The potential of the Erasmus Programme: Assessing European Identity in Greek Erasmus Students

Master’s Thesis in International and European Relations

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Submitted for Examination: September 2015
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This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master’s level degree in Social Science (120 credits) with a major in Political Science and a specialization in International and European Relations.
“The diversity of cultures within the framework of a common European civilization, the attachment to common values and principles, the increasing convergence of attitudes to life, the awareness of having specific interests in common and the determination to take part in the construction of a United Europe, all give the European Identity its originality and its own dynamism.”

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Acknowledgments

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Lars Niklasson, for his constructive feedback and absorbing conversations we had in the early stages of the thesis writing process as well as for his kind words of encouragement throughout these eight months. His guidance enabled me in my research by showing me the way towards the case of Greek students.

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank the director of studies and coordinator of the master’s programme in International and European Relations, Per Jansson, for his stimulating feedback during the thesis proposal discussions, which enhanced my interest towards European identity but also for his general care and support throughout the two-year master’s programme.

Last but not least I would like to thank my mother, Eleni Lechouriti for her continuous support throughout my life, emotionally, economically and in every aspect imaginable but especially for her help during these past three months with the SPSS Statistics software. Without her I would not be where I am today.
Abstract

Since the establishment of the Erasmus exchange programme in 1987, its potential in various aspects has been evident. Many researches have been conducted regarding the Erasmus programme and its possible effects on European identity in higher education students, providing varying outcomes. Based on a survey of 200 Greek former Erasmus students, this thesis, examined the European identity among Greek students that have participated in the Programme proving its potential in terms of fostering European identity. The European identity in students was conceptualizes in terms of its spontaneous, civic and cultural aspects while its analysis was based on the theories of social constructivism and orientalism. Furthermore, the thesis conducted a correlation examination between the European identity levels of students and the destination country of their sojourn, in the hopes of establishing if the rising Euroscepticism in European countries affects the enrichment of the European identity in any way. However, the data largely reported against such a relationship.

Key words: European identity, Erasmus Programme, Euroscepticism, social constructivism, orientalism

Number of words: 23.538
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1. Introduction

Internationalization is a widespread phenomenon in Higher Education that has been achieved through various activities; one of these is the opportunity for mobility in higher education, which holds a key position for the notion of European identity. The European Union from the 1980s onwards actively pursued the internationalization of higher education as part of its policies for cooperation among the member states. The Erasmus programme provided an opportunity for collaboration between universities from the member states creating the right structures for the purpose of the enhancement of support in the European Union. Over the years, European mobility has been promoted as an experience affecting European identity in the higher education students, while it has been considered as a vital component of the European Union that provides the foundation not only for development on a personal level but in a European level as well.

European identity can be defined in terms of a "sense of identification amongst a given group of people between whom it comes to be felt both legitimate and plausibly that collectively binding decisions . . . should be taken" (as cited in Camia 2010, 109). Why though, is it important to ensure the presence of a European identity? To answer this question, we need to question ourselves regarding what the European Union tries to achieve. We can be sure that, European identity matters crucially for the future of the European Project and integration since its existence ensures the EU’s legitimacy. According to Checkel and Katzenstein (2009, 213), "where that sense of belonging is reacting to threats or challenges posed by others – Islamic fundamentalism, US unilateralism, East Asian competition - it often reveals a Europe that is perceived as a community of shared values"; while, "where that sense of belonging is challenged to create something on its own - in the EU’s constitutional process or in choosing between the continent's secular and religious heritages - Europe often reveals itself to be a community of strangers". It is therefore pivotal, to examine under what circumstances can a collective European identity prosper.

This thesis will evolve around the concepts of European identity and mobility. According to Pellerin-Carlin (2014, 73), “today’s EU is at the crossroads of several
crisis, amongst which are an economic crisis, ecologic crisis, and democratic crisis”. The youth is the future of the European Union; therefore European identity ‘enforcement tactics’ should be addressed primarily towards them especially through mobility programmes, which attracts a considerable attention. I find this imperative for the sustainable development of the European Union; hence I decided to proceed with this subject matter as a topic for my master thesis. Another reason behind my decision to examine the formation of a European identity in the context of the Erasmus Programme emerges from a more personal point of view; from my time as an Erasmus Student and my experience with the programme’s potential both for the EU and its member states and citizens.

Before proceeding with discussing the research topic, I need to address the issue of the difference between European and EU identities and the fact that they don’t mean the same thing. An individual might consider himself/herself European while showing no support for the European integration project. The European identity refers to the continent while the EU identity refers to the political union. I want to clarify that for the purposes of this paper the terms will be sued interchangeable without taking under consideration physical borders and geopolitics. European identity is conceptualized therefore in terms of the European political community and the ‘European continent’ of the 28 member states.

1.1 The thesis topic

My thesis research wishes to examine the European identity levels among Greek students that have participated in the Erasmus Programme and if their European identity correlates with the destination country of their sojourn. For this reason, I will employ a categorization between the destination countries based on Eurobarometer data, into Eurosceptic countries and Pro-European countries. Specifically, I will conduct a questionnaire to Greek former Erasmus students, in which I will try to determine if there is an attitudinal change after the Erasmus experience in terms of views and interest towards the EU. From there on, I will measure European identity in the participants of the research and establish its varying levels. Finally, I plan to determine the correlation, if any, between the European identity levels in its different
aspects and each subgroup of countries (i.e. Eurosceptic countries and Pro-European countries).

1.2 The thesis objectives

The aim of the following study is to get accustomed to the views of Greek youth, regarding European Union from various perspectives. Specifically, to investigate the impact of the Erasmus programme into shaping European identity with the intention as well of pinpointing the significance of the programme and the significance of the existence of a European identity overall.

1.3 The research problem

Does the Erasmus opportunity shapes or influences the formation of European identity among young Greek people? And is this process affected based on the Erasmus country destination?

1.4 The research questions

- Is there an attitudinal change in the Greek former Erasmus students after their sojourn and are there any differences based on gender?
- How is the European identity (spontaneous self – assessment, civic and cultural) shaped in the Greek former Erasmus students after their sojourn?
- Among the constituents of the civic and the cultural European identity, which are the most important for the Greek former Erasmus students and are there any differences based on gender?
- Is there a relationship between the European identity levels (Civic and Cultural aspects) and the Erasmus destination among Greek former Erasmus students?
  - Dependent Variable: European identity
  - Independent variable: Erasmus destination
  - Sample: Greek Students
The study, overall, shall be distributed into ten distinct parts, the first one being its introduction. The second part (chapter 2), will discuss epistemological and ontological considerations and will provide the departing theories. The third section (chapter 3), will introduce and define the concept of European identity, distinguishing its different aspects/components and will proceed by examining other, related to the theme of my thesis, works. The fourth part (chapter 4), will address the concepts of Euroscepticism and pro-European attitudes, analyzing them from various angles. It will also establish the division of the European member states in the respective groups of Eurosceptic and pro-European countries. The fifth part (chapter 5), will present the methodology used in this study highlighting at the same time the limitations / restrictions my choice of methods pose. The sixth part (chapter 6), will introduce the data results of the survey distributed online, presenting descriptive statistics aiming to provide insight regarding the effects of the Erasmus programme and incorporating the correlation tables, focusing on explaining the existence or non-existence of a relationship among Erasmus destination country and European identity levels. Finally, the discussion part (chapter 7) will ponder the theoretical approaches and literature review around the results, reaching some final remarks as part of my conclusion at the final part (chapter 8).

1.5 Originality and importance of the research topic

There have been many studies about European identity in relation with the Erasmus Programme but none to my knowledge based on Greek university students so far, rendering my research rather unprecedented for the issue at hand. Moreover the majority of the previous researches have focused in the general notion of European identity rather than categorizing it while, the correlation part of the research has never been examined before. Sigalas (2009) makes some statements regarding this aspect in his paper but only gives recommendation for future a full-scale research in order to shed more light in the possible connection among European identity and Eurosceptic / pro-European countries.
Regarding the importance of the sample selection, I must admit that I consider the Greek students to be a special ‘case’ since in Greece in the past few years the economic crisis has been predominant and has caused many consequences in varying levels. According to Clements et al. (2014, 262), “for the majority of Greek citizens, the EU was always positively associated with democracy, economic prosperity and a move away from the inherent weaknesses of national politics”. The handling of the Eurozone crisis though has changed this with Greece, a traditionally considered pro-European country changing attitudes in a dramatic rate. Looking on the Standard Eurobarometer data, we can see a plunging decrease in optimism, positive image and trust the public has towards the European Union.\footnote{Recent standard Eurobarometer: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm} It is important to acknowledge that the economic crisis has called for an urgent transformation but this transformation brought via austerity measures has created an unbearable situation for the Greek citizens, who turn against the European Union. In the second stage of the crisis, the sovereign debt crisis, EU institutions became more involved in dealing with the crisis and new institutions were created for that purpose (Serricchio et al. 2012, 61). This resulted in an increasing negative image towards the European Union and its institutions by the Greek public, who felt they were losing their sovereignty. The recent referendum happening in Greece, where it became evident that especially the youth is extremely dissatisfied with the situation in Greece and considers the European Union as its cause, supports this notion; especially since the financial crisis has had an extreme impact on the youth unemployment. According to Clements et al (2012, 247), we see though a paradox regarding the negative sentiment towards the EU; “there is a decline in general support for the EU and an increase in support for the Euro”. This can be explained by a general discontent along with a simultaneous feeling of acceptance for the positive aspects the union brings for the member states and their citizens. Nevertheless, no one can ignore the current situation in Greece or devaluate the importance of the last decade in the formation of the Greek minds.

Another important factor of the crisis is the employability problem and the ultimate choice of migration. This has affected the youth deeply, who either see migration as a burden and a necessary evil in order to survive or together with distrust towards the national institutions and the realization of no future sees a way out by seeking
opportunities in other European countries using their rights as European citizens. “The state is virtually bankrupt, sovereignty on fiscal policy has been lost, pensions and salaries have been severely reduced primarily in the public and also in the private sector resulting in a drastic deterioration of the economic conditions for the majority of the population” (Lyrintzis 2011, 16). As a result the Greek sample becomes a compelling case, especially since in a country like Greece “pressing family commitments and limited work opportunities in a familistic welfare regime under crisis” (Maroukis 2013, 234) can enhance the anger towards European Union and its institutions.

A concrete proof of the hard Euroscepticism that has been born in Greece in the recent years is the mainstreaming of radical right political parties, which has turned into a worrying and significant phenomenon. In the Greek elections of 2012 and 2015 the ‘Golden Dawn’, an extreme anti-EU far-right political party saw the first for its history positive results with a percentage of 6.9% and 6.3% respectively in the seats of the Hellenic parliament. This cannot only be seen as a result of domestic problems when “data on popular Euroscepticism make it clear that the EU has not been a victim of collateral damage in Greece, but one of the electorate’s main targets” (Verney 2015, 293).

“The crisis period appears to have been a game-changer, producing a sea-change in public opinion comparable only to that which occurred as a result of the dictatorship of 1967–1974. The result has been a widespread delegitimation of both domestic political institutions and the EU, with loss of confidence in both appearing to progress in parallel” (Verney 2015, 292). It is crucial therefore, to assess how the Greek Erasmus students, who have experienced firsthand certain benefits of the European citizenship, think regarding Europe and what are their European identity levels after a sojourn in regard to other established researches based on other nationalities, while keeping in mind the last decade of shortcomings in Greece due to the financial crisis and the birth of Euroscepticism.

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2 Information about the Political party of Golden Dawn: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Dawn_(political_party)#Election_results
2 Theoretical Assumptions

2.1 Epistemological and Ontological Considerations

In social science, there are many different ways to investigate a research topic. These different approaches can vary precisely on an ontological and an epistemological basis. Ontology is considered the study of what can be known; while epistemology is considered the study of how can we know something. Both terms (ontology and epistemology) originate from the Greek language, and specifically Ancient Greek, from the words «ὄν» and «ἐπιστήμη». In Modern Greek, the respective words are also «ον» meaning existence and «επιστήμη» meaning science; the kind of things that exist and knowing something very well.

As seen in Phiri’s text (2011), in summary ontology tries to investigate: (i) characteristics of the common sense physical and perceptual world; (ii) whether reality, as a phenomenon, is a mentally constructed entity; (iii) characteristics of the beings that populate the world; and (iv) whether the relationships between these beings or individuals are hidden and require significant inquiry. While, epistemology tries to answer: (i) what is the source of knowledge?; (ii) can knowledge of the world be gained?; (iii) can knowledge of reality be established by some empirical evidence?; (iv) can knowledge of reality be deduced from premises?; (v) what are the presuppositions of knowledge?; (vi) what are the methodological problems of knowledge?; (vii) what are the problems of validating truth?; and (viii) how can knowledge be communicated to other human beings?.

In general, research on European Identity has employed various methodological approaches, with methods used being based on both positivistic and interpretive epistemological considerations. There have been many researchers that have engaged identity variables in questionnaires, employing quantitative methods while many have used interviews deploying qualitative methods; both methods though have their limitations. Those using quantitative methods endorse a positivist epistemology and aspire to predict mass behaviors concerning the EU while those using qualitative methods endorse an interpretive epistemology and aspire to explain in depth these
issues. After careful consideration, I have decided to endorse a mixed methods research design with the purpose of triangulation, while presenting the related limitations. As a researcher I can comprehend what many others suggest about the abstractness of identity, but I consider hard facts of identity to be measurable as well.

According to Creswell (2003, 14), by “recognizing that all methods have limitations, researchers felt that biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods”. “The researcher can base the inquiry on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides an understanding of a research problem” (Creswell 2003, 18). Mixed methods researchers therefore, can use assumptions from both qualitative and quantitative research designs without having to restrict themselves only to one side of the epistemological / ontological spectrum. Due to financial and time restraints, though, this paper will involve only the findings of a quantitative research, while I will propose in the conclusions a plan for an additional qualitative method, complementary and supportive to this research.

2.2 Departing theories

2.2.1 Social Constructivism / Constructionism

A good basis from approaching the phenomenon of European identity is the theory of social constructivism / constructionism (terms used interchangeably). Social constructivism –thereafter– is a theory that lies on the assumption that i) identity is not attributed by default in human beings in birth or that ii) identity is not based on rational choices by human beings. Rather, identity in general and European to be specific is considered a construction through social interaction and social processes (Berger and Luckmann 1966). Identity therefore is a process that goes through many changes and can be directed towards multiple directions. Towards this direction the EU has created symbols in the same manner as national symbols, which are set to create a notion of pride to the citizens for their country. These include the European flag, the European passport, “a deliberately ‘European-only’ design for the euro banknotes”, the European anthem etc. (Bruter 2003, 1152). As Bruter states, “the implicit rationale of the efforts of European institutions to provide the European
Union with a comprehensive set of symbols was the idea that it would reinforce the citizens’ sense of belonging to their new political community. Even the Erasmus programme itself, as a policy tool, is considered by many one of the phenomena, which inspire European identity” (Bruter 2003, 1152), a conviction that will be examined through this research paper. This way the European Union manages to enhance the citizens’ identification with its political system and create a European common civic identity (more to the civic aspect of identity in the literature review).

The ideas behind social constructivism have been fundamental for the recent turn in the contemporary research on identity which dropped the understanding of identity as a prerogative of the individual or as function of one’s beliefs and feelings (as cited in Udrea 2011, 2). Using social constructivism I will discuss the outcomes of my research based on the civic aspect of the European identity and European Union’s ability to shape a sense of belonging to its political community. Furthermore, based on social constructivism theory and its views regarding the reshaping of identities, I will conduct the intended correlation of this research paper, which seeks to establish a possible relationship between European identity levels and the Erasmus destination country.

2.2.2 Orientalism

A second basis for a theoretical departure for this thesis is Orientalism. Edward Said (1979) discusses the concept of orientalism by defining the western based on the Eastern characteristics. Europe and the European citizens are identified based on all "those" non-Europeans; the idea of European identity is considered superior in comparison with all the non-European identities and cultures. Many scholars identify identity as a point of classification and difference to other identities. People experiencing a we-feeling or else a feeling of belonging to a group identify with it placing on the other side their perceived differences with other groups. In other words, “people’s perceptions of themselves are constructed in relation to elements of the outside world” (as cited in Udrea 2011, 4).
Europeans is said to have common cultural views, which enables them to define themselves and define other countries and other cultures as the different. Keeping this in mind Europeans “are likely to see an "us" versus "them" relation existing between themselves and people of different ethnicity or religion.” (Huntington 1993, 29) The European civilization therefore, is defined by its people and their common objectives and cultures, else said common identity. As Bruter (2003, 1150) supports, “identities involve how individuals perceive and define who are the “us” and therefore, by contrast, who are the “them”, or the out-groups that are implicitly excluded from a community. In turn, the definition of this symbolic boundary may help in the emergence, modification, or development of a new political identity, which have long been felt to be necessary for the legitimacy of newly created political communities.

The orient life, the life of people in non-European countries is predominantly considered ‘eccentric’; languages with different roots, odd calendars, seemingly perverse morality designates the need of that ‘other to exist’ in order for the opposite actors to define their identity. In this sense, the European identity is better perceived when regarded in opposition to other continental identities such as the American, Asian or African (Said 1979). Even though European identity is something hard to define or even understand, citizens are able to identify with it based on knowing who they are not instead of who they are. The other can be defined in many ways; it can be seen as the outside of Europe or even Europe itself versus the nation state. It has been stated though that European identities should not be conceptualized in zero-sum terms since the existence of European identity does not diminish the national one (Herrmann et al. 2004, 50). I shall employ the theory of orientalism in order to discuss the findings of my research regarding the cultural aspect of European identity (more to the cultural aspect of identity in the literature review).
3 European identity and the Erasmus programme

3.1 European identity

To begin with, I first need to define the concepts that I shall use in this research paper. Identity has various meanings; to clarify the concept of European identity I shall use the definition by H. Tajfel (1981, 63); "European identity is that part of the individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership".

The European collective identity has been discussed over the years by many scholars (Smith, Checkel and Katzenstein, Risse etc.). It is supported, that identity is not an exclusive notion, and that indeed one person can have multiple identities at the same time. According to Bruter (2008, 279), collective identities are based on civic and ethno-cultural components. The civic component is based on the acceptance of the same democratic values and care for human rights by people and the ethno – cultural component is based on common cultural aspects among people; European identity can be examined under the auspices of these two components. Individuals, through social interaction can form a European identity, since identity is a notion that can be constructed. This relates with the contact hypothesis, which prescribes that when someone from one social group (in-group) is socializing with someone from another group (out-group), following the right conditions their exchange and behavior to one another improve (Allport 1954 and Amir 1969). According to Wilson (2011, 1120), though, “there is an extensive psychological literature on the effects of personally moving across international borders on attitudes to other countries and their nationals which greatly complicates this basic hypothesis”.

The European Union has been employing different tactics for the creation and enhancement of the European identity of the European citizens which are supported from the departing theories, analyzed in the previous paragraphs. The European Union citizenship was first introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, which was signed in
1992 and has been in force since 1993.\(^3\) It was employed in order to enhance a European identity feeling among the citizens of the European Union (Jiménez Lobeira 2012). According to the Maastricht Treaty, citizenship, in general, is a political status of people being members of “a legally uniform (usually national) group of people, with attendant rights and duties” (Maas 2007, 2). The European Citizenship though, doesn’t grant citizens only with rights but also duties towards the Union. These rights and duties transform individuals into members of this Union regardless of their differences, enforcing thus the legitimacy of the Union. The reality is though that European citizenship has been ascribed to the citizens of the member states without that meaning they do have prior to this or that they will eventually form a European identity. “Some prominent contributors to democratic theory insist that the members of the citizenry must share some features unique to them, to the exclusion of others” (Follesdal 2014, 771). This according to theory can be shared beliefs regarding democratic values and political institutions that are collectively accepted by the citizens or the shared cultural characteristics, differentiating them from others. I have already analyzed the related theoretical approaches I will be using in this research paper for tackling the issue of identity. Now it is important to address the different components of the European identity.

3.2 Aspects of European identity

European identity and identity, in general, can be conceptualized in various ways. In the next paragraphs, I will analyze the aspects of the European identity, some of which, I plan to base my questionnaire on.

There are three main ways the European identity can be perceived. First, the cultural aspect of European identity can be understood based “on ethno – cultural factors, which are historically generated” (Ruiz Jiménez 2004, 3). Second, the instrumental aspect explores European identity in relation with the self-interests of the Europeans” (Ruiz Jiménez 2004, 3). Third, the civic perspective understands identity based on “a commitment to the shared values of the Union as expressed in its constituent documents” and a sense of belonging under common institutions (Ruiz Jiménez 2004, 3).

\(^3\) Information about the EU citizenship: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen)
Finally, Bruter (2003, 1156) identifies another aspect of identity, that being of a “spontaneous self-assessment” relating to both the civic and the cultural aspect of identity in the sense of feeling European and identifying with the EU. Below I will analyze the first three aspects in detail.

The cultural aspect of the European identity is based on the perception of the existence of a common cultural heritage, languages that share a common root, religion and emotional bonds. The history of the European Union has been a complex unification; it started with the aims of securing everlasting peace among the member states, following the catastrophic wars between neighboring countries. The member states have created their national identities through myths, history and shared cultural background. In the case of the European Union, this could be characterized as something difficult due to the expanded differentiation among the nations of the European Union that existed prior to their unification. Smith has argued though that, a united Europe “formed of pluralism” should be based on “the idea of branches sprouting from a common tree, where the starting point is not ethnicity but shared cultural traditions” (as cited in Örkény 2011, 36). Therefore, the cultural aspect should be observed through a symbiotic relationship between European identity and national identities (Örkény 2011, 37) and not as opposites. Indeed, European identity can coexist with national identity and they should not be perceived as exclusive, especially keeping in mind that European identity is perceived in terms of the ‘other’ with Europeans feeling closer to other Europeans rather than the rest civilizations. This notion will be further analyzed in the next paragraphs.

The instrumental aspect, which is based on the ‘calculated personal interests’ of the individual, these either being ‘economic or political’, is also an important aspect of European identity (Ruiz Jiménez 2004, 5). The importance of the instrumental aspect is evident since it recognizes that the EU can enhance European identity through intensifying the benefits of membership. Here, I should make clear that support and identity do not necessarily have to be accommodated under the same umbrella term. Although, the possibility of formation of European identity in the European individuals based on self-interest exists we shouldn’t rule out the possibility of just supportiveness due to the perceived gains.
Finally, the civic aspect of European identity is considered to be based on the commitment to the common institutions and on the existence of a sense of being a true member and citizen of the European Union. By civic identity, Bruter (2003, 1155) means “the degree to which they feel that they are citizens of a European political system, whose rules, laws, and rights have an influence on their daily life”. In the civic aspect of the identity we can find a connection with the European citizenship. As Twist (2006, 6) supports civic identity involves a group of individuals rationally united through the aspect of the European citizenship enshrined in the Treaty on European Union.

3.3 Factors Affecting Identity

In this research, I shall be examining the effect the Erasmus country of destination has on students’ European identity levels. In reality though, there are many other factors that alter European identity. From participation time in the Union, where people that originate from countries that have been members of the EU for longer periods of time feel more European; to national politics and national governments and the way they affect via their actions on a plethora of issues on how positive or negative citizens are towards the EU. Among others, differences based on geopolitics, with countries in the North not having the same interest towards participation in the EU and new phenomena such as labor market, unemployment, economy, knowledge and technology alter significantly the existing perceived European identity.

3.4 European identity and National Identity

As discussed previously European identity and National identity should be considered interchangeable and not individually since both identities can exist at the same time, and the European identity can be considered to originate from national identities (Risse 2003). Keeping this in mind, a question arises regarding certain national characteristics that divide Europeans instead of bringing them together. In the opposite direction, many have treated European identity as a notion that creates tension along with the national identity. The view though, that the European Union is
an abstract, opaque, “hard to define”, construction makes it seem highly unlikely that European citizens develop a European identity in the same way as a national one (Oborune 2013, 187). But it should not be forgotten that the instrumental aspect could be considered as the one that empowers the European Union rather than the national level in this constant battle. And the fact that European Union is an opaque construction that does not necessarily mean that the European Union cannot enable a common identity through policies such as the ones discussed previously. According to Örkény (2011, 57), “the process of unification has opened a new phase of cooperation among nations and has attained significant success in terms of efficiency, various joint development programs, and reducing inequalities among nations and regions”. European Union must face the challenges ahead and focus on enhancing active policies towards a common European identity goal.

3.5 Erasmus Programme as a Policy Instrument

The Erasmus Programme is a policy tool of the European Union and specifically the European Commission. It has served over the years many different purposes. In the beginning of its creation European policy-makers recognized the potential of education as a means of fostering the ties between the institutions and the population (Keating 2009, 135) through the formation of a common European identity among European citizens, as a means of supporting the legitimacy of the European Union. But after the 1990 it has been claimed that the globalization of education changed the main purpose of the Erasmus Programme making it seem mainly as an economic commodity (Walkenhorst 2008). The Commission launched various mobility programmes aiming at university education but also vocational training along with programmes based on non-formal education, such as the ‘youth in action’ programme. The Erasmus/LLP programme was the previous higher education focused programme before the birth of the Erasmus+ programme in 2014.4 Both the old and the new programme concerns students receiving financial aid to spend a semester up to a year in a foreign European institution, studying, living and experiencing a different culture, with the assurance that upon their return home the foreign university courses they

4 Erasmus+ EU programme for education, training, youth and sport: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
completed there would contribute to a degree to their home institutions. According to statistics provided by the European Commission more than 3 million students have benefitted from EU Erasmus grants since the exchange scheme’s launch in 1987. From 2014 onwards the Erasmus Programme changed its face. It was signed on the 11th of December 2013, as a framework programme including all current EU’s schemes for education, training youth and sport. The Erasmus Programme as mentioned previously has served and will continue to serve many purposes; other than promoting European identity or supporting the economy through creating competitive employability, it can also serve other functions, such as the promotion of the learning of foreign languages and awareness of other European cultures, the access of students to specialist knowledge unavailable in their own countries, or even act as a symbol of European cooperation.

Before proceeding with the discussion about the relationship between the Erasmus Programme and European identity, I should first embark upon a further understanding of the Erasmus programme objectives. What is Erasmus for and what defines its success? First I shall quote the Council decision of 1987 stating the official objectives:

The objectives of the ERASMUS programme shall be as follows: (i) to achieve a significant increase in the number of students...spending an integrated period of study in another Member State, in order that the Community may draw upon an adequate pool of manpower with first-hand experience of economic and social aspects of other Member States…; (iv) to strengthen the interaction between citizens in different Member States with a view to consolidating the concept of a People’s Europe; (v) to ensure the developments of a pool of graduates with direct experience of intra-Community cooperation, thereby creating the basis upon which intensified cooperation in the economic and social sectors can develop at the Community level. (Original Council decision, as cited in Sigalas 2009, 8).

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Since its establishment in 1987, the Erasmus programme has been presented as an agency for achieving various goals. From creating a European consciousness and identity to the people participating in the programme, to creating opportunities for future careers, intellectual and personal development for the participants and creating the environment where skills and technology can flourish. The European identity and the economic part are the most discussed though with European identity being contested by various researchers as we shall see in the next paragraphs and the economic aspect being most prominent in official mission statements (Papatsiba 2005). Evaluating the success of the Erasmus programme consequently, is a difficult task especially when it has so many different and varying objectives. “Whether Erasmus achieves an objective may not be the only possible definition of success, but it is one of several grounds on which the programme can legitimately be evaluated” (Wilson 2011, 8).

3.6 The relationship between the Erasmus programme and the European Identity

It has been hypothesized by many that Erasmus students by living together develop a supranational European identity based on “the popular assumption that personal contact with people of other nationalities can improve international relations and facilitate political integration” (Sigalas 2009, 1). However, many recent studies have been concluded with different results in the terms of what the actual effect the Erasmus exchange programme has on European identity. Studies like these, which will be analyzed in the next paragraphs, condemn the prospect of the Erasmus programme in the formation of a collective European identity by supporting that mobility does not necessarily have any effect on the students and mainly that the programme is ‘preaching to the converted’ (Kuhn 2012, 995). According to these scholars, the different effects transnational mobility has across education groups are not on an identity formation level rather than on other aspects, such as language learning. University students are likely to be already European-minded and prone towards a common European identity in contrast with lower educated people, where the exchange could have a greater impact upon as far as creating or fostering European identity. Research has suggested that the younger and the more educated an
individual is, the more likely he/she is to support European integration and to have a European identity (Kuhn 2012). Education and age can be considered therefore as immediate facilitators of European Identity, while other categorical labels such as gender, class, nationality etc. might hold their own importance in shaping identities as well.

3.7 Existing research on the Erasmus Programme and European identity

Many kinds of research have been conducted until now in this topic. Some have followed qualitative methods and others quantitative methods. Authors of qualitative researches support that quantitative data are not ideal to measure identity due to its abstract nature. On the other hand, authors of quantitative studies support that “quantitative data can point to broader patterns of identity change that cannot be detected in small-n studies” (Kuhn 2012, 996). Finally, others such as Bruter (2008) argue that the best is to combine different kinds of research and methodology in order to reach the most accurate results in an efficient way.

Continuing on the already existing research on the relationship between exchange through the Erasmus programme and European identity we see that opinions vary. King and Ruiz-Gelices in 2003 conducted research among 425 students and graduates from the University of Sussex who had spent a year at a European university. They found that these people were significantly more prone to a European feeling of belonging while their control students and graduates sample from the same University that had not participated in the Erasmus Programme did not produce the same results. Sigalas’ (2009) findings, on the other hand, reached considerably different outcomes. He conducted a panel design two-wave longitudinal survey in two samples; British students going abroad for their sojourn and European students doing their Erasmus semester in the United Kingdom. He also chose to have a control sample of students of British universities that did not participate in the Erasmus Programme in the academic year of 2003/2004. His research produced mixed results on the European

6 King, Russell, and Enric Ruiz-Gelices: 'International Student Migration And The European ‘Year Abroad’: Effects On European Identity And Subsequent Migration Behaviour’ (2003)
identity issue. He found that the Erasmus experience did not alter his questionnaire participants’ support towards the EU and their sense of being Europeans. Among others, Sigalas included questions about self-identification, attachment and even pride of being a European. He concluded that there is no direct relation between the formation of European identity and the sojourn. But he also found that students choosing the country of UK became less supportive of Europe after their sojourn while British students going abroad became more supportive.\footnote{Sigalas, Emmanuel: ‘Cross-Border Mobility And European Identity: The Effectiveness Of Intergroup Contact During The ERASMUS Year Abroad’ (2009)}

Following Sigalas’ footsteps, in 2011 Wilson published his research on the attachment to Europe after the Erasmus programme participation. His results were similar. He conducted a panel study between British, French and Swedish Erasmus students and a control group of University students in 2007 and 2008. His questions similarly checked European attachment, European self-identification and opinions on political matters through voting. While he indeed discovered that exchange students were more pro-European he also found that this tendency towards Europe existed prior to their exchange abroad concluding that the actual Erasmus experience made no difference at all. It is worth noting though that both Sigalas and Wilson’s samples were not very representative of the European Union countries and citizens and it is also important to address the fact that differences in the results in these kinds of studies may be related directly to the sample’s country of origin.\footnote{Wilson, Iain: ‘What Should We Expect Of ‘Erasmus Generations’?’ (2011)}

Theresa Kuhn (2012) contributed to this mystery by arguing that the current exchange programme in higher education is ‘preaching to the converted’. It seems that young people, who are in higher education, are likely to feel already more European regardless of a possible exchange study abroad. This research locks the previous two pieces of research by adding the reason to why the Erasmus Programme is not working towards its identity formation purposes. Kuhn’s central hypothesis is that exchange period and European identity have the potential of working positively towards EU’s objective only if it is addressed towards younger ages. Especially in young people though that have left school early on don’t get to experience these
sojourn opportunities. Her research based on Eurobarometer survey data indeed pointed out that education and cross-border interactions represent “different routes to the same outcome” (Kuhn 2012, 1006).  

Mitchel (2012), on the other hand, conducted a large and multinational survey with 2011 students representing 25 EU nationalities, making this research one of the most representative in the nature of the topic at hand. Rather than attempting to establish causality, Mitchel analyzed the idea of meaningful contact towards European identity during the sojourn based on a civic rationale. This rationale is supported on the constructivist view that “collective identities in general and political identities, in particular, are not fixed but malleable” (Mitchel 2012, 494). Mitchel’s research argued that indeed the Erasmus programme could reinforce and foster European identity.  

Moes’s (2009) approach analyzed European identification and whether it exists and according to which individual and national determinants it is distributed to the citizens of the European Union. The author employed a cohort cross-national comparison using both a qualitative and quantitative methods on Eurobarometer survey data in Polish higher educated youth. The findings supported that European and National identity should not be considered as exclusive social phenomena, which is complementary to Bruter’s theoretical approach in his results that are based on the distinction between the civic and the cultural component of the European identity. Finally, Christof Van Mol (2012) demonstrated through his research that European identity is subject to regional variation.  

3.8 European Union Legitimacy  

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9 Kuhn, Theresa: ‘Why Educational Exchange Programmes Miss Their Mark: Cross- Border Mobility, Education And European Identity’ (2012)  
10 Mitchell, Kristine: ‘Student Mobility And European Identity: Erasmus Study As A Civic Experience?’ (2012)  
European identification can be considered as a highly relevant topic due the unstable nature of the European project. Carey (2002) argues that the European Union has a democratic deficit problem since its citizens are rarely included in political changes and that the common institutions lack accountability. This research paper is set out to shed light on the issue of identification in European citizens because it recognizes its importance for the future of European Union.

The issue of legitimacy in a European context is imperative since lack of support towards the European Union has been an issue for many years and has been extensively researched. Legitimacy, according to Scharpf (1999) can be considered in two different ways; think and thin. This translates in that support can exist towards European Union from the state members’ citizens without that equally meaning that a European identification exists among them (Wilson 2011, 11). The amount of people believing they have benefited from EU membership is not equal to the amount of European identification. “It is not unfeasible that someone may have benefited from existing EU policies, yet be against continued integration, both of which – or neither of which – could affect how European he does or does not feel” (Twist 2006, 17). Therefore, European Union can have support by someone believing that his or her country membership in the EU will be beneficial without that meaning at the same time that that person feels European / identifies with Europe. The term thick legitimacy by Scharpf can be considered analogous to the term diffuse support, conceptualized by Easton (1975) which means that support is not pointed towards a particular cause. Both are related with the concepts of ‘affective’ and ‘utilitarian’ support for political institutions, which were introduced by Lindberg and Scheingold (1970). Affective support could translate in an ideological support towards the European Union, while utilitarian support could translate to an attachment with the EU interchangeable with economic or political interests (Chierici 2005). The issue of support will be further tackled in the Euroscepticism section of this research paper.

3.9 What divides us?

We should discuss further here the topic of differences among European countries, before proceeding with considering the opposition towards the EU and the concept of
Euroscepticism. We have talked about European identity, and the ways it can be examined based on instrumental, cultural and civic aspects. But we should also acknowledge the differences that can potential lead to the influence of the common European identity unless the European Union ‘plays its cards properly’. These are, cultural differences – depending on the way people perceive their countries in relation to other Europeans – such as different religions, differences between north and south and societies; economical differences such as poor and rich countries, countries that are deep in the crisis factor and countries that are not, inequalities, unemployment; and political variations, which would include demographic differences, dominant political parties in the widest parts of the political spectrum and various democratic traditions among others (Guibernau 2011, 39). As Hanshew (2008, 42) argues, “the image of a battle reminds us that European history may be read as a series of small conflicts and great wars between rivals, not a harmonious joint venture inspired by shared values”. Animosity and conflict have been ever-present reminders of the differences EU countries had in the past, but they can also be regarded as the spur behind the European integration project. Keeping in mind all the differences and possible similarities and how Europe is a construction that it is supposed to be ‘united in diversity’ I shall now move on to the attitudes towards the EU from a country/population perspective.
4 Euroscepticism

4.1 Attitudes towards the EU

Euroscepticism is the notion of criticizing the European Union and European integration. It can originate from various factors such as legitimacy issues, fear of weakening of the nation states and economic problems and crises. Euroscepticism exists in political parties on a national and on a European level and plays an important role as an ideology in the workings of the European Union. We can also discuss it in terms of the entire behavior of a country towards the EU and the European integration project. Pro-Europeanism, on the other hand, is considered the notion of admiration and approval of the European Union in direct opposition to Euroscepticism.

Euroscepticism can be looked upon in various ways. It can take the form of constructive criticism, and it go all the way to complete disapproval towards the European Union, therefore Euroscepticism exists as an ideology both on the left and the right political spectrum. In my research, I will need to make a distinction in the countries of the European Union into Eurosceptic countries and Pro-European countries. In order to quantitatively divide European countries into Eurosceptic countries and Pro-European countries, data from the Standard Eurobarometer, which are gathered by the European Commission regularly, will be used. The European countries will be compared in terms of their perceived image towards the EU rendering them into two groups formed through statistics, while incorporating theoretical knowledge about each country and its perceived state in the Eurosceptic/Pro-European spectrum.

According to Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002, 7) hard Euroscepticism is the opposition to the membership entirely in the EU while soft Euroscepticism is the support for the membership with opposition to particular EU policies. This categorization is quite problematic though since it is not clear where the boundaries should be set between hard and soft Euroscepticism. As Vasilopoulou (2009, 5) denotes there is “a lack of clarity about how many and which policies should a party oppose in order to still be characterized as “soft” Eurosceptic (as opposed to “hard” Eurosceptic)”. Wessels (2007) hypothesizes that identity acts “as a buffer against Euroscepticism” but in a
country that is considered Eurosceptic that does not necessarily mean that the majority of its citizens are not prone to European identity. Based on this, Kopecky and Mudde (2002) have suggested an alternative categorization of Euroscepticism that includes the extreme categorization, “Eurorejects” who do not support at all any integration and the “Eurosceptics” who support the Union but integration, in general, finds them opposite. In this respect they created four new categories: ‘Europhiles’, 'Europhobes, 'EU-optimists' and ‘EU-pessimists'; the first two categories varying based on level of support for European integration and the last two varying based on attitude towards the Union. Below the Figure 1 exemplifies these categorizations.

Based on the mass media and research, Euroscepticism is a genuine problem this European generation faces. It is implicated that European Union citizens are lacking European identity, a feeling of attachment to EU and trust, something that is being promoted as the reason behind low turnout in European Parliament elections, negative responses in EU related referenda, etc. The statistics indeed pinpoint to this direction, but when we consider the concept of Euroscepticism under the auspices of previously discussed distinction we come to the realization that this isn’t true in its entirety. When thinking European identity and Euroscepticism, we should understand them in terms of what Michael Bruter (2008) states “…European identity is in fact growing, but that because an increasing number of EU citizens precisely feel European, they now judge the various policies and institutional reforms of the EU ‘from the inside’,

Figure 1, Categories of Support

13 Online source (Blog no longer active)
as citizens, and thus on their own merits, rather than on the principle of integration. Thus, we would not be witnessing a lack of European identity and rise in Euroscepticism, but an increasing European identity and a switch from an ‘outside’ Euroscepticism that targets the principles of integration to an ‘inside’ Euroscepticism that takes the principle of durable, continuing integration for granted but targets specific policies and reforms (Bruter 2008, 276)”. This leads us to the understanding that the concepts of European identity, support, trust and Euroscepticism have a complex relationship. I believe António Carlos Monterio, General Secretary of the Popular Party (CDS-PP) from 2010 to 2014 explains this with simple words “Euroscepticism as a political expression tends to describe a political attitude that blames Europe for everything that goes wrong today. The European Union is being used like a scapegoat. It’s a populist and demagogical attitude. You don’t have to agree with everything that is made by the Europe Union, but, from my point of view, that doesn’t mean you are Eurosceptic.”

Following the definitions of Euroscepticism, I find it crucial here to define the way with which I am planning to use the terms Euroscepticism and Pro-Europeanism in my research paper. Euroscepticism will be used in the wide sense of lack of support either towards the European Union or towards its actions in general while Pro-Europeanism will be used in the sense of support. A general idea of the decrease of support towards Europe will be presented in the following paragraphs.

Throughout the years, the European Union has been measuring the public’s opinion through its official survey named Eurobarometer. In 1973, the European Commission commissioned the first Europe-wide public opinion poll, which nowadays occurs every six months in each country. Eurobarometer survey distinguishes in four different kinds; the standard, the Flash, the Central – Eastern and Candidate countries Eurobarometer. Since the beginnings of the crisis, European’s attitudes have been dramatically altered. It is evident through the Standard Eurobarometer surveys that recent events in Europe have influenced the trust and perceived image for the European Union, and the statistical findings point to sharp drop (see Figures 2 and 3).

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14 Euroscepticism: an ideology, a feeling, or a political attitude?: http://www.euroviews.eu/2014/2014/05/02/euroscepticism-an-ideology-a-feeling-or-a-political-attitude

The reason for this decrease in support towards the European Union could be certainly attributed to the economic crisis of the past years. But this cannot be considered entirely accurate; “the economic situation is affecting support to the EU - not in a direct, immediate manner but by means of other secondary dimensions”.  

Even though it was once seen as a British disease, Euroscepticism seems now to have spread across the continent like a virus (Torreblanca and Leonard 2013, 1). Disappointment in how the EU handled the crisis is evident throughout many southern countries and the public has been negative towards a perceived lack of support from EU’s side. “The Union must be seen "at work" in the field alongside its citizens. This is how it will succeed in restoring its image that had been severely damaged since the start of the crisis”.

Figure 2, Image levels of the European Union (EB65 – EB77)

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17 Ibid.

18 Source: Standard Eurobarometer 77
Image levels, towards the EU, in general, have undergone a significant change. The total positive responses towards EU’s image have fallen to 31% since the autumn of 2011 while the total negative responses have increased from 15% in the autumn of 2009 to 28% in the spring of 2012. Confidence in the European Union seems to follow the same downward trend. Trust towards the European Union went from 43% in the autumn of 2010 to only 31% in the spring of 2013 while distrust levels have risen from 45% in the autumn of 2010 to the shocking percentage of 60% in only a span of two years (Spring 2012). It is worth noting though that recent standard Eurobarometer surveys show a minor increase in trust towards the EU.

![Figure 3, Trust levels to the European Union (EB62 – EB77)](image)

### 4.2 Euroscepticism vs. Pro-Europeanism

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19 Source: Standard Eurobarometer 77
Having addressed in the previous paragraphs of this thesis paper Euroscepticism and its various components, I will now proceed into distinguishing the destination countries of our Erasmus students sample into two broad categories; ‘Eurosceptic’ countries and ‘pro-European’ countries. Even though I make a note to this process in the restrictions paper of this paper as well, I shall make clear that this distinction is not a universal one and has been constructed for the process of establishing the possible correlation in the results sections of the paper.

The process I am following will be based in statistics along with literature implications. Using the Eurobarometer surveys from 2011 until the late 2014 (both spring and winter versions), I worked with the question “*In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image*”. I decided to use the question of image, since it portrays a general sense of the idea people have about the European Union as an existence and can be depicted as an overall positive or negative thing. This way using statistical findings I created three groups based on the positive image the people of these countries have for the idea of the European Union compared with the average percentage of the entire EU population.

It is important to make a note on why I used the Eurobarometer data from 2011 until the 2014. That is because my questionnaire sample includes students that have participated in the Erasmus exchange programme from 2011 to 2014, and since I will try to establish a possible correlation between the country of destination and the European identity levels in the Greek students, I believe this classification will correspond to reality as accurately as possible. Furthermore, the continuous changes of the populations’ perspective on the European Union contributed in this decision as well. The member states which will be used for the categorization into the two groups of Eurosceptic and pro-European countries based on my sample are: Belgium, England, Netherlands, Poland, Austria, Sweden, France, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, Spain, Italy, Portugal and Finland. In Table 1, we can see the percentages of these countries’ positive image towards the European Union. In the last cell, we can see the EU’s average on the positive image questionnaire.
Table 1, Positive Image for the European Union (country percentages)

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Based on the Table 1, we can demonstrate therefore three different groups. First is the group that is above the EU average. This group including Belgium, Poland, France and Germany can be classified as the group tending towards a pro-European attitude. A second group based on Table 1, is the countries that are below average; United Kingdom, Austria, Czech Republic, Spain, Portugal and Finland. This group can be classified as the group tending towards Euroscepticism. The third established group through the Eurobarometer statistical findings is the group with the controversial/ambiguous results. This group consists of the Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary and Italy, presenting fluctuating percentages in comparison with the EU average.

Even though the average is fluctuating variably in the span of these four years – most reasonably due to current for each year political and economic issues – the established differences with each year’s results in the Eurobarometer surveys, are sound enough to establish the three groups presented above. In the next paragraphs, using literature I am trying to place these countries in the double faced spectrum of two groups categorized as ‘tending towards Eurosceptic countries’ and ‘tending towards Pro-European countries’.

The notion of Euroscepticism as already discussed is a very delicate idea. Having trust issues or disliking a certain policy aspect of the European Union doesn’t necessarily make you a Eurosceptic citizen. As discussed in the literature review of this thesis paper, there are many aspects in Euroscepticism and it can be expresses in various ways. For the purposes of this research we are trying to identify the countries
where the overall situation – either translated directly in the general public views, either translated in the rise of popularity of Eurosceptic extremist parties in each country – is somewhat negative towards the European Union. This way we can establish if there is a possible correlation between the overall situation in the countries and the European identity levels of the students. Even though establishing a possible causality here would be ideal, the situation does not allow for such an extensive research, therefore a possible correlation will suffice for the purposes of further research designs down this path that would tackle more comprehensively the issue.

Continuing on the plan of distinguishing the countries I find imperative to mention the situation in some of the countries in both the pro-European and the Eurosceptic group, I established in the previous paragraphs. I will also make an analysis on the four ambiguous countries prior to categorizing them in the two main groups.

On the one hand, we have the countries that are tending towards Euroscepticism; first the United Kingdom, a traditionally Eurosceptic nation, which reacts hesitantly towards the European unification. Second countries such as Austria, the Netherlands and Finland where “the once cozy elite consensus have become cauldrons of discontent in which the traditional centre-left and centre-right parties are being squeezed by Eurosceptics” changing the traditional political sphere and the country status on the Euroscepticism/Pro-European spectrum (Torreblanca and Leonard 2014, 5). Finally, countries such as Spain and Portugal, which belong among the countries that have been affected mostly by the economic crisis and are currently in the process of building a Eurosceptic perspective.

On the other hand the countries that are tending to be towards a pro-European attitude but still have their own negative voices towards the EU. Indeed the far right extremist party of Marine Le Pen in France, has risen along with the mistrust towards the EU but the population seems to support the idea of Europe scoring, an above average percentage point in the image question20. In the same way Germany, according to Torreblanca and Leonard (2013, 4), seeing themselves as the ‘victims of the euro

20 The economist - The resistible rise of Marine Le Pen:
crisis’ have been negative but the “populism has so far been contained: the mainstream political parties all support the euro and recent polls show that three quarters of Germans are against leaving the euro”. And the Polish population always showing above average support to the EU, possibly due to its opposition to the past and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, while Belgium, the capital of the European Union, reacts in the same way possibly enjoying the benefits of being the ‘European capital’.

Finally, the third group containing the ambiguous countries based on the Eurobarometer data includes Italy, Hungary, Netherlands and Sweden. Italy in the past has been a loud supporter of the EU. Nowadays it is quickly turning to one of the most Eurosceptic nations with austerity measures and almost 42% unemployment rate in youth.\(^{21}\) In the Netherlands, a historically pro-European country, the impact of the crisis affected the perception of the Dutch public and political parties regarding the European Union. Nevertheless, although Europe was an issue in election campaigns in 2012, its actual impact on results was limited (Torreblanca and Leonard 2013, 4). Regarding Hungary, “even though its EU membership continues to enjoy majority support, this does not mean that Hungarians would be glad to transfer powers to Brussels.”\(^{22}\) Hungarians according to the Eurobarometer survey were less supportive six years ago than they were two years ago but as a country in general, they do not care for the notion of shared competencies. Also they do have a political party, the Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik), which is extremely nationalistic and hard Eurosceptic, in the same way as the Golden Dawn extremist political party of Greece (Torreblanca and Leonard 2014, 5). Finally, Sweden is a member state that in general is in the outskirts of the European Union, literally and metaphorically. There is Euroscepticism in hard and soft forms in all its political parties. It is considered a pro-European member-state but a cautious member-state which lacks in regard to policy on EU politics.\(^{23}\) Out of the Eurobarometer data, Sweden has been close to the EU average regarding their EU perceived image, except in the spring of 2014 that they scored an overall 42% out of 35%. In general the euro crisis has created advancement

\(^{21}\)Italy Youth Unemployment Rate - June 2015: http://ycharts.com/indicators/italy_youth_unemployment_rate_lfs


\(^{23}\)One – Europe, Euroscepticism in Sweden: http://one-europe.info/eurosceptisism-in-sweden
in political parties against the EU either in the form of a hard Euroscepticism either in the form of soft Euroscepticism, and that view is accurate in all the European Union member states.

Having documented the situation in these four countries along with the statistical findings, I do not feel comfortable to place them into the two categories. All countries have Eurosceptic and pro-European counterparts and in order to establish the two groups as accurately as possible, I decided to proceed differently. Focusing thereon, on more comprehensive statistics, I used three different questions out of the Eurobarometer survey to establish countries that are above average with a significant percentage value at least in most of the surveys. The first question I am using is the perceived image as presented previously, the second question is about trust and the third one is a question examining the general optimism towards the European Union. These three questions are quite different, but they are being used based on their consideration as different aspects of support by each country, establishing as a result, the general scope of support towards the EU. The plan is to create two groups with two countries in each, by choosing the countries that present the most variation between the EU averages from either side of the Euroscepticism/pro-European spectrum. For this alternative categorization I based my findings on statistics on an above and below average principle. For accuracy of the outcome, I will eliminate all other countries from the correlation part of this thesis paper; the four countries that are placed in the ambiguous group of the original plan and in general all the countries that don’t present significant differences from the European Union average in all three questions. By all means this categorization is established for the purposes of this paper and it should not be considered as categorical - universal. As I mentioned previously the notions of Euroscepticism and Pro-Europeanism are very delicate concepts which need to be treated with relativity.

In Table 2 therefore, we see the country percentages for the optimism question and in Table 3 we see the country percentages for the total trust question. Using these tables and the table regarding image presented in the previous pages I created a graphical representation in each question with the countries that are continuously above and below average in all the questions.
Out of the following graphical representations, we can therefore statistically and safely reach a conclusion that Belgium and Poland showing rates significantly above the EU average each year in each question can be placed in the pro-European group. In the same way, Spain and United Kingdom, showing rates significantly below the EU average in each year and each question can be placed in the Eurosceptic group. This categorization can even be supported through the literature presented in the previous paragraphs, enhancing therefore its validity.

Table 2, Total Optimism for the European Union (country percentages)

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Table 3, Total Trust to the European Union (country percentages)

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Figure 4, Image of the European Union (BE, PL, ES, UK & EU average)

Figure 5, Trust in the European Union (BE, PL, ES, UK & EU average)

Figure 6, Optimism of the European Union (BE, PL, ES, UK & EU average)
5 Research Methodology

5.1 Quantitative Research

Political identities can be measured by employing either a quantitative analysis either a qualitative analysis while each method can serve different purpose. For example a qualitative analysis can capture the fluidity of identities while a quantitative analysis can measure the hard facts of identity leading to generalized predictions. “In many cases, these differences of research ambition are grounded on varying ontologies of social identity, with quantitative approaches tending to see identities as more coherent entities measurable through survey methods, while qualitative approaches, tend to conceive identities as being too complex, fluid and contradictory to measure using standard cross-sectional survey methods like Eurobarometer data” (Bourne 2012, 6). In both cases, each method has its limitations in regard to the study of identities. In my opinion, using a mixed methods approach for the purpose of triangulation will produce the most accurate results. Nevertheless, in my research, I shall use a non-experimental quantitative method in order to examine European identity. Due to resources and time restrictions I will only manage to recommend in the final parts of my thesis a further qualitative method for future research, than can act as supportive evidence for this work.

Concerning the quantitative research process, I decided to use a retrospective descriptive research design and correlation research design – derived as a natural evolution of the descriptive statistics – in order to determine the European identity levels in my sample and the possible correlation they might have with the two categories of the Erasmus country destination respectively. Specifically, a descriptive research design aims at describing participants of a study and how the act, behave or perceive the world, while a correlation research design aims at testing for a possible relationship between two variables without that meaning causation. I proceeded, firstly, by formulating my questionnaire into four parts aiming at gathering data that would enable me to answer my research questions. Then I continued by making a categorization of my variables into dependent (European identity/= civic, cultural) and independent (country of destination/= Eurosceptic and Pro-European) as well as
determined the group of respondents I wanted to examine (Greek former Erasmus students) for the correlation part of this research paper.

5.2 European identity: Analysis approach

Overall, this study will be based on Mitchel’s findings that Erasmus students engage in meaningful contact with other Europeans and change their attitudes towards the European Union after the exchange. The first part of my research, therefore, assesses this attitudinal change by examining if the Erasmus experience altered the behavior of the Greek former Erasmus students. The second part is considering the three European identity aspects and how they are affected from the Erasmus experience. For this, I am using similar questions to those of Bruter’s survey mixed with questions I prepared following the same logic / style for measuring identity. Finally, the last part of my research will determine if there is correlation between the civic and cultural components of European identity and the two proposed categories of Erasmus destination country of the participants in my study.

In my analysis of the European identity, as I mentioned in the previous paragraphs, I will use the distinction of European identity provided by Bruter (2008), in spontaneous, a civic and a cultural component, as my primary point of departure. Before proceeding to what questions I will use first, I will talk about what questions I will not use. These are questions aiming at finding the attachment level to the EU, the pride for being a European (questions used by Sigalas) and last but not least the ‘Moreno’ question of dual identities that is based on a negative relationship between national and European identity. These questions exhibit various difficulties in the process of measuring identity. The alternative model proposed by Bruter was analyzed in the literature review part of this paper. For reference, I provide a table summarizing the conceptual definition and operationalization of European identity (see Figure 7).

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5.3 The Questionnaire design

The order of the questions was organized based on the research question they corresponded. The questionnaire was distributed with an explanatory introduction, where I made clear that through this survey I will question the participants about their past thoughts and attitudes. In the beginning demographic questions were placed, followed by the questions for the attitudinal change, self-assessment of European identity, civic aspect of European identity, cultural aspect of European identity and the multiple choice set of questions in the respective order. The questions referring to the civic and cultural aspects of identity were placed in the same page of the questionnaire and in a group format, in order to enhance the recall process by enabling the participants to concentrate on the same issue. For the last question, which determines, which are the most important constituents of the civic and the cultural European identity for the Greek former Erasmus students, a filter was used in order to enable the process of separating the respondents who could assess the following multiple choice questions and at the same time eliminating those who given negative

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responses. At the question prior to the multiple choices set, all those that responded no, were redirected at the final page of the questionnaire. The rest were asked the final questions of the multiple responses set.

The questionnaire was self-administered and its length was kept relatively medium, just under 800 words. Closed ended questions were used exclusively in the questionnaire, with scaled proposed responses, that renders a comparison much easier and lessens the possibility of coding error. The scaled answers covered a range of 5 responses, two negative one neutral or not known and two positives (in most of the questions). Prior to creating the questionnaire I studied extensively other similar research papers and their questionnaires since by using already established material the validity and reliability of a questionnaire can be attested.26

Upon examining the different techniques used in quantitatively measuring identity, I decided to use as inspiration and incorporate to my own questionnaire, questions used in the papers of Bruter (2003 & 2008) and Mitchel (2012). The questions were divided into four different categories. (The questionnaire in both its English and its Greek translations are presented in the Appendix I of this paper.)

1. Demographic data, were question such as gender, studies discipline, Erasmus destination etc. were at place (general questions)
2. Questions trying to assess attitudinal change after the Erasmus sojourn. The premise here is that Erasmus students become more interested in Europe, the Union, its cultural characteristics and countries - via possible meaningful contact with other Europeans, with locals of the country etc. - after the Erasmus sojourn.
3. Questions trying to identify:
   a. European identity in its spontaneous form based on a general dimension of European identity (Bruter 2008).
   b. The civic aspect of European identity. The European civic identity of respondents according to Bruter can be understood as the degree to which they feel that they are citizens of a European political system,

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whose rules, laws, and rights have an influence on their daily life (2008).

c. The cultural aspect of European identity. The European cultural identity of citizens according to Bruter is best described as the individuals’ perceptions that fellow Europeans are closer to them than non-Europeans. That means that cultural identity refers to their identification with their political community as a human group, regardless of the nature of the political system (2008).

4. Multiple questions set to explore which constituents of the civic and the cultural European identity are the most important for the Greek former Erasmus students

The questions measuring the attitudinal change, as mentioned before, were largely based on Mitchel’s (2012) prior used questionnaire that was set out to explore attitudinal changes in sample containing students from five European universities. The questions do not try to assess the European identity levels; rather they try to identify the attitudes of the respondents after an experience abroad in regard with the European Union, Europe, other European countries etc. The wording in these questions was used to emphasize that the question at hand was to discover if they felt altered after experiencing a sojourn (As a result of studying abroad…?).

Regarding the identification of the European identity in the Greek former Erasmus students, I gathered a total of 9 variables to measure the three components of the European identity, based on Bruter’s categorization; two questions corresponding in the spontaneous self-assessment of a European identity, four corresponding in the civic aspect of identity and three corresponding the cultural aspect of identity. Finally, the variables which are to be correlated have been selected based on both personal experience and theoretical grounds. To conduct the correlation I will use three questions of the four questions of the civic aspect of the European identity and the three questions of the cultural aspect of the European identity partnered up with the two groups of countries; Eurosceptic and pro-European.
5.4 Target Group

The target group consists of Greek citizens – students of higher education that participated in the Erasmus Programme from the year of 2011 until 2014. The age will not be a factor for this research paper.

5.5 Wording of the questions

The survey was prepared in the English language and later translated in the Greek language for distribution to the Greek students, due to the mother language of the participants (see Appendix I). The idea behind the translation is that the participants will be able to comprehend the questions much easier in their native language. The translation was conducted by the author of this research paper, who is a certified translator and it was proofread by a second certified translator. The wording was done with special care in order to eliminate any possibilities of misinterpretation by the participants. For the questions with an extensive number of words, explanation sentences (preamble) were also used to accompany them in order to ensure correct interpretation.

5.6 Sampling Technique

Non-probability sampling was used for the questionnaire. The questionnaire was available on a website form and the link was posted in various student groups in the Facebook platform. There was an initial effort to access a judgmental sample or else purposive by making the link of the web form available to students from a wide range of disciplines, which would mean that the sampling of units studied would rely on my personal judgment. But the student groups on Facebook were based on a university level rather on a department level, which rendered a judgmental sample based on study disciplines difficult. Therefore I used a self – selected sample. This resulted to the loss of the possibility of generalizations to the population. Nevertheless, I will be able to focus on the particular characteristics of the questionnaire’s sample, which will enable me in answering my research questions. I need to clarify that this is non-ideal but rather a forced choice due to resources and time insufficiency. I will elaborate further on this in the restrictions part of my thesis paper.
5.7 Pilot Test and Questionnaire Distribution

Initially, I conducted a pilot test in order to determine the questionnaire readability and possible issues. The questionnaire was prepared and edited after the pilot session based on whether the respondents understood the questions, whether they felt there was a logical order in the questions, whether they felt the questionnaire was too long and finally whether the skip rules were applied properly. The completion time was calculated in around three to five minutes. The creation of the questionnaire was done with the help of Google Docs, where one can set up surveys free of charge with an infinite number of respondents.

The questionnaire (see Appendix I) was distributed during the months of April and May 2015 via link posting - as stated previously - in various student groups in Facebook. The participation was entirely voluntary. It included 20 questions in five subcategories. The questionnaire was distributed with a comprehensive instructions passage, where I informed the participants regarding who am I, what I study, how they should attend to each question and I outlined the purpose of the survey in the process of familiarizing the respondents with the importance of their given opinion. I also explained in detail how the responses will be used and I made clear that all the information provided would be treated with absolute confidentiality and anonymity.

5.8 Limitations of the study

Considering the limitations of my study, the first thing I will comment on, is the use of quantitative data only. As I wrote in the previous paragraphs, I believe that my research should incorporate qualitative data as well in order to encapsulate the full essence of identities along with the hard facts. Cerutti (2008) has even suggested that the complementary qualitative research should prevail over the quantitative research due to the thoroughness it can give in the analysis by capturing the citizens’ soul. So, through presenting a qualitative proposal at the end for further research, I hope to complete the full scaled design I have in mind.

Second of all, regarding my sampling, since I did not use a random sampling
technique, I face problems as far as generalization is concerned, either in the population of Greece or more far-fetched the entire population of Europe. Using a non-random sample has as a result first, a selection bias possibly affecting the results of the survey and second it damages the ability to make generalization to the public. Unfortunately, the possibility of a sample error is not something my research can overcome. The large number of the respondents though (200 plus) strengthens the data’s power. It would be ideal to conduct research with the optimal sampling technique, but this cannot happen based on my current resources. In general, in order to fully grasp the issue at hand, the research should be replicated on a larger scale in the future in order to determine a reasonably valid result in terms of generalization. Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge the targeted former Erasmus Greek students had no specific bias that will affect the final results and the final count of respondents actually represented a wide range of academic specialties, despite initial difficulties, rendering a possible influence, based on academic specialties, void.

I believe the research problem has been properly defined and articulated and the questions used in the survey have been prepared in order to address the research questions. A good design of the questionnaire can eliminate a certain amount of bias in the results. Important to mention though, is the recall bias. “Asking the respondents to reflect on changes over time raises issues of ‘recall bias’ – that is, that the past will be glorified, damned, downplayed, or not ‘recalled’” (Bruter and Lodge 2013). In my questionnaire, since it is not a panel, longitudinal research design, the participants are extensively questioned about their past. Throughout the questionnaire it has been clear that the period I am questioning the participants about is the period right after their Erasmus experience. I consider this time frame to be rather specific and ‘memorable’ and the period from 2011 until 2014 a limited recall period based on what my research objectives are, for recall bias elimination. Nevertheless it is still a questionnaire that examines the past and a notice should be given regarding the possibility of recall bias existing in the data results.

Another problem, particular to my kind of research, is the issue of the participants of the questionnaire not fully understanding the used terms. For example, problems may arise from the difficulty of interpretation in regard with some of the worlds used in the survey (such as ‘feel more European’ ‘identification with Europe’ etc.). Such
problems though were identified in the pilot test of the questionnaire and definitions were provided in the online questionnaire in instances, where the pilot test participants had problems understanding what exactly the questions asked. Pilot testing here enabled me to find possible problems in the questionnaire design regarding the participants’ understanding of the question. From there on, I could provide explanatory comments either in the beginning of the questionnaire or before each question (preamble), which would eliminate the risk of misinterpretation.

Contemplating the choice of the research design, I should mention that ideally, to fully grasp the attitudinal change of students returning from an Erasmus experience I would need to conduct a panel study. A panel study method is a longitudinal study in which the sample is being tested in intervals. In our case we would need to create one questionnaire that would be distributed to students prior to their Erasmus sojourn and one questionnaire that would be distributed to them after their return in Greece; this together with a questionnaire for a control group of non-mobile students would give us the most accurate results. In reality though this kind a research design would be too much time consuming and financially difficult and it would render the cooperation of the author with Greek universities unavoidable. Therefore this choice had to be excluded in this research paper but it will be among my recommendations for future research.

Finally one last important restriction of my research paper is the categorization of the countries into the Eurosceptic/Pro-European groups. Even though I am using Eurobarometer data for this purpose along with already existing literature this categorization cannot be viewed as universal due to the noted fluctuation of the data from year to year; it is only intended for the purposes of completing this research paper. It is important in general that the following results and their respective discussion to be read taking under consideration the limitations of this study and to be seen as a study that contributes to the overall knowledge about the Erasmus programme as a policy tool towards the enrichment of the European identity in university students.
6 Data Results

6.1 Descriptive Statistics

6.1.1 Reliability of the Questionnaire

In the questions of the survey (attitudinal change, self-assessment, civic and cultural aspect of identity), a reliability analysis was conducted, which resulted in an Alpha Cronbach measurement of 0.70 (0.765) (see Table 4). The same reliability test was conducted, in each question separately with the results visible in Table 5 (next page). As we can see, all the questions, together and separately, score a measurement of above 0.70; this point, to a reliable constructed questionnaire.

Table 4. Reliability Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.765</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Item – Total Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.742</td>
<td>As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in the EU?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.748</td>
<td>As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European countries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.759</td>
<td>As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European people and cultures?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.742</td>
<td>As a result of studying abroad, do you ‘feel’ more European?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.734</td>
<td>In general, would you say that you consider yourself a citizen of Europe?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.732</td>
<td>Would you say that you identify with Europe?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.733</td>
<td>Since 1985, citizens from all the countries of the European Union have had a common ‘European’ passport on which both the name of their country and ‘European Union’ is written. Do you think that this is a good thing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.756</td>
<td>What would best describe your reaction if you saw someone burning a European flag?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.747</td>
<td>A group of athletes from all the countries of the European Union has proposed that at the Brasil Olympics, whenever an athlete/team from the European Union wins a gold medal, the ‘Ode to Joy,’ the European anthem, should be played after and in addition to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.740</td>
<td>When the heads of state/government of a European Union country (such as Greek Prime Minister, the French President, or the German Chancellor etc.) make a speech on TV, both the national flag and the European one appear behind them. Do you think that this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.754</td>
<td>Some say that in spite of their numerous differences, Europeans share a ‘common heritage’ that makes them slightly closer to one another than they are to, say, Japanese or Chilean people. Do you . . . ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.774</td>
<td>When compared to other continents, would you say that it is much easier to see what Europeans have in common in terms of values?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.793</td>
<td>Does being a ‘Citizen of the European Union’ mean anything for you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

52
6.1.2 Demographic Data

Gender

![Gender of sample](image)

In the two months that the questionnaire was active online, more than 250 Greek people participated by answering the questions. Out of the respondents, I eliminated the responses related with a sojourn prior to 2011 and after 2014. In the final count, 200 people out of whom 150 (75%) were female and 50 (25%) were male were included in the results phase (see Figure 8). The sample is not equally distributed in the two genders but I believe, using relative frequencies, this will not affect the reading of my results.

Destination Country

From the Erasmus students that participated in the research, 12 (6%) stated that have chosen Belgium for their sojourn, 34 (17%) have selected France, 10 (5%) the Netherlands, 6 (3%) Sweden, 10 (5%) Finland, 30 (15%) Germany, 8 (4%) Czech Republic, 14 (7%) Poland, 15 (7.5%) Portugal, 18 (9%) Spain, 10 (5%) Italy, 5 (2.5%) Hungary, 18 (9%) England and 10 (5%) Austria (see Figure 9). There is an expected elevated participation in the questionnaire from students choosing France and Germany as their Erasmus destination, since statistics point out that these two
countries are considered among the top destinations of Greek students during their Erasmus Experience.

From the final 200 respondents of the questionnaire, 87.5% participated in the Erasmus exchange programme for a period of 6 months, while 12.5% participated in the Erasmus exchange programme for an entire academic year (see Figure 10). From Figure 11, it is evident that, 63.5% of the respondents were pursuing a degree in theoretical disciplines while the 36.5% of the respondents were pursuing a degree in scientific disciplines. This was established with a question asking their degree title and by distinguishing the two study areas based on a minor research at the websites of the respective universities.

Figure 9. Destination Countries of Sample

Figure 10. Duration of Sojourn

Figure 11. Study Disciplines

---

27 Erasmus Mobility, Presentation from Greek National Agency (State Scholarships Foundation) https://magic.piktochart.com/output/2357551-erasmus
Gender and destination country

It’s interesting to note that out of the questionnaire respondents, the distribution of the chosen destination countries presents many differences among the two gender groups. Most females have participated in an Erasmus exchange in France while most males have participated in an Erasmus exchange in Germany (see Figure 12).

6.1.3 Attitudinal Change

In the Figure 13, which corresponds to the first question of the attitudinal question set (“As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in the EU?”), we observe that 7,5% of the sample respondents, believe that their attitude did not change at all after their sojourn experience. 20,5% of the respondents, think that their interest was slightly increased, 47,5% that their interest was altered to some extent while the 24,5% of the respondents reported that their interest was improved to a great extent. A quite big percentage of the sample respondents (72% - to some & to a great extent) have experienced a significant alteration to their views regarding the European Union after their experience abroad.
Figure 13. As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in the EU?

Figure 14. As a result of studying abroad, do you “feel” more European?
In the Figure 14, we can see the answers to the second question of the attitudinal change set (As a result of studying abroad, do you ‘feel’ more European?). 7% of the respondents reported that their experience of feeling ‘European’ has not changed at all after their sojourn, 13,5% reported that they feel slightly more European, while 39% and 40,5% of the respondents, reported that they feel more European to some extent and to a great extent respectively. We can observe in this question, that the sample feels more European after their experience abroad with the 79% of the respondents reporting a significant change (to some & to a great extent).

![Figure 15](image-url)

Figure 15. As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European people and cultures?

In the third question of the attitudinal change question set (As a results of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European people and cultures?), we can see that only a 2,5% of the respondents reported that they are slightly interested in other European people and cultures while the tremendous percentage of 97,5% of the respondents reported that they are to some extent and a great extent more interested. It is worthy of notice that in this question, there were no respondents that chose the negative option of ‘not at all’ in regard with their attitudinal change towards other European people and cultures (see Figure 15).
In the last question of the attitudinal change set of questions (*As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European countries?*), only 1% of the respondents noted that their attitude towards other European countries has not changed at all. The rest 99% has responded positively with 6% of the participants admitting to a slight change, 34% to a change of some extent while 59% of them to a change of attitude to a great extent. This question in the same manner as the previous one, reports a significant positive result in the form of attitudinal change after an Erasmus experience (see Figure 16).

![Figure 16. As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European countries?](image)

Comparing the results of the attitudinal questions set with the gender of the participants, we can conclude that there is no great difference among gender and attitudinal change. Creating relative frequencies for the responses I managed to compare the results and observe that the responses have similar levels among the two gender groups. The relative frequencies allow for a comparison between the two gender groups’ responses in a sample of disproportionate number of males and females participants (see Tables 6, 7, 8 & 9).
Table 6. Attitudinal Change Question 1 and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in the EU?</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Attitudinal Change Question 2 and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a result of studying abroad, do you ‘feel’ more European?</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Attitudinal Change Question 3 and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European people and cultures?</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>78,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. Attitudinal Change Question 4 and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European countries?</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>36,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>56,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.4 Self – Assessment of European Identity

Figure 17. In general, would you say that you consider yourself a citizen of Europe?

The next question set examines the spontaneous self – assessment aspect of the European identity in the respondents.²⁸

The first question corresponding to the self – assessment set for European identity is “In general, would you say that you consider yourself a citizen of Europe?”. Out of the 200 participants of my sample, 11% admitted to no particular change with given responses the ‘not at all’ and ‘not really’ options. 3,5% reported that they don’t know if they consider themselves a citizen of the European union, while a groundbreaking total of 85,5% gave positive responses, with 49,5% reporting that they feel more European to some extent and 36% reporting to feel more European ‘very much’ (see Figure 17).

²⁸ See more at Bruter Michael (2008)
In the second question, detecting the spontaneous self-assessment of the European identity in the respondents, we asked them if they identify with Europe (Would you say that you identify with Europe?). The responses follow the pattern of the previous question, with a total negative statement by the 21% of the respondents. An 11.5% of the respondents reported that they don’t know if they identify with Europe and a total of 67.5% of the respondents reported a positive response, with 53.5% identifying to some extent and 14% identifying to a great extent (see Figure 18).

6.1.5 Civic Aspect of European identity

In the first question of the civic identity set of questions, we asked the participants of the questionnaire if they think the ‘European passport’ is a good thing. Only a 2% responded in a negative way towards the idea of the European passport, while a total of 80.5% found it to be a rather good and a very good thing respectively. It is interesting to mention, that a considerable percentage of 17.5% of the respondents found its existence of such a passport irrelevant (see Figure 19).
Figure 19. Since 1985, citizens from all countries of the European Union have had a common “European” passport on which both the name of their country and “European Union” is written. Do you think that this is a good thing?

Figure 20. What would best describe your reaction if you saw someone burning a European flag?
In the second question, we asked the participants how they would feel in case they saw someone burning a European flag. 31% of the respondents reported that they wouldn’t mind while 60.5% of the respondents reported that they would be shocked but not hurt. On a more extreme level, 1% reported that they would be happy to be present during this action, while 7.5% would be socked and personally hurt by such an action of violence (see Figure 20).

In the third question, we asked the participants of the questionnaire how they would feel about the use of the European union anthem ‘Ode to Joy’ every time a European athlete would win in the Olympics in addition to their national anthem. On the one hand, the figure presents the negative responses, with 8% thinking it as a very bad idea and 14.5% thinking it is a rather bad idea. On the other hand, the figure also shows the positive responses, with 27% of the respondents considering this option as a great idea and 5.5% as a very good idea. The interesting part of this question is the majority of the respondents, selected the neutral response (as neither a good thing nor a bad thing – 45%) regarding involving the European anthem in the Olympic Games (see Figure 21).
The fourth and final question trying to establish the civic aspect of the European identity in the respondents, asked them about how they felt regarding the presence of the European flag alongside the national flag, when head of states gives speeches in national TV channels. The use of the flag in this way, is an already established practice by the head of states of the EU countries. Only a 2% found this practice to be something bad, while the rest 98% felt either neutral or positive towards it. 30,5% of the respondents reported they it as either good or bad thing while a total positive of 67,5% thought of it as something good with 45% reporting a rather good feeling and 22,5% a very good feeling about it (see Figure 22).

![Figure 22](image_url)

**Figure 22.** When the heads of state/government of a European Union country (such as Greek Prime Minister, the French President, or the German Chancellor e.t.c) make a speech on TV, both the national flag and the European one appear behind them. Do you think that is a good thing?

### 6.1.6 Cultural Aspect of European Identity

In the first question of the set trying to examine the cultural aspect of the European identity in the participants of the questionnaire we asked them if they would agree with the statement “Some say that in spite of their numerous differences, Europeans
share a ‘common heritage’ that makes them slightly closer to one another than they to, say, Japanese or Chilean people”. 18.5% of the respondents provided a negative response, while 61% provided a positive response. 20.5% of the respondents were neutral regarding this statement. While the positive results exceed the negative, we observe that the neutral aspect has a considerable amount of supporters (see Figure 23).

Figure 23. Some say that in spite of their numerous differences, Europeans share “a common heritage” that makes them slightly closer to one another than they are to, say, Japanese or Chilean people. Do you…

Figure 24. When compared to other continents would you say that it’s much easier to see what European have common in terms of values?
In the second question of the cultural aspect of identity questions set, 60.5% reported that they agreed with the statement “When compare to other continents, would you agree that it is much easier to see what Europeans have in common in terms of values?”, while 23.5% believe against so. Once again in this question we have an interesting percentage of 16% from the people that feel neutral regarding this statement and the positive responses exceed the negative ones (see Figure 24).

In the last question of the cultural aspect of the European identity questions set we asked the participants if they consider understanding other Europeans based on their culture, an easy thing. 72% of the respondents reported that they find it easy to understand fellow Europeans based on their cultures, while 9% reported their neutrality towards this statement. Moreover, 19% of the respondents, reported that it is difficult, with 4.5% stating that they strongly disagree this view and a 14.5% stating that they somewhat disagree this view. Even though neutral responses belong to 9% of the respondents, they have been considerably less than the previous questions (see Figure 25).
6.2 Multiple responses set

![Bar chart showing responses to the question: Does being “a Citizen of the European Union” mean anything for you?](image)

Figure 26. Does being “a Citizen of the European Union” mean anything for you?

The last part of the questionnaire is set out to find out what is important to the European citizens in relation to their country’s membership to the EU. The initial question “Does being a citizen of the European union means anything to you?” identifies which people will move into the next questions (the multiple responses set) based on a positive response. The results point to 12% of the respondents admitting that ‘it does not mean anything’, while the rest 88% gave a positive response, with 62% percent reporting that ‘it means something’ while 26% that ‘it means a lot’ (see Figure 26).

Therefore, out of this question, we collected the total positive responses (176) and questioned them via two different multiple response questions, one with options for constituents of the civic aspect of identity and one with for constituents of the cultural aspect of identity. In the following pages I will present two tables based in the frequencies of the responses and two contingency tables based on responses and gender.
The frequency table will pinpoint (i) the number of the selected answers and their respective percentages and (ii) the percentages of the respondents, which selected each response/category (see Table 10).

1. From the four options of the first question assessing the responses relating to the civic aspect of European identity, each participant could choose more than one answers (instructions: check all that apply). Therefore from the 176 participants I received 388 responses in total. In Table 10 we can see that from these 388 responses, 104 (26.8%) were on ‘the right to vote on the European parliament elections, 104 (26.8%) were on the existence of common European institutions, 41 (10.6%) were on the existence of common European symbols’ (flag, anthem and passport), while 139 (35%) were on free movement /free customs.

2. From Table 10, we observe that in the questions relating to the civic aspect of European identity, 59.1% of the respondents selected the option for the right to vote on the European parliament elections, 59.1% selected the common European institutions, 23.3% selected the common European symbols and 79% the free movement /free customs.

It can be concluded therefore, that the questionnaire respondents showed a considerable preference to the right of free movement and the right to vote in the
European parliament elections along with the existence of the common European institutions, while the responses for the common symbols were considerably less.

Table 11. Multiple Responses Question Set – Constituents of the Civic Aspect of European Identity with Gender (Crosstabulation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituents of the Civic Aspect of European Identity with Gender</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to vote in the E.P elections</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Civic aspect</td>
<td>23,1%</td>
<td>76,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>57,1%</td>
<td>59,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Institutions</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Civic aspect</td>
<td>25,0%</td>
<td>75,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>61,9%</td>
<td>58,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common European flag, anthem, passport</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Civic aspect</td>
<td>22,0%</td>
<td>78,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>21,4%</td>
<td>23,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free customs</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Civic aspect</td>
<td>25,2%</td>
<td>74,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>83,3%</td>
<td>77,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 11 we can read two different things (i) the number of the responses and their respective percentages based on gender for the four options of the question and (ii) the percentage of the respondents based on gender.

1. The right to vote in the European parliament elections:

   From the 104 responses 24 (23,1%) were given by the 57,1% of the male participants while 80 (76,9%) were given from by the 59,7% of the female participants.

2. Common European Institutions:
From the 104 responses 26 (25%) were given by the 61.9% of the male participants while 78 (75%) of the responses were given by the 58.2% of the female participants.

3. Common European symbols (flag, passport and anthem):
From the 41 responses, 9 (22%) were given by the 21.4% of the male participants, while 32 (78%) were given by the 23.9% of the female participants.

4. Free customs:
From the 139 responses, 35 (25.2%) were given from the 83.3% of the male participants while, 104 (74.8%) were given from the 77.6% of the female participants.

From the cross tabulation (see Table 11) we observe that there is a minor difference between the percentages of the female and male respondents in their given responses with the exception of the option ‘free movement / free customs, which noted a more considerable variation (we observe that it was selected by 83.3% of the male participants and the 77.6% of the female participants of this question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 12. Multiple Responses Question Set – Constituents of the Cultural Aspect of European Identity (Frequencies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared European heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common European history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Ideals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong to the European family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 12, following the same rules that were presented in the frequency table of the previous question, we gathered a total of 336 responses from 176 responses.

1. From the 336 responses 59 (17.6%) were on the option ‘a common European heritage’, 43 (12.8%) were on the option ‘a common European history’, 132
(39,3%) were on the option ‘common European ideals’ and 102 (30,4%) were on the option ‘belonging to the European family’.

2. The option of ‘a common European heritage’ was selected from the 33,5% of the respondents, the option for the ‘common European history’ from the 24,4% of the respondents, the option for the ‘common European ideals from the 75% of the respondents and the option for the ‘belonging in the European family’ form the 58% of the respondents. As we observe from table 12, from the 176 respondents the choices selected most from the respondents were to ‘belong in a European family’ (58%) and to ‘have common European ideals’ (75%)

Table 13. Multiple Responses Question Set – Constituents of the Cultural Aspect of European Identity with Gender (Crosstabulation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituents of the Cultural Aspect of European Identity</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared European heritage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Cultural aspect</td>
<td>23,7%</td>
<td>76,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>33,3%</td>
<td>33,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common European history</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Cultural aspect</td>
<td>30,2%</td>
<td>69,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>31,0%</td>
<td>22,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Ideals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Cultural aspect</td>
<td>26,5%</td>
<td>73,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>83,3%</td>
<td>72,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong to the European family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Cultural aspect</td>
<td>23,5%</td>
<td>76,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>57,1%</td>
<td>58,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 13, following the same rules that were presented before Table 11, we can conclude to the following:

1. Common European heritage:
   From the 59 responses 14 (23.7%) were selected from the 33.3% of the male respondents for this question and 45 (76.3%) were selected from the 33.6% of the female respondents.

2. Common European history:
   From the 43 responses, 13 (30.2%) were selected from the 31% of the male respondents and 30 (69.8%) were selected from the 22.4% of the female respondents.

3. Common European ideals:
   From the 132 responses 35 (26.5%) were selected by the 83.3% of the male respondents and 97 (73.5%) from the 72.4% of the female respondents.

4. Belonging in the European family:
   From the 102 responses 24 (23.5%) were selected from the 57.1% of the male respondents while 78 (76.5%) of the responses were selected from the 58.2% of the female respondents.

From the Table 13, we can conclude that only small variations of around 10 percentage points exist between the responses of male and female respondents in the categories of common European history and common European ideals.

### 6.3 Correlation between Erasmus destination and European identity levels

Continuing on the correlation part of this paper, I will use the four countries that have been successfully placed in the Eurosceptic / pro-European categorization to create a contingency table first and then a table of symmetric measures. These countries are: Belgium and Poland, which according to the Eurobarometer data, they can be characterized as pro-European; and the United Kingdom and Spain, which are characterized as Eurosceptic under the same statistical findings. For these countries, I created a variable with the name Destination Country_1, with two different
categories; the first being pro-European countries and the second one being Eurosceptic countries.

In order to create the European identity levels based on the civic aspect, we will use three out of the four respective questions from the questionnaire, which identify this (questions 14, 16, 17). Question 15 will not be used in the correlation since the scaled reply only has four possible response-options, due to an error in the questionnaire design process. The procedure for determining the European identity levels is presented in Figure 27.

**Figure 27. European Identity Levels (Variable Recoding)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Variables 14,16,17</th>
<th>5 options (0=not at all, 1=slightly, 2=neutral, 3=certain extend, 4=great extend)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recoding of the 14,16,17 variables</td>
<td>For option 0 we assign 0 points For option 1 we assign 1 point For option 2 we assign 2 points For option 3 we assign 3 points For option 4 we assign 4 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recoding of the new variable</td>
<td>Creation of three levels from the average of each participant: 1 Low level, 2 Average level, 3 High level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the same application, we create the variable with the different categories of the cultural aspect of European identity as well. Using these two variables of the levels of European identity in its respective aspects along with the variable with the two categories of destination countries (Eurosceptic and pro-European) we will examine a possible correlation among them. The participants of the survey that have chosen the two Eurosceptic (United Kingdom and Spain) and two pro-European countries (Belgium and Poland) are 62 in total. Form the total, 26 (42%) have been on Erasmus in Belgium and Poland and 36 (58%) in the United Kingdom and Spain.
6.2.1 Civic Aspect of European identity

In the following cross tabulation I have determined the frequencies of the variables (see Table 14). Using this table I will calculate the relative frequencies vertically and I will proceed with a comparison of the values in Table 15 horizontally in order to establish a possible relationship.

Table 14. Levels of European Identity, Civic Aspect with Destination Country (Frequencies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination Country</th>
<th>Pro - European</th>
<th>Eurosceptic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Level</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Level</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. Levels of European Identity, Cultural aspect with Destination Country (Relative Frequencies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination Country</th>
<th>Pro - European</th>
<th>Eurosceptic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Level</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Level</td>
<td>65,4%</td>
<td>72,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level</td>
<td>34,6%</td>
<td>22,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the Table 15 table I observe the following:

A. From the students that spend their Erasmus experience in the Pro European countries 0% have a low level of European identity, 65,4% a medium level of European identity and 34,6% a high level of European identity.

B. From the students that spend their Erasmus experience in the Eurosceptic countries 5,5% have a low level of European identity, 72,2% a medium level of European identity and 22,2% a high level of European identity.
Comparing the percentages horizontally we observe only a minor difference of a rate of 5 to 7 percentage points at least in two categories (low and medium level of European identity). This indicates a faint relationship among the independent variable ‘destination country’ and the dependent variable ‘European identity levels’. In order to double check this outcome I used the Cramer’s V, which is a measure of association for variable with at least two categories. Cramer’s V is 0.190, which in the same manner as the horizontal observation suggests a faint relationship among the two variables as well (see Table 16).

Table 16. Correlation of European Identity, Civic aspect Levels, with Destination Country (Cramer’s V)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Approx. Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal by Nominal</td>
<td>Phi</td>
<td>,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cramer's V</td>
<td>,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.2.2 Cultural Aspect of European identity

Following the same rules from Table 14, I created a cross tabulation with the frequencies of the variables (see Table 17). Using this table I calculated the relative frequencies vertically and I will proceed with a comparison of the values in Table 18 horizontally in order to establish a possible correlation.

Table 17. Levels of European Identity, Cultural aspect with Destination Country (Frequencies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination Country</th>
<th>Pro - European</th>
<th>Eurosceptic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Level</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Level</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18. Levels of European Identity, Cultural Level with Destination (Relative Frequencies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination Country</th>
<th>Pro - European</th>
<th>Eurosceptic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Level</td>
<td>15,4%</td>
<td>5,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Level</td>
<td>61,5%</td>
<td>52,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level</td>
<td>23,1%</td>
<td>41,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the Table 18, I observe:

A. From the students that spend their Erasmus experience in the Pro European countries 15,4% have a low level of European identity, 61,5% a medium level of European identity and 23,1% a high level of European identity.

B. From the students that spend their Erasmus experience in the Eurosceptic countries 5,6% have a low level of European identity, 52,7% a medium level of European identity and 41,7% a high level of European identity.

Comparing the percentages horizontally in at least two categories (high and medium level in this case), I observe a small increase of a rate of 8 to 10 percentage points, compared to the horizontal examination of the correlation of the civic aspect of the European identity with the Erasmus destinations. This, points to a slightly elevated relationship among the two variables, which is though still quite faint. In order to double check this outcome I once again used the Cramer’s V. Cramer’s V is 0,229, which in the same manner suggests a faint relationship among the two variables as well (see Table 19).

Table 19. Correlation of European Identity /Cultural aspect Levels, by Destination Country (Cramer’s V)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Approx. Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal by Phi</td>
<td>.229</td>
<td>.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Cramer’s V</td>
<td>.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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7 Discussion

In this part of my research paper I will evaluate the data results and discuss them by assessing their significance towards the research questions of the study and towards the already established theoretical knowledge in the field, as discussed in the previous chapters.

The main goals of this particular study were:

- To identify a possible European identity alteration after an Erasmus experience abroad based on the views of Greek former Erasmus students regarding issues concerning the European Union as a political union and Europe as a cultural representation.
- To Assess the European identity in the Greek former Erasmus students in its three aspects; spontaneous self-assessment, civic and cultural.
- To identify the important Greek former Erasmus students give to the constituents of the civic and cultural aspects of identity
- To examine if there is any correlation between the European identity levels of the Greek former Erasmus students and country of Erasmus destination.

Initially, I examined using the questionnaire, if there was an attitudinal change to the students’ perspective towards different aspects relating with the EU and in general Europe and then proceeded into detecting if there are any differences in the results in respect to gender. Furthermore using three different sets of questions I checked first the spontaneous self-assessment of the European identity and then the civic and cultural aspects of the European identity respectively. Using these question sets, I determined the European identity levels in the participants of the questionnaire and by using a final multiple questions set I examined which constituents of the civic and cultural aspects of identity, were the most important for the respondents. Finally using the Eurobarometer data I managed to create two groups of two Erasmus destination countries respectively representing Euroscepticism and pro-Europeanism and I conducted a correlation analysis in order to determine if there is any relationship among the levels of the European identity in the respondents and their Erasmus destination country.
7.1 Attitudinal Change

**Research Question:** Is there an attitudinal change in the Greek former Erasmus students after their sojourn and is there a difference among female and male students?

In all four questions used in the questionnaire regarding the attitudinal change of the respondents after their Erasmus experience, a considerable percentage of change can be observed, with most given responses belonging to the options of change ‘to some extent’ and to ‘a great extent’. I questioned the respondents about their views regarding four different things; the European Union, other European countries, other European people and cultures and the feeling of being a European. Assessing the results we can definitely draw the conclusion that indeed there is an attitudinal change after the Erasmus experience based on the majority of the respondents’ positive replies. The Erasmus programme can be characterized therefore as a transformative experience which can suggest the impact it has in the European identity of the Greek former Erasmus students.

Comparing the questions we can draw a second conviction as well. There is a significant difference among the results between the questions. In the question that examines the interest towards the European Union, after the Erasmus experience, I observe that in 7.5% of respondents the views have not been affected. The same goes for the last question of the attitudinal question set, which examines the aspect of ‘feeling’ more European after the sojourn that shows a 7% in the negative responses as well. In contrast, in the questions examining the interest towards other European countries, people and cultures, the negative responses are close to none. We can conclude from this that the respondents of the sample show a greater interest towards cultural aspects rather than showing interest in the European Union or ‘feeling’ more European. This is especially supported from the third question examining the interest in other European cultures, where the significant percentage of 77% of the respondents responded positively by choosing the option ‘to a great extent’. This shows that possibly the cultural aspect of European identity can be influenced much easier than the civic aspect.
Another important finding is that there are no significant differences in the responses between the female and male participants of the survey in regard to the questions of attitudinal change in contrast to my original belief that gender, in the same way as education and age, would affect identity.

Even though the research is based on high educated youth, who are considered more prone to having a European identity as argued in the earlier sections of this paper, we can observe a positive progression in their views about the European Union, the European cultures and people in relation with their beliefs prior to the sojourn. The findings of the attitudinal set follow the findings of Mitchel, were she used the same logic of not attempting to establish causality between the Erasmus programme and European identity, as opposed to other researchers like Wilson and Sigalas. In her research, Mitchel (2012) suggested that the Erasmus programme acted as a catalyst for attitudinal change, rendering the Erasmus programme a transformative experience.\(^{29}\) This is manifested in the theory of social constructivism, where identities are seen as something not static that is affected by social contact and constructed through repeated interactions, which supports further the possibility of the alteration of European identity during the Erasmus exchange.

### 7.2 European Identity Levels

**Research question:** How is the European identity (spontaneous self-assessment, civic and cultural) shaped in the Greek former Erasmus students after their sojourn?

#### 7.2.1 European Identity – Spontaneous Self-Assessment

In the two questions trying to identify the spontaneous self-assessment of the European identity in the respondents, I questioned them regarding their feeling of being a European and their identification with Europe. Overall the results showed that

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\(^{29}\) The term ‘catalyst’ for describing the Erasmus Programme effects on European Identity, was first used by Karina Oborune (2013)
the majority of the survey participants responded positively regarding this form of European identity, which can be attributed to both its civic and cultural aspects.

7.2.2 European Identity – Civic Aspect

Regarding the civic aspect of European identity, I based the question on the social constructivism theory and the assumption that identity is something that can be constructed via social interaction rather than being a birth characteristic. The European Union symbols along with the European citizenship have been adopted by the European Union based on the plan that they will “reinforce the citizens’ sense of belonging” in the European community i.e. their European identity, which in turn will enforce the legitimacy of the Union’s actions (Bruter 2003). This is similar to the ways a national identity is constructed along with the cultural commonalities of a nation. Certain researches though suggest that it seems highly unlikely that European citizens develop a European identity in the same way as a national one (Ruiz Jiménez 2004). Nevertheless, using the questions which are based solely on symbols - whereas the rights and duties of the citizens of the European Union have been employed in the multiple questions set of the questionnaire – we managed to assess the capability of the European Union regarding creating or fostering a European identity in a civic manner. Overall, the Greek former Erasmus students based on the data results are shown to have a European identity in various levels, with most of the respondents reporting positive opinions.

In general, according to the results 31% of the respondents reported that they wouldn’t care if they saw someone burning the European flag symbol while a shocking 1% claimed that they would be happy to be present during such an act. If we consider that the flag, in the respective national perspective of each country, is an important patriotic symbol, we can observe that the European flag and what it means is not as important for the questionnaire respondents (total positive 68% / total negative 32%). Regarding though the presence of the European Union flag during public speeches by the representatives of the member states, the majority of the questionnaire participants have responded positively. This question corresponds to an
already established practice by the representatives of the member states, which could practically be significantly affecting the given responses. In the question about the anthem we see once again varying results. In this question, the predominant answer (45% of the respondents) has been neutral (‘it doesn’t matter at all’) about the use of the European anthem ‘Ode to Joy’ in the Olympic Games along with the national anthem. Only 32.5% of the respondents found it to be a good idea and 22.5% found it to be a bad idea. Based on the data results, I noticed that the question about the anthem presents elevated negative responses in relation with the question about the use of the European flag in the public speeches of national head of states in TV, even though both are closely related symbols, which enable the enhancement of European identity in the citizens. In the final question, which assesses the views of the respondents for something that is already an established practice as well (the European passport) once again the results tend towards the positive side. The existence of the European passport, another symbol of the political union, seems to excite the respondents with a percentage of 80% positive responses. Overall, looking at the four questions asking about symbols that enhance identity, the respondents react differently towards the hypothetical questions and towards the questions that are based on already established patterns, such as the use of the European passport and the presence of the European flag along the side of the national one when the heads of the members states public speeches in TV. Overall, from the general results, it can be suggested that the use of European symbols for the enhancement of the civic aspect of European identity has been successful. Furthermore, it seems that the power of habit can affect the European citizens - students and can enable the facilitation of the European identity even further.

7.2.3 European Identity – Cultural Aspect

Regarding the cultural aspect of European identity, I based the questions on the notion that Europeans identify themselves as a union in contrast to the ‘other’; the other nations outside of Europe with different cultural views and no common history or heritage (theory of orientalism). Given though the strength of the national cultural identities, it is normal to question the possibility of a European cultural identity
emergence. But Europe, as a whole, shares “cultural” elements in the form of common myths and cultural traditions and even a common history of animosity and conflict that enabled the European unity in the first place. The questions I used in the questionnaire were set to identify if the respondents feel that Europeans are “closer” together than towards the rest civilizations. Again, it is important to understand that nationalism and ethnicity do not need to be seen as direct opposites of the existence of European identity in citizens of the European Union. European identity can be formed and enhanced despite the various economic problems in the respective state members. After all, as Smith (1992) has argued “the starting point for European unity should not be ethnicity but rather shared cultural traditions”.

The results of the questions concerning the cultural aspect of the European identity present similar levels with the results of the questions concerning the civic aspect of the European identity. Overall Greek students that participated in the Erasmus programme in their majority have responded in the questions positively believing that European countries have as nations a common history heritage and ideals that enable citizens to understand each other and it distinguishes them from other, non-European nations. In the respondent’s sample, even though the majority gave positive responses, there were percentages of neutral and negative responses as well. The question about the ability for Europeans to understand each other based on their culture provided the most positive responses followed by the questions about the enabling common values and the shared common heritage that creates a feeling of closeness among Europeans. Overall, based on the findings, it seems that believing in differences with other non-European nations can influence positively the existence of a European identity with the data results pointing to enhanced European identity levels in the Greek former Erasmus students.

7.3 Value of the constituents of the Civic and Cultural European Identity

**Research question:** Among the constituents of the civic and the cultural European identity, which are the most important for the Greek former Erasmus students and are there any differences based on gender?
The multiple choice question was created in order to examine the importance the Greek former Erasmus students show to the constituents of the civic and cultural aspects of the European identity. This question conceptualizes what is important for the Greek former Erasmus students in order to pinpoint what the European Union can prioritize in the attempt to create or enhance European identity in youth. 88% of the respondents qualified to proceed in the multiple choice question set based on their replies in the question “Does being a citizen of the European Union means anything for you?”

Among the given choices, in the first question of the multiple choices set, the majority selected the free borders - with the highest score -, the right to vote in the European parliament elections and the common European institutions while they ascribed less importance to the European Union symbols. This could suggest that the European Union could accomplish more in regard to the European identity of the European citizens by enhancing the gains for the citizens rather than using symbols and projects/programmes for the same purpose. This would correspond to the instrumental aspect of identity, which was discussed in the previous chapters of this research and could allude to the rational choice theory. According to this theory, the formation of a European identity would rely upon certain interests of the citizens of the member states rather than social interactions which institutions could directly address enhancing therefore the European identity and support for the European integration project (della Porta and Keating 2008). Supporters of the instrumental theory suggest that European identities can be consciously decided on, and are thus based on perceived gains or losses (Ruiz Jiménez 2004, 5). This relates with the theories of the affective and utilitarian support, where the instrumental aspect of European identity would correspond the utilitarian support. It is not uncertain though that an instrumental aspect could coexist with the civic and cultural aspects of European identity or that the European union could have more enhanced results with the intensification of the gains for the member states and their citizens, especially when considering countries such as Greece with a great amount of national pride and many economic issues that affect directly the people. This reinforces the notion that identities are extremely opaque and vague. The quantitative method could examine in depth and shine light on how interchangeable these aspects are and how valid each theoretical perspective could be considered.
In the second question of the multiple choices set, among the given options, the respondents showed higher importance in the common ideals and in the idea of belonging in the European family than in a common history or heritage among Europeans. This might allude in the need to leave behind the past of European wars and animosity. It could be possible for the common history of past wars to not function as a positive reinforcement for the formation or enhancement of a European identity rather being a constant reminder of the nations’ differences. This could be further explored in the proposed quantitative analysis of interviews with Greek former Erasmus students, in order to illuminate, what exactly affects the cultural aspect of the European identity and how. Finally in both questions there were no considerable differences among the female and male respondents regarding what they consider important in their relationship with the European Union.

7.4 Correlation between European Identity Levels and Erasmus destination

Research question: Is there a relationship between the European identity levels (Civic and Cultural aspects) and the Erasmus destination among Greek former Erasmus students?

The idea behind a possible correlation among these two variables was based first on the social constructivist theory and the social contact hypotheses and second, as stated before, on some interesting results I found in Sigalas’ research, regarding students becoming less supportive for the EU after a sojourn in the United Kingdom.30

According to Allport (1954) and Amir (1969) people from different social groups (in group/out group) are influenced when socializing towards creating a positive attitude to each other. Based on the fact the Erasmus programme gives the opportunity for the

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30 In his research, Sigalas examined a sample of Erasmus students; incoming in the United Kingdom and outgoing in other countries of the European Union. In his findings he suggested that the country of choice plays an important role in the notion of European identity since in his sample the outgoing students visiting less Eurosceptic countries of the European Union – in relation with the historically Eurosceptic United Kingdom – showed more sentiments of attachment towards Europe and acknowledged more commonalities with other Europeans.
exchange of views that could lead to a reinforcement of likeness among the member states and its citizens. If a country is considered Eurosceptic, this could suggest that its citizens (in group) and the visiting Erasmus students (out group) can create a basis of understanding each other that can be influence the ideas the out groups has about the European Union based on the views the people of the in group have. Therefore the European identity in students could be possibly altered based on the country of destination and its citizens’ beliefs based on the theoretical departure of social constructivism and the notion that identities can be constructed. I find this notion of the construction or the reinforcement of the European identity in the Erasmus students based to where they spent their sojourn, quite interesting. Of course, as discussed in the previous chapters, this paper is not set to found either causality or establish how exactly ‘the magic works’ during the Erasmus period. Nevertheless, the possibility of the application of the social contact hypothesis is apparent in this case. Following the conclusions in Sigalas’ research that stated that there might be a possible relationship between European identity in the Erasmus students and Euroscepticism, I decided to conduct a correlation examination among European identity levels and the countries, students spent their Erasmus period abroad. In order to identify the possible application of the social contact hypothesis in the relationship between European identity and the Erasmus country destination, ideally I would need to use a qualitative approach with in depth interviews but due to limited resources and time restrictions, I decided to present this plan in my suggestions for further analysis as part of qualitative research design, complementary to the quantitative design of this research paper; as opposed to the quantitative approach, which is based on measuring the hard facts of European identity levels in the respondents in order to proceed in the correlation examination.

In the data results section of this paper, I discovered that the variable of the two groups of Erasmus country destination (Eurosceptic and pro-European countries) does not correlate with the three categories of European identity of low, medium and high levels of the participants of the survey (Civic aspect, Cramer’s $V=0.196$, Cultural aspect, Cramer’s $V=0.229$). As a result, my findings do not follow Sigalas’ suggestions of environmental influences of the European identity and variation of the Erasmus experience based on a country level.
It is important to acknowledge though, that these results cannot be transferred with significance in the Greek or European population; rather they can only make suggestions. First of all, regarding the European population, my sample contained only Greek students, who could possibly differ from other nations’ students in regard to their views about the European Union, due to the extreme financial problems the country faces. Differences between the nations of the European Union might have played a role into the results forming like this. Furthermore, with a non–random sample containing only 62 Greek students for the correlation examination - due to the problem of the categorization of the countries into Eurosceptic and pro-European -, the results of this correlation analysis cannot be considered accurate for all the Greek Erasmus students’ experiences with the Erasmus programme either.
8 Conclusions

European identity is a very important notion for the European Union. There are several reasons why studying the concept of European identity is highly useful. The European Union in its entirety through its legitimacy problems, its democratic deficit issues and its lack of accountability, is at stake especially in recent years where research has shown that Euroscepticism is on the rise. Even though, the kind of Euroscepticism that strives these days originates ‘from the inside’, where citizens judge policies of the union rather than externalizing an opposition towards the unification, the problematization of European identity still remains relevant.\textsuperscript{31} Many researchers have proven the potential of education in the form of enabling European identity.\textsuperscript{32} This research, in the same way, has proved how important the Erasmus programme is for the European youth and European identity.

From a theoretical perspective the thesis was based mainly on the two theories of social constructivism and orientalism. I first set out to identify if there is an attitudinal change for Greek students after their sojourn abroad, proving the transformational aspect of the Erasmus Programme. From there on I identified three separate aspects of European identity and measured them in the Greek students that participated in the research questionnaire, while keeping in mind the two central departing theories, and documented in what way the civic and the cultural aspect of identity relate to these theories in the discussion part of the paper. I showed how "European identity is that part of the individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1978). Furthermore, I managed to demonstrate what the Greek former Erasmus students find most important in this relationship with the EU and identified that against the original prognosis, there is no actual relationship between the levels of European identity in the students from both the civic and the cultural perspectives and the Erasmus destination.

\textsuperscript{31} The characterization of Euroscepticism as deriving ‘from the inside’ is a suggestion of Michael Bruter.
\textsuperscript{32} See Mitchel (2012), Udrea (2012), Oborune (2013)
Moreover examining Greek former Erasmus students, originating from a considerable Eurosceptic country with many issues deriving from the economic crisis, I documented that the Erasmus programme has been a success in fostering European identity nevertheless. Even though there has been a pool of researches in this field with different results regarding the relationship between the Erasmus programme and European identity, no one can disregard the importance of such a programme for the lives of the European youth.\textsuperscript{33} Evaluating the success of the Erasmus programme overall is difficult, nevertheless the results of this paper, which agree with multiple previous researches, seem promising into the usefulness behind it as far as European identity is concerned.

Regarding further research suggestions, first and foremost I believe that this research paper should be expanded by an accompanying qualitative research paper based on in depth interviews to a sample of Greek former Erasmus students. Even though, in the correlation part of this research paper, I tried to assess and place the countries in groups based on an overall Eurosceptic / pro-European attitude, the notion of Euroscepticism is no less opaque and difficult to measure that the European identity. Therefore, the idea of a possible correlation between European identity and destination country should be studied in detail based on assessing the participants’ experiences from their sojourn in relation with the social contact hypothesis or even the influence media could possibly have on this. This way, one could assess not only if there is a correlation but also one could get in depth, in relation to how exactly the fostering of European identity happens during the Erasmus experience. Other suggestions for further research would include, a) tackling the same subject using a panel design and b) doing a case comparison among students from the old member states and students from the new member states with a given importance to ex-soviet countries. Finally, even though I understand the related difficulties, I find it crucial for the next researchers to involve a wide European perspective with a strong research design and method involving a sample of students from all over Europe. This way, only will it become possible to assess the entire picture of the relationship among the European identity and the Erasmus programme.

\textsuperscript{33} Check in detail the Erasmus Impact study (http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact_en.pdf) and the numerous ESN surveys reporting on issues connected with education mobility (https://esn.org/ESNSurvey).
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Appendix I

Demographic Questions

1. Gender
   Male □   Female □

2. In which country did you go with the Erasmus Programme?
   ........................................................................................................................................

3. For how long did you stay in the country of your choice with the Erasmus Programme?
   ........................................................................................................................................

4. What was the field of your studies in Greek University during the Erasmus Programme?
   ........................................................................................................................................

Attitudinal Change due to Erasmus

5. As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in the EU? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
   A. Not at all   B. Slightly   C. To some extent   D. To a great extent

6. As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European countries? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
   A. Not at all   B. Slightly   C. To some extent   D. To a great extent

7. As a result of studying abroad, are you more interested in other European people and cultures? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
   A. Not at all   B. Slightly   C. To some extent   D. To a great extent

8. As a result of studying abroad, do you ‘feel’ more European? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
   A. Not at all   B. Slightly   C. To some extent   D. To a great extent

Spotaneous self – assesment of European Identity

9. In general, would you say that you consider yourself a citizen of Europe? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
   A. Not at all
   B. Not really
   C. I don’t know
   D. Yes, to some extent
   E. Yes, very much

10. Would you say that you identify with Europe? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
A. Not at all
B. Not really
C. I don’t know
D. Yes, to some extent
E. Yes, very much

Civic Aspect of European Identity

11. Since 1985, citizens from all the countries of the European Union have had a common ‘European’ passport on which both the name of their country and ‘European Union’ is written. Do you think that this is a good thing? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
A. Yes, a very good thing
B. Yes, a rather good thing
C. It doesn’t matter at all
D. No, a rather bad thing
E. No, a very bad thing.

12. What would best describe your reaction if you saw someone burning a European flag? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
A. I would be shocked and hurt
B. I would be shocked but not hurt
C. I would not mind
D. I would be happy.

13. A group of athletes from all the countries of the European Union has proposed that at the Brasil Olympics, whenever an athlete/team from the European Union wins a gold medal, the ‘Ode to Joy,’ the European anthem, should be played after and in addition to their national anthem. Do you think that this would be a good idea? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
A. Yes, a very good idea
B. Yes, a rather good idea
C. Neither a good idea nor a bad idea
D. No, a rather bad idea
E. No a very bad idea.

14. When the heads of state/government of a European Union country (such as Greek Prime Minister, the French President, or the German Chancellor etc.) make a speech on TV, both the national flag and the European one appear behind them. Do you think that this is a good thing? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)
A. Yes, a very good thing
B. Yes, a rather good thing
C. Neither a good thing nor a bad thing
D. No, a rather bad thing
E. No, a very bad thing
Cultural Aspect of European Identity

15. Some say that in spite of their numerous differences, Europeans share a ‘common heritage’ that makes them slightly closer to one another than they are to, say, Japanese or Chilean people. Do you agree with this view? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)

A. Strongly agree with this view
B. Somewhat agree with this view
C. Neither agree nor disagree with this view
D. Somewhat disagree with this view
E. Strongly disagree with this view

16. When compared to other continents, would you say that it is much easier to see what Europeans have in common in terms of values? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)

A. Strongly agree
B. Somewhat agree
C. Neither agree nor disagree
D. Somewhat disagree
E. Strongly disagree

17. Would you agree, it’s easy to understand other Europeans based on their culture? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)

A. Strongly agree
B. Somewhat agree
C. Neither agree nor disagree
D. Somewhat disagree
E. Strongly disagree

Constituents of the Civic and Cultural Aspects of European Identity

18. Does being a ‘Citizen of the European Union’ mean anything for you? (Please, choose ONE ONLY)

A. Yes, it means a lot
B. Yes, it means something
C. No, it does not mean anything.

19. If you answered yes to question 18, would you say that, among other things, it means . . . ? (Please, choose AS MANY AS APPLY)

1. The right to vote in the European Parliament elections.
2. Common institutions.
3. A common European flag, European anthem, European passport.
4. The right to travel to another EU country without passing through customs.
20. If you answered yes to question 18, would you say that, among other things, it means . . . ? (Please, choose AS MANY AS APPLY)

1. A shared European heritage.
2. A common European history.
3. Some common ideals.
4. To be a member of the ‘European family’.
Appendix II

Δημιουργικές Ερωτήσεις

1. Φύλο
Andreas [ ] Γυναίκα [ ]

2. Σε ποια χώρα πήγας με το Erasmus πρόγραμμα;

3. Για πόσο καρό παρέμεινες στην χώρα που πήγας με το πρόγραμμα Erasmus;

4. Ποιως ήταν ο τομέας σπουδών σου στο Ελληνικό Πανεπιστήμιο κατά τη διάρκεια της συμμετοχής σου στο πρόγραμμα Erasmus;

Αλλαγή συμπεριφοράς λόγω του Erasmus

5. Ως αποτέλεσμα της παραμονής σου στο εξωτερικό κατά την διάρκεια του προγράμματος Erasmus, θα έλεγες ότι ενδιαφέρεσαι περισσότερο για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση;

A) Καθόλου B) Λίγο Γ) Σε κάποιο βαθμό Δ) Σε μεγάλο βαθμό

6. Ως αποτέλεσμα της παραμονής σου στο εξωτερικό κατά την διάρκεια του προγράμματος Erasmus, θα έλεγες ότι ενδιαφέρεσαι περισσότερο για τις άλλες Ευρωπαϊκές χώρες;

A) Καθόλου B) Λίγο Γ) Σε κάποιο βαθμό Δ) Σε μεγάλο βαθμό

7. Ως αποτέλεσμα της παραμονής σου στο εξωτερικό κατά την διάρκεια του προγράμματος Erasmus, θα έλεγες ότι ενδιαφέρεσαι περισσότερο για τους ανθρώπους και τους πολιτισμούς της Ευρώπης;

A) Καθόλου B) Λίγο Γ) Σε κάποιο βαθμό Δ) Σε μεγάλο βαθμό

8. Ως αποτέλεσμα της παραμονής σου στο εξωτερικό κατά την διάρκεια του προγράμματος Erasmus, θα έλεγες ότι 'αισθάνεσαι' πιο πολύ Ευρωπαίος;

A) Καθόλου B) Λίγο Γ) Σε κάποιο βαθμό Δ) Σε μεγάλο βαθμό

Αυθόρμητη αυτο – αξιολόγηση της Ευρωπαϊκής ταυτότητας

9. Σε γενικές γραμμές, θα έλεγες ότι θεωρείς τον εαυτό σου πολίτη της Ευρώπης;

A. Όχι, καθόλου
B. Όχι, ιδιαίτερα
Γ. Δεν ξέρω
Δ. Ναι, σε κάποιο βαθμό  
Ε. Ναι, σε μεγάλο βαθμό  

10. Σε γενικές γραμμές, θα έλεγες ότι μπορείς να ταυτιστείς με την Ευρώπη;  

Α. Όχι, καθόλου  
Β. Όχι, ιδιαίτερα  
Γ. Δεν έχει σημασία  
Δ. Ναι, σε κάποιο βαθμό  
Ε. Ναι, σε μεγάλο βαθμό  

Αστική πλευρά της Ευρωπαϊκής ταυτότητας  

11. Από το 1985 και μετά, οι πολίτες της Ευρώπης έχουν ένα κοινό 'Ευρωπαϊκό' διαματάμιο, στο οποίο αναγράφεται το όνομα της χώρας τους και το "Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση". Νομίζεις ότι αυτό είναι θετικό;  

Α) Ναι, είναι πολύ θετικό  
Β) Ναι, είναι μάλλον θετικό  
Γ) Δεν έχει σημασία  
Δ) Όχι, είναι μάλλον αρνητικό  
Ε) Όχι, είναι πολύ αρνητικό  

12. Ποια θα έλεγες ότι θα ήταν η αντίδραση σου σε περίπτωση που έβλεπες κάποιον να καίει / βεβηλώνει την Ευρωπαϊκή σημαία;  

Α) Θα ήμουν σοκαρισμένος/η και θα πληγωνόμουν  
Β) Θα ήμουν σοκαρισμένος/η αλλά δεν θα πληγωνόμουν  
Γ) Δεν θα με πείραξε  
Δ) Θα ήμουν ευχαριστημένος/η  

13. Μια ομάδα αθλητών από όλες τις χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, έχει προτείνει στους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνες του Ρίο το 2016, κάθε φορά που ένας αθλητής / ομάδα από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση κερδίζει ένα χρυσό μετάλλιο, η «Ωδή στη Χαρά», ο ύμνος της Ευρώπης, να παίζει μετά και πέραν των εθνικών ύμνων. Πιστεύεις ότι αυτό θα ήταν μια καλή ιδέα;  

Α) Ναι, είναι πολύ καλή ιδέα  
Β) Ναι, είναι μάλλον καλή ιδέα  
Γ) Όχι, καλή, ότι κακή ιδέα  
Δ) Όχι, είναι μάλλον κακή ιδέα  
Ε) Όχι, είναι πολύ κακή ιδέα  

14. Όταν οι αρχηγοί κρατών / κυβερνήσεων των χωρών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (όπως ο Έλληνας Προέδρος της Ελλάδας, η Ελληνας Προέδρος της Ελλάδας, η Ελληνας Προέδρος της Ελλάδας κλπ.) δίνουν μια ομιλία στην τιμεδόραση, τόσο η εθνική σημαία όσο και η Ευρωπαϊκή φαίνεται πίσω τους. Νομίζεις ότι αυτό είναι θετικό;
Α) Ναι, είναι πολύ θετικό  
Β) Ναι, είναι μάλλον θετικό  
Γ) Δεν έχει σημασία  
Δ) Όχι, είναι μάλλον αρνητικό  
Ε) Όχι, είναι πολύ αρνητικό

Πολιτιστική πλευρά της Ευρωπαϊκής ταυτότητας

15. Μερικοί λένε ότι παρά τις πολλές διαφορές τους, οι Ευρωπαίοι έχουν μια «κοινή κληρονομιά» που τους φέρνει λίγο πιο κοντά τον έναν με τον άλλο από ό,τι ας πούμε, με έναν Ιάπωνα ή Χιλιανό. Συμφωνείς με αυτή την άποψη;

Α) Συμφωνείς απόλυτα με αυτή την άποψη  
Β) Μάλλον συμφωνείς με αυτή την άποψη  
Γ) Όχι, συμφωνείς, ούτε διαφωνείς με αυτή την άποψη  
Δ) Μάλλον διαφωνείς με αυτή την άποψη  
Ε) Διαφωνείς κατηγορηματικά με αυτή την άποψη

16. Σε σύγκριση με άλλες ηπείρους, θα συμφωνούσες ότι είναι πολύ πιο εύκολο να βρεις κοινά στους Ευρωπαίους, από άποψη αξιών;

Α) Ναι, συμφωνώ απόλυτα  
Β) Ναι, μάλλον συμφωνώ  
Γ) Όχι, μάλλον διαφωνώ  
Δ) Όχι, διαφωνώ κατηγορηματικά

17. Πιστεύεις ότι είναι εύκολο να κατανοήσεις τους άλλους Ευρωπαίους βάσει των διαφορετικών πολιτισμών / της διαφορετικής κουλτούρας σας;

Α) Ναι, συμφωνώ απόλυτα με το ότι είναι εύκολο  
Β) Ναι, μάλλον συμφωνώ με το ότι είναι εύκολο  
Γ) Όχι, μάλλον διαφωνώ με το ότι είναι εύκολο  
Δ) Όχι, διαφωνώ κατηγορηματικά με το ότι είναι εύκολο

Συστατικά της Πολιτικής και Πολιτιστικής πλευράς της Ευρωπαϊκής ταυτότητας

18. Το να είσαι «Ευρωπαίος πολίτης» σημαίνει κάτι για σένα;

Α. Ναι, σημαίνει πολλά  
Β. Ναι, σημαίνει  
Γ. Όχι, δεν σημαίνει τίποτα

19. Εάν απάντησες θετικά στην ερώτηση 18, θα έλεγες ότι ανάμεσα σε άλλα πράγματα, σημαίνει …; (Παρακαλώ, επιλέξτε όσα ισχύουν).

Α) Να έχεις το δικαίωμα του εκλέγειν και εκλέγεσθαι στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο  
Β) Να υπάρχουν κοινά Ινστιτούτα

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Γ) Να υπάρχει κοινή σημαία, κοινός ύμνος και κοινά διαβατήρια
Δ) Να υπάρχουν ελεύθερα σύνορα

20. Εάν απάντησες θετικά στην ερώτηση 18, θα έλεγες ότι ανάμεσα σε άλλα πράγματα, σημαίνει …. (Παρακαλώ, επιλέξτε όσα ισχύουν)

Α) Να υπάρχει μια κοινή Ευρωπαϊκή κληρονομιά
Β) Να υπάρχει μια κοινή Ευρωπαϊκή ιστορία
Γ) Να υπάρχουν ορισμένα κοινά ιδανικά
Δ) Να είσαι μέλος της «Ευρωπαϊκής οικογένειας»