

## COMPONENTS OF NATIONAL IDENTITIES – A COMPARATIVE SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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**ABSTRACT** The article presents the results of an analysis of attitudes towards the importance of components of national identity – cultural, ascriptive and civic – based on data collected from a survey conducted in seventeen European countries. Differences in identity formation between countries with specific historical legacies (democratic traditions, dominant religious denomination, and ethnic composition) and structural characteristics (GDP per capita, level of urbanization, migration rate, and tertiary education attainment rate) are analysed, as well as the significance of different individual predictors (gender, age and university education). The main hypothesis, that modernization processes influence the strengthening of the civic component, as well as the weakening of ascriptive and cultural components, was confirmed. However, the results suggest that the modernizing effects of the examined factors (economic, cultural and political) are visible only up to a certain level of development, whereupon they tend to decrease their influence. The strongest influence on the strength of civic components is recorded for an economic factor – GDP per capita. Although civic components proved to be dominant in shaping the national identities across the examined countries, the other two traits – ascriptive and cultural – do not disappear, testifying to the still hybrid nature of national identity.

**KEYWORDS** National identity, ascriptive/cultural/civic basis, modernization, comparative research

## CONCEPTS

The paper is based on two general presuppositions: one concerns the components of national identity, and the other the historical conditions governing its formation and subsequent changes (for more, see Smith, 1991, 2009; obviously, Smiths' third thesis on the fruitfulness in research of the concept of identity

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is also accepted; for an opposing view see Malešević, 2006, 2011). Smith has clearly derived the characteristics of national identity from the nature of a nation's constitution: a territorial type of nation is the basis of civic identity, while demotic identity is built on the ethnic type of nation (Smith, 2009: 41-60). Demotic identity includes ascriptive and cultural components (ethnic origin, language, collective memories, myths, etc.; their common denominator is the fact that they are substantively and exclusively defined), while civic identity is based on citizenship, respect for laws, political participation, etc. (traits which are formally defined and therefore accessible to everyone). Incidentally, if the starting historical conditions of nation formation (bureaucratic incorporation versus vernacular mobilization) fundamentally differ, in time – especially in consequence of modernization factors (strengthening of the nation-state, including the development of state administration, an army, educational system, mass communications, etc., together with the rise of a capitalist market economy) –, the 'original' basis of identity will change towards favouring the spreading and fostering of civic components. Namely, nations 'fixed' in territorial frames of nation-states for a longer period of time (irrespective of the way they were constituted) are increasingly subject to the logic of the reproduction of state apparatuses (as well as of a universalizing market economy) which reinforces exactly those components of identity that secure the unobstructed functioning of reproduction. These are essentially civic components, or transformed cultural components (primarily language, which, having become 'official', simultaneously acquires the characteristics of formal and substantive components).

However, we must, still, bear in mind that certain cultural components of identity belong to *longue durée* historical phenomena (the idea of a common ethnic origin), while some others are taken over and sustained by the state (although on a modified basis – e.g. language). The result of this dual process is the following: national identity in contemporary nation-states appears as a differing – and changeable – mixture of these components (Smith, 2009).

We must note that the bulk of research into the characteristics of nations and national identities has been based on theoretical-historical arguments (developed in the framework of individual nation-states or comparative research), as was the case with the work of Smith, Gellner (1983), Hobsbawm (1990), etc., or on micro-sociological research with a nominalist hypothesis that national identity is a phenomenon of solely (or primarily) individual consciousness and action (Brubaker, 2004; Bonikowski, 2013). Our argument in this paper is empirically based and draws on survey data collected during the implementation of a major comparative research project – which means that we accept yet another of

Smiths' theses: that understanding the nation as a "real community" is theoretically legitimate (see Smith, 2009: 13-14).<sup>2</sup>

We assume that the concept of national identity signifies the feeling common to a number of individuals that they permanently belong to a national group because of specific and distinct traits they share with its other members which simultaneously differentiate them from other national/ethnic groups (see e.g. Wesolowski, Slomczynski and Dubrow, 2010). The origin of this feeling rests outside the individual, in the group he/she identifies with. Its source is the need of the national group to remain stable in relation to other groups, self-defined in the same way according to corresponding criteria. In order to fulfil this need, the group adopts (or, according to another and different theoretical paradigm: constructs – see Anderson, 1991) certain characteristics to represent specific 'values' common to all its members, which distinguish them from members of another group or groups, who signify 'others', different and potentially confronted with 'us'. Differentiation and potential confrontation are the necessary elements of identity, which is essentially a relational concept (see e.g. Devereux, 1978).

The analysis that follows rests on the assumption that modernization processes (accompanied by the strengthening of liberal national states) simultaneously took place with a rise in the importance of civic components of national identity and a decline in the significance of cultural and ascriptive components. As for modernization, we must note the profusion of literature about this historical process which renders any attempt to comment on it here meaningless. We will instead simply state our understanding of this concept. Briefly, and descriptively, modernization has been a multidimensional process, which includes social differentiation (Smelser, 1959, 1967), creation of a mass consumption society (Rostow, 1960) – implying a universal market economy of an industrial, and, later on, post-industrial type (with a tendency to permanent growth, an increase in urbanization, dramatically accelerated communication, etc.), a political system organized on the basis of liberal democracy (Apter, 1965; Eisenstadt, 1966; Weinberg, 1976), and the spread of 'modern values' (including secularism, individualism, trust in science, achievement orientation, protection of human rights, etc.; Inkeles and Smith, 1974; see also Lerner, 1958; McClelland, 1967; Inglehart 1997; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Dalton, 2004; Dalton & Shin, 2006; Klingemann, 1999; Norris, 1999).<sup>3</sup>

2 It has to be said that similar differentiation between primordial, civic and cultural codes in constructing collective (and especially ethnic) boundaries and identities can be found in Eisenstadt and Giessen's programmatic text on the construction of collective identities (Eisenstadt & Giessen, 1995).

3 We cite 'classic' authors since it is clear that neo-modernization critique has not fundamentally questioned most of the key elements of the theory enumerated above (see Alexander and Sztompka, eds., 1992).

The advancement of these processes in recent decades has additionally changed the institutional preconditions of the formation of national identities. Suffice it to recall here the changes that underwent nation-states in Europe due to the strengthening of economic, political and cultural linkages within the EU: economic growth leading to an increase in mutual economic-political dependence, a high level of migration, and cultural permeation. With the creation of supranational institutions (government, parliament, courts, a central bank, etc.), together with the gradual devaluation of interstate borders, common currency, symbolic elements like flags and anthems, etc., many characteristics of nation-states ‘double’ as (potential) bases of new identities. The concept of the “other” as a necessary counterpoint in view of the relational character of identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) has therefore been defined to a greater extent at two levels: national and European (or very often, even broader: Western, Christian, etc.). In other words, the identity basis appears at several levels: not only as regional and national (as before) but also as European, etc. It is increasingly difficult to define this ‘extended’ basis of identity ascriptively, and in many cases even using cultural factors.

## HYPOTHETICAL FRAMEWORK

We do not discuss our first analytical hypothesis – based on the three components of national identity: ascriptive, cultural and civic – simply because it was built into the data collection instrument used in the survey. We only propose the view that ascriptive and cultural components are (or at least originally, were) very close due to their being defined in a substantive way, and taken to be ‘inherent’ to the members of a nation; exclusive, unchangeable (or difficult to change), and therefore characteristic of the demotic type of identity. Conversely, civic components are fundamentally different, being susceptible to universal acquisition (potentially inclusive) and change, and are characteristic of the civic type of identity.

As already mentioned, the result of the historical processes of nation-state formation lead us to assume that all three components of national identity were widely present in all the countries researched, meaning that national identity is hybrid, and that, at this level, differences between members of different nations may be found only to the extent that individual components of identity are present. At this point, the following research problem arises: which factors account for the variation in the spread of particular components? We thus firstly examine the hypothesis on modernization; a phenomenon which creates contextual conditions relevant for the formation of identity, different in different nation states.

If the starting historical conditions for nation and identity formations were different, historical processes in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, modernization above

all gradually reduced these differences and significantly equalized the political, economic and cultural conditions for national identity reproduction (in European states, which are the locus of our research). A single piece of sociological research clearly cannot analyze too many factors which might influence the remaking of the components which constitute identity, but one can try to single out some of the factors 'representative' of the basic subsystems – economic, political and cultural – wherein modernization unfolds, and investigate if, and to what extent, these factors have been relevant for the presence of different identity components.

In order to check these hypotheses we operationalized the basic processes of modernization. Economic modernization is summed up by two indicators: level of economic development (expressed by GDP per capita), and level of urbanization (indicated by the percentage of urban dwellers in the total population). We do not find an extended explanation of this choice to be necessary. Namely, from its emergence the theory of modernization took economic development to be the goal of social progress, and simultaneously its indicator, and more or less the same is true of urbanization. In view of this, we posit the hypothesis that a higher level of GDP per capita and of urbanization are positively correlated with indicators of civic identity, and negatively with ascriptive identity, while the relationship with cultural components is less certain, because all indicators of these components represent phenomena of long historical duration (ethnicity, religion, or/and tradition).

The choice of political modernization indicators is also simple on the conceptual level. We selected the duration of a democratic political regime in a country. The explanation is quite obvious: the establishment and stability of a liberal-democratic regime, by definition, represents one of the basic forms of modernization. Briefly, our hypothesis is that the duration of a democratic political order in nation-states positively correlates with civic components of identity, and negatively with the ascriptive ones, while in the case of cultural components the above conclusion (an uncertain outcome) also applies.

As for cultural modernization, we first check one simple indicator: the percentage of the population with a university degree in a country. It is well known that the proportion of highly educated people is directly related to the level of modernization. The hypothesis that follows is that a higher percentage of the population with a university degree is positively related to civic components and negatively to ascriptive ones, with – once again – uncertain results in the case of cultural components.

We also check how modernization relates to another factor in the cultural sphere: religion, expressed in two of its manifestations: intensity of religious practice as indicated by the rate of regular church attendance, and majority denomination. It is very well known that a decrease in the spread of religiosity (secularization)

has been described as an important element of modern social development by the 'founding fathers' of sociology (Marx, Weber, and Durkheim). Despite all controversies following this thesis (including the notorious exception of the USA, the spread of religious fundamentalism and new forms of secular religion and the religious revival in post-communist countries in eastern Europe, etc.), it has still received wide theoretical and empirical support (see e.g. Norris and Inglehart, 2004). Our hypothesis, therefore, will be that a lower proportion of regular churchgoers is positively correlated with the spread of civic components and negatively with the spread of the other two traits.

The connection between religious denomination and modernization may be demonstrated in different ways. A direct connection was stressed by Huntington, who claimed that cultural patterns based primarily on religion supported unequally the democratization of a political system, and consequently, modernization: Protestantism stimulates democratization and Catholicism much less so, while Orthodoxy hinders democracy (Huntington, 1976, 1996). While this thesis has (rightly) been criticized for being highly politicized, our hypothesis might be supported in another way. Namely, it may also be demonstrated that the importance of Orthodox churches in maintaining the integrity of ethnic communities in earlier times (of Muslim political domination), and their association with nation-states later on, created a preference for ascriptive and cultural components of identity, which is consistent with our previous arguments. Briefly, we may propose the hypothesis that Protestantism as the dominant denomination is positively associated with civic components, and the prevailing Orthodox denomination with ascriptive and cultural ones, which leaves the predominantly Catholic states somewhere in between.

Finally, we believe that it is not necessary to prove that the ethnic composition of a population is connected with characteristics of national identity. Presumably, in nation-states with a more ethnically mixed population the presence of civic components will be stronger, because of the need to maintain a stable political order (notwithstanding periods of internal or international political crises, frequently marked by inter-ethnic conflicts when ascriptive and cultural components of identity most often come to the fore). In addition, modern times are characterized by significant population migration, which in EU countries has a twofold character: the free movement of people from less developed to more developed member-countries, and an influx of pauperized people from low-income countries. Since our research took place during a period of economic crisis, when migrants (especially those of the second type, who are as a rule manifestly different from a cultural perspective from the domicile population) are treated as 'scapegoats' (i.e. blamed as agents who generate the crisis), the proportion of

immigrants in a country is taken as an indicator.<sup>4</sup> We expect that a higher percentage of immigrants will correlate to the stronger presence of ascriptive and cultural components, and a lower presence of civic ones.

## DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Our analysis rests upon data collected in 17 European countries in the frame of the INTUNE project (Integrated and United: A quest for Citizenship in an ‘ever closer Europe’). The project was designed to analyse the changes in the scope, nature and characteristics of citizenship resulting from the deepening and enlargement of the European Union (<http://www.intune.it/>).<sup>5</sup> Quantitative research was conducted in two waves (2007 and 2009) on two different types of samples: one comprising the members of political, economic and media elites, and the other a representative national population sample. In this analysis we use the data gathered from the second wave of research on the general population for all seventeen surveyed countries (the total sample numbered 16 613 respondents; Table 1).

*Table 1: The structure of the sample*

| Country  | Sample size | Country  | Sample size |
|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| Belgium  | 1001        | UK       | 1000        |
| Denmark  | 1002        | Estonia  | 1000        |
| Germany  | 1000        | Hungary  | 1000        |
| Greece   | 1000        | Poland   | 1000        |
| Spain    | 1000        | Slovakia | 1044        |
| France   | 1004        | Slovenia | 1028        |
| Italy    | 1002        | Bulgaria | 1007        |
| Portugal | 1002        | Serbia   | 1020        |
| Austria  | 503         | Total    | 16613       |

<sup>4</sup> It should also be mentioned that data collection occurred before the massive influx of migrants from war-torn near and Middle-Eastern countries, which drastically changed the perceptions of a significant part of the ‘domicile’ population toward ethnically different people. Since data analyses show that even before these developments the proportions of migrants significantly influenced the characteristics of national identity, we decided to introduce this indicator: even if it points to some relatively short-term processes, while we try to understand the long-term factors shaping ethnic identities its consequences seem to be potentially too big and lasting to be left out of this paper.

<sup>5</sup> The project involved scholars from different scientific fields: political science, sociology, linguistics, social psychology, and media. Its main focus was determining how integration and decentralization processes, at both national and European levels, affect three major dimensions of citizenship: identity, representation, and scope of governance. See more in Sanders, Magalhaes and Toka, 2012; Best, Lengyel and Verzichelli, 2012; Bellucci, Sanders, Toka and Torcal, 2012; Bayley and Williams, 2012.

Elements which comprise components of identity were operationalized in the following way (for survey questions and correlation matrix, see Table 2): a. cultural components included the importance of (Christian) religion, shared cultural traditions and national feeling as the basis for national identification (items number 1, 2 and 6 in Table 2); b. ascriptive components were related to the country of origin and nationality of parents (items number 3 and 4 in Table 2); while c. civic components were marked by respect for national laws and institutions, mastery of the national language<sup>6</sup> and political involvement through participation in national elections (items number 5, 7 and 8 in Table 2). Respondents ranked the importance of components of different identity bases on a scale of 1-4, where 1 denoted that the component was not important at all, and 4 that it was very important. For each of the following components we constructed scales that reflect our theoretical concept of instrument-building.<sup>7</sup> Although confirmatory factor analysis verified that only one factor can be extracted for each of the examined components,<sup>8</sup> it should be stressed that the aim of this analysis was not to test the measurement instrument itself (dealing with complex cross-national comparisons usually requires rigorous instrument testing in terms of measurement equivalence; i.e. configural, metric and scalar invariance).<sup>9</sup> Our goal was different: to operationalize a theoretical model and see whether we could use it as a tool for making conclusions about the supposedly changing nature of national identity in the present (ever-globalizing) world.

6 This indicator was originally introduced in the survey to represent one of the cultural components. However, the wording in the questionnaire implied that it represented a skill which might be learned and acquired afterwards, and was not necessarily connected with ethnic origin as the mother tongue. Since the factor analysis also showed that this item was related to other civic components, not with cultural ones, we included it among the former.

7 Using the same set of items (ISSP 2003 survey), Helbling, Reeskens and Wright constructed a somewhat different measurement instrument (scales of ethnic and civic components of national identity), following the results of exploratory factor analysis (Helbling, Reeskens and Wright, 2013). However, when applying the bottom-up approach in constructing the measurement instrument, as the authors did, one ends up with scales that only partially correspond to theoretical or even common-sense concepts (for example, the importance of citizenship ended up as part of the ethnic component). In constructing our instruments, we relied on Shabad and Slomczynski's concept (introduced in texts that deal with the same set of questions for the Polish sample), which argues that those three components make up a cognitive dimension of national identity (as opposed to its emotional dimension), and are related to one another to varying degrees (Shabad and Slomczynski, 2010).

8 Eigenvalues on the CFA (Maximum Likelihood) for the components of national identity were the following: 1.654 (55.128% of variance explained) for the cultural component, 1.655 (82.763% of variance explained) for the ascriptive and 1.479 (49.310% of variance explained) for the civic component.

9 For more on the problem of measurement equality in examining national identity in cross-national surveys, see Davidov, 2009.

**Table 2:** *Correlation matrix of components of national identity*

| People differ in the way they think about what it is important to be (nationality). How important for you are each of the following components (nationality)? | 1. To be a Christian | 2. To share (nationality) cultural traditions | 3. To be born in (our country) | 4. To have (nationality) parents | 5. To respect (nationality) laws and institutions | 6. To feel (nationality) | 7. To master (country language) | 8. To exercise citizens rights |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| To be a Christian                                                                                                                                             | 1                    | .332**                                        | .382**                         | .413**                           | .089**                                            | .227**                   | .143**                          | .144**                         |
| To share (nationality) cultural traditions                                                                                                                    | .332**               | 1                                             | .341**                         | .349**                           | .298**                                            | .422**                   | .289**                          | .216**                         |
| To be born in (our country)                                                                                                                                   | .382**               | .341**                                        | 1                              | .660**                           | .178**                                            | .386**                   | .247**                          | .151**                         |
| To have (nationality) parents                                                                                                                                 | .413**               | .349**                                        | .660**                         | 1                                | .154**                                            | .402**                   | .238**                          | .119**                         |
| To respect (nationality) laws and institutions                                                                                                                | .089**               | .298**                                        | .178**                         | .154**                           | 1                                                 | .320**                   | .296**                          | .247**                         |
| To feel (nationality)                                                                                                                                         | .227**               | .422**                                        | .386**                         | .402**                           | .320**                                            | 1                        | .288**                          | .158**                         |
| To master (country language)                                                                                                                                  | .143**               | .289**                                        | .247**                         | .238**                           | .296**                                            | .288**                   | 1                               | .179**                         |
| To exercise citizens' rights                                                                                                                                  | .144**               | .216**                                        | .151**                         | .119**                           | .247**                                            | .158**                   | .179**                          | 1                              |
| **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).                                                                                                  |                      |                                               |                                |                                  |                                                   |                          |                                 |                                |

As was already mentioned, economic modernization was measured through two dimensions: economic development, represented by GDP per capita,<sup>10</sup> and urban development, represented by the level of urbanization.<sup>11</sup> For an indicator of political

10 We are aware that GDP is a very rough and sometimes poor indicator of economic development (in comparison with, e.g., the concept of Human Development - see Sen, 1999, and Sen, Dreze, and Fitoussi, 2010), but believe that it may serve as its general approximation in our case. Data about GDP per capita (in US\$) for 2009 are taken from the website: 'GDP per capita (in US \$)', *World Bank*, available via <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>, accessed in November 2014.

11 'Urban population (% of total)', *World Bank*, available via <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS>, accessed in November 2014.

modernization we chose the duration of a democratic regime, which is operationalized by the division of countries into three categories, depending on the continuity of their democratic political regimes during the 20<sup>th</sup> century: 1. continuously democratic: Belgium, Denmark, France, United Kingdom; 2. mostly democratic (over fifty years of democratic regimes): Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy; and 3. mostly undemocratic (less than fifty years of democratic regimes): Bulgaria, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Spain, Portugal and Serbia.

Cultural modernization was measured by three indicators, the first and the simplest one being the percentage of the population with a university degree in a country.<sup>12</sup> The second contextual indicator of cultural modernization was represented by the importance of religious practices measured as the frequency of church attendance (once a week or more frequently).<sup>13</sup> Finally, the third indicator was the dominant religious denomination, operationalized by the majority presence (as a percentage) of members of different churches: Catholic (Italy, Poland, Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, Hungary, Austria, Slovenia), Orthodox (Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria), and Protestant (Denmark, GB, Estonia). Since no one denomination was prevalent in Germany and Slovakia, these two countries form a separate group of 'mixed denomination'.

Apart from the factors representing three dimensions of overall modernization processes, we assumed that the influence of two other structural factors related to contemporary development should also be checked: ethnic composition of the population and migration rates. Ethnic composition is operationalized as the level of ethnic homogeneity; i.e. by the percentage of members of the dominant ethnic group in the total population of researched countries,<sup>14</sup> while the rate of migration is operationalized as the percentage of the total population not born in a country.<sup>15</sup>

12 Data on the percentage of people aged 15-64 with university education (in 2009) are taken from: 'Tertiary education statistic', *EUROSTAT*, available via [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Tertiary\\_education\\_statistics](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Tertiary_education_statistics), accessed in November 2014. However, since there were no data available for 2009 for Serbia, we used data for 2011 ('2011 Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Serbia. Book 3: Educational Attainment, Literacy and Computer Literacy', *Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia*, available via [http://media.popis2011.stat.rs/2012/publikacije/Saopstenje31januarKnjiga3\\_2\\_\\_engl%20\\_2\\_.pdf](http://media.popis2011.stat.rs/2012/publikacije/Saopstenje31januarKnjiga3_2__engl%20_2_.pdf), accessed in November 2014).

13 Rates of church attendance represent estimates for the year 2008, obtained through representative national samples within the European Social Survey (<http://nesstar.ess.nsd.uib.no/webview/>, accessed in March 2015). Exceptions are the rates for Austria (data were collected in 2006, within ESS), Serbia and Italy (data for those two countries were obtained in 2005 from the World Value Survey, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>, accessed in March 2015).

14 Data are taken from 'The World Fact Book', *Central Intelligence Agency*, available via [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos), accessed in November 2014.

15 Data are taken from 'World Population Policies 2005', *United Nations*, available via [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/WPP2005/WPP2005\\_full.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/WPP2005/WPP2005_full.pdf), accessed in November 2014.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF COMPONENTS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY**

Our analysis starts with a descriptive overview of the survey data along the distribution of three components of national identities – cultural, ascriptive and civic – among the population of seventeen European countries.

The means for each of the components for all countries (the theoretical mean is 2.50) show that most importance (almost equal) is awarded to two components of civic identity: mastery of a country's language (3.66), and respect for the laws and institutions (3.5). Interestingly, the only component valued below the theoretical mean (therefore disregarded as unimportant) was cultural: religion (mean: 2.47; these findings indicate that Brubaker's thesis about the increasing importance of religion in comparison with language as a source of cultural difference in contemporary Western societies needs stronger validation – see Brubaker, 2013). Finally, ascriptive components (nationality of parents, country of origin) scored the lowest after religion (both were awarded 2.99), which means that they were considered less important than civic and also other cultural components, but were still positively valued. Accordingly, our general analytical starting point is confirmed by research data: all three components of national identity are present in all researched countries, but to varying extents; in other words, identity may still be considered hybrid, but certain components which are characteristic of the demotic type of identity (especially ascriptive ones) are valued less highly than others.

## **THE JOINT EFFECT OF DETERMINANTS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY COMPONENTS (MULTILEVEL ANALYSIS)**

Checking the next hypotheses, however, was much more complicated. As already indicated, we attempted to show first that the modernization process has been conducive to the strengthening of civic components of national identity (and has possibly led to a decrease in the presence of at least some ascriptive and cultural components). As already mentioned, all the factors related to the influence on characteristics of national identity usually do not have isolated or independent effects, but are mainly interdependent (each variable may therefore impact another positively or negatively). In order to test for the individual effects of different individual and contextual factors on components of national identity (controlling for the effects of all other variables in the models) we ran hierarchical linear regression models (where individual respondents represent

the first level of the analysis, and the examined countries the second). The null (empty) model for each of the components indicates the amount of variance at the second (country) level of analysis, allowing us to decide whether to conduct a multilevel analysis. As shown in Tables 3-5, the indicator of 'level two' variance, Intra Class Correlation (ICC) is highest for cultural and lowest for civic components (0.05), which agrees with our previous finding about the low variance of civic components at the level of individual respondents.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, the relatively high ICC was found for cultural components (0.13) testified that 13 per cent of the total variation for that variable should be attributed to non-individual (contextual) factors. The percentage of contextual variation for ascriptive components lies somewhere between the previous two, amounting to 9 per cent.

The multilevel analysis is displayed for the different models for each of the examined national identity components as dependent variables on the one hand, and indicators of the examined modernization processes (economic, political or cultural) as contextual-level determinants, together with gender, education and age, as individual-level independent variables, on the other.

**Table 3:** *Multilevel unstandardized coefficient b's for the cultural component of national identity as a dependent variable*

|                                                                                                        | Null model | Model 1                       | Model 2                       | Model 3                       | Model 4                       | Model 5                       | Model 6                                      | Model 7                       | Model 8                       | Model 9                                      | Model 10                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Individual level variables                                                                             |            |                               |                               |                               |                               |                               |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |                                              |
| Females                                                                                                |            |                               |                               |                               |                               |                               |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |                                              |
| Age (dummy for older than 55 years)                                                                    |            | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000) | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000) | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000) | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000) | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000) | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000)                | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000) | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000) | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000)                | -0.28 (0.000)<br>0.80 (0.000)                |
| Education (dummy for university degree)                                                                |            | -0.43(0.000)                  | -0.43(0.000)                  | -0.43(0.000)                  | -0.43(0.000)                  | -0.43(0.000)                  | -0.43(0.000)                                 | -0.43(0.000)                  | -0.43(0.000)                  | -0.43(0.000)                                 | -0.43(0.000)                                 |
| Contextual level variables                                                                             |            |                               |                               |                               |                               |                               |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |                                              |
| Dominant denomination (religiously mixed countries as referent category): Catholic Orthodox Protestant |            |                               |                               |                               |                               |                               | 0.43 (0.267)<br>1.53 (0.001)<br>0.34 (0.458) |                               |                               | 0.46 (0.154)<br>1.22 (0.002)<br>0.48 (0.203) | 0.61 (0.000)<br>1.42 (0.000)<br>1.28 (0.000) |

16 Such a low level of ICC for civic components represents a borderline value when deciding whether to conduct a multilevel analysis.

|                                                                                                          |                 |                 |                  |                                |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                  |                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Democratic tradition (mostly undemocratic as referent category): Constantly democratic Mostly democratic |                 |                 |                  | -0.86 (0.016)<br>-0.17 (0.627) |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                  |                |
| GDP per capita                                                                                           |                 |                 | -0.00003 (0.000) |                                |                 |                 |                 |                 | -0.00002 (0.013) | -0.00002 (0.005) |                |
| Migration rate                                                                                           |                 |                 |                  |                                |                 |                 |                 | -0.09 (0.010)   |                  |                  |                |
| Tertiary education attainment                                                                            |                 |                 |                  |                                | -0.07 (0.000)   |                 |                 |                 | -0.05 (0.012)    |                  | -0.09 (0.000)  |
| Urbanization rate                                                                                        |                 |                 |                  |                                |                 | -0.03 (0.001)   |                 |                 |                  |                  |                |
| Intercept                                                                                                | 9.34 (0.000)    | 9.28 (0.000)    | 10.11 (0.000)    | 9.52 (0.000)                   | 10.73 (0.000)   | 11.70 (0.000)   | 8.72 (0.000)    | 9.93 (0.000)    | 10.85 (0.000)    | 9.33 (0.000)     | 10.25 (0.000)  |
| Variance component $\tau_{00}$                                                                           | 0.50            | 0.46            | 0.27             | 0.34                           | 0.27            | 0.29            | 0.24            | 0.33            | 0.20             | 0.16             | 0.07           |
| Variance component $\sigma^2$                                                                            | 3.35            | 3.14            | 3.14             | 3.14                           | 3.14            | 3.14            | 3.14            | 3.14            | 3.14             | 3.14             | 3.14           |
| LR test                                                                                                  | 2278.73 (0.000) | 2237.00 (0.000) | 1309.95 (0.000)  | 1675.09 (0.000)                | 1270.32 (0.000) | 1406.58 (0.000) | 1173.47 (0.000) | 1624.91 (0.000) | 955.27 (0.000)   | 790.07 (0.000)   | 293.84 (0.000) |
| ICC                                                                                                      | 0.13            |                 |                  |                                |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                  |                |
| $R^2$ individual level                                                                                   | 0.000           | 0.06            | 0.06             | 0.06                           | 0.06            | 0.06            | 0.06            | 0.06            | 0.06             | 0.06             | 0.06           |
| $R^2$ contextual level                                                                                   | 0.000           | 0.08            | 0.46             | 0.32                           | 0.46            | 0.42            | 0.52            | 0.34            | 0.60             | 0.68             | 0.86           |
| N of respondents                                                                                         | 16613           | 16613           | 16613            | 16613                          | 16613           | 16613           | 16613           | 16613           | 16613            | 16613            | 16613          |
| N of groups                                                                                              | 17              | 17              | 17               | 17                             | 17              | 17              | 17              | 17              | 17               | 17               | 17             |

**Table 4:** Multilevel unstandardized coefficient *b*'s for the ascriptive component of national identity as dependent variable

|                                                                                                          | Null model   | Model 1                       | Model 2                       | Model 3                        | Model 4                       | Model 5                       | Model 6                                      | Model 7                       | Model 8                       | Model 9                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Individual level variables                                                                               |              |                               |                               |                                |                               |                               |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |
| Females                                                                                                  |              |                               |                               |                                |                               |                               |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |
| Age dummy (older than 55 years)                                                                          |              | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000) | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000) | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000)  | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000) | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000) | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000)                | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000) | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000) | -0.09 (0.001)<br>0.58 (0.000)                |
| Education dummy (university degree)                                                                      |              | -0.64(0.000)                  | -0.64(0.000)                  | -0.64(0.000)                   | -0.64(0.000)                  | -0.64(0.000)                  | -0.64(0.000)                                 | -0.64(0.000)                  | -0.64(0.000)                  | -0.64(0.000)                                 |
| Contextual level variables                                                                               |              |                               |                               |                                |                               |                               |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |
| Dominant denomination (religiously mixed countries as referent category): Catholic Orthodox Protestant   |              |                               |                               |                                |                               |                               | 0.33 (0.336)<br>0.93 (0.018)<br>0.04 (0.910) |                               |                               | 0.35 (0.156)<br>0.60 (0.047)<br>0.20 (0.504) |
| Democratic tradition (mostly undemocratic as referent category): Constantly democratic Mostly democratic |              |                               |                               | -0.88 (0.000)<br>-0.39 (0.094) |                               |                               |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |
| GDP per capita                                                                                           |              |                               | -0.00003 (0.000)              |                                |                               |                               |                                              |                               | -0.00002 (0.000)              | -0.00002 (0.000)                             |
| Migration rate                                                                                           |              |                               |                               |                                |                               |                               |                                              | -0.08 (0.000)                 |                               |                                              |
| Tertiary education attainment                                                                            |              |                               |                               |                                | -0.05 (0.004)                 |                               |                                              |                               | -0.03 (0.072)                 |                                              |
| Urbanization rate                                                                                        |              |                               |                               |                                |                               | -0.02 (0.005)                 |                                              |                               |                               |                                              |
| Intercept                                                                                                | 5.96 (0.000) | 5.95 (0.000)                  | 6.68 (0.000)                  | 6.25 (0.000)                   | 6.95 (0.000)                  | 7.65 (0.000)                  | 5.61 (0.000)                                 | 6.52 (0.000)                  | 7.07 (0.000)                  | 6.25 (0.000)                                 |
| Variance component $\tau_{00}$                                                                           | 0.31         | 0.27                          | 0.12                          | 0.15                           | 0.18                          | 0.19                          | 0.18                                         | 0.18                          | 0.10                          | 0.10                                         |

|                               |                    |                    |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Variance component $\delta^2$ | 3.11               | 2.95               | 2.95              | 2.95              | 2.95              | 2.95              | 2.95              | 2.95              | 2.95              | 2.95              |
| LR test                       | 1528.67<br>(0.000) | 1397.82<br>(0.000) | 637.21<br>(0.000) | 757.03<br>(0.000) | 887.46<br>(0.000) | 943.60<br>(0.000) | 925.69<br>(0.000) | 918.89<br>(0.000) | 529.99<br>(0.000) | 497.55<br>(0.000) |
| ICC                           | 0.09               |                    |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| $R^2$<br>individual level     | 0.00               | 0.05               | 0.05              | 0.05              | 0.05              | 0.05              | 0.05              | 0.05              | 0.05              | 0.05              |
| $R^2$<br>contextual level     | 0.00               | 0.13               | 0.63              | 0.52              | 0.42              | 0.39              | 0.42              | 0.42              | 0.80              | 0.68              |
| N of respondents              | 16613              | 16613              | 16613             | 16613             | 16613             | 16613             | 16613             | 16613             | 16613             | 16613             |
| N of groups                   | 17                 | 17                 | 17                | 17                | 17                | 17                | 17                | 17                | 17                | 17                |

**Table 5:** Multilevel unstandardized coefficient  $b$ 's for the civic component of national identity as dependent variable

|                                                | Null model        | Model 1           | Model 2              | Model 3           | Model 4               |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Individual level variables                     |                   |                   |                      |                   |                       |
| Females                                        |                   | -0.12 (0.000)     | -0.12 (0.000)        | -0.12 (0.000)     | -0.12 (0.000)         |
| Age dummy (older than 55 years)                |                   | 0.33 (0.000)      | 0.33 (0.000)         | 0.33 (0.000)      | 0.33 (0.000)          |
| Education dummy (university degree)            |                   |                   | -0.006 (0.814)       | -0.006 (0.814)    | -0.007 (0.804)        |
| Contextual level variables                     |                   |                   |                      |                   |                       |
| GDP per capita                                 |                   |                   | 0.0000005<br>(0.361) |                   | 0.00005<br>(0.002)    |
| Tertiary education attainment                  |                   |                   |                      | 0.008 (0.549)     | 0.06 (0.006)          |
| Interaction GDP pc and tertiary education att. |                   |                   |                      |                   | -0.0000002<br>(0.003) |
| Intercept                                      | 10.39 (0.000)     | 10.32 (0.000)     | 10.18 (0.000)        | 10.16 (0.000)     | 8.95 (0.000)          |
| Variance component $\tau_{00}$                 | 0.11              | 0.11              | 0.10                 | 0.10              | 0.07                  |
| Variance component $\delta^2$                  | 2.14              | 2.11              | 2.11                 | 2.11              | 2.11                  |
| LR test                                        | 819.52<br>(0.000) | 772.41<br>(0.000) | 737.61<br>(0.000)    | 754.42<br>(0.000) | 441.46<br>(0.000)     |
| ICC                                            | 0.05              |                   |                      |                   |                       |
| $R^2$<br>individual level                      | 0.00              | 0.01              | 0.01                 | 0.01              | 0.01                  |
| $R^2$<br>contextual level                      | 0.00              | 0.00              | 0.09                 | 0.09              | 0.36                  |
| N of respondents                               | 16613             | 16613             | 16613                | 16613             | 16613                 |
| N of groups                                    | 17                | 17                | 17                   | 17                | 17                    |

## ***Individual-level variables***

Individual variables – gender, age and education – in all constructed models (Tables 3-5) proved to be statistically significant predictors of the examined national identity components, with an unexpected truancy of connection between the education of respondents (represented by a dummy variable for university degree) and civic components (Table 5).<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, with respect to gender it appears that, compared to men, women are less likely to consider all three components important, revealing their stronger inclination to distance themselves from all forms of national identification. Thus, the strength of this relationship remained unchanged when contextual factors were introduced in the models, as was also the case with the strength of the effect of the other two individual-level predictors.

The impact of age<sup>18</sup> contrasts with that of gender. Acceptance of all of the examined components of national identity rises with respondent age. Essentially, this could be a consequence of either changes in socio-psychological characteristics related to biological processes (greater closure towards the world as a result of advancing age, etc.), or of the lower level of socialization exposure to (some) modernization processes. Moreover, this finding could be taken as testament to the general cultural changes that have occurred during the last decades (globalization, European integration, etc.) which have decreased the importance of national identification, and to which younger generations are more exposed.

University education is significantly negatively related to the acceptance of cultural and ascriptive components, and completely unrelated to the civic components of national identity. Following the previous interpretation matrix, we may conclude that national identification, in general, is dropping in importance for a growing number of highly educated people in Europe.

## ***Contextual level variables***

Further to the individual traits of the respondents, we also examined the effect of contextual variables on components of national identity. The models were built by introducing different modernization indicators as contextual-level independent variables. The effects of contextual factors on cultural and ascriptive

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17 However, it should be noted that the small number of individual-level predictors that were available led to relatively poor values of R squared and therefore to low percentages of explained variances for individual-level models: 6% on cultural components, 5% on ascriptive and only 1% on civic components.

18 Represented by dummy variable for respondents over 55 years old.

components of national identity proved to be somewhat similar (as expected!), as opposed to civic components. However, we here present only those models that show statistically significant effects of the examined contextual factors on the components of national identity. Therefore, the final models for each of the components will inevitably differ.

The first set of models (Table 3), referring to the contextual determinants of cultural components, shows that basic modernization factors do have the hypothesized effects in terms of their direction, although at a relatively uneven level of intensity. In Model 2, for example, the economic development indicator (GDP per capita), as expected, proves to be a statistically significant negative predictor of cultural components (a higher level of economic development goes hand in hand with a decrease in the importance awarded to cultural traits), and the same goes for its effect on the ascriptive component (Table 4, Model 2). Political modernization, represented by the stability of a democratic regime, also proved to be a statistically significant predictor of both the cultural and ascriptive traits of national identity (Tables 3 and 4, Model 3), indicating that the extent of acceptance of these two components decreases as democratic stability grows. Finally, the factor representing cultural development (attainment of tertiary education) also proves to be a significant predictor of cultural and ascriptive components (again, the higher the level of cultural modernization, the lower the scores on two scales; see Model 4 in Tables 3 and 4).

Other modernization indicators mentioned above also had statistically significant effects on the extent of acceptance of the cultural and ascriptive components of national identity as sole contextual predictors in multilevel regression models. Higher levels of urbanization negatively influence the prevalence of cultural and ascriptive components (Model 5 in Tables 3 and 4), while data related to religious denominations show that compared with religiously mixed communities, respondents in predominantly Orthodox countries tend to more strongly support ascriptive and cultural traits (Model 6 in Tables 3 and 4). On the other hand, the third indicator of cultural modernization – church attendance rates – in contrast to our hypothesis proved to be a statistically insignificant predictor of any of the examined components of national identity (and therefore is not shown in the tables). Finally, the effect of rates of migration is also in tune with our hypothesis: the higher the level of migration, the lower the importance given to ascriptive and cultural components becomes (Model 7 in Tables 3 and 4).

Besides establishing the individual effects of the analyzed contextual predictors of national identity components, our goal was to determine whether they tend to change when controlling for the effect of other contextual variables. However, due to space limitations, we here present only the models for which the causal effect of the examined predictors was statistically significant. In terms of the models

which represent the contextual predictors of cultural components, it is clear that the effect of tertiary education attainment remains significant (and only slightly changed) when controlling for the effect of GDP per capita (Model 8 in Table 3). The same goes for the effect of religious denomination when controlling for the effect of GDP per capita (Model 9 in Table 3). As for models representing the predictors of ascriptive components, the effect of religious denomination (controlling for the effect of GDP per capita) slightly decreases, although it remains statistically significant (Model 9 in Table 4), while the effect of tertiary education attainment (also when controlling for the economic development indicator) loses its significance and predictive value (Model 8, Table 4). Furthermore, going back to cultural components, the model that proved to be the best in terms of the share of contextual variance explained (see the R square values) is that which contained dummy variables for religious denomination and the percentage of highly educated population as contextual predictors (Model 10 in Table 3). Namely, when controlling for the effect of the attainment of a tertiary education, the effect of all three denominations – Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic – compared with religiously mixed communities as the referent variable, now gains importance, increasing the inclination to accept national identity cultural components. Although the rate of church attendance did not prove to be a statistically significant sole predictor of any of the three components, when controlling for the effect of the dominant denomination, its effect gains importance in predicting the acceptance of cultural and ascriptive components in such a way that a higher incidence of traditional religious practice (regardless of the dominant denomination) correlates with stronger acceptance of cultural and ascriptive traits of national identity (with no effect whatsoever on the acceptance of civic components).<sup>19</sup>

However, in multilevel regression models that represent the contextual predictors of civic components, not one of the independent variables at the second level of analysis was of statistical significance (although the directions of the relationships were as expected). Nevertheless, when introducing the interaction effect between GDP per capita and tertiary education attainment rate in the model, those two predictors, as well as their interaction, became statistically significant covariates of civic components: the higher the level of economic modernization (when controlling for the effect of cultural modernization and their interaction effect) the greater the acceptance of civic components of national identity (model 4 in Table 5). The negative value of unstandardized coefficient b

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19 In a multilevel regression model, when controlling for age, education and gender as level one predictors, and dummy variables for Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox denomination as level two predictors, the effect of the rate of church attendance on cultural and ascriptive components is significant and positive (with a coefficient b of 0.03 for cultural and 0.02 for ascriptive components as dependent variables).

for the interaction effect, however, suggests the following conclusion: the higher the level of economic development of the country, the more the effect of tertiary education attainment on the acceptance of civic components decreases.

In short, the initial insights into all presented models allows the preliminary conclusion that the effects of the examined contextual factors on the components of national identity (when controlling for the effects of other assumed predictors) are in accordance with their individual influence in the case of cultural and ascriptive components, but differ with respect to civic components.

If we choose to interpret the multilevel analysis from another angle – by including the modernization indicators – it seems that, in the case of cultural and ascriptive components, almost all the analysed indicators of modernization (in the three subsystems) prove to be statistically significant predictors, as indicated in our hypothetical framework: growing modernization is leading to a decrease in the importance of both cultural and ascriptive components of national identity. However, in the case of civic components our hypotheses were only partially confirmed: the expected direction of the relationship was confirmed for indicators representing economic (GDP per capita) and cultural development (tertiary education attainment), but only when controlling for their interaction. This finding leads us to a potentially unexpected conclusion: the relationship between cultural and ascriptive components of national identity, on the one hand, and civic components on the other, is far from oppositional, but is rather relatively neutral. An increase in the level of acceptance of civic components does not necessarily lead to a drop in the level of acceptance of the other two components, since the latter is determined by other factors that need to be analysed further (a clue to the potential direction of further analysis is given by the findings about individual-level predictors: a higher level of education appears to be related to decreases in the importance of this – national – form of collective identity in general). On the other hand, when controlling for the effect of economic development, this particular element of modernization apparently gains in importance with the growing acceptance of civic components. However, we should again underline the fact that the positive effect of tertiary education attainment on civic components may be registered only up to a certain level of economic development, after which it tends to decrease. In a few words, it seems that modernization, represented here in its basic aspects, almost inevitably leads to the diminishment of the importance of ethnic identification in its cultural and ascriptive aspects, as well as to dual processes relevant for civic identity: the strengthening, or alternatively, weakening, of all forms of collective identity.

In brief, it seems that this attempt at the analysis of a synthesis of a wide set of factors which determine the extent of the acceptance of the national identity components under examination simultaneously questions, as well as informs,

our hypotheses and conclusions. Needless to say, these findings can hardly be regarded as unexpected, keeping in mind the complex nature of the identity-formation process, the multitude of individual and social factors this process involves, the complexity of these factors, and the fact that some of the examined causal agents may produce contradictory effects on the components of national identity (let us recall that the break with the socialist regime in Eastern Europe simultaneously increased the tendency towards the strengthening of national sovereignty and nationalism, and the transfer of a substantial part thereof to the EU).

## CONCLUSIONS

Having analyzed the survey data, what may we finally conclude about the relationships between processes of modernization and national identity characteristics? Another look at our data shows that the 'hardest' and the simplest indicator of modernization proved to be the best predictor: the level of economic development, represented by GDP per capita is significantly positively correlated to the spread of the civic components of national identity (Model 4, Table 5), and negatively with the spread of cultural and ascriptive components (Models 2, 8 and 9 in Tables 3 and 4). Naturally, the strength of the relationship in some models has been reduced by its overlap with other factors, but the basic hypothesis that guided our analysis – about the deterministic influence of modernization on decreasing the spread of ascriptive and of cultural components – is supported by the most important, economic, dimension. On the other hand, the effect of the same factor on civic components is rather ambiguous: in some cases it increases their significance, and in others reduces it (as a rule, the negative effect of GDP per capita on civic components goes hand in hand with its similar effect on the other two components – cultural and ascriptive). An individual-level variable – the dummy variable for university education – testifies to the same, since it decreases the importance of ascriptive and cultural components, even if it is not significant for the spread of civic ones. Finally, findings about the influence of the share of migrants in the population are very indicative, since this indicator proves to be significantly correlated to the lower level of acceptance of the ascriptive and cultural components of identity, precisely in the framework wherein these components are basically defined (ethnic 'purity').

These findings and the preceding analysis of the isolated effects of individual factors together much more strongly support our hypotheses. At the very beginning of the analysis we firstly saw that the components of civic identity as a whole were rated higher than others, and have the lowest level of individual

and contextual variation. Secondly, almost all the indicators for modernization we used were related to identity components in the way we hypothesized (so that a higher level of modernization stimulates the spread of civic components and hinders appreciation of the ascriptive and cultural components), with the following limitation: most of these factors have a strong influence up to a certain developmental level, after which their influence decreases. In short, our empirical evidence suggests that the advancement of the modernization process changes the characteristics of national identity by increasing the importance of its civic components which are necessary for the functioning of an ever-more interdependent world. However, this does not mean that other components disappear; in our analysis we only witnessed their partial withdrawal, parallel with a (potential) total decline in the importance of all forms of national identity.

It is also clear that our last conclusion may be formulated from a different perspective: even if modernization is creating the conditions for the spread of the civic components of national identity, obstacles to this expansion arise at a certain point of development and support for the existence of substantive components remains, securing the survival of 'natural' borders between ethnic groups (evidenced by the growing ethnic nationalism in numerous EU countries over the last few years). This contradictory movement of spread/survival is the result of the extremely complex effects of numerous factors which act in different directions so that their outcome in specific social surroundings cannot be simply predicted. National identities, therefore, retain their hybrid nature, notwithstanding changes in the proportions of their components, which still makes the character of interethnic relations within and between nation-states an open question.

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