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Territorial attachment in the age of globalization: The case of Western Europe

Marco Antonsich
Central European University, Hungary

Edward C. Holland
University of Colorado at Boulder, USA

Abstract

The age of globalization has often been associated with de-/re-territorialization processes. The increasing integration of markets and the appearance of new modes of economic production and capital accumulation on the one hand, and the transformation of forms of political governance on the other, have led to the emergence of new territorial actors at the supra-national and sub-national scales. While these economic and political de-/re-territorialization processes have been studied at length, relatively little attention has been paid to the transformation of the territorial identities associated with these spaces. The aim of the present study is twofold. First, it aims to understand whether territorial identities are experiencing a similar re-scaling along with modes of economic production and forms of political governance. Second, it explores which factors today explain the attachment of people to their territories. A descriptive analysis of Eurobarometer survey data for Western Europe reveals no signs of a re-scaling of territorial identities, pointing to a sort of inertia of these identities in relation to the changing of political and economic structures. A statistical model on four scales of territorial attachment (local, regional, national and European) shows the complexity of its formation, as both personal compositional and regional contextual factors should be taken into account.

Keywords

Attachment, European, identity, local, national, regional

Introduction

The relationship between territory and collective identity in the age of globalization is a complex one. Since the early 1990s, a growing literature has questioned the persistence of the nation-state as an effective economic and territorial unit for ensuring the welfare of its inhabitants (Badie, 1995; Guéhenno, 1995; O'Brien, 1992; Ohmae, 1993). The accelerated circulation of people, commodities, capital, information and images has supposedly undermined the role and power of the nation-state (Amin and Thrift, 1995; Brenner, 1999; Castells, 2000; Hirst and Thompson, 1995; Jessop, 1993; Jones, 2001; Keating, 1998; Le Galès, 2002; Swyngedouw, 1997). At the same time, newly empowered territorial units (cities, regions, and supra-national

Corresponding author:
Marco Antonsich, Department of International Relations and European Studies, Central European University, Nádor utca, 9, Budapest 1051, Hungary.
Email: AntonsichM@ceu.hu

institutions) have emerged as significant actors in the functioning of the global economy, questioning, directly or indirectly, the role of the nation-state as the sole container of territorial identities (Keating, 2009; Paasi, 2009; Sassen, 2006; Taylor, 2000).

This process of re-scaling, defined here as the shifting of a variety of processes away from their traditional level of aggregation, has largely been studied in terms of the transformation of modes of economic production and forms of political governance. Yet, whether this process of re-scaling also influences the ways people express their collective identities is something that has been only partially investigated (Agnew, 1999; Berezin and Schain, 2003; Castells, 1997; Croucher, 2004; Fitjar, 2010; Mlinar, 1992; Savage et al., 2004; Scholte, 1996; Yaeger, 1996). In other words, is the re-scaling of political and economic processes accompanied by a similar re-scaling of territorial identities?

The purpose of this article is to offer a quantitative analysis of territorial identities in the present globalized era, focusing on both the question above and the factors that today explain territorial identities. Operatively, the study analyses Eurobarometer survey data for territorial attachment covering the original 15 member states of the European Union (EU-15) – a geographical area that encompasses almost all of Western Europe. The explicit assumption we make is that, at least in quantitative terms, territorial attachment can be used as a proxy to study territorial identities. Although this operationalization is unavoidable, as Eurobarometer does not have a question about 'identity' per se, we would argue that attachment and identity are often viewed in the literature as closely related or used interchangeably (Lewicka, 2008; Low and Altman, 1992; Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996; Williams et al., 1992). Moreover, looking at the praxis adopted in other survey studies concerned with territorial identities, these latter are also operationalized in alternative terms – for instance, as 'belonging' (European Values Study) or as a feeling of 'closeness' (International Social Survey Programme).

The article is divided into three parts. The first part reviews the literature on the interaction between place and identity, as theorized by scholars working in humanistic geography and environmental psychology, which in turn serves as the basis for interpreting the formation and consolidation of territorial attachments. In the second part, we examine the series of Eurobarometer survey data (1991–2007) for territorial attachment at four scales (local, regional, national and European) to answer the 're-scaling' question. The third part analyses statistically the same four scales in order to understand the predictors of territorial attachment, testing the significance of a set of controls and geographically defined contextual variables included in the statistical model. A concluding section summarizes the key findings and briefly suggests avenues for further work on the topic.

Geography, place and the making of territorial attachment

In her voluminous study of the imbrications of territory, authority and rights, Sassen (2006) points to the link between territorial identities, political institutions and economic modes of production. Since its emergence in the 18th century as a technical device of the European monarchical states to standardize, homogenize and disciplinize social and material reality (Alliès, 1980), territory has been theorized in close connection with the 'political' and the 'cultural' – a perspective that continues to inform scholarly attempts to investigate the restructuring of contemporary territorialities (Ansell and Di Palma, 2004; Antonsich, 2009).

Departing from these theoretical premises, it is legitimate to analyse whether the re-scaling associated with the shift from a Fordist economy, based on mass production and consumption organized at the national scale, to the present post-Fordist economy, characterized by local flexible production working within an inter-dependent market organized at the global scale (Jessop, 1994), is also associated with a shift in territorial attachment and identity. Certainly, the 're-scaling' of modes of economic production is not just a new name to capture an old phenomenon. The de-nationalization process experienced by present economies is not only a historical shift in the forms of capital (re) production and accumulation (Brenner, 1999), but also a feature of contemporary forms of political governance, with new actors claiming spaces of political action which once belonged exclusively to the state (Keating, 1998; Le Galès, 2002).

Numerous scholars, working in both geography and environmental psychology (see, for example, Antonsich, 2010a and Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001, respectively), have used 'place attachment', or the related 'sense of place', as key organizing concepts to understand how individuals relate to a given geographical space. Although the strength of an 'affective bond' between people and places is widely agreed upon – the significance of a particular place is determined by a human's ability to ascribe meaning to that place (Tuan, 1976) – place itself remains an abstract concept.

Agnew's (1989: 9) proposal for a 'concept of place in which spatially extensive fields of economic and political power are mediated through historically defined conjunctures of social interaction specific to localities' moves towards a more grounded conceptualization. Taking this idea further, Agnew (1987, 1996) emphasizes the notion of geographic context in order to investigate how geographic location and locale potentially influence political opinion and collective perceptions. Though we do not equate place and territory, the latter, defined here as a 'politico-institutional bounded space' (Antonsich, 2009: 789), is an environment – like place – that influences a variety of individual and collective opinions. In turn, if territory is understood, following Elden (2010: 811), as 'a political technology', it might also become something with which the individuals sited within it identify and to which they are attached. As a 'political technology', territory can indeed supplement an emotional connection through the provision of services (i.e. education) or by operating as economic containers for growth (Taylor, 1994), among other examples. While the 'territorial' has a historical basis, we are interested here in contemporary manifestations of attachment to territory in some of its actual forms: the local, the regional, the national and the European. Territories, therefore, at different scales, can be both the contexts that shape people's feeling of attachment and the source of attachment itself.

Unlike the related concept of place attachment, territorial attachment has been both under-theorized and infrequently subjected to empirical analysis (see Marks, 1999 for an exception). In part, the present article is a first attempt at addressing these shortcomings in the wider literature. Identity is not absolute, and individuals can simultaneously maintain loyalties and attachments to different territorial aggregates (Herb and Kaplan, 1999). As also observed by Marks (1999: 87), individuals may indeed have mutually inclusive territorial identities. Marks, against whose empirical work we partly position our analysis, leaves a set of important points unaddressed: how identities are mobilized in different locales, and the alternative characteristics that affect territorial attachment among individuals. Before moving to these questions, we first want to analyse the relevance of territorial identities and, more specifically, understand whether, in a context of increased globalization processes, territorial identities have experienced any type of re-scaling. Our attempt to understand what motivates territorial attachment considers both individual characteristics and contextual variables variously affected by territorialized space.

The empirics of territorial attachment

Our choice to focus on Western Europe has both theoretical and practical justifications. Theoretically, because of the high exposure to globalization processes (i.e. the internationalization of markets, the international mobility of people and goods, technological innovation, communication flows, etc.), this region is a relevant case study to test the hypothesis of the 're-scaling' of territorial identity in the post-Fordist era. Practically, the Eurobarometer Standard Survey lacks an adequate time series on territorial attachment for Europe as a whole.[1]

The present study focuses on Eurobarometer data collected in response to the following question: 'People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country, or to Europe. Please tell me how attached you feel to . . . ?'. Respondents answered the question on the basis of a four-point Likert-type scale: 'very attached', 'fairly attached', 'not very attached' and 'not at all attached'. This question has been asked periodically since 1991, though a slightly different wording has been used in some rounds.[2] Figure 1 shows the cumulative trend ('very attached' + 'fairly attached') for the four levels of territorial attachment, aggregated across the EU-15 states.[3]

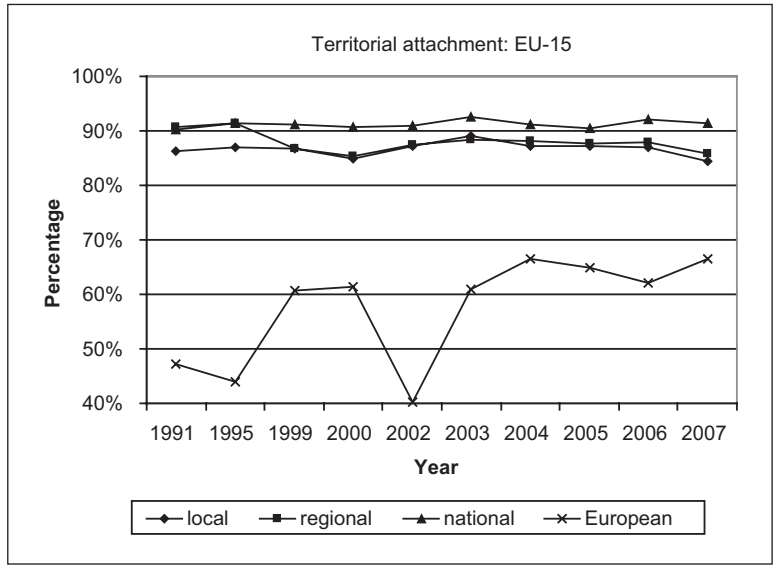

Figure 1. Territorial attachment in EU-15 ('very' + 'fairly'), 1991–2007.
Source: Eurobarometer (1991–2007).

Apart from European attachment, which displays an inconsistent pattern across surveys, the other three forms of attachment have been generally stable for the last two decades. This suggests that the re-scaling of the political and economic functions of the nation-state has not been accompanied by a similar rescaling of territorial identities, as measured in terms of territorial attachment. This finding somewhat challenges the widespread assumption that globalization is associated with, among other things, an increase in local or regional identities.

Overall, but not by a large margin, the national remains the principal form of identification for respondents. In 2007, 91% of respondents affirmed to be either 'very' (55%) or 'fairly' (36%) attached to their own country. This result is consistent with the findings of the 1991 survey, when 90% of respondents answered that they were 'very' (58%) or 'fairly' (32%) attached to their own nation. One can therefore infer that either national identity, as operationalized through attachment, is not affected by the changing politico-economic conditions associated with globalization and the post-Fordist economy or such identification is inelastic, with the logic of social identification responding only gradually to changes in political–economic structures (Poche, 1992).

Similar considerations apply to local and regional attachments. Interestingly, the two overlap across surveys, and thus suggest that people might tend to look at their locality and their region in similar ways – a finding also confirmed by a recent qualitative study (Antonsich, 2010b). In the case of European attachment, variation across surveys is clear. Apart from a major downturn registered in 2002 – the year the euro entered circulation – attachment to Europe is increasing. In 2007, 67% of people interviewed responded that they were either 'very' (22%) or 'fairly' (45%) attached to Europe – an increase of 19% from the 1991 survey, when, overall, 48% of respondents declared themselves as either 'very' (12%) or 'fairly' (36%) attached. To some extent, these figures support the argument that a sense of Europeanness can be generated *a posteriori* by the process of European integration itself, rather than being a necessary, pre-existing condition for integration (Kohli, 2000; Gabel, 1998a). Whether such a feeling, though, can endure through periods of serious stress, such as those associated with the EU's eastern enlargement (in 2004 and 2007) or the present 'Euro crisis', is an issue that cannot be addressed within the space of this article.

Here we would like instead to highlight the positive correlation among territorial identities. Table 1

Table 1. Correlation coefficients for territorial attachment.

	Local		Regional		National	
	1995	2007	1995	2007	1995	2007
Local	1.000	1.000	–	–	–	–
Regional	0.601	0.665	1.000	1.000	–	–
National	0.363	0.449	0.396	0.503	1.000	1.000
European	0.087	0.142	0.090	0.190	0.160	0.281

Source: Eb 43.1bis (1995); Eb 67.1 (2007).
All values are significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

shows correlation coefficients (Kendall's tau-b) for local, regional, national and European attachment for individual respondents using two Eurobarometer datasets, fielded respectively in 1995 (EB 43.1bis) and in 2007 (EB 67.1).[4]

Territorial identities at different scales are positively correlated for individuals – something that has been suggested in previous studies (Duchesne and Frognier, 1995; Marks, 1999; Opp, 2005).[5] Attachment is not mutually exclusive, though correlation is stronger across 'neighbouring' scales – the local and regional being more correlated than the local and national, for example. The table also shows longitudinal change, as the tau coefficients increase from 1995 to 2007 for all comparisons. This suggests that territorial attachment is blended to a greater extent than in the mid-1990s. Respondents in 2007 were more likely to feel simultaneously attached to the regional and European scales. In other words, territorial identities tend to be more closely knitted today than 15 years ago; in the age of globalization, the relationship between forms of territorial identity has strengthened.

One important caveat applies to the present analysis – could the territorial re-scaling have taken place before 1991? Rokkan and Urwin (1983: 118), for instance, talk of a revival of regionalist movements already back in the 1960s and 1970s. In order to address this potential issue we considered a different dataset, the European Values Study, which, since 1981, has periodically asked, among others, the two following questions: 'To which of these geographical groups would you say you belong to first of all? Locality or town where you live; region of country where you live; your country as a whole; [continent]; the world as a whole'; 'And next? [same options]'.

Figure 2 shows the longitudinal cumulative (first and second choices) levels of geographical belonging, aggregated across six Western European countries.[6] The absolute values for each geographical unit offer a somewhat different picture from that observed in the Eurobarometer surveys. This can be due to, among other factors, the limited number of countries and/or the different geographical units included in the European Values Study survey. Here, though, we are not concerned with a comparison of the two surveys, but with the time under investigation. Apart from the years 1999–2000, when regional and country belongings experienced a remarkable change (a change which, surprisingly, goes in the opposite direction from that detected in the Eurobarometer surveys for the same years), Figure 2 does not reveal any re-scaling of territorial identities even for the longer period under consideration – 1981–2008. Available survey data do not allow for an earlier analysis.[7] Yet, even if an increase of regional identities happened in the 1960s and 1970s, it would be unlikely to be caused by globalization processes as defined above, as these processes had not yet fully manifested in those years.

The determinants of territorial attachment

The above results are interesting, if somewhat expected. Despite the re-scaling of modes of economic production and forms of political governance, respondents in the Eurobarometer surveys indicate stable levels of high attachment to traditional 'socio-spatial containers': the local, regional and national. This review provides little insight, however, into the determinants of such territorial attachment, a shortfall that leaves a range of questions unanswered. In order to explore what factors account for attachment across the four territorial scales, we have merged a specific Eurobarometer dataset (EB 60.1, 2003) with Eurostat data concerning the socio-demographic features of the regions where individuals

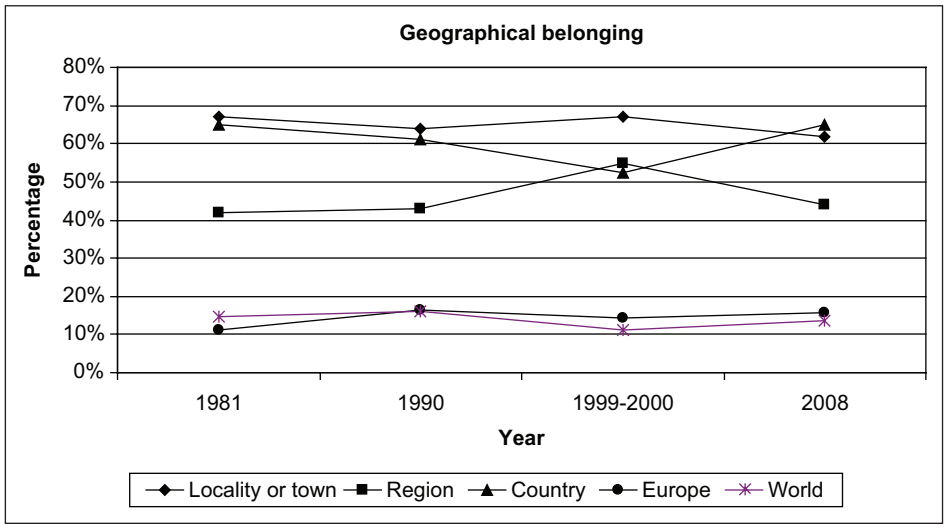

Figure 2. Geographical belonging ('first' + 'second' choice). Aggregated mean values for the following countries: France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Ireland.
Source: European Values Study.

were surveyed.[8] This multi-level approach was employed to evaluate the relevance of both individual characteristics and geographical context in influencing strength of territorial attachment. As very few studies (Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez, 2001; Marks, 1999; Opp, 2005) have so far investigated territorial identities at multiple scales, our analysis is largely explorative.

The inclusion of the Eurostat variables was motivated by theoretical considerations, but had to be positioned against restrictions resulting from the limited number of data available. Given the theoretical interests of the paper – the impact of globalization on territorial identity and attachment – we incorporated variables that addressed the economic structure of the region, its welfare, its economic performance, its rural/urban character and the levels of unemployment of the region's inhabitants. The implicit rationale driving this selection was the assumption that economic factors are usually significant in explaining social attitudes. Practically, however, Eurostat data presented some limitations in terms of both time and geographical coverage. Reaching a compromise between theory and practicality, the following contextual indicators were chosen: gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)); GDP growth; unemployment rate; employment in technology and knowledge-intensive sectors; and population density. The contextual variables – all measured at NUTS level 2[9] – are defined as follows:

- **GDP per capita (PPP)**: gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices measured in PPP per inhabitant.
- **GDP growth**: real growth rate of regional GDP at market prices measured as a percentage change on the previous year.
- **Unemployment rate**: unemployed persons as a percent of the total workforce.
- **Employment in high-technology sectors**: employed persons in technology and knowledge-intensive sectors as a percentage of total employment. This variable aims to capture the degree of exposure of the region to the global economy.
- **Population density**: defined as inhabitants per square kilometre, population density is an indicator that aims to capture the urban/rural character of the regions under scrutiny.

In order to take into consideration the variance of these indicators over time, the mean values for the years 2001–2003 were used instead of the 2003 data –with the exception of data for population density; for a number of regions, data were not available for the year 2001.[10] By averaging the data longitudinally, we addressed the theoretical concern (see, for example, Tunstall et al., 2000) that people's behaviour is dependent more on the perception of a change (e.g. the perception that this year my income has decreased in relation to last year) than on their actual living condition (e.g. how much money I have right now).

These regional-scale variables were complemented by demographic and compositional controls drawn from the Eurobarometer dataset, including:

- **Geo-demographic categories**: gender, age, education, employment status and the geographic character of a respondent's place of residence – rural or small or large town (coded continuously).
- **Personal values and attitudes of the respondents**: personal expectation about one's life (coded continuously, with 1 = worse, 2 = same and 3 = better); near-term expectation about the economic situation of the country of residence (coded in the same order as personal expectation); importance of family in day-to-day life (coded as a dummy variable, with 1 = important); willingness to learn a foreign language (1 = willing, 0 = not willing); national pride (coded as a dummy variable, with 1 = fairly or very proud); European pride (coded in the same fashion as national pride); political preference (categorized continuously as right, centre and left); and political interest (how often a respondent speaks with his or her friends about politics, continuously coded from 1 = never to 3 = frequently).

The justification for including this last set of controls was based on prior statistical studies on European attachment and identity. This work has found that oftentimes individuals' answers are dependent more on subjective perceptions about reality than on objective economic indicators (Carey, 2002; Gabel and Whitten, 1997). Moreover, following the work by Inglehart (1970, 1977) on the importance of cognitive mobilization for explaining support for the EU, we included a variable that measures the degree to which an individual discusses political issues in a non-professional setting (see also Carey, 2002).[11]

Modelling

In the analysis, structuring the dependent variable was complicated by the fact that responses for territorial attachment were collected on a four-point Likert-type scale, as introduced above. We initially ran an ordinal regression; this is an appropriate model choice when the data are clearly ordered. However, the critical assumption of this model, that the effect of the independent variables is the same for each level of the dependent variable, was violated. In fact, the 'test of parallel lines' turned out to be significant for any link function used (probit, logit or complementary log–log). Therefore, the dependent variable was recoded as a binomial variable (1 = 'very' + 'fairly attached'; 0 = 'not very' + 'not at all attached') and we ran a binary logistic regression.

Logistic regression is used to estimate the odds of a certain event, more precisely defined as the probability of an event occuring divided by the probability of the corresponding non-event, when the dependent variable is coded binomially. Moreover, logistic regression does not require that the dependent variable be normally distributed; untransformed, territorial attachment at the local, regional and national scale is not normally distributed. There are some drawbacks to this model: dichotomizing an ordinal variable results in a loss of information, which can be compensated only slightly by the fact that the new statistical model offers an easier way to interpret the coefficients (Pampel, 2000). A clearer understanding of what motivates attachment to the four scales under consideration is the central aim of this paper; this is made easier through the transformation of the dependent variable into a binary measure. Therefore, we view the compromise between coefficient interpretation and loss of explanatory power as acceptable.

As answers for territorial attachment were collected separately for the local, regional, national and

European, four models were generated, one for each scale of attachment. The analysis included two steps. For each of the four scales, we first evaluated each of the variables separately. After each of the variables selected was considered, we then ran the fully specified model. The results of this modelling are provided in Appendix 1. A number of interesting patterns emerge from the models that we discuss below. Rather than parsing out this summary to each of the four scales considered, each is discussed simultaneously, with an emphasis on the results of the final, fully specified model. Owing to space considerations, we focus our discussion only on those predictors that were significant in this final iteration.

Results

In the first set of controls, which included the geographic and demographic measures associated with individual respondents, age is the most consistently significant explanatory factor. A one-category increase in age – respondents were grouped into six age classes – leads to an associated increase in attachment at all four territorial scales. Age is significant across all four final models, though the results for attachment to the national scale are most notable; an incremental increase in the age category is associated with a 15% increase in odds of attachment. This suggests that young respondents are significantly less likely to feel attached to the territories considered in comparison with older generations. Importantly, this result challenges the pre-existing literature that suggests a negative relationship between age and European identity and support (Gabel, 1998b; Janssen, 1991). Younger respondents are less likely to indicate attachment across all four scales, showing a sort of indifference to traditional political territories/boundaries, Europe included. It might also be that young people have a more cosmopolitan view of the world that even the idea of Europe fails to capture, or that inclusion in the geographic contexts considered increases as individuals age (see Schueth and O'Loughlin, 2008).[12]

With respect to gender, males are significantly less likely to indicate attachment to the national territory. The results for the other scales are inconclusive; as such, we are unable to confirm the 'gender gap' reported in other studies (Nelsen and Guth, 2000), which have found that women report lower levels of support for a pan-European political project than men.

Education plays an ambiguous role in estimating attachment across the four scales, although this uncertainly mirrors what other authors have observed in the case of support for the EU (Carey, 2002; Deflem and Pampel, 1996; Gabel, 1998a; Inglehart, 1977; Janssen, 1991). With regard to local, regional and national scales, as education increases, the odds of attachment decrease; these results are significant at the 0.001 level for the local and the regional and at the 0.01 level for the national. The opposite is generally true for European attachment, though the variable is not significant in the final model. Employment status and the rural/urban character of the place of residence of respondents generally have little effect on territorial attachment; only in the case of attachment to Europe are those currently not working significantly more likely to indicate attachment.

Among the controls that measure personal values and attitudes, the importance given to family proved significant in all four models; those who identified the family as an important component of their life were significantly more likely (at the 0.001 level) to indicate attachment to each of the four scales. This might mean that people who espouse traditional values – as represented by the importance given to family – are more likely than others to feel attached to territory (at any scale, Europe included). Attachment to the region and nation is associated with the largest odds, which are roughly 50% larger for respondents who acknowledge the importance of family.

Willingness to learn foreign languages is also significant in three of the four models, being inversely associated with local, regional and national attachment, but directly related to European attachment (it is not significant for national attachment). This confirms the original expectation; people who want to learn a foreign language are more 'open' than others, and as such their likelihood to feel attached to traditional 'containers' (locality, region and nation-state) is lower than others. The likelihood of attachment to Europe is higher for those interested in learning a foreign language than the remainder of the population.

Individual expectations, as associated with a respondent's personal life, are only significant in the model evaluating local attachment; those who expect

a worsening of their situation are more likely to indicate attachment to their locality. The independent variable measuring expectations regarding the economy of the country in which one lives is significant for the local and European scales; those with a positive economic outlook are, interestingly, more likely to indicate attachment to the locality and the EU. A 'feeling good' factor is therefore an important dimension to explain territorial attachment. The variable for political interest confirms Inglehart's cognitive theory, which argues that a higher level cognitive mobilization (as here epitomized by the degree to which a person talks of political issues) leads to a higher cosmopolitan attitude and therefore a more positive attitude towards Europe.

National pride and European pride both play important roles in explaining territorial attachment. Though the close relationship between pride and attachment to the nation and Europe is unsurprising, the inclusion of the pride variables results in notable outcomes for attachment to the more parochial scales. The odds of people who are either very or fairly proud of their nation reporting attachment to their locality and region are significantly larger (at the 0.001 level), by a factor of 2.5. For European attachment, and in support of the findings of Carey (2002), individuals with higher reported national pride are significantly less likely to report attachment to Europe. Interestingly, when attachment is evaluated with respect to European pride, those respondents who are either very or fairly proud of being European are significantly more likely to indicate attachment to the region, nation and Europe. This result seems to suggest that while the nation tends to be a more exclusive identifier, Europe stands instead for a more open identity marker, capable of co-existing with other identity dimensions more than the nation.

In the final models, the self-ascribed position on the political spectrum (right, centre, left) does not play a significant role in explaining territorial attachment. This result was not expected in relation to European attachment, as previous studies (Franklin et al., 1994; Gabel, 1998b) have demonstrated the importance of political partisanship. Upon deeper reflection, this ambivalence is explainable by the fact that different political parties, occupying different positions on the political spectrum, voice concerns over European integration depending on the country; Taylor (2008), for example, suggests that anti-expansion rhetoric was more likely to be found on the political fringes in France than in Great Britain. Less ambiguously, those who report an interest in politics are more likely to report attachment to the EU.

The regional contextual variables provide the most interesting results from the modelling, and distinguish this study from previous work on attachment that has not incorporated a multi-level approach. First, in wealthy regions respondents were significantly less likely to indicate attachment to the local and regional scales and more likely to report attachment to Europe. At the same time, respondents in those regions where GDP is growing were more likely to report attachment to the locality, the region or the nation. This is an interesting finding, which suggests that high levels of economic development result in increased attachment to Europe, while in fast-growing areas attachment to the locality, region and nation all remain strong, with these scales serving as a marker of political identity that, potentially, becomes less important as high living standards are consolidated.

Second, respondents residing in regions with lower unemployment rates indicate higher levels of attachment to all four scales under consideration (though the variable is not significant for the national scale). Though this result somewhat contradicts the findings for the individual variable – where those currently not working (including the unemployed, students and pensioners) indicated stronger attachment to Europe alone – the finding potentially indicates that those living in economically vibrant areas are more likely to hold an attachment to a variety of territories.

Lastly, the population density of a respondent's region is only significant for attachment to the locality (at the 0.05 level). There is, perhaps, an expectation that those living in more urbanized areas would indicate a weaker attachment to the local and regional scales, and higher levels of identification with Europe. For the locality the opposite appears to be true, indicating that those living in more densely populated areas view it as an important touchstone to which they desire to maintain some attachment.

Conclusion

After evaluating Eurobarometer survey data for territorial attachment, it is currently difficult to accept Urry's (2000) prediction for the 21st century – that a new social order of flows would replace the existing social order based on territory. Territorial identities are still relevant, at least in Western Europe. This does not mean that new spaces of flows, mobility and trans-territoriality do not already exist. Based on the above results, it seems plausible, though, to affirm that these new 'spaces of flows' have not substituted the traditional 'spaces of place' – to use Castells' (2000) terminology. The link between individuals and territory does not show any sign of losing momentum. Rather than an 'either/or' logic, it is perhaps more realistic to think of identity formation in terms of a 'both/and' logic, much in the way many Europeans simultaneously evoke their national and European identities.

If territory remains a central dimension in the social articulation of the self, it is legitimate to ask whether notions of territorial attachment have changed over time. By relying on longitudinal Eurobarometer survey data collected around four scales (local, regional, national and European), we found no evidence of a territorial re-scaling in the case of Western Europe. Attachment to the nation continues to remain primary, followed closely by local and regional attachments, which, throughout the period analysed, frequently overlap. European attachment has increased over the study period, but, after a phase of instability associated with the introduction of the euro, has levelled off at 60–70%. Whether European attachment will remain at this level or will change, particularly at a time of economic and financial crisis, remains a matter of speculation.

This lack of territorial re-scaling might be interpreted in two ways – either collective identity formation and the processes associated with the post-Fordist transition do not influence each other or the re-scaling is under way, but still to manifest. Alternatively, we can also hypothesize that our instruments are insufficient to capture this phenomenon.

With respect to the factors that explain territorial attachment at multiple scales, a topic largely under investigation by the literature, our statistical model suggests that both personal compositional and regional contextual factors are significant. Geo-demographic characteristics (education and age, but also gender and place of residence for particular scales) and personal values and attitudes (the importance of family, willingness to learn a foreign language and national pride, in particular) are the consistently significant variables throughout the four models. Clearly, it is impossible to identify a single determinant from this class of variables that serves to explain territorial attachment. Instead, such sentiment is the product of a variety of factors, some of which relate to objective features of the individual and some to other personal features, which are commonly held among individuals, regardless of their level of social standing or background.

The regional contextual variables, including GDP growth, GDP per capita and unemployment, are significant in certain models. For example, respondents living in wealthy regions are more likely to report attachment to Europe, whereas those in poorer regions are more likely to indicate attachment to the parochial scales: the locality and the region. But GDP growth could, in time, erode this attachment to the parochial. Those respondents in regions that have benefited from the post-Fordist economy – with low unemployment rates and high rates of employment in technology jobs – are more likely to indicate attachment to Europe; if the benefits of the post-Fordist economy spread, perhaps this connection to Europe as a territory will grow as well. This is an important finding, which points to the direction that some identity re-scaling might indeed be associated with the switch to the new modes of global production – something that our descriptive statistics could not capture.

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Notes

1. Although we considered alternative datasets (European Values Study and International Social Survey Programme), as the primary goal of the present research

is to answer a question about the re-scaling of territorial identities, the extensive longitudinal character of a survey series is of fundamental importance. By offering the longest time coverage for the whole region under investigation, standard Eurobarometer surveys remain, therefore, the most suitable datasets.

2. The following standard Eurobarometer surveys have been used for the present analysis: EB 36 (1991), EB 43.1 bis (1995), EB 51.0 (1999), EB 54.1 (2000), EB 56.3 (2002), EB 60.1 (2003), EB 62.0 (2004), EB 63.4 (2005), EB 65.2 (2006) and EB 67.1 (2007). It should be noted that for EB 36, EB 43.1 bis and EB 65.2 the question was split in two: 'the European Union' and 'Europe [as a whole]'. In both cases, data about 'Europe [as a whole]' were used. In the case of EB 67.1, a fifth item ('attachment to the world') was introduced. Although the first time a question about territorial attachment was asked in Eurobarometer surveys was in 1971 (ECS 71), its different phrasing ('To which of these areas do you feel you belong most strongly? And which next? City/locality, department, region, country, Europe, other') prevents its use in the present study. A similar consideration applies also to EB 50.1 (1998), in which the question was formulated in the same way as in the 1971 survey and, as such, was not used in the present study. A similar wording issue also characterizes the most recent Eurobarometer survey available on territorial attachment (EB 73.3, 2010), which dropped 'Europe' in favour of 'European Union'. This is the reason why our analysis stops at the year 2007.
3. Given the cross-national character of the Eurobarometer survey, it is certainly possible that the same geographical unit might be associated with different meanings in different countries. This might be a potential issue in particular for 'region' – a geographically rather ambiguous term (Antonsich, 2010b) – which, in some cases (e.g. Scotland, Wales, Catalonia, etc.), might be confounded by respondents with 'country'. However, among the possible answers, the Eurobarometer questionnaire does not list 'our country', but the name of the country of residence of the respondent (e.g. 'Spain', 'France', 'Italy'). This obviously excludes any possible confusion between 'region' and 'country'.
4. We decided to use EB 43.1bis (1995) rather than the oldest Eurobarometer dataset available for this series (EB 36, 1991) because the former also includes Finland, Sweden and Austria.
5. As pointed out by one anonymous reviewer, we should acknowledge that positive correlations could also result from subjective differences in how the scale is understood, as attachment means different things in different contexts. Although this is true, it is, however, difficult to accurately gauge, given the cross-cultural nature of the Eurobarometer survey; instead, we accept the survey as worded and rely on the result as reported.
6. Among all the Western European countries surveyed by the European Values Study, only nine have been present in all four waves: France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Ireland.
7. The European Communities Study (ECS) administered in 1971 adopted a questionnaire similar to that used in the European Values Study, but unfortunately split the answer into two categories ('department' and 'province'), making it difficult to compare the data.
8. The focus on EB 60.1 rather than on more recent Eurobarometer datasets is because at the time this study was carried out Eurostat data for European regions were not yet available for more recent years. Eurostat statistical data can be retrieved free of charge from its official website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat.
9. NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) are the statistical units used by Eurostat, the official statistical institute of the EU. NUTS are classified into three levels. In general, level 1 corresponds to provinces or counties, level 2 to administrative regions and level 3 to macro-regions within each member state of the EU. NUTS 2 corresponds to the geographical scale at which Eurobarometer survey data were collected.
10. In these two cases, to use data for the year 2003 only is not inconsistent in relation to the other geographical contextual variables, for which the average over the years 2001–2003 was used. It seems, in fact, legitimate to assume that both population density and higher education percentage are more stable over time than economic and labour data.
11. Inglehart's theory about changing political attitudes in Western Europe revolves around two major concepts: post-materialism (giving priority to symbolic, as opposed to material, objects) and cognitive mobilization (the capacity for processing information at certain

levels of abstraction). However, more recent quantitative studies have suggested that both post-materialism (Janssen, 1991) and cognitive mobilization (Gabel, 1998a) do not play a significant role in influencing public support for the EU.

12. Again, we are indebted to an anonymous reviewer for this second suggestion.

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Appendix 1

Table A1. Logit model for territorial attachment to the local scale (Odds ratios reported).

Independent variables	Individual variable entry	Fully specified model
Geo-demographic		
Males	0.89*	1.01
Age	1.19***	1.07*
Education	0.63***	0.71***
Employment status	0.96	1.06
Place of residence	0.99	1.04
Personal Values and Attitudes		
Personal expectation	0.84***	0.87*
Economic expectation	1.12**	1.16**
Importance of family	1.83***	1.43***
Willingness to learn a foreign language	0.47***	0.66***
National pride	3.22***	2.63***
European pride	1.43***	1.07
Political interest	0.86***	1.02
Political preference	0.90	0.95
Contextual		
GDP per capita (PPP)	0.99***	0.99***
GDP growth	1.19***	1.17***
Unemployment rate	1.05***	1.04***
Employment in high-tech sectors	0.96***	1.00
Population density	0.99***	1.00*
Observations in model		8,449
R-squared		0.074

Significance levels are indicated by asterisks: * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table A2. Logit model for territorial attachment to the regional scale (Odds ratios reported).

Independent variables	Individual variable entry	Fully specified model
Geo-demographic		
Males	0.90	0.92
Age	1.22***	1.11***
Education	0.64***	0.71***
Employment status	0.88*	0.92
Place of residence	0.84***	0.88
Personal Values and Attitudes		
Personal expectation	0.88**	0.96
Economic expectation	1.06	1.06
Importance of family	1.92***	1.53***

Table A2. (Continued)

Independent variables	Individual variable entry	Fully specified model
Willingness to learn a foreign language	0.52***	0.83*
National pride	3.56***	2.64***
European pride	1.51***	1.21*
Political interest	0.88**	1.07
Political preference	0.89	1.01
Contextual		
GDP per capita (PPP)	0.99***	0.99***
GDP growth	1.20***	1.17***
Unemployment rate	1.04***	1.03**
Employment in high-tech sectors	0.96***	1.01
Population density	0.99***	1.00
Observations in model		8440
R-squared		0.074

Significance levels are indicated by asterisks: * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table A3. Logit model for territorial attachment to the national scale (Odds ratios reported).

Independent variables	Individual variable entry	Fully specified model
Geo-demographic		
Males	0.85*	0.83**
Age	1.22***	1.15***
Education	0.68***	0.81**
Employment status	0.96	1.01
Place of residence	0.89**	0.96
Personal Values and Attitudes		
Personal expectation	0.94	0.88
Economic expectation	1.19***	1.07
Importance of family	2.03***	1.53***
Willingness to learn a foreign language	0.59***	0.89
National pride	9.94***	7.51***
European pride	2.64***	1.37**
Political interest	0.85***	1.06
Political preference	0.76***	0.84
Contextual		
GDP per capita (PPP)	0.99***	0.99
GDP growth	1.21***	1.13***
Unemployment rate	1.01	1.01
Employment in high-tech sectors	0.95***	0.99

Table A3. (Continued)

Independent variables	Individual variable entry	Fully specified model
Population density	0.99***	0.99
Observations in model		8446
R-squared		0.153

Significance levels are indicated by asterisks: * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

Table A4. Logit model for territorial attachment to the European scale (Odds ratios reported).

Independent variables	Individual variable entry	Fully specified model
Geo-demographic		
Males	1.14***	1.11
Age	0.97**	1.06**
Education	1.27***	1.07
Employment status	1.01	0.86*
Place of residence	1.02	0.96
Personal Values and Attitudes		
Personal expectation	1.29***	0.99
Economic expectation	1.37***	1.21***
Importance of family	1.11*	1.31***
Willingness to learn a foreign language	1.73***	1.33***
National pride	1.86***	0.62***
European pride	9.80***	11.03***
Political interest	1.42***	1.31***
Political preference	1.01	0.98
Contextual		
GDP per capita (PPP)	1.00***	1.00***
GDP growth	0.99	0.96*
Unemployment rate	1.02***	1.06***
Employment in high-tech sectors	1.00	1.01
Population density	1.00	0.99
Observations in model		8384
R-squared		0.200

Significance levels are indicated by asterisks: * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.