

# RU EU? Teaching Support Materials

## Support Material for Teachers

### National Identity



#### National Identity

National identity is an aspect of identity based on belonging to one state or nation. It is often perceived as having either an ethnic or a civic component (or being between these two options). In an ethnic framing, it tends to be based on issues of culture, language history and religion. On a civic framing, it often draws on more institutional or value based interpretations. Studies have examined the extent to which political institutions, history, culture, experience, and the mass media have played a role in shaping an emerging European identity and the impact that they could have in the future, see Leith et al 2019, for examples of such.

European identity is a contested, fluid concept that has been central to EU integration academic research (Risse 2001; 2005). The attainment of a “sense of community” was conceived to be a critical precondition for European and international integration in “security communities” in the post-war era (Deutsch et al. 1957: 36). This sense of community, according to Deutsch and his colleagues, can only be intensified communication through personal contacts and social interactions among citizens across different countries (Mendez and Bachtler, 2016).

However, the extent to which European identity can be salient depends on numerous elements, many of which investigated and considered in the RUEU? game. Having your individual students play will allow them to explore both the extent to which European identity is salient and then consider the following questions in a classroom setting when students have played the game:

1. Students may feel European in different contextual settings but does this depends on their individual exposure and socialisation in relation to European integration.
2. Is it the case that few people consider their European identity to be their primary identity?
3. Is the relationship between European identity and other (national/regional/local) identities, determined by the strength of the latter?
4. Why is there is considerable variation in terms of the strength of European identity across countries and is this is related to trust in national political institutions, rather than the EU?
5. Which socio demographic characteristics (such as higher education level, income, employment status) are important explanatory factors in framing identity?

#### References

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