relationship to trust in EU institutions, and its interplay with national identity. Next, the relationship between national and European identity will be empirically investigated by integrating the cultural or civic meanings that the respondents of the IntUne Mass Survey 2009 (might) attach to being part of their national and EU community. Finally, the paper empirically explores the relationship between this interplay between European and national identity on the one hand, and trust in EU institutions on the other.

Studying European identity

Driven by the idea that European identity is an antecedent to citizens' attitudes about the EU and of key importance to the democratic legitimacy of the EU (Beetham and Lord, 1998; Habermas, 2011; Sigalas, 2010; Weiler, 1997), a vibrant field on the study of European identity developed (Checkel and Katzenstein, 2009; Risse, 2010). Roughly summarized by the words of Sigalas (2010), it is argued that "The introduction and extension of majoritarian democratic principles [to the EU level] presuppose a well-defined people who will recognize as legitimate the majority decisions. This is more likely to

happen if people perceive themselves as belonging to the same political collective” (p. 244). This feeling of belonging is captured by the concept ‘European identity’.

European identity is that aspect of an individual’s social identity that reflects a feeling of belonging to the EU community (Herrmann & Brewer, 2004; Risse, 2010). An individual who is a member of the group of EU citizens can be cognitively aware of this and attach positive emotional value to this group membership (Brewer, 2001; Tajfel, 1981). In that case, the individual has a European identity. This implies that for this individual, being a member of the group of EU citizens is perceived as part of one’s self. More precisely, processes of self-stereotyping take place when one identifies as a member of a group. These processes stimulate the internalization of the norms, values, goals and beliefs of the social group one identifies with (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Turner, 1982). This connection between the self and the group of EU citizens makes this group membership a point of reference to interpret the surrounding world, and to take a position in social relationships (Cinnirella, 1996; Tajfel, 1981).

Research on European identity can be divided into three subfields, respectively focussing on the development of European identity, its relationship with national identity, and the meanings citizens attribute to being European. The first group of studies showed how certain contexts, such as education or family, impact the development a European identity. For instance, it is shown that both cognitive and social learning opportunities about the EU are positively correlated to the strength of individuals’ European identity (Bergbauer, 2017; Kuhn, 2012; Verhaegen et al., 2013), and there is empirical evidence for an intergenerational transmission process of European identity from parents to their children (Quintelier, Verhaegen & Hooghe, 2014). Additionally, studies have shown how the wider societal context in which individuals live influences the development of a European identity. For instance, adolescents who grow up in a more Eurosceptic climate tend to have a weaker European identity (if any), and citizens who are more likely to benefit from EU integration tend to have a stronger European identity (Fligstein 2008; Verhaegen et al., 2013; Verhaegen et al., 2014).

In the second strand in the literature, a guiding question has been whether national and European identity can coexist within an individual, or whether they should be seen as antagonistic (Duchesne & Frogner, 1995). Westle and Buchheim (2016) provide an excellent overview of the development of this literature. Summarized, the expectation of a clash between national and European identity was the dominant view until the late 1990s, and is still voiced in some more recent works. The view of a clash between European and national identity originates from the conceptualization of both European and national identity as aspects of individuals’ social identity that reflect a feeling of belonging to a geographical political community. It is argued that even though social identity theorists have argued that various aspects such as gender identity, class identity, religious identity etc. are combined in individuals’ identity (e.g. Sen, 2006), European and national identity cannot coexist because these identifications are two different forms within the same category (Westle & Buchheim, 2016). Assuming that one can identify with only one geographical political community, a zero-sum relationship between both identities is expected (Kaelberer, 2004; Norris, 2011; Risse, 2003). From this point of view, attention has been drawn to citizens’ fear or anxiety of a loss of national identity due to EU integration (McLaren, 2002, 2004). This view among academics is in line with the view of the EU and European identity as a replacement of national identity and nationalistic aggression that could result from this (Westle & Buchheim, 2016).

More recently, national and European identity are usually seen as coexisting within individuals, as the result of empirical observations of a (statistically) positive relationship between national and European identity, and the incorporation of social psychological literature in the study of European identity (Calhoun, 1994; Citrin & Sides, 2004; Duchesne & Frogner, 1995; Risse, 2010). In most EU member states, the majority of citizens identify with both the EU and their country. This is observed in studies that used measures for national identity and European identity such as the so called ‘Moreno’-

question, which suggests a tension and hierarchy between these identities to respondents answering the question (e.g. Risse, 2003, and critiqued by Bruter, 2008), and in studies that use measures that do not prime such a tension to respondents (e.g. Bruter, 2005; Westle & Buccheim, 2016).

Yet, the mere fact that large shares of the European population combine European and national identifications, is not the full story. The question remains why some people develop dual identities, while others only have a national identity, only a European identity or do not identify with either of those. Westle and Buchheim (2016) answered this question by identifying a number of characteristics, attitudes and experiences that are shared by citizens that have a dual (national and European) identity, and which distinguish them from those citizens who do not have a dual identity. They observed that Europeans are more likely to have a dual identity than to have a solely national identity when they are more politically sophisticated, have travelled more within the EU, when they view EU membership as beneficial to them and their country, and when they live in a newer EU member state. Similarly, respondents are more likely to have a solely European identity, compared to a dual identity when they have more travel experience within the EU, view EU membership as beneficial and live in an older member state. Interestingly, these correlates strongly overlap with the correlates of the strength of citizens' European identity, independent of the strength of one's national identity (e.g. Fligstein, 2008). The current paper will further answer this question why some people have a dual national and European identity by looking at *how* European and national identity are combined, rather than *who* combines those identifications.

This inquiry will build on the third strand in the literature on European identity, which asks what meanings citizens (could) attribute to being part of the EU community. The term 'meaning' refers to the content attributed to being part of a social group (Huddy, 2001). Because of self-typicality and self-stereotyping, group members perceive that the characteristics they attribute to the group are also characteristics of their own, and they perceive a common fate (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tanti et al., 2011; Turner, 1982). This is the result of the internalization of the norms, values, goals and beliefs of the social group one identifies with. The meaning attributed to a group membership has been shown to be consequential for individuals' actions and attitudes towards the group. For instance, when one perceives a common project with shared social, economic and political goals to strive for and achieve in the future as characterising the group of Europeans, one is more cooperative towards other Europeans than when this group membership is centred around having a common heritage (La Barbera, Ferrara & Boza, 2014).

Both qualitative and quantitative, inductive and deductive studies have shown that citizens tend to attribute 'civic' and 'cultural' meanings to being part of the EU community (Delanty, 2002; Fligstein, Polyakova, & Sandholtz, 2012; Guglielmi & Vezzoni, 2016; Shore, 2004). The prevalence of these meanings has been observed in all EU member states (Antonisch, 2012; Bruter, 2004; Huyst, 2008; Pichler, 2008). Civic European identity is defined as the degree to which individuals feel part of a political community in which members share rights and duties (Bruter, 2004). Cultural European identity reflects the perception of a shared cultural heritage, shared beliefs, norms and traditions (Bruter, 2003; Wintle, 1996). These categories resemble those of ethnic versus civic identity in the literature on nationalism (Kohn, 1944). Hence, citizens are observed to attribute similar types of meanings to both identifications.

Interest in the meanings attributed to European identity is usually driven by the observation that different types of European identity can be triggered by different cues, and that they cause different attitudes and behaviours in specific situations (Huddy, 2001). For instance, civic and cultural European identities are observed to be influenced by different types of media content (Bruter, 2009). The current study, however, looks at how the meanings individuals attribute to being European or a member of their national community are related to the way in which national and European identity are combined

in individuals, and how this combination translates into varying levels of trust in EU institutions. This paper thus contributes to both the second and the third strands in the literature on European identity.

Combining European and national identity

Specific expectations about more and less likely combinations of civic and cultural, national and European identity can be derived from the normative and theoretical literature on European identity. At the centre of the normative debate is whether the emergence of cultural European identity, or rather a civic European identity is more desirable (Cerutti, 2008; Delanty, 2002; Habermas, 1992; 2011; Smith, 1992). Underlying these opposing views, however, is the shared expectation that a civic European identity is more likely to arise than a cultural one. On the one hand, the emergence of a cultural European identity is seen as less likely as it is not only hard to find a common history, culture or traditions that are shared by citizens in all EU member states, it is also hard to sustain in a community that regularly changes its geographical scope. The EU's past expansions and soon shrinking with Brexit, increases the difficulty to find common characteristics that are sufficiently specific to delineate the 'European culture' and at the same time adapt to changing constellations. This tension that a European identity needs to be "both distinctive and inclusive, differentiating yet assimilative" (Smith, 1992, p. 76) is argued to make it impossible to define a cultural European identity.

On the other hand, civic European identity has been brought forward as a solution to these problems, as it is based on the commitment between free and equal citizens to act according to the shared rules that structure a community (Habermas, 1992; 2011). It can be acquired by whoever makes this commitment. In this way, a civic European identity is much more inclusive and open to newcomers than a cultural European identity. Indeed, empirical accounts have observed the occurrence of both civic and cultural types of identification with the EU, and attaching civic meaning to being European seems to be more widespread (Antonisch, 2012; Bruter, 2003; 2004; Huyst, 2008; Jiménez et al., 2004; Pichler, 2008). Yet, a systematic study of how these types of European identification are combined with similar types of national identification is currently missing.

Further building on these logics and integrating work on national identification, it is expected for the combination of national and European identity that *individuals who identify with a cultural national community are less likely to also have a civic or cultural European identity (H1a)*. Similar descriptions have been made about cultural (often referred to as 'ethnic') national identity as for its European counterpart (Brubaker, 1997; Kohn, 1944). A cultural national identity is seen as rather exclusive as it is built around shared traditions, religion and is even defined in ethnic terms such as descent. It is a demarcation between the national community and others based on criteria to enter the community that are hard to fulfil for many outsiders. As identifying as European (either culturally or civically) means including those outsiders into one's sense of self, this would contradict such a perception of one's national community. The more inclusive characteristics of civic identification (both national and European), in contrast, lead to the expectation that *individuals with a solely civic national identity are more likely to identify with the EU as well (attributing civic and/or cultural meaning to it), compared to individuals with a solely cultural national identity (H1b)*. *The same is expected for individuals with a solely civic European identity. They expected to be more likely to also have a (civic and/or cultural) national identity, than individuals with a solely cultural European identity (H1c)* (Jiménez et al., 2004). Specifically, as a civic identification reflects a link to a political community, the coexistence of identification with multiple such communities is expected just as different jurisdictions coexist in a system of multilevel governance.

The interplay between European and national identity, and trust in EU institutions

After describing how individuals tend to (not) combine civic and cultural, European and national identity, this paper will investigate the relationship between these identifications and trust in EU institutions. Previous empirical work typically studied how the absence or presence of national and European identity is related to trust in EU institutions (Ehin, 2008; Foster & Frieden, 2017). Identifying with the EU is observed to be positively related to trust in EU institutions, while the opposite is observed for national identification. These observations correspond to the expectation that congruence between the political geographical community one identifies with and the level at which governance is placed, strengthen trust in institutions governing this community (Berg & Hjerm, 2010).

The underlying reasoning is that democratic institutions are to represent the community they govern by representing their general will, to act according to shared norms and values, and to deliver policy that respects the general interests of this people (Lipset, 1983; Newton & van Deth, 2010). Individuals' level of trust in institutions indicates to what extent an individual perceives this to be the case, as political trust expresses the belief – affective or rational – that one can rely on an institution because it operates according to one's normative expectations (Hetherington, 1998; Miller, 1974; Norris, 2011). In the case of the EU, this implies representing the general will, to act according to shared norms and values, and to deliver policy that respects the general interests of the 'European (EU) people'. When individuals identify as part of this EU community or European people, they are expected to feel represented and perceive that the institutions operate in accordance to their own norms and expectations, as identification with the EU implies perceiving shared norms, values, goals and beliefs with other EU citizens (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Beetham & Lord, 1998; Turner, 1982; Westle & Buccheim, 2016). Hence, individuals with a stronger European identity are more likely to have more trust in EU institutions. Put differently, when one identifies as part of an EU community, EU-level governance implies a feeling of self-governance (Cerutti, 2008; Hartevelde et al., 2013).

In contrast, individuals who do not share this feeling and have a strong identification with their country instead, are expected to have less trust in these EU institutions (Foster & Frieden, 2017; Hartevelde et al., 2013). They are expected to perceive EU-level governance at least partially as being ruled by outsiders, as not only the will and norms of their member state, but those of the whole EU are to be represented by EU institutions. Rather, national institutions are expected to be seen as a more reliable representation of the will, norms and interests of the national community.

The largest share of the literature on identity and trust in EU institutions referred to above, however, can be further developed in three ways. First, both implicitly and explicitly, this research often assumes European and national identification to be in an antagonistic relationship when theorizing and testing an opposite relationship between national identity and trust in EU institutions, compared to European identity and trust in EU institutions (Ehin, 2008). Second, most studies (but Hartevelde et al., 2013 is an exception) build on conceptualizations of identification that allow for gradations in strength of identifications, yet empirically study how the mere absence or presence of national and European identity is related to trust in EU institutions. Third, even if identification in relation to trust in EU institutions is sometimes studied as varying in strength, it has neither been studied as varying in meaning, nor in specific combinations between national and European identification.

The literature review on the relationship between national and European identity demonstrated that citizens often combine national and European identification (Westle & Buchheim, 2016). Both identities are expected to coexist in different constellations, depending on the meaning one attributes to each social group (Risse, 2010). The current paper therefore studies how this combination of identifications relates to individuals' trust in EU institutions by relying on the distinction between civic

and cultural forms of identification (Antonsich, 2012; Bruter, 2004). Building on the idea of congruence between the community identified with and the level at which governance is organized, it is indeed expected that any type of European identification will be positively related to trust in EU institutions, and that stronger national identifications would be related to lower levels of trust in EU institutions. Yet, the goal is to further inquire whether these relationships differ when specifying between civic and cultural types of identification.

Firstly, for both civic and cultural European identity, there are particular reasons to expect a relationship with trust in EU institutions. Berg and Hjerm (2010) studied this relationship on the national level in 18 European countries, and McLaren (2015) in the UK. They showed that citizens who attribute civic meaning to being part of their national community are more likely to trust their national political institutions, whereas they observe the opposite for citizens who attribute ethnic meaning to it. The authors interpret this result as supporting the idea that, while an ethnic or cultural identity reflects a thicker meaning attributed to membership of a national community, the meaning reflected in a civic national identity reflects adherence to procedures, rights, duties and agreements, which brings it closer to political institutions and their legitimacy and trustworthiness. Cultural identification rather contains characteristics that link citizens to their fellow citizens within a community (Lenard & Miller, 2018). It is argued that “the cultural or ethnic part of the national identity can be weak, but there can still be enough commonness to support functioning, legitimate institutions.” (Berg & Hjerm, 2010, p; 394). These observations link back to how the potential role of civic patriotism in the EU in the work of Habermas (1992; 2011) can be understood. Citizens with a civic European identity are expected to accept the institutional framework and the competences of the EU institutions and feel represented by these institutions because they are legal members of the EU community. Based on these theoretical and empirical accounts, it is expected that *individuals with a stronger civic European identity tend to have higher levels of trust in EU institutions (H2a)*.

Others have argued that a thicker cultural bond between members of a community will result in a stronger commitment to the political institutions governing this shared community than a civic bond. Smith (1995), for instance, argues that identification with a community sharing cultural traditions is required to evoke emotions that result in political loyalty and a belief in the right to territorial self-determination. Others argue that a combination of civic and cultural European identity is the basis for civic participation in the EU (Cerutti, 2008). While civic European identity is pivotal for citizens’ views on the importance of EU institutions, these institutions also need to make decisions that correspond to the deep-seated values, principles and overall goals the members of the EU community believe in. As these values, principles and goals are often inspired by the sense of a shared history and cultural beliefs, institutions need to embody this shared history and speak through shared and understood symbols. Linking to the definition of institutional trust used in this paper, the cultural aspect is seen as especially important for shaping citizens’ normative expectations about the EU. From this perspective follows the expectation that *individuals with a stronger cultural European identity tend to have higher levels of trust in EU institutions (H2b)*.

Secondly, the more exclusionary character of cultural identity described above, suggests that *the negative relationship between national identification and trust in EU institutions will be particularly strong when this national identity is linked to shared cultural traditions (H3)* (Foster & Frieden, 2017; Harteveld et al., 2013; Smith, 1995). As the civic characterization of a community is seen as more inclusive, it is expected that it is less likely that political institutions that govern and represent one’s national community, but also other member states, is perceived as at odds with one’s normative expectations about the functioning of governance.

Finally, this paper will explore how specific combinations of civic and cultural, national and European identifications relate to Europeans’ trust in EU institutions. It will be explored whether and

how the particular meaning one attributes to one's national identity moderates the relationship between European identification and trust in EU institutions.

Controlling for alternative explanations for trust in EU institutions

While the main contribution of this paper is to further inquire the relationship between identification and trust in EU institutions, this relationship will be put into perspective by setting it off against the two most established alternative explanations for variation in trust in EU institutions.

First, the role of rational utilitarian considerations will be taken into account. Within a democratic political system, citizens are not only expected to appreciate being represented, they are also expected to be sensitive to the outcomes they perceive to get from these institutions (Harteveld et al., 2013; Scharpf, 1999; Schmidt, 2013). This aspect links back to the definition of institutional trust in this paper as not only being an affective belief, but also a rational belief that one can rely on an organization to act in the interest of a community. In the context of the EU, performance can be evaluated as either beneficial or detrimental to oneself (egocentric), or to one's country as a whole (sociotropic) (Hooghe & Marks, 2005; Verhaegen et al., 2014). The rational utilitarian hypothesis that citizens who perceive EU membership to be more beneficial and who evaluate their individual economic situation or that of their country more positively will have more trust in EU institutions, is among the most tested and validated explanations for citizens' trust in EU institutions (Armingeon & Ceka, 2014; Arnold et al., 2012; Ehrmann et al., 2013; Foster & Frieden, 2017; Harteveld et al., 2013; Kaltenthaler et al., 2010; Kumlin, 2009; Wessels, 2009). This is not surprising, given that the observed drop in trust in the EU since the onset of the euro crisis has inspired many of those studies. Building on this broad literature, it is thus also here expected that individuals who perceive EU membership as more beneficial, will have more trust in EU institutions.

Second, citizens are observed to use cues from the national level and extrapolate or compensate for their experiences with and attitudes about national level institutions, when forming attitudes about the EU level (Armingeon & Ceka, 2014; Arnold et al., 2012; Bucker & Kleiner, 2014; Harteveld et al., 2013; Obydenkova & Arpino, 2018; Wessels, 2009). A positive relationship between trust in national political institutions and trust in EU institutions has been observed across EU member states and at varying points in time (yet, most studies took place in the 2000s). Three different causal mechanisms could explain this positive relationship. First, the proxy- or cognitive shortcut mechanism proposes that citizens' inexperience with the EU leads them to extrapolate their views about national institutions onto EU institutions (Anderson, 1998; Karp, Banducci, & Bowler, 2003). Armingeon and Ceka (2014) indeed observed that the positive relationship between trust in national institutions and EU institutions is weaker among more politically sophisticated citizens, who need to rely less on proxies rather than information and evaluations about the EU specifically. Second, it has been proposed that national and EU political trust result from a common source (Dellmuth & Tallberg, 2016; Harteveld et al., 2013). The exact nature of this source, however, is still debated. While Armingeon and Ceka (2014) propose that citizens in Europe became more disillusioned with politics in general during the recession and the euro crisisⁱⁱⁱ, Dellmuth & Tallberg (2016) and Harteveld et al. (2013) hypothesize about the role of interpersonal trust, building on the concept of moralistic trust, which means that citizens with high levels of trust do not discriminate between objects of their trust (Uslaner, 2002). Whether it is institutions at different levels or people, it is argued, they trust. Third, the fact that national representatives are active in EU institutions could create a spill-over of trust in national to the EU level (Anderson, 1998; Rohrschneider, 2002). In contrast to using trust in national institutions as a cognitive shortcut to compensate for a lack of information about the EU, awareness about the role of national institutions within the structures of the EU is expected to drive attitudinal congruence.

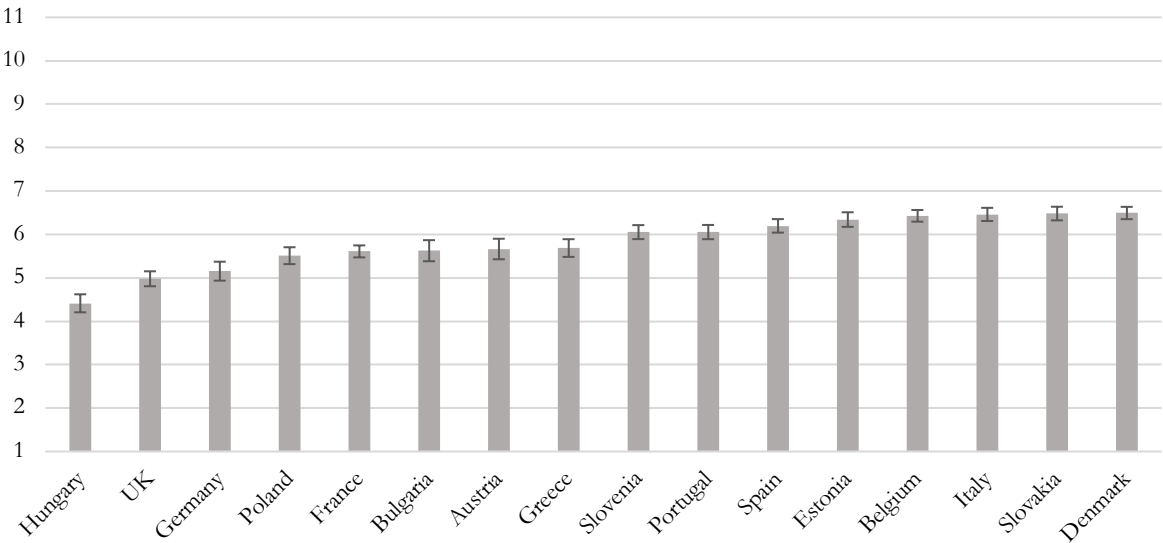
Data and methods

For the empirical analyses, data from the IntUne Mass Suvey 2009 (Cotta et al., 2009) is used. This dataset includes information on 15,594 respondents in 16 EU member states (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the UK). In all countries but Austria, about 1,000 interviews were completed. In Austria, 503 people were interviewed. Respondents were selected using random sampling methods that take geographical stratification into account. The analyses in this paper are carried out using the data on 11,871 respondents who have no missing values on any of the survey questions used in the analyses.^{iv} In 13 countries, the survey was done through computer-assisted telephone interviews, in Poland face-to-face interviews were carried out, and the Bulgarian and Slovakian research teams used paper and pencil surveys. The study was carried out between one and two months before the 2009 EP elections. While this is not very recent, the data are to date the most elaborate source of comparative data including both measures on trust in EU institutions and specifically civic and cultural national and European identification. Given the clustering of individuals in EU member states, two-level regression models with random intercepts are estimated to account for the clustering of the data.

Measurements

To measure trust in EU institutions, respondents were asked how much they personally trust the European Parliament and the European Commission. Responses varied between no trust at all (score 1) and complete trust (score 11). A sum scale (rescaled to range between 1 and 11) of these two survey items is used as the dependent variable in this paper and is referred to as ‘trust in EU institutions’. On average, respondents scored 5.83 (SD: 2.34) on trust in EU institutions. Figure 1 displays the mean levels of trust in EU institutions in the 16 included EU member states. The lowest level of trust is observed in Hungary (mean: 4.27; SD: 2.47) and the highest level is observed in Denmark (mean: 6.45; SD: 2.01).

Figure 1. Mean trust in EU institutions per member state



Source: IntUne Mass Suvey 2009. Notes: Mean values and 95 per cent confidence intervals are presented.

Respondents' identification with a civic or cultural European or national community is measured by a combination of survey questions. On the one hand, respondents were asked how attached they feel to their country and to Europe (ranging on a scale from 1 to 4). On the other hand, respondents were asked how important they find it to share European cultural traditions and to exercise citizens' rights like being active in EU politics in order to be European.^v The same questions were asked for the national level. The answers to these questions are combined by multiplication into measures of the extent to which one identifies as part of a cultural European community (mean 2.17; SD 0.99), a civic European community (mean 2.102; SD 0.99), a cultural national community (mean 2.94; SD 0.983) and a civic national community (mean 2.72; SD 1.02). These scales range between 1 and 4.

As a rational utilitarian alternative explanation for variation in respondents' trust in EU institutions, measures for perceived benefits of EU membership are included. Both the evaluation of the benefits and costs of EU membership to the respondent individually (egocentric evaluation), and to their member state (sociotropic evaluation) are included. Measures of *perceived* benefits or costs are included as it has been observed that perceived benefits are stronger predictors for citizens' attitudes about and identification with the EU than calculations about the objective (economic) impact of EU membership to individuals and member states (Hooghe & Marks, 2005; Verhaegen et al., 2014). Hence, respondents were asked whether they think that their country has on balance benefited, or not benefited, from EU membership (75% thinks their country benefited) and whether they think that people like them have on balance benefited from EU membership (54% thinks they benefited).

To test for the role of extrapolation of national-level attitudes, respondents' trust in national political institutions is included. Respondents' levels of trust in their national parliament and government are included in a sum scale (mean 5.37; SD 32.53, responses range between 1 and 11).

Finally, political interest, education level, age and gender are included as control variables. Political interest and education level are measures for cognitive mobilization (Arnold et al., 2012). It is shown that citizens who are cognitively more politically mobilized, which is expressed in their interest in politics and correlated to education level, are more supportive of EU integration and tend to develop stronger European identities (Díez Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001; Stoeckel, 2012). Their higher levels of awareness of the processes and consequences of EU integration are expected to make them feel less threatened by it, and benefit more from its policies (Inglehart, 1970; Janssen, 1991; Stoeckel, 2011).

Analyses

The first aim of this study is to explore whether and how individual citizens combine civic and cultural, national and European identifications. Table 1 describes how respondents who feel somewhat attached to the EU or who feel very attached to the EU (this is 67% of the respondents) perceive the EU community, compared to respondents who do not, or only weakly, feel attached the EU. It shows whether they identify with a civic community, a cultural community, or one that combines both cultural and civic meanings. This is also displayed for national identification (90% of the respondents feels somewhat or very attached to their country) and perceptions of a civic or cultural national community.

The table shows that for both the national- and the EU-level, respondents with a weak or no identification with a community, are more likely to attribute no meaning to this community than respondents with a stronger European or national identity. Most respondents who do identify with a community attribute both civic and cultural meaning to being part of this group.

Table 1. Meanings attributed to being part of the EU and national community

	No meaning	Civic only	Cultural only	Civic and cultural	Total N
No European identification	21.80%	14.70%	19.27%	44.23%	3,803
European identification	7.85%	10.42%	16.31%	65.42%	8,068
No national identification	14.49 %	16.53%	20.76%	48.22%	1,180
National identification	3.63%	6.87%	17.34%	72.15%	11,871

Source: IntUne Mass Suvey 2009. *Notes:* N=11,871.

In Table 2, it is presented how respondents combine these meanings of national and EU identification. While all possible combinations are observed, the majority of respondents combine European and national identity with varying kinds of meanings (58.77%). Also, when respondents do not have a dual identification, they more often only identify as part of their national community with civic, cultural or both meanings, than with a European community (resp. 28.04% and 3.87%). This is in line with various previous studies that concluded that citizens more often have a solely national identity or dual identity, than a solely European identity (Duchesne & Frogner, 2008; Risse, 2010). A small, but substantial part of the respondents (9.33%) does not identify with either the EU, nor their member state, or did not attribute any meaning to these identifications.

When looking at how national and European identity are combined, we see that H1a is refuted by the data. While a substantial proportion of respondents with a cultural national identification indeed does not combine this with any type of European identity (32%), the majority (68%) of respondents with a cultural national identity does combine it with a European identity. Conversely, among respondents with a civic national identification, 30 per cent does not combine this with any type of European identity while 70 per cent does. Hence, there is no substantial difference between both types of national identification. Moreover, if we look at the group of respondents who have a dual identity, more (93%) include a cultural national identity in their identification than a civic national identity (85%). The only indication that respondents with a cultural national identity might have a lower likelihood to also identify as part of the EU is when respondents who hold a civic national identity, but not a cultural national identity (only 6.2% of the sample), are compared to those who have a cultural national identity, but no civic national identity (15.62% of the sample). This comparison shows that more (64%) respondents with a solely civic national identity combine this identity with a European identity, than respondents with a solely cultural national identity (56%). Overall, inquiring hypothesis 1a through multiple perspectives leads to the conclusion that identifying as part of a culturally defined national community, which is argued to be more exclusive, does not seem to substantially decrease the likelihood of also identifying as part of the EU.

Table 2. Combinations of national and European identity

	Proportion of respondents
No meaning	9.33%
Only European identity	3.87%
Civic	0.80%
Cultural	1.12%
Civic + cultural	1.95%
Only national identity	28.04%
Civic	2.26%
Cultural	6.86%
Civic + cultural	18.92%
National and European identity	58.77%
Civic national identity + civic European identity	1.99%
Civic national identity + cultural European identity	0.35%
Civic national identity + cultural European identity + civic European identity	1.60%
Cultural national identity + civic European identity	0.60%
Cultural national identity + civic national identity + civic European identity	3.70%
Cultural national identity + cultural European identity	5.27%
Cultural national identity + cultural European identity + civic European identity	2.89%
Cultural national identity + civic national identity + cultural European identity	4.35%
Cultural national identity + civic national identity + cultural European identity + civic European identity	38.02%

Source: IntUne Mass Survey 2009. *Notes:* N=11,871.

The expectation (H1b) that a solely civic national identity is more likely to be combined with any kind of European identity than a solely cultural national identity, is confirmed by the data. Among the respondents with a civic national identity, but no cultural national identity, 64% also identifies with the EU. For respondents with a solely cultural national identity, only 56% combines this identification with any EU identification. For European identity, we do not observe such a clear pattern. While 89% of the respondents with only a civic European identity combines this with any type of national identity, the combination of a solely cultural European identity with any type of national identification is nearly as high (86%). Hence, H1c is not supported by the data. In sum, if anything is to be concluded from this, it is that civic national identification is more inclusive than cultural national identification. This resonates with the observation that the scholarly and public debate is mostly concerned about national identification not being compatible with European identification due to a perceived threat to one's national culture (Carey, 2002; McLaren, 2002; 2004).

Additionally, the data show that in many cases respondents combine a national and a European identity with the same meaning. For 38.02% of the respondents, both national and European identity are linked to sharing citizen rights and cultural traditions, 5.27% combines a cultural national identity with a cultural European identity, and 1.99% combines a civic European and a civic national identity. This observation was not anticipated by the literature on civic and cultural identification, yet it is in line with the recurrently observed positive correlation between strength of European and national identity.

The guiding research question in this paper asks how the relationship between identification and trust in EU institutions can be understood, if we take into account that European and national identity coexist in citizens. Table 3 presents the result of the two-level regression models (individuals are nested

within countries). The Null-model presents the variance in trust in EU institutions between individuals and between member states (respectively 4.906 and 0.332). The intra-class correlation is 6.3 per cent. This figure suggests that individual-level attitudes and characteristics will explain most of the variance in trust in EU institutions, yet multilevel modelling is applied given the clustered structure of the data.

Model I describes how civic and cultural national and European identification are related to trust in EU institutions. It is observed that the stronger respondents' civic or cultural European identity is, the more trust they tend to have in EU institutions (the effect sizes do not significantly differ; Wald-test, $p=0.196$). Hence, both hypotheses 2a and 2b are confirmed by the data, and equally so. Respondents with a stronger cultural national identity tend to have significantly less trust in EU institutions than those with a weaker cultural national identity, all other factors in the model being equal. The strength of respondents' civic national identification is not significantly related to their levels of trust in EU institutions. These observations also confirm what was theoretically expected. The negative relationship between national identification and trust in EU institutions is indeed particularly strong when this national identity is linked to shared cultural traditions (H3).

The specification of identification as civic and cultural types thus contributes to our understanding that trust in EU institutions is linked to both attachments to a civic and to a cultural European community. It is particularly attachments with a *cultural* national community that are linked to lower levels of trust in EU institutions. Interestingly, these findings are quite different from those observed by Berg and Hjerm (2010) in their study on the relationship between national identification and national political trust. Berg and Hjerm showed that Europeans who attribute civic meaning to being part of their national community are more likely to trust their national political institutions, while they observed the opposite for citizens who attribute ethnic meaning to it. When looking at those relationships on the EU-level, however, the current study shows that both civic and cultural identification coincide with higher levels of trust in EU institutions.^{vi}

Table 3. Multilevel regression model explaining trust in EU institutions

	Null-model	Model I
Civic European identity		0.248(0.026)***
Cultural European identity		0.187(0.025)***
Civic national identity		-0.011(0.022)
Cultural national identity		-0.127(0.022)***
Perceived personal benefit		0.323(0.040)***
Perceived country benefit		0.665(0.046)***
National political trust		0.498(0.007)***
Age		-0.005(0.001)***
Female		0.242(0.032)***
Education level (ref. college, university or other degree)		
No schooling		0.1350.227)
Primary education		-0.189(0.065)**
Basic secondary education		-0.084(0.057)
Vocational secondary education		-0.158(0.046)**
A-level secondary education		-0.025(0.046)
Still student		0.141(0.088)
Other qualification		0.139(0.185)
Political interest		0.017(0.019)
Intercept	5.807(0.154)***	2.096(0.161)***
Variance _{country-level}	0.332(0.119)	0.274(0.087)
Variance _{individual-level}	4.906(0.194)	2.634(0.211)

Source: IntUne Mass Suvey 2009. Notes: N_{Individual-level}=11,871; N_{Country-level}=16; ***p<0.001; **p<0.01; *p<0.05; Reported values are regression coefficients (B) with standard errors between parentheses.

Finally, it is explored how specific combinations of civic and cultural, national and European identifications relate to Europeans' trust in EU institutions. As Table 2 has indicated, many citizens combine national and European identifications. It is therefore tested whether and how the particular meaning one attributes to one's national identity affects the relationship between European identification and trust in EU institutions. These combinations are tested through the interaction effects presented in Table 4. The positive relationship between cultural and civic European identity and trust in EU institutions is significantly mitigated when these identifications are combined with a cultural national identification. Identifying with a civic national community only significantly mitigates the positive relationship between cultural European identification and trust in EU institutions.

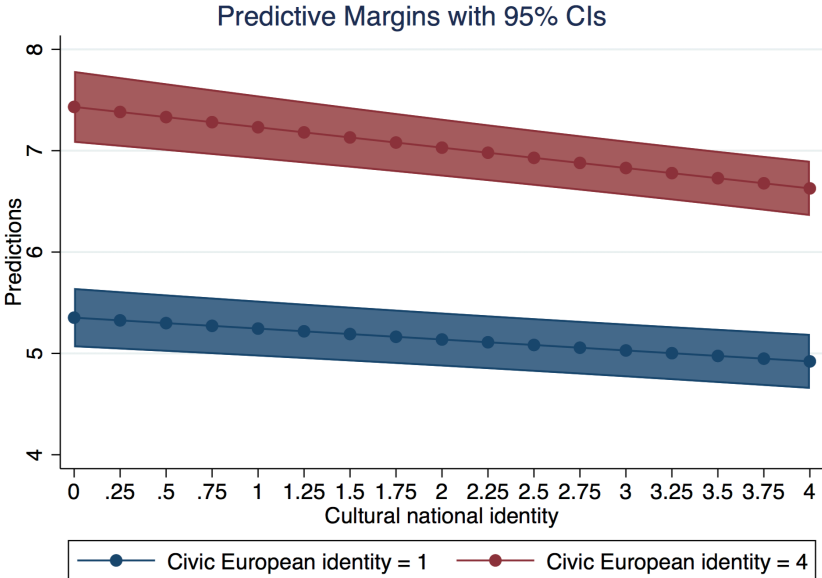
Table 4. Interaction effects national and European identification

	Interaction effect
Civic European identity*cultural national identity	-0.050(0.016)**
Cultural European identity*cultural national identity	-0.045(0.016)**
Civic European identity*civic national identity	-0.085(0.015)
Cultural European identity*civic national identity	-0.030(0.015)*

Source: IntUne Mass Suvey 2009. Notes: N_{Individual-level}=11,871; N_{Country-level}=16; ***p<0.001; **p<0.01; *p<0.05; Reported values are regression coefficients (B) with standard errors between parentheses; All variables included in Model I, Table 3 were included in the model.

Yet, the interaction effects are small in size as the mitigation of the relationship between European identity and trust in EU institutions only appears for respondents with a strong civic or cultural European identity. This is illustrated in Figure 2 for the strongest interaction effect. It is shown that the interaction effect only appears for those 11% of respondents with the strongest civic European identity.^{vii}

Figure 2. Interaction civic European identity and cultural national identity



Source: IntUne Mass Survey 2009. Notes: N_{individual-level}=11,871; N_{Country-level}=16.

It is therefore concluded that while the results hint that also in the interplay with European identification, cultural national identification is more influential than civic national identification, the direct relationship between types of identification and trust in EU institutions is much more substantial. These direct effects show, for instance, that when comparing two respondents with the same level of civic or cultural European identification of which one respondent also strongly identifies with a cultural national community and the other does not (strongly) identify with a cultural national community, the former is expected to have less trust in EU institutions than the latter. Yet, the coefficient of cultural national identity is smaller than those of civic and cultural European identity. In most cases, the total identification ‘package’ of a respondent will thus still be positively related to trust in EU institutions, when all else is kept equal.

Finally, the results for the alternative explanations for variation in trust in EU institutions can be interpreted (Table 3). Results are in line with most previous studies. Respondents who perceive EU membership as more beneficial tend to have more trust in EU institutions. Hence, we can conclude that while one may be more likely to feel represented by institutions aiming (or arguing) to represent a community congruent to the community one belongs to, citizens are also sensitive to the outcomes they perceive to get from these institutions. Also, a congruence between trust in national political institutions and EU institutions is observed in the data. Predicted marginal effects show that this is clearly the strongest relationship in the analysis. As such, this observation places the substantial significance of the findings into perspective. Still, it can be argued that it might be more relevant when a significant relationship is observed between attitudes and identifications that are more different from each other, than between two types of institutional trust.

CONCLUSIONS

The guiding research question in this paper was how the relationship between identification and trust in EU institutions can be understood, if we take into account that European and national identity coexist in citizens. The paper distinguished between civic and cultural identification to address this question in detail. This approach offered two types of contributions to the literature. First, the paper provides a systematic overview of how civic and cultural, national and European identity are combined. This complements previous qualitative and quantitative work in only a few countries, or which only focused on either European or national identity (Antonsich, 2012; Bruter, 2004; Pichler, 2008). Second, the paper unpacked the relationship between European and national identity, and trust in EU institutions by introducing civic and cultural types.

As a first step, descriptive analyses showed how individuals combine national and European identification. It is observed that a dual national and European identity is most prevalent, and many respondents (48.28%) attribute the same meaning to identifying as part of an EU community as to being part of their national community. These observations imply that the distinction between the inclusiveness of civic identification and the exclusiveness of cultural identification is less important than generally assumed in the literature. Hence, combining cultural national identification with cultural (or any) identification with the EU does not seem to give rise to problematic levels of conflicting norms, values and interests. This suggests that individuals hold a broader conception of what being part of a political geographical community means (sharing civic, cultural, or both types of characteristics) and apply this to the different communities they feel part of. This would be in line with the argument made by Duchesne and Frogner (2008) that many citizens identify with both the EU and their national community because they have a personal disposition to identify with collectives such as a European or a national community. In other words, the results suggest that individuals do not only have a general disposition to identify or not with geographical political communities, they also have broader views on what it means to be part of such communities. With this observation, the analyses further contradict the idea that national and European identity are in an antagonistic relationship because they are two types within the same category of social groups (Westle & Buchheim, 2016).

As a second step, it was inquired whether and to what extent different types and combinations of national and European identity are related to trust in EU institutions. The models also included indicators for utilitarian calculation and cue-taking from the national level. Against the background of these alternative explanations, identification is shown to be significantly related to trust in EU institutions. It was observed that civic and cultural European identification are to a similar extent positively related to trust in EU institutions. This observation suggests that the debate about which type of European identification should be strived for in order to strengthen the perceived legitimacy of the EU is less pressing than assumed. For national identity, however, it is shown that only the extent to which Europeans identify as part of a cultural national community is significantly related to lower levels of trust in EU institutions. This stark difference in the relationship between these types of national identity and trust in EU institutions highlights the importance of making this distinction. The observation nuances the previously observed detrimental effect of national identification on trust in EU institutions by highlighting that it strongly depends on the type of national identity. Third, tests of interaction effects showed that specific combinations of national and European identification do not substantially moderate these relationships. If anything would be concluded, it again is that particularly cultural national identity is related to lower levels of trust in EU institutions. Hence, while we observe that individuals combine European and national identity in specific ways, these combinations are not differently related to their trust in EU institutions in a different way than the sum of the individual relationship between these types of identification and trust in EU institutions.

These results suggest that if we want to better understand citizens' perceptions of legitimacy of EU integration and policy, scholars and practitioners should be especially attentive to the meanings Europeans attribute to their group memberships. For instance, the findings suggest that when campaigns related to EU membership and integration tap into cultural notions of national identity, the likelihood of influencing citizens' views about EU membership and integration will be higher than when these campaigns make references to civic aspects of one's national community. Elements in Brexit campaigns appealing to cultural conservatism and negative sentiments about multiculturalism could have done just that (Calhoun, 2016; Guerra, 2018; Hobolt, 2016). The data used in this study suggest that referring to civic aspects is even irrelevant for both campaigns in favour and against EU integration. For actors in favour of EU integration who aim to strengthen citizens' support for the EU through European identity building, however, the distinction between appealing to civic or cultural characteristics of an EU community is less relevant in the perspective of the research findings.

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ⁱ Despite this conventional approach, there is an ongoing debate about the link between political trust and perceived legitimacy (e.g. Grimes, 2006, 2008, Kaina, 2008). As such, trust is regarded here as an indicator for perceived legitimacy, rather than as an exact operationalization of the concept.

ⁱⁱ Also for other attitudes about EU integration such as support for EU integration and EU membership, a positive relationship with European identification and a negative relationship with national identification have been observed (e.g. Hobolt, 2016; Hooghe & Marks, 2005; McLaren, 2004).

ⁱⁱⁱ Armingeon and Ceka (2014) observed support for both the hypothesis about cue-taking or cognitive shortcuts, and for the hypothesis of a joint antecedent to trust in national and EU institutions. They argue that the common antecedent for national and EU political trust is (dis)satisfaction with policy. If citizens are (dis)satisfied and it is unclear to them from which level of governance this originates, this (dis)satisfaction reflects on trust on all political institutions that they assume can have produced this policy.

^{iv} Most of the used survey items have few missings. The loss of respondents is mainly due to a higher rate of ‘don’t know’-answers to the questions about the perceived benefits from EU membership.

^v Exact question wording: “People differ in what they think it means to be (NATIONALITY). In your view, how important is each of the following to be (NATIONALITY)? (Response options range from 1 (not at all important) to 4 (very important)).

- To share (NATIONALITY) cultural traditions.

- To exercise citizens’ rights, like being active in the politics of (COUNTRY).

And for being European, how important do you think each of the following is?

- To share European cultural traditions.

- To exercise citizens’ rights, like being active in politics of the European Union.”

^{vi} As a robustness test, the model of Berg and Hjerm was more closely replicated by only including variables about the EU-level (as they only included variables about the country level). When excluding national identifications and trust from the model, still a positive relationship between both civic and cultural European identity and trust in EU institutions is observed. Yet, in this analysis the effect size of civic European identity is significantly larger than that of cultural European identity ($b_{civic} = 0.104$; $b_{cultural} = 0.053$; $p < 0.05$). This is slightly more in line with the conclusions of Berg and Hjerm about the country level.

^{vii} As using weights in multilevel modelling is highly debated, the main analyses do not show weighted results (Carle, 2009; Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2006). When using the weighted sample, the main conclusions of the analyses hold, yet the interactions presented in Table 4 are not significant. Therefore, the overall – conservative – conclusion remains that it is the types of identification included in one’s European and national identity that explain variation in levels of trust in EU institutions rather than their combinations.