European identity and voting in the European Parliament elections:

the effect of transnationalism in post-crisis EU-15

Doctor of Philosophy

2018

Ana Carrillo-López

School of History, Politics and International Relations.
University of Leicester.

Abstract

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The financial crisis of the Eurozone in 2008 has had major socio-political and demographic consequences. Since the 2008 recession, increasing numbers of Europeans have identified with Eurosceptic political parties, while their perception of EU institutions has steadily worsened. From a demographic perspective, the EU has also witnessed a significant increase in transnationalism (i.e. intra-EU mobility) from southern to northern European member-states (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). Despite the number of transnational Europeans steadily increasing since the 2000s, this phenomenon has not been sufficiently studied (Fligstein 2008; Kuhn 2015). Though the influence of transnationalism on European identity and voting behaviour has been investigated in the past (Day and Shaw 2002; Collard 2013; Favell 2008; Fligstein 2009; Favell *et al.* 2011; Kuhn 2015), the bulk of these studies have been rooted in specific disciplines, been predominately quantitative in nature and focused on data prior to the 2008 crisis.

This thesis adds to past research by adopting an interdisciplinary, mixed-methods approach incorporating data of the EU-15 before and after the financial crash. More specifically, the mixed-methods design complements statistical analyses of Eurobarometer datasets (EU-15) with qualitative analysis of 58 interviews with transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards. Three main conclusions were derived from these analyses. First, transnationalism continues to have a positive effect on European identity. Second, transnationalism reduces the educational gap on European identity: lower educated transnationals feel more European than lower educated non-transnationals. Third, there is a trade-off to transnationalism: though it augments European identification, it also deters voting in the European elections. Previous explanations suggest that low voter turnout is a consequence of the second-nature of these types of elections. However, the in-depth interviews presented here shed light on this socio-political paradox, revealing that transnationals' voting behaviour is strongly shaped by difficulties with electoral registration and other structural barriers.

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List of abbreviations

EB   Eurobarometer

EP   European Parliament

EU   European Union

MEP   Member of the European Parliament

MP   Member of the Parliament

NT   Non-transnationals

SNSs   Social networks sites

T   Transnationals

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The impact of transnationalism (i.e. intra-EU mobility), both on European identity and on voting behaviour, has been the object of several studies in the last decades. The bulk of these studies stems from the field of sociology –in the case of European identity– or political science – for voting behaviour. In spite of the strong connection between identity and voting behaviour, research combining these two fields remains scant. For this reason, this thesis contributes to past research on European identity, voting behaviour and transnationalism combining the fields of sociology and political science. Furthermore, given the impact of the 2008 Great Recession on Europeans, it aims at answering two main research questions. In a post-crisis EU-15:

> 1) How does transnationalism shape European identity?
>
> 2) How does transnationalism affect participation in the European Parliament elections?

Although these questions have been posed in the past, the majority of previous studies utilised quantitative data prior to the 2008 financial crisis. Thus, this study attempts to answer these research questions with a mixed-methodology that combines data before and after the 2008 financial crash. In order to understand the relevance of these questions, this introductory chapter addresses the puzzle that motivates them. The next section then offers a brief description of the structure and content of the chapters composing this thesis.

1.1. Identity, voting behaviour and the socio-economic crisis

The Eurozone crisis (2008) marked a turning point in Europeans' lives. What had begun as an economic crisis, escalated to further institutional, political and migratory crises, as a result of the instability of the financial markets (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014; Lafleur and Stanek 2017). High levels of public deficit and unemployment, the appearance of anti-EU austerity social movements (e.g. *Los indignados* in Spain) or an increasing number of Europeans identifying with Eurosceptic political parties (e.g. *Le Front National* in France) are some examples of the agitation taking place in these spheres.

Europeans have not remained indifferent to these changes. This has been particularly the case of Mediterranean Europeans who have persistently showed their disagreement over the Troika's austerity measures. In most cases, this disagreement took the shape of public

demonstrations against the Troika and EU political leaders like Angela Merkel (El País 2013; Gorjao Henriques 2012; Reuters 2013; Viana 2017). The Eurozone crash has not only shaped Europeans' lives, it has also modified their perception of the European Union (hereafter EU). In fact, the image that Europeans have of the EU has worsened since 2008. While, in 2007, "a fairly positive image of the European Union" was opined by 30.6% more Europeans than those who had a "fairly negative image of the EU", in 2013 there was only a 5.7% gap between the two answers (see Figure 1.1). At the same time, a similar pattern to the EU image can be observed with concrete European institutions. For instance, for more than eleven years, Europeans had been more inclined to trust the European Parliament (EP) (see Figure 1.2), but in 2011, the EB indicates that approximately 40% of the sample tends not to trust the EP. In fact, it is the first time that these attitudes have reversed. As a consequence, an increasing number of Europeans are more prone to mistrust this European body.

Figure 1.1. Image of the European Union of the EU-15 (in percentages).

Source: Eurobarometer (2002 – 2016). Own elaboration.

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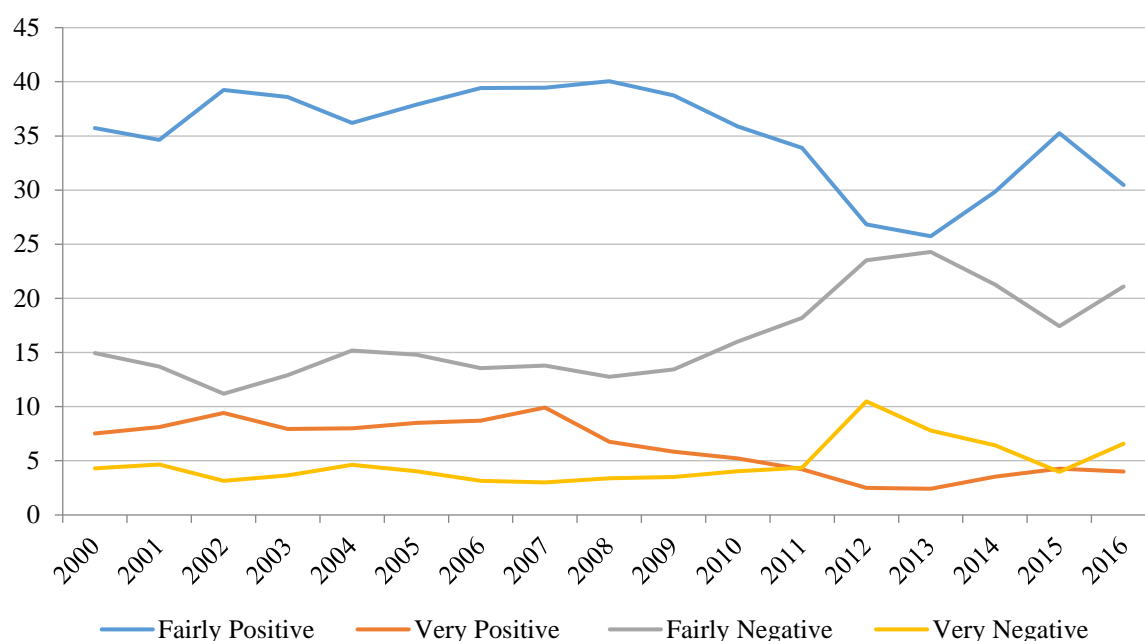
Figure 1.2. Do you tend to trust or not to trust the European Parliament (EU-15)? (in percentages)
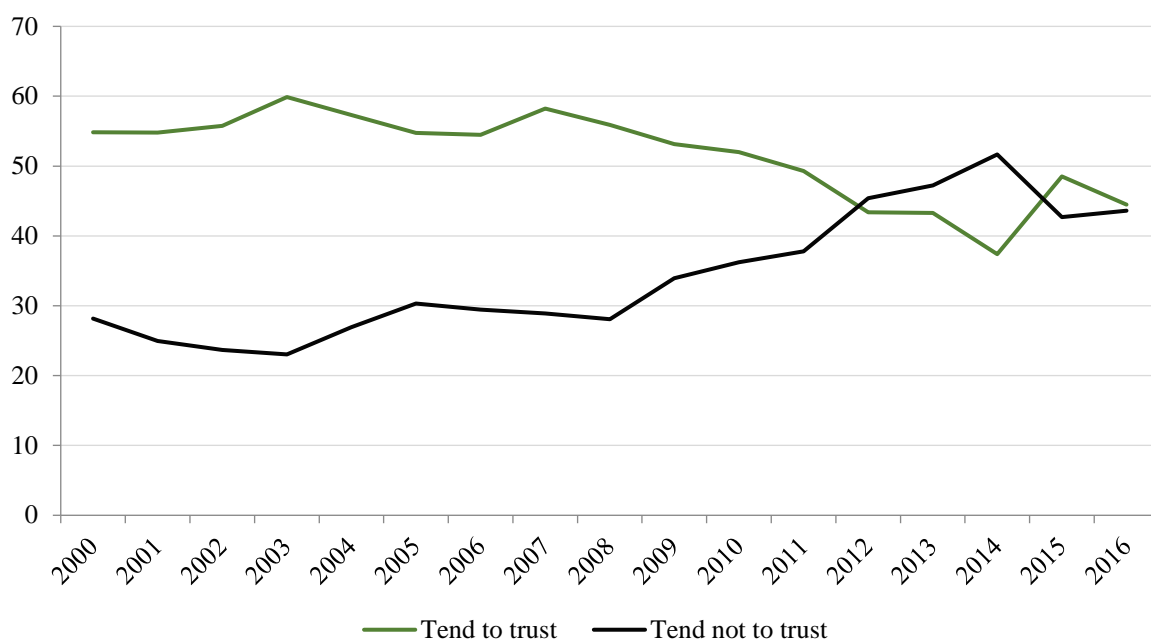
Source: Eurobarometer (2002 – 2016). Own elaboration.

Whether Europeans' concerns are based on the lack of political and institutional demands (Offe 2006; Denters, Gabriel and Torcal 2007; van der Meer 2010; Armingeon and Guthmann 2013), economic instrumentalism (Chanley *et al.* 2001; Brooks and Manza 2007; Polavieja 2013) or a combination of both together with specific national-based characteristics such as corruption (Torcal 2014), the increase of this political dissatisfaction may jeopardise the legitimacy and functioning of the EU. For instance, the levels of participation at the European elections continue to decline since they first occurred in 1979. Numerous debates have addressed the second-order nature and the (un)intended consequences of the EP elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Franklin and Hobolt 2011; van der Brug and de Vreese 2016). Academics consider that some of the reasons behind this democratic deficit are –to some extent– necessary for the functioning of the EU (Majone 1998; Moravcsik 2002).[1] While others claim that low levels of turnout reflect the lack of political contestation (Follesdal and Hix 2006; Schmitt *et al.*2015), are shaped by structural factors (Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Schmitt 2005; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Schmitt *et al.* 2015) and rely on

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[1] Majone claims that "as long as the majority of voters and their elected representatives oppose the idea of a European federation, while supporting far-reaching economic integration, we cannot expect parliamentary democracy to flourish in the Union" (1998: 5). While Moravcsik (2002) states: "most analysts view the EU in isolation, and thus fail to appreciate fully the symbiotic relationship between national and EU policy-making. (…) This gives observers the impression that the EU is undemocratic, whereas it is simply specializing in those functions of modern democratic governance that tend to involve less direct political participation" (2002: 606).

micro factors (Mattila 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Stockemer 2011; Risse 2010; Franklin and Hobolt 2011; van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Hogh and Larsen 2016). Yet, these studies fail to explain the persistent downturn in engagement or to connect the increasingly low levels of EP participation with Euroscepticism or dissatisfaction towards the EP (Stockemer 2011).

Besides the shrinkage of the EU's economy since the Eurozone crash, the socio-demographic consequences of the financial crisis have shaped EU member-states in different ways, thus broadening the gap between southern and northern EU member-states. As Lafleur and Stanek highlight "while some countries, mainly the North, have weathered the crisis relatively well and have managed to recover from the initial financial downturn, others, especially the South, have been suffering from long-term financial instability, high unemployment rates and worsening living conditions among wide segments of the population" (Lafleur and Stanek 2017: 1). The aftereffect of this is that for the first time since the end of WWII –through "guest workers" programs– the EU has witnessed dramatic south-north waves of migration (Lafleur and Stanek 2017).

Although intra-EU mobility data have limitations, we know that more EU citizens have become transnationals since the 2008 financial crisis. For instance, from 2011 to 2012 there was an increase of 12% in intra-EU mobility (Dumont 2014: 4). At present, the overall percentage of transnational Europeans is approximately 3% of the total EU population (Eurostat 2013). Nevertheless, the disparity of these demographic changes has been significantly acute in southern EU member-states. This is the case in Spain, a country that has turned from hosting the highest number of migrations per-capita in the EU since the late 1990s (González Martínez 2015), into one of the southern EU member-states with persistently negative net rates of migration since 2010 (Eurostat 2015). Due to the highest rate of unemployment,[2] the Spanish youth is the demographic group affected the most. In the light of the socio-politic and demographic transformations described, this research explores the relationship between transnationalism and two distinguished –yet interconnected– dependent variables: European identity and turnout in EP elections.

As has been previously mentioned, intra-EU mobility has increased since the 2008 financial crisis to the point that Europeans are more mobile than ever (Fligstein 2009). Considering

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[2] From 2008 to 2013, the 15 to 24 and 25 to 29-year unemployment rates were 55% and 33%, respectively (The New York Times 2013)

that little is known about the socio-political consequences of transnationalism (Fligstein 2009; Kuhn 2015), understanding the impact of transnationalism on European identity and European political behaviour in a post-crisis context becomes crucial. For this reason, this research aims to bridge this gap of knowledge combining the fields of sociology and political science, and triangulating different methodologies (e.g. quantitative methods and in-depth interviews). More specifically, I build upon socio-constructivist theories of the formation of social identities (Simmel 1908; Turner 1977; Tajfel 1981; Jenkins 2004; Ellemers and Barreto 2008). In the last decade, European identity scholars have examined the impact of transnationalism on European identity (Fligstein 2009; Recchi and Favell 2009; Favell et al. 2011; Bullucci *et al.* 2012; Fligstein *et al.* 2012; Kuhn 2015). However, the bulk of these studies used data prior to the 2008 financial crash and have been predominantly quantitative. Given that "identities become salient and are fought for in particular historical moments, especially in times of crisis" (Risse 2010: 2), this thesis explores the relationship between European identity and transnationalism before and after the Eurozone crisis through quantitative and qualitative methodologies for the EU-15.

Furthermore, I attempt to bridge the divide between my two research questions by connecting the intrinsic activeness of transnationalism with the performative essence of European citizenship in which transnational Europeans are immersed. In this sense, due to their active use of their freedom of movement within the EU I deem transnational Europeans as active users of their European citizenship, and voting at the EP elections, as a manifestation not only of European citizenship but also of citizens' identity (Pfister 2011). In order to establish this connection, I return to past debates on the democratic deficit of the EU (Wallace and Smith 1995; Majone 1998; Moravcsik 2002; Follesdal and Hix 2006), and engage with these debates for the case of transnational and non-transnational Europeans living in the EU-15. Studying turnout at EP elections is particularly pressing for two main reasons. First, since the 2008 financial crash, Europeans are tending to lose confidence in the EP. This negative shift in European attitudes could also reflect a shift on European identity and Europeans' diffuse support (Easton 1965). Second, the levels of EP participation continue to drop since these elections were first held back in 1979. In spite of the expectations that turnout at the EP elections should be lower due to its second-order nature (Reif and Schmitt 1980), the second-order-elections debate cannot explain the steady decrease over time. However, "low voter turnout is a concern because it tends to produce inequalities in the electorate, as non-voters are not evenly distributed across socio-economic groups" (Banducci 210: 2016). In light of

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these past academic debates, this thesis builds on previous research by exploring the impact of transnationalism on turnout at EP elections, triangulating large-N datasets and 58 in-depth interviews with transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards residing in the EU-15.

1.2. Thesis structure

Chapter 2 contains the theoretical pillars of this research. Given that I tackle two complementary research questions, this chapter is constructed using theories from the fields of sociology and political science. The first section engages with theories about social identity and European identity formation. From a theoretical point of view, the relevance of individuals' interaction in the genesis of social identities justifies the relevance of tackling European identity from a transnational perspective. Following that, chapter 2 transitions from debates on social identity to the history of European citizenship, characteristics and implications of the EP elections and EP elections turnout for the transnational case.

Chapter 3 explains the logic behind the application of a mixed-methodology in the study of European identity and participation in the EP elections. This chapter aims at achieving two goals. First, it states the advantages and strengths from merging statistical analyses with in-depth interviews. Second, chapter 3 provides a reflection on the ontological and epistemological grounds of the mixed-methodology. Finally, this chapter argues that a reconciliation between positivistic and social constructivist approaches is possible thanks to critical realism.

Making use of EB data, chapter 4 analyses the impact of transnationalism on European identity through six logistic regression models along the 2000s for the EU-15. This chapter tests two hypotheses. The first hypothesis ($H_{4.1}$) tests that transnational EU citizens feel more European than non-transnational Europeans prior to and after 2008. These results provide significant information – yet scant in academia – on European identity and transnationalism before and after the financial crash. More specifically, it demonstrates that transnational Europeans continue to present higher levels of European identification. At the same time, given that European identity has been strongly connected with higher social status (Duchesne and Frognier 1995; Fligstein 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012), I delve deeper into this macro analysis, and test a second hypothesis ($H_{4.2}$): education has a lower effect on European identity for transnationals than for non-transnational Europeans. The effect of

transnationalism and education has not always been conclusive.[3] Considering that the contradiction of these studies may be rooted in the absence of comparing transnational Europeans with different educational backgrounds (Kuhn 2012), the second hypothesis ($H_{4.2}$) analyses the interactional effect between these variables. The quantitative results provide empirical evidence supporting this second hypothesis. According to these results, transnationalism lessens the educational gap on European identity.

Chapter 5 explores context-dependent data in one of the southern EU member-states that has been most severely affected by the financial crisis: Spain. It is known that the EU's response to economic hardships (i.e. austerity measures) had a negative socio-political impact on southern EU member-states (Torcal 2014; Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014). Although a significant number of Spaniards moved to northern EU member-states due to the facilities presented to them as European citizens (Lafleur and Stanek 2017), for years (2010 – 2015) large groups of the Spanish grassroots organisations mobilised, expressing their disagreement to national and EU austerity measures.[4] At the same time, Spain has traditionally been known as one of the EU member-states with the highest levels of European identification and pro-EU attitudes (Gabel 1998; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; McLaren 2006). However, European identity and attitudes may have been jeopardised by the financial crisis, a reality that has not received much attention among academics. Through the qualitative analysis of 58 in-depth interviews (i.e. 27 non-transnational Spaniards residing in Madrid and 31 transnational Spaniards residing in six EU capitals), this exploratory chapter attempts to answer some of the following questions: what motivations drove young transnational Spaniards to move to another EU member-state? How do young transnational and non-transnational Spaniards portray their European identity? What factors do those in the sample utilise to justify their lack of European identity? This chapter illustrates how transnational Spaniards are more prone to understand their European identity under cultural factors, while non-transnational Spaniards tend to incorporate civic items. Finally, a number of non-transnational Spaniards believe that lack of European identification is rooted in a sense of detachment and remoteness towards the EU, other EU member-states and European cultures.

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[3] While some academics prove that the university exchange *Erasmus* reinforces European identity (King and Ruiz Gelices 2003; Wilson 2011), others state that European identity among university students exists prior to engaging in the *Erasmus* experience (Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Mitchell 2012).

[4] New grassroots organisations like *15-M*, also known as *Los Indignados,* gathered in the symbolic square *Puerta del Sol* (Madrid) –and other Spanish cities– for the first time on May 15th of 2011. Protests against austerity measures, political corruption and public cuts were also supported by other post-crisis groups such as ¡*Democracy Real Ya!* ("Real Democracy Now!"), *Jóvenes Sin Futuro* ("Futureless Youth") and *No Les Votes* ("Do not vote them").

The next two chapters, chapters 6 and 7, provide a tentative empirical answer to the second research question: how does transnationalism affect participation in the EP elections? Similar to the structure of the previous empirical chapters, this question is addressed by combining different methodologies. Chapter 6 tackles transnationalism and European political behaviour in the EU-15 utilising EB data from 2009 and 2012, and tests the following hypothesis ($H_{6.1}$): transnational Europeans are less likely to participate in the EP elections than non-transnational Europeans. Furthermore, this chapter provides a descriptive overview of the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample, chi-square test of independence between transnationalism and specific micro variables and analyses of two logistic regressions. These results reveal that transnationalism deters voting in the EP elections and support $H_{6.1}$. Further analyses of the motivations behind vote abstention indicate that macro factors (e.g. institutional issues with electoral registration) –as opposed to micro factors (e.g. European attitudes)– have a more detrimental impact on transnational Europeans than on non-transnational Europeans.

Chapter 7 enriches the quantitative data on participation in the EP elections with data from 58 semi-structured interviews with transnational and non-transnational Spaniards. This chapter explores some of the major aspects shaping turnout in the EP elections for the two groups of the sample. EP elections are second-order elections. Generally speaking, this implies that levels of participation are lower than at general elections, and that for most Europeans, voting socialisation is primarily influenced by national elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Follesdal and Hix 2006). Thus, prior to exploring the participation in the EP elections, I queried respondents about their perception of voting as a whole. While investigating the definitions and meanings of voting, the interviewees stress the impact of the dictatorial past of Spain (1939 – 1975) and the weight of the transmission of family values. The results at the macro level also appeared at the interviews. Even when both groups of the sample explained their abstaining of EP participation due to a lack of information and sense of remoteness towards the EU, transnational Spaniards' political engagement is severely constrained due to institutional hurdles. Moreover, the interviewees highlighted other national and European aspects connected with the aftermath of the Eurozone crash (e.g. democratic corruption).

Finally, chapter 8 concludes with a summary of the findings of this thesis. The main conclusion is that there is a trade-off to transnationalism. Transnationalism promotes a sense of European identification in a post-crisis EU, yet it hinders participation in the European –

and national – elections. In this chapter, I also summarise the key contributions and limitations of the thesis and make suggestions for future lines of research.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The present chapter provides a review of the theoretical foundations underpinning this thesis (Figure 2.1 offers a visual roadmap of the literature review). Two main complementary sections can be distinguished in the literature review, corresponding to the two research questions of this thesis. The first section is rooted in sociology. This section begins with past debates about social identity formation from a bottom-up and socio-constructivist point of view. Once the main factors that characterise social identities have been established, I engage with more specific theories tackling European identification. Given that European identity is strongly connected with European attitudes, this section reviews utilitarian theories vis-à-vis European identity. This first passage culminates in a review of past research focusing on European identity from a transnational perspective. By the end of this section I highlight the gaps that motivated my first research question. More specifically, I argue that the active nature of transnationalism brings unique insights into the comprehension of European identity formation. Although European identity from a transnational approach has been studied in the past, I stress the current absence –and consequently the relevance– of

Figure 2.1. Literature review roadmap.

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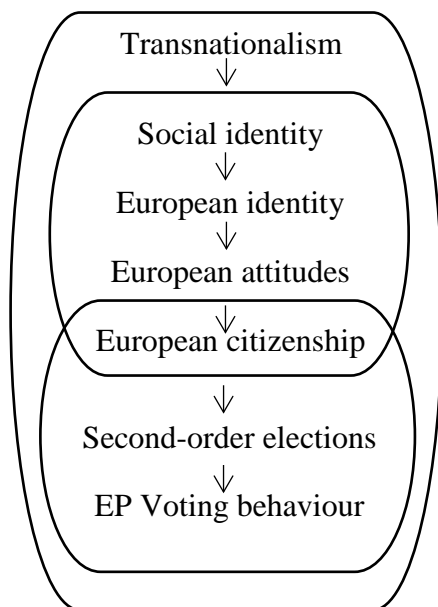
advancing this debate with comparative and explorative studies in a post-crisis EU.

The second main section of the literature review rests on the field of political science. The bridge between sociology and political science is built upon the notion of European citizenship. Drawing on the history and expectations of European citizenship (i.e. socio-political integration), I delineate a connection among transnationalism, European identity and voting behaviour. Understanding the origins of European citizenship highlights the relevance of European identification and turnout for transnational Europeans. Next, this second section discusses the second-order nature of the EP elections and their impact on turnout. After that, it focuses on the most relevant debates between transnationalism and turnout. At the end of this part I introduce my second research question. Given that levels of turnout at the EP elections keep falling, I argue that studying voting behaviour from a transnational perspective contributes to past research on European citizenship and voting engagement. At the same time, I highlight that the reality of transnational Europeans has not been sufficiently included in previous academic debates (e.g. EU's democratic deficit and second-order elections). Finally, I emphasise the necessity of exploring transnational and voting behaviour since the Eurozone financial crash, and the reasons that deter this political behaviour.

It should be noted that this chapter also includes literature on transnationalism. Although this research focuses on European identity and voting behaviour in a post-crisis EU, this study has a transnational essence. For this reason, I begin this chapter with a short overview of past transnational studies, and continue this transnational debate setting out the meaning and usage of this term for the current research.

2.2. Situating transnationalism

"Today transnationalism seems to be everywhere, at least in social science. That is, across numerous disciplines there is a widespread interest in economic, social and political linkages between people, places and institutions crossing nation-state borders and spanning the world" (Vertovec 2009: 1).

Transnationalism, in the simplest terms, is the act of going beyond the homeland. Over the last decades, this basic definition has evolved and the number of disciplines incorporating the term "transnationalism" has flourished (Vertovec 2009). Yet, the use of this term is not exclusive to contemporary research. Concerned about an increase of hostile attitudes towards migrants after WWI, Bourne stated in 1916 "America is coming to be, not a nationality but a trans-nationality, a weaving back and forth, with the other lands, of many threads of all sizes

and colors. Any movement which attempts to thwart this weaving, or to dye the fabric in any one color, or disentangle the threads of the strands, is false to this cosmopolitan vision" (1916: 58-59). In this extract, Bourne embeds transnationalism with two main qualities: activeness and cosmopolitanism. While there is an implicit consensus that transnationalism is inherently performative, not all disciplines interpret transnationalism under cosmopolitanism. For instance, transnationalism has been perceived as a "social space" (Castells 1996), "translocalities" (Appadurai 1995; Glodring 1998) or "glo-cal history" (Clavin 2005), network spaces (Beckert 2006) or as a consequence of globalisation (Vertovec 2009). While debate exists regarding a precise definition of transnationalism, the stance adopted in this thesis relies on Vertovec's (2009), and Smith and Guarnizo's (1999) work.

The combination of different theorists allows me to situate transnationalism for this research. Specifically, I complement Vertovec's (2009) definition with some of the specificities addressed in Smith and Guarnizo's (1999) work. In his book *Transnationalism*, Vertovec provides the following definition:

"*When referring to sustained linkages and ongoing exchanges among non-state actors based across national borders, businesses, non-government-organizations, and individuals sharing the same interests (by way of criteria such as religious beliefs, common cultural and geographic origins); we can differentiate these as transnational practices and groups (referring to their links functioning across nation-states). The collective attributes of such connections, their processes of formation and maintenance, and their wider implications are referred to broadly as transnationalism*" (2009: 3).

In his description, Vertovec (2009) interprets transnationalism as an aspect derived from transnational practices. According to this author, transnational practices involve more than one actor, from different backgrounds, establishing "across nation-states"[5] connections. This definition does not only provide a picture of the complexity taking place among multiple agents at a global scale, it also recognises that there are further consequences attached to transnationalism. Although this definition may seem lax, its broad nature makes it suitable for this interdisciplinary thesis, thus facilitating a coherent inclusion of sociology and political science. In other words, it allows me to analyse the impact of transnationalism on European identity and European voting behaviour.

In order to overcome the partial limitation of Vertovec's (2009) definition, I complement it with the intrinsic duality of transnationalism (Smith and Guarnizo 1999). Moving beyond the

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[5] For a debate on the distinction between national, state and locality in transnational debates see Fitzgerald (2002).

nature and consequences of transnational practices, Smith and Guarnizo believe that the study of transnationalism requires further attention to human agency (1999: 9). From this perspective, they embed transnational actions with a dual nature. First, these actions require a better understanding of the contexts where transnational practices take place. This is due to the fact that the appearance of these contexts depends on social interaction – among individuals and in relation to their physical contexts.[6] Second, transnational actions rely on "the policies and practices of territorially-based sending and receiving local and national states and communities" (Smith and Guarnizo 1999: 10). Given the strong link among individuals, their homelands, host societies and socio-political structures, Smith and Guarnizo (1999) advocate for macro and micro comparative studies. According to them, only through the combination of large-N datasets and context-dependent data can researchers obtain a more robust image of transnationals and their transnational practices.

In spite of the proliferation of transnational studies across disciplines, transnationalism has had a greater vogue in North American studies (see Aguayo *et al.* 1988; Goldring 1996; Guarnizo 1997; Smith 1998; Benítez 2006). In the case of European studies, the term transnationalism tends to be applied to non-EU transnational citizens (see Berns McGown 1999; Al-Ali *et al.* 2001; Østergaard-Nielsen 2001; Mügge 2011). EU official documents and academics commonly refer to transnationalism as "intra-EU mobility" or "intra-EU migration" (see report "Evaluation of the impact of the free movement of EU citizens at local level"), while transnational EU citizens have been known as: "Eurostars" or "free movers" (Favell 2008), "Pioneers" (Recchi and Favell 2009), "non-national Europeans" (Collard 2013) and "EU movers" (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014). The most relevant literature engaging with transnational Europeans will be addressed further in this chapter, in the "Activating European identity: a transnational approach" section.

2.3. The social nature of identity

> *"Without repertoires of identification we would not be able to relate to each other meaningfully or consistently. We would not have that vital sense of who's who and what's what. Without identity there could be no human world" (*Jenkins 2004: 7*).*

According to Tajfel (1981) social identity represents a social framework defined as: "individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social

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[6] In line with this thought, academics have stressed the necessity of expanding transnational studies because "this field is composed of a growing number of persons who live dual lives: speaking two languages, having homes in two countries, and making a living through continuous regular contact across national borders" (Portes *et al.* 1999).

group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (1981: 255). Tajfel's (1981) definition establishes that social identity is based on individuals' perception as a member of a specific group, and on top of all the emotional qualities surrounding being part of this "social club." Moreover, individuals' self-recognition as part of a group presents four main outcomes: a) as long as the group adds value to the social identity of the individual, he/she will continue to be part of it, b) if these needs are not met, the individual could seek to become a member of a different group except when leaving the group is not possible or when leaving will clash with core beliefs attached to the individuals' identity, c) individuals wishing to leave a group can overcome the hurdles described in section (b) by modifying the qualities of the group or by engaging into actively changing these qualities as a member of the group, and finally, d) every group necessitates other groups, since the essence of a group is formed by contrast (Tajfel 1981: 255–256). Simply put, individuals develop social identities because this type of identity adds value to their lives. It fulfils specific individuals' needs. Nonetheless, if individuals disagree with certain aspects of their social identity they may accept these discrepancies or attempt to change them. Finally, the appearance of social identities is established in opposition to other social identities.

Characteristics (a) and (b) reflect an existential duality between the individual and the group. Individuals cannot exist without their identity (Jenkins 2004). One of the main reasons behind an individuals' existence is that social identity represents a system of orientation (Tajfel 1981; Jenkins 2004; Ellemers and Barreto 2008). Identity facilitates individuals' understanding through social categorisation, and this –in return– provides meaning to the individual and her/his social world (Turner 1977). Thus, unpacking the genesis of social identity requires understanding the relationship between the individual as an independent subject and as a member of a group. It is precisely at the interaction between individuals and groups that social identity emerges.

Humans are unavoidably social beings, they are always rooted to social contexts (Simmel 1908; Tajfel 1981; Turner 1977; Jenkins 2004). Since the earliest stages, individuals are part of the most basic social group: the family (Simmel 1908). This type of small circle promotes subjects' individuality, strengthening a sense of uniqueness from other subjects (Simmel 1908; Jenkins 2004). However, the borders of these social circles are not rigid. In fact, the porosity of these circles depends on individuals' perception of sameness and difference

towards other social circles (Simmel 1908). Therefore, social identity is born through the inner struggles and interactions between the individual and groups (Simmel 1908; Turner 1977; Tajfel 1981; Jenkins 2004). According to social identity theories (Turner 1977; Tajfel 1981; Jenkins 2004), the experiences and perceptions that appear through social interaction present the ability of shaping individuals' belief to the point that the subject may identify as a new member of a group, reinforce his/her membership or push him/her away from this group. Under this conception, social identity is (de)constructed through social interaction and it presents a non-static nature.

Up to this point it has been made clear that social identity is socially constructed, emerges from individuals' inner struggles and it is dynamic. Beyond these fundamental characteristics, social identities shape individuals' behaviour and their relationship towards other individuals (Turner 1977). More specifically, Turner (1977: 518 – 519) describes three main psychological aspects or criteria attached to social identities: first, social identity is determined not only by the definition that others ascribe to the group but also by the aspects shared among the members of this group (i.e. identity criterion); second, the members of the group are interconnected, and these connections present positive contributions (i.e. interdependence criterion). This second characteristic tends to strengthen the unity and cohesiveness of the group. Finally, the social interaction of the group is regulated within a system (i.e. criterion of social structure). As Turner states "the accepted theory of a psychological group is that in essence it is some collection of individuals characterized by mutual interpersonal attraction reflecting some degree of interdependence and mutual need-satisfaction" (1977: 520).

At the same time –and linking this idea with the interdependence criterion– social identity may have a positive effect on individual's behaviour. Sometimes positive side-effects go beyond the benefits of fulfilling individual's needs. For instance, Allport (1954) focuses on the impact that social interaction among individuals has on reducing prejudice, also known as "the contact hypothesis." According to Allport (1954) positive group interactions take place under these conditions: equal group status, among individuals sharing common goals, through intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities, law or custom. According to Allport (1954) under these conditions, intergroup interaction will cause a positive effect on members' behaviour. Aspiring to contributing to Allport's contact hypothesis, Pettigrew (1998) discusses some of the reasons that trigger positive intergroup effect. He highlights

four consequences from intergroup interaction. First, individuals increase their knowledge of the out-group. Next, the knowledge acquired through their social interaction, is likely to shape individuals' behaviour. Third, social interaction promotes affective ties. Finally, the appearance of these ties can culminate in friendships leading to intergroup appraisal (1998: 70–73). While Allport (1954) focused on the "how" of these positive interactions, Pettigrew (1998) complements the contact hypothesis tackling the "why" behind it; the reasons that cause a change in individuals' perceptions towards others. In sum, the positive experience built through social interaction and the potential friendships shape individuals' behaviour, reducing social prejudices (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998; Ellemers and Barreto 2008).

Socio-constructivist theories are crucial for the understanding of the formation of the European identity. According to these theories, social identities necessitate social interaction for their genesis, mostly because they tend to be constructed in opposition to other social identities (Simmel 1908; Turner 1977; Tajfel 1981; Jenkins 2004). Given the impact of individual's interaction with other groups on identity formation, socio-constructivist theories can significantly contribute to the comprehension of European identity among transnational Europeans. While residing in another EU member-state, transnational Europeans inescapably interact with other Europeans. Depending on their frequency and nature, these interactions may turn into meaningful relationships. According to the contact hypothesis (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998), it could be expected that transnational Europeans' prejudice towards other European cultures will potentially diminish, shaping transnationals' behaviour and facilitating European identification –or reinforcing it for those who already felt European.

2.4. Activating European identity: a transnational approach

The study of European identity has traditionally focused its impact on the legitimacy of the EU (Risse 2001; Duchesne *et al.* 2013; Duchesne and van Ingelgom 2015). A classic author discussing this type of legitimacy is David Easton (1965). Easton defines a political system as "the members seen as a group of persons bound together by a political division of labor. The existence of political system must include a plurality of political relationships through which the individual members are linked to each other and through which the political objectives of the system are pursued" (1965:177). According to this author, a constant interplay takes place in every political system; one based on the demands and supports that the system receives (i.e. input), and a second interplay is influenced by the decisions and actions (i.e. output) provided by the system. From an Eastonian point of view, the support that the political

system receives establishes a bridge between the political system and its context. More specifically, support fulfills three different needs: promotes internal cohesion, maintains stability, and turns demands into outputs.[7] Although political systems may emerge without feelings of identification, Easton believes that every system must contain a "reservoir" of diffuse support in order to survive or endure for longer periods, and that this threshold relies on citizens' sense of legitimacy (Easton 1965: 283). In this regard, high levels of identification strengthen internal cohesion, feelings of solidarity and attachment of the members. Conversely, the lacking emergence, or sustaining, of long-term identity, may jeopardize the survival and support of the political system. When political disaffection increases and their members perceive that institutions are not as effective as they expect them to be, feelings of solidarity will be undermined. In Easton's eyes, if this disaffection occurs members' perception of a common interest is weakened (they tend to make authorities responsible), and they eventually may seek for structural changes within the system (Easton 1965).

The previous section highlighted the relevance of individuals' interactions in social identities. In spite of the bottom-up nature of social identities, early European identity research tackled this identification from a top-down approach. This top-down influence may be linked to the fact that the EU –known as the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950– was founded by a selected elite group. Risse (2001) distinguishes five main top-down national debates on the construction of European identity since the 1950s: nationalist (i.e. "we" vs. "others"), Europe as a community of values (i.e. based on geography, history and culture), Europe as a third force (i.e. a democratic alternative to leave behind the Cold War), a modern Europe as part of the Western community (i.e. based on liberal democracy and social market economy), and a Christian Europe (Risse 2001: 203-204).

At the opposite end of this top-down perspective, lies Delanty's (2002) normative model of *European cosmopolitanism.* This model combines the approaches of European cultural particularism (i.e. European identity reliant on universal and democratic values) and European people (i.e. economic and social European lifestyle). Compared to previous studies, Delanty's model derives from the cultural and historical conflict of the cosmopolitan European legacy. According to this author "it might make sense to define European identity in terms of its conflicts, traumas and fears which have ranged from religious conflict to class

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[7] Easton distinguishes two types of support: overt support and covert support. Overt support implies actions and it can be witnessed, while covert support refers to emotions and attitudes (e.g. loyalty towards a political party).

and national conflicts to a new era of multicultural conflicts over cultural rights and anti-globalisation conflicts today" (Delanty 2002: 353-354). The European cosmopolitanism model provides an inclusive approach, and it conceptualises European identity as a consequence of the historical, cultural and political construction of Europe. It is a feeling that has to acknowledge other identities, always embedded in a political context. The European cosmopolitanism model presumes that European identity is dynamic, inclusive and stems from a conscious deliberation. This consciousness attribute, according to Delanty, refers to the reflectivity of leaving part of the national identity behind ("forgetting of history") for the sake of a European identity ("the remembering of history") (Delanty 2002: 355). One of the strengths of the cosmopolitan model resides in the inclusion of multiple aspects beyond the influence of the economy policies of the EU. Recent studies (Kohli 2010) advocate for inclusive types of "hybrid" models of European identification. This approach may be particularly relevant for transnational Europeans who are constantly interacting with more than two cultures, political entities and geographical spaces.

Over the last two decades, academics have expressed more curiosity towards the existence of a European identity from a bottom-up perspective. The first studies faced the emergence of European identity with caution. The fact that European identity presents low levels of intensity[8] and that the majority of Europeans admit to feeling European in coexistence with local and national identities (Duchesne and Frognier 1995) led to the conclusion that this international identity remained in its infancy (Fligstein 2008). In most cases, these studies utilised large-N datasets to assess Europeans' feelings of attachment and European attitudes. However, in 2003 Díez-Medrano published *Framing Europe*, a milestone in European studies. The uniqueness of this book resides both in the multifaceted methodologies applied and in the empirical contribution. Based on 160 in-depth interviews[9] with citizens and elite groups residing in Germany, Spain and the UK, Díez-Medrano (2003) highlights the relevance of history and culture in Europeans' portrayal of their vision of the EU. For instance, his interviews reveal that to Spaniards, joining the EU in 1986 was perceived as a sign of democratic advancement; a significant event connected with the idea of "closing the chapter" on the Spanish dictatorial past. In spite of the influences of their national history, Díez-Medrano's (2003) work exposed a deep lack of knowledge and familiarity among

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[8] This intensity is understood in terms of hierarchy, since European identity has been measured as opposition with local and national identities and based on the dominance of these identities (Ruiz-Jiménez 2007).

[9] Apart from these interviews, Díez-Medrano (2003) also carried out content analysis of newspaper editorials and opinion pieces, novels, textbooks on contemporary history and statistic analyses to the EB.

Europeans; a cognitive deficiency that may distort Europeans' attitudes towards European integration.

In the 2000s measures of identity, through non-traditional and multidimensional items, have flourished. Bruter (2004) published a novel study establishing a frontier between ethnic and civic dimensions of European identity. In his study, Bruter (2004) proposes a set of grounded and quantified items to measure civic and cultural identities using concrete and tangible questions (e.g. support for a hypothetic European football team). In broad terms, while ethnic dimensions refer to the cultural side of identity (i.e. "feeling European"), civic identity connects this idea with citizenship (i.e. "being European"). Bruter's main conclusions stress that EU integration support and European identity should not be analysed as part of the same variable; civic and cultural identity are correlated but should be studied separately; respondents tend to answer European cultural identity questions based on Europe as a whole and not necessarily the EU; and European language skills and living in a different EU member-state have a positive impact on the rise of European identity. Bruter's bi-dimensional operationalisation also has been recently supported by other authors (Ruiz-Jiménez *et al.* 2004; Favell *et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012).

Once research provided empirical evidence of the existence of this identity, academics explored the socio-demographic profile of those who feel European. In other words, they offered an answer to the "Who are the Europeans?" query (Delanty 2003; Favell 2008; Fligstein 2009). The answers to that question emphasised that European identity tends to be shared among a reduced and "privileged" group of the EU population (Favell 2009; Recchi and Favell 2009; Kuhn 2015). According to this strand of the literature, the privilege of travelling and residing in another EU member-state is limited to an advantageous group of the EU population: younger male with high socio-economic status (Fligstein 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012). While the class argument may have held in the first decades after the European integration project begun, more recent research casts doubt on this "class cleavage" (see Bellucci *et al.* 2012: 68). For instance, in the case of the educational cleavage, research analysing the positive impact of the university exchange *Erasmus* on European identity remains unclear. Some studies state that this university exchange enhanced European identification (King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003; Kuhn 2012; Mitchell 2012), while others cast doubt on the effect of this transnational sojourn (Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011). Nonetheless, research generally indicates that the emergence of European identity is influenced by the

interaction taking place with other EU peers. These encounters are considered key to European identity because "they have given them first-hand experience of their counterparts in other countries and made them feel positive effect for people who are like them" (Fligstein 2009: 138).

As in the formation of social identities (Simmel 1908; Tajfel 1981; Turner 1977; Jenkins 2004), transnational Europeans have higher chances of interacting with other Europeans, and possibly embracing other identities. While living in another EU member-state, transnational Europeans have their cultural values and customs constantly confronted. The set of 'invisible rules' that were taken for granted back home, are no longer useful in the new host society (Fox 2005). This requires –at least to a certain extent– an adaption to a new European culture. Although transnational Europeans may face unpleasant circumstances, research indicates that residing in another EU member-state fosters a sense of commonness and proximity towards other Europeans, solidarity and positive European attitudes, (Favell 2008; Fligstein 2009; Recchi and Favell 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012; Triandafyllidou and Maroufof 2012; Ciornei 2014; Pötzchke and Braun 2014; Kuhn 2015). Moreover, these interactions facilitate the creation of a "transnational public sphere: a context where transborder communication emerges when same issues are being discussed (...) where collective identities are constructed and contested" (Risse 2010: 108).

2.5. A note on European attitudes

Early research tackling citizens' perceptions of the EU focused on attitudes towards the European integration project. Although European attitudes and European identity tend to be interrelated, the bulk of these early studies focused on European attitudes (see Inglehart 1970; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998). In spite of the connection between identity and attitudes, this thesis intentionally reviews these two aspects separately. This distinction occurs both theoretically and analytically. Although it is important to understand the influential relationship between European attitudes and European identity, I argue that in the case of transnational Europeans a sharper differentiation between these two variables is necessary.

Early European studies from a bottom-up perspective were predominantly centred on European attitudes. While identity is perceived as a deeply rooted and intimate emotion, attitudes tend to remain in the surface. As Eiser and van der Pligt state "a person's attitude

towards an act is predictable from the sum of his or her "salient evaluative beliefs" about that act" (1977: 364). Contrary to the study of European identity, the analysis of "salient evaluative beliefs" (i.e. European attitudes) presents more methodological and analytical advantages. This may explain why European attitude studies proliferated earlier than European identity research – in addition to the perception that European identity remained in its infancy for decades after the creation of the EU (Duchesne and Frognier 1995).

According to Bellucci *et al.* (2012) there are three main approaches in the literature: *cognitive mobilisation*, *instrumental rationality* and *judgmental heuristics*.[10] The term cognitive mobilisation was firstly coined by Ronald Inglehart (1970). This author analysed the EB to understand EU support and the ability of Europeans "to relate to a remote community" (1970: 47). According to his findings, highly educated citizens tend to be more exposed to cosmopolitan circumstances in society and will embrace EU integration the most. Two decades later, Duchesne and Frognier's (1995) findings highlight that although a sense of belonging to the European community is extremely low, support towards the European integration project should still be considered a relevant factor to understand the European society. The second approach, instrumental rationality*,* is based on the idea that European attitudes vary depending on the cost and benefits that citizens perceive as members of the EU. Citizens' evaluations have been traditionally measured through economic conditions, membership support, national pride and political perceptions (see Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998; Carey 2002, Hooghe and Marks 2004). According to instrumental rationality, in order to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the EU membership, Europeans need to possess a certain knowledge of the economic and political reality at national and European levels. For this reason, it could be stated that explaining EU integration through a utilitarian theory is partially rooted in cognitive mobilisation.

Bellucci's *et al.* (2012) "instrumental rationality" has also been known as utilitarian theories.[11] Exploring this utilitarian approach even further, McLaren (2006) classifies three

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[10] This typology follows the steps of Bellucci *et al.* (2012). However, in their literature review, the authors do not distinguish between attitudes and identity.

[11] Belluci *et al.* (2012) compared these three attitudinal perspectives (i.e. cognitive mobilisation, instrumental rationality and judgmental heuristics) in relation to an affective/identitarian dimension. In their analysis, they incorporated gender, age, occupation and religion views as control variables with macro contextual (e.g. communist background) and macro-micro contextual items (e.g. quality of governance). Thanks to the EB and data collected through the INTUNE project, Bellucci *et al.* (2012) offer one of the most updated comparative European identity and attitudes studies. Their findings stress that: a) countries with a communist past tend to identify less with the EU, b) cognitive mobilisation has a small influence on EU citizens, c) instrumental rationality (i.e. individual's evaluation of the cost/benefits as members of the EU) and judgmental heuristics

types of utilitarian attitudes: egocentric, sociotropic and perceptions. To this author, utilitarian attitudes may be rooted in an individualist point of view (i.e. egocentric), the total gain or losses as an EU member-state (i.e. sociotropic), or in opinions that are shaped by the degree of awareness of the European integration project (i.e. perception). The final cluster, judgmental heuristics, conceives the formation of European attitudes rooted in domestic performance. It should be noted that findings in this category are not in harmony. While some authors discovered that low political performance at national levels and European politics push citizens to perceive European politics as an ideal alternative (Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Ray 2003), others obtained opposite conclusions. For instance, Rohrschneider (2002) finds that corruption exerts a bigger impact on EU evaluation than was stated by authors like Sánchez-Cuenca (2000).

Understanding the impact of utilitarian attitudes on European identity relates to this thesis for a number of reasons. First, the EU tackled the aftermath of the Eurozone crash with high austerity measures. The financial crash derived in further institutional and political crises, and the imposition of EU austerity measures created deeper socio-political divisions in southern Europe (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014; Lafleur and Stanek 2017). Secondly, in the last decade Europeans' "salient evaluative beliefs" of the EU have shifted. Since 2008 Europeans' positive image of the EU is in decline and they are tending not to trust European institutions like the EP (Eurobarometer 2000-2016). In the third place, the socio-economic crises were accompanied by an increase of migration from southern to northern EU member-states (Focus Migration 2013; Lafleur and Stanek 2017). From a transnational perspective, Europeans from countries most severely affected by the Eurozone crisis may perceive their migratory path from different approaches. On one hand, southern transnational Europeans may perceive themselves as privileged citizens. After all, they have the right to move freely and establish in another EU member-state to access better labour conditions. The European realm may offer them education and labour opportunities; otherwise non-existent back "home". However, Mediterranean Europeans may feel forced to move to another EU member-state as an immediate consequence of the austerity measures imposed by the EU after the 2008 financial crash. While past research has demonstrated a strong positive relationship between European attitudes and European identity, it remains unclear whether

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have an impact on citizens' identity, and d) relations of trust among other EU citizens encourage feelings of European identity.

transnational Europeans would present more positive or negative European identification in a post-crisis EU.

In the light of these considerations, I pose my first research question: in a post-crisis EU, how does transnationalism shape European identity? As the literature review indicates, this question has been posed in the past. Even so, the bulk of these studies were conducted prior to the 2008 Eurozone crash (see King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003; Favell 2008; Fligstein 2009; Recchi and Favell 2009; Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Kuhn 2012; Kuhn 2015; see Pötzschke and Braun 2014 for a post-crisis study). Moreover, this research question attempts to strengthen past research making use of a comparative mixed-methodology. A peculiarity of European identity studies, since most of past research combining European identity and transnationalism are dominantly quantitative (see Favell 2008 and Ciornei 2014 for exceptions). For this reason I tackle these two variables through the analysis of large-N datasets and in-depth interviews. The justification and implications of applying this methodology can be found in chapter 3.

Up to this point, literature addressing the formation, meanings and implications of European identity and European attitudes from a transnational perspective has been introduced. Now, I will continue the literature review with the literature section that connects with political science. At present, Europeans' possibility of becoming transnational is determined by the set of rights and obligations granted through European citizenship. For this reason, this thesis conceives European citizenship as the bridge connecting European identity and participation in the EP elections. The next section reviews past research on European citizenship.

2.6. European citizenship

Citizenship is a multifaceted and contested concept. Classically defined as a combination of civic, political and social rights emerging through the historical appearance of a political apparatus (Marshall 1964; Rokkan 1974), citizenship has also been linked to membership reciprocity, expression of individuals' identity, access to rights, and as a socio-political enactor (Held 1991; Wiener 1994; Shaw 2000; Lehning 2001; Isin 2012). Eder and Giesen (2003) gather the most significant aspects of citizenship in a 3x3 matrix (see Figure 2.2.). This matrix interacts three complementary paradigms – individualist, political and collective identity – with the perception of citizenship as a practice, as an institution and as a discourse. According to these authors, the strength of this matrix resides in the ability of these analytical

aspects "to address the issue of European citizenship as one of finding a notion of rights, obligations, and identity that abstracts from the nation state but is tied to the emerging social space of Europe, to a European society" (Eder and Giesen 2003: 7).

Figure 2.2. Three conceptions of citizenship.

	The individualist paradigm: market model; liberal theory and socialist critique	The political paradigm: participation model; democratic theory and republican/communitarian critique	The collective identity paradigm: membership model; universalist theory and primordial critique
Citizenship as a practice	Individual liberties (negative freedom)	Civic duties (positive freedoms)	Common virtues/values
Citizenship as an institution	Welfare entitlements	Democracy as a strong public sphere	Common culture and tradition
Citizenship as discourse	Rights	Obligations	Belonging

Source: Eder and Giesen (2003)

For the purpose of this research, I will exclusively focus on citizenship as a practice and how this approach bridges the connection among transnationalism, European identity, European citizenship and voting behaviour. If we look at "citizenship as a practice", Eder and Giesen (2003) highlight three aspects for each of the paradigms. From an individualist perspective, a performative citizenship activates individual liberties – also known as negative freedom. Secondly, in the case of the political paradigm, an active citizenship promotes specific civic duties (i.e. positive freedom). Finally, crossing the collective identity paradigm and citizenship as a practice highlights individuals' mutual feelings of community.

The study of European identity and voting behaviour from a transnational perspective connects with Eder and Giesen's (2003) paradigms of citizenship as a practice. Transnational Europeans are intrinsically active users of their European citizenship. As European citizens they are entitled to freely move and reside in any EU member-state. This active nature – in both transnationalism and citizenship – potentially triggers and/or strengthens identification towards other European cultures (Favell 2008; Fligstein 2009; Bellucci *et al.* 2012; Kuhn 2015). Furthermore, thanks to European citizenship, transnational EU citizens are entitled to

vote in local and EP elections while residing in different member-states. While living in another EU country, transnationals are able to fulfil some of these European civic duties.

The road to European citizenship is one of the most influential documents around debates of European citizenship (Shaw 2007). Written on 21st of February 1991 by the Spanish Government,[12] this document has significantly contributed to the debates that later shaped the definition of European citizenship in the Treaty of Maastricht (Connolly *et al.* 2006). Early in the preamble it states that the purpose of the document was "to lay the foundations for an integrated area serving the citizen, which will be the very source of democratic legitimacy and fundamental pillar of the Union, through the progressive constitution of a common citizenship, the rights and obligations of which derive from the Union" (Spanish Government 1991: 325). Compared to the privileges that Europeans were entitled to since 1957 (e.g. working in another EU member-state) –and later modified in the Council Regulation 1612/68– this document established the earliest foundations of alien suffrage (i.e. voting and standing rights for non-nationals, Connolly *et al.* 2006: 31) for the European civil society.

The notion of citizenship intrinsically creates differences between those who are citizens and those who are not. Citizenship grants access to a selective club (Bellamy 2006), with a special type of membership. The inclusion of certain members to this club also implies excluding others from this status (Pfister 2011). In spite of this duality, European citizenship connotes a further sense of commonness among Europeans, diminishing citizenship differences at the national and European levels. But, what does European citizenship entail? The amendments included in the Treaty of Maastricht (1993), interpreted as a milestone in the political nature of European citizenship (Bellamy *et al.* 2006), rest on four main articles (currently the Article 19 EC):

> Article 8.a.
> 1. Every citizen of the Union shall have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in this Treaty and by the measures adopted to give it effect.
>
> Article 8.b.
> 1. Every citizen of the Union residing in a Member State of which he is not a national shall have the right to vote and to stand as a candidate at municipal elections in the Member State in which he resides, under the same conditions as nationals of that State.

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[12] At that time Felipe González was the Spanish Prime Minister.

Article 8.c.
Every citizen of the Union shall, in the territory of a third country in which the Member State of which he is a national is not represented, be entitled to protection by the diplomatic or consular authorities of any Member State, on the same conditions as the nationals of that State.

Article 8.d.
Every citizen of the Union shall have the right to petition the European Parliament in accordance with Article 138d. Every citizen of the Union may apply to the Ombudsman established in accordance with Article 138e.

After the Treaty of Maastricht Europeans were entitled to settle in another EU member-state, expanding their rights of freedom of movement, – until that point intra-EU mobility depended on their working conditions – get involved and/or become a candidate in municipal elections of the European state where they reside, be protected diplomatically, claim an Ombudsman, and vote in the EP elections while residing in a different member-state. These articles establish the legal framework of European citizenship. However, many EU member-states and European institutions believe that the Treaty of Maastricht aspires to deeper socio-political integration. This extract from the "EU Citizenship Report" in 2013 epitomises this idea:

> *"At a time when the EU is taking major steps towards a deep and genuine Economic and Monetary Union, of which democratic legitimacy is a cornerstone, with a Political Union on the horizon, it is all the more important to focus on the things the EU is doing to make citizens' lives easier, to help them understand their rights and involve them in a debate on the Europe they want to live in and build for future generations."*

In spite of these institutional expectations, more than twenty years after the Treaty of Maastricht (1993), a high percentage of the EU population remains unaware of the rights derived from the European citizenship. For instance, according to the EB, in 2016, 39.8% of the interviewees declared to know their rights as Europeans "to a certain extent", while 34.9% of EU citizens expressed not "to really know" about their European citizenship (European Commission 2013).[13] This cognitive lacuna highlights that approximately half of Europeans are disconnected from their European citizenship. However, such citizenry malady is not exclusive to the European civil society. Another source feeding this disconnection can also be found top-down. This detachment has been discussed as part of the debate on "the democratic deficit" of the EU (Wallace and Smith 1995; Majone 1998; Moravcsik 2002;

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[13] Other results to the question "to what extent you know what your rights are as a citizen of the EU" were: 10.6% of Europeans answered "yes, definitively", 13.9% answered "no, not really" and 1.4% responded "don't know" (European Commission 2013).

Banducci 2016). The EU apparatus has been perceived as lacking transparency and accountability within European institutions, and in its policy-making processes (Majone 1998). However, Majone believes that this democratic deficit is "democratically justified" as a necessary aspect of the functioning of the EU (Majone 1998: 7). On the other hand, Moravcsik (2002) stressed how "the increasing powers of the EP are sufficient to ensure that EU policy-making is, in nearly all cases, clean, transparent, effective and politically responsive to the demands of European citizens" (2002: 605). Even when the EU has its limitations, Follesdal and Hix (2006) contributed to this debate engaging with some of the negative impact that several mechanisms at the European level have on Europeans. According to these authors, the democratic deficit is strongly shaped by the absence of a political contestation (Follesdal and Hix 2006: 551). As a consequence, political events like the EP elections do not resonate in Europeans as much as domestic elections.

2.7. European parliament elections

Democracy offers a variety of means for citizens to get democratically engaged (e.g. contacting a politician; taking part in a demonstration, see Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.*1995). From all these different democratic channels, this thesis focuses on Europeans' participation in the EP elections. The EP elections were for the first time labeled as "second-order elections" by Reif and Schmitt (1980). Although the notion of second-order elections already existed, these authors extrapolate this feature to the European level. Reif and Schmitt (1980) enumerate a number of factors explaining lower levels of turnout at the EP elections. For instance, lower levels of participation at the EP elections are constrained by voters' perception that there is "less-at-stake" in these elections (1980: 9). The *less at stake* factor is one of the most debated aspects of the second-order elections approach. Voters may perceive that the outcome of these elections will not directly influence them, deterring voters to cast their ballot. As it has been previously mentioned, other authors (Follesdal and Hix 2006) suggest that the lack of participation mirrors a lack of political debate in the European public sphere. Secondly, compared to general elections, the performance of small and big parties presents a reverse result at the European elections. In other words, national government parties obtain less support while smaller parties strengthen. This effect connects with voters' impression that there is less at stake. Due to this perception, "in second-order elections, there is less reason to vote strategically – strategic voting being defined as supporting another party than the most preferred one (…) As strategic considerations do not play much of a role in EP

elections, this suggests that small parties do relatively better compared to first-order election results" (Schmitt 2005: 652).

Once it has been established that the EP elections possess a number of characteristics explaining lower levels of turnout than at general elections, what other factors shape this type of European political behaviour? These factors can be distinguished into macro (or structural) and micro (individual). Academics have brought macro factors to the attention with the aim of seeking an increase in levels of EP participation through the modification of these structures (Franklin 2001; Matilla 2003). Some of these macro factors are rooted in national electoral systems. For instance, the levels of EP turnout are expected to be higher in countries where voting is compulsory (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Blondel *et al.* 1998; Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Stockemer 2011). The time span between EP and other type of elections shape European turnout. In this case, the shorter the time between these elections or if the EP elections occur the same day than other elections increase levels of participation (Blondel *et al.* 1998; Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Rose 2004; Stockemer 2011). Finally, the latest research on the EP election supports the idea that a specific European candidate (i.e. Spitzenkandidaten) positively influenced voters' participation (Schmitt *et al.* 2015). Other aspects – such as the day of the vote (i.e. weekdays vs. weekend), the vote-seat disproportionality or the type of parliament (i.e. bicameral or unicameral) –are known to affect EP turnout inconclusively (Frankling *et al.* 1996; Blondel *et al.* 1998; Mattila 2003; Farrell and Scully 2007; Gallagher and Mitchell 2008).

Apart from these structural factors, EP turnout is also shaped by micro factors. These factors are particularly relevant for this thesis since they take into consideration individuals aspects such as European identity. As in the national arena, European turnout is also shaped by socio-demographic factors and voting socialization (Franklin 2001; Franklin and Hobolt 2011). Beyond these common set of variables, turnout in the European elections is mostly influenced by factors specific to the EU realm. For instance, Europeans with higher levels of European cognition are not only more able to relate to a remote community like the EU (Inglehart 1980), but they are also more likely to vote in the EP elections (Banducci 2013; Hogh and Larsen 2016). EU citizens who identify as Europeans normally do so in coexistence with other identities (Díez Medrano 2003; Ruiz-Jiménez 2007; Fligstein 2008; Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez 2010; Risse 2010; Favell *et al.* 2011; Fligstein *et al.* 2012). Individuals who see themselves as Europeans tend to support EU integration, and develop stronger solidarity

feelings towards other EU-peers (Fligstein 2009; Ciornei 2014). Finally, as it was mentioned in a previous section, European attitudes play a determining role in European turnout. Although European attitudes may present many sides, empirical studies highlight that Europeans who trust European institutions, who support the EU and interpret European membership as beneficial, will cast their vote in the EP elections (Mattila 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Stockemer 2011; van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Vasilopoulou 2016).

Three reasons sustain the study of turnout at EP elections from a transnational perspective and its connection with European identity. First of all, EP elections rest at the heart of the European democracy. While European citizenship guarantees the right to participate in the EP elections for the whole EU population, the EP elections are particularly appealing for the case of transnational Europeans. The amendments of the Treaty of Maastricht (1993) endowed the EP elections with a transnational essence. As long as transnational Europeans are locally registered, they are entitled to vote in the EP elections while residing in another EU member-state. Alternatively, transnational Europeans are allowed to vote for their national candidates through the embassy or consulates. Second, debates tackling the EU's "democratic deficit" in relation to the second-order nature of the EP elections have decreased in the last decade.[14] EP elections are expected to be perceived as second-order elections for the whole EU population, thus resulting in lower levels of turnout at the European level than at general elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005; Hix and Marsh 2011). Given that the democratic deficit and second-order elections debates do not account for the case of transnational Europeans, I argue that these discussions need to be engaged with and reviewed from a transnational approach.

Finally, although identity and voting behaviour are mutually influential (de Vreese and Tobiasen 2007; Pallarés *et al.* 2007; Llera 2009; Chernyha and Burg 2012; van Klingeren *et al* 2013; Curtice 2016), studies connecting European identity and turnout in the EP elections are scant. This deficiency becomes more salient for the case of transnational Europeans. Citizens who embrace European identity as part of their identities present higher levels of participation in the EP elections than Europeans with exclusive type of identities (van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Curtice 2016). On top of this, European attitudes and turnout in the

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[14] As a consequence, academic debates explaining the constant decrease of turnout at the EP elections have lost their momentum. As Stockemer states "the overall majority of scholars focusing on European integration or the functioning of European democracy do not seem to be concerned about this persistent downward trend in citizens' participation in EU elections" (2011: 27).

European elections (e.g. positive perception towards EU membership) tend to be positively correlated (Vasilopoulou 2016). However, studies addressing the socio-political behaviour of transnationals' participation in the EP elections remain limited. The next section offers a review of the literature tackling transnationalism and turnout.

2.8. Transnationalism and turnout

When it comes to European citizenship, the EB (2016) reveals that almost half of the EU population may not be aware of what European citizenship entails. Rights and obligations' awareness may shape how Europeans make use of their European citizenship. Given the strong link between citizenship awareness and the practice of this citizenship, it is unlikely that transnational and non-transnational Europeans relate to their European citizenship in similar terms. Intentionally or unintentionally transnational Europeans are active users of their European citizenship. It is precisely this performative side of European citizenship that uniquely contributes to past research on turnout in the EP elections. This is what Isin (2012) describes as "enacting citizenship", one of citizenries' assets "that lead to the emergence of creative, inventive and autonomous acts of becoming political subjects" (2012: 109). Although in theory all EU citizens are capable of exercising their European citizenship, are transnational Europeans able to fully become political subjects while residing away from their member-state?

The idea of "becoming a political subject" (Isin 2012) connects with the expectations from the EU: European citizenship enhances social and political integration (Day and Shaw 2002). Compared to non-transnational Europeans, political integration among transnational Europeans goes beyond national frontiers; it affects local and EP political engagement from another EU member-state. In spite of claims that further research is needed (Shaw 2007; Collard 2013), little is known about the political behaviour of transnational Europeans in EP elections. Up to this point, the bulk of studies analysing political participation of Europeans residing in another EU member-state indicate that transnational EU citizens are less prone to getting politically involved than non-transnational Europeans (Day and Shaw 2002; Kochenov 2009; Janoschka 2010; Shaw 2010; Collard 2013).[15] Several reasons have been found to constrain transnationals' political engagement. To some, lower levels of transnationals' participation, or the fact that European citizenship has not been fully implemented, is due to the absence of European identity (Day and Shaw 2002). Although this

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[15] See Muxel (2009) for an exception to this "norm."

may have been the case in the past, recent research supports the positive correlation between European identity and participation in European elections (Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016). Considering that transnational Europeans present higher levels of European identity than non-transnational EU citizens (Bruter 2004; Favell 2008; Recchi and Favell 2009; Favell et al. 2011; Belluci *et al.* 2012; Kuhn 2015), the positive correlation between European identity and EP turnout should translate into higher levels of participation among transnationals. Yet, research exposes the opposite.

To others, the reason behind lower levels of political participation among transnational Europeans emanates from the irregularities from member-states and the EU (Kochenov 2009; Shaw 2010; Collard 2013). This latter explanation has been gaining more support in the last decade. One of the most recent studies conducted by Collard (2013) reveals the complexities behind electoral registration. If voter registration has traditionally been a deterrent for political participation (Erikson 1981; Brown *et al.* 1999; Ansolabehere and Konisky 2006; Brown and Wedeking 2006; Burden and Neiheisel 2011), understanding the steps behind registration becomes more crucial for the transnational population. For this reason, Collard (2013) gathered data of the participation in local and EP elections among transnational Europeans living in France and the UK. An extensive study of the procedures of voter registration stresses the complexities shaping transnational residents in these two EU member-states. France adopts a more lax approach to municipality registration, while new UK residents may face penalties if they do not register to vote. Unless we are familiarised with these differences, higher levels of voter registration in the UK may give the impression that transnational Europeans in the UK may be more politically engaged (Collard 2013). This empirical gap not only impedes an accurate assessment of transnational Europeans but it also hinders comparative research.

It should be noted that transnationalism also negatively effects participation at national elections. Becoming a transnational European "comes with a price" both at the national and European level. As Kochenov stresses "any national of a member-state disenfranchising expatriates loses the main right connected with his or her nationality as a direct consequence of benefiting from the main EU citizenship right" (2009: 8). To transnational Europeans, making use of their right of freedom of movement and residence within the EU jeopardises their chances to participate in national and European elections. Even when it is expected that turnout at the EP elections will be lower than at general elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980;

Schmitt 2005), the case of transnational Europeans reveals that they often have a great deal of difficulty in exercising their voting rights as European citizens. Compared to non-transnational, transnational Europeans face higher difficulties that impede them to fulfil their political rights. Evidence of an uneven turnout distribution across certain social groups exposes political inequality in the EU (Banducci 2016), to the point that citizenship ceases to exist when citizens cannot vote (Kochenov 2009). Under this transnational reality, not only the basic notion of European citizenship is at stake, but from the perspective of citizenship as an identity put in practice (Eder and Giesen 2003; Janoschka 2010; Pfister 2011; Isin 2012) these structural obstacles silence the voice of those who are left on the margins. Given that citizenship "activates patterns of inclusion or exclusion" (Pfister 2011: 20), transnationalism seems to embed Europeans with the deprivation of expressing their identity and political voice. This reality may endanger socio-political integration and allegiances (Lehning 2001). Considering that the number of transnational Europeans has significantly increased since the 2008 financial crisis (Eurostat 2014), this thesis intends to contribute to past research answering a second main research question. In a post-crisis EU: how does transnationalism shape voting in the EP elections?

2.9. Conclusions

Up to this point the main literature on transnationalism, social identity, European identity, European citizenship, EP elections and turnout has been reviewed. Based on the strengths and deficiencies of the reviewed literature I sustain that the performative nature of transnationalism still represents an important tool for the study of European identity and voting behaviour. Social identities are dynamic and tend to appear through social interaction (Simmel 1908; Turner 1977; Tajfel 1981; Jenkins 2004). Based on this social characteristic, transnational EU citizens are more likely to feel European than non-transnational Europeans. In fact, past research confirms the positive effect of transnationalism on European identity (Bruter 2004; Favell 2008; Recchi and Favell 2009; Favell *et al*. 2011; Belluci *et al.* 2012; Kuhn 2015). At the same time, European attitudes and European identity tend to be correlated. For instance, EU citizens who perceive they are benefiting from European integration are more prone to feel European (Gabel 1998; McLaren 2006). Considering that since the 2008 financial crash negative European attitudes have increased whilst the number of transnational Europeans has significantly incremented, my first research question explores the impact of transnationalism on European identity in a post-crisis EU. Moreover, my

second research question tackles the impact of transnationalism on participation in the EP elections in a post-crisis EU. In an attempt to answer this question I argue that the EU's democratic deficit and second-order elections debates fail to explain low levels of participation among transnational Europeans –basically because these studies omit a transnational perspective. While for most of Europeans low levels of turnout may be explained through the perception that there is *less at stake* at the EP elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980), transnational Europeans present an ideal profile of an active voter. Yet transnational Europeans cast their vote in smaller numbers than non-transnational Europeans. Chapters 5 and 6 address this puzzle.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out the mixed-methods design utilized to tackle the impact of transnationalism on European identity and European voting behaviour. The methodology has been constructed applying two types of research tools: quantitative and qualitative. Thus this is a sequential study (Creswell 1995) embedded with a "dominant-less dominant design" (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). This type of design tends to be represented as "quan → QUAL", where the capitalization of the letters stresses the emphasis of one method over the other (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). More specifically, the research design begins with a quantitative phase. Applying several logistic regression models, I study the impact of transnationalism (independent variable) on European identity and participation in the EP Elections (dependent variables) in several EB datasets prior to and after the 2008 financial crisis. This quantitative section intends to find factors that explain variation in the dependent variables, thus offering a global picture of identity feelings and political behaviour between transnational and non-transnational Europeans at a macro level. Next, I complement these quantitative techniques with 58 in-depth interviews focusing on the case-study of Spain. Through semi-structured interviews I explore the impact of transnationalism on European identification and political behaviour on one of the demographic group that has been most dramatically affected by the 2008 financial crash: transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards.

In spite of the common morphological roots, methodology and method are intrinsically different. For the purposes of this chapter, it is vital that this distinction becomes clear. According to Olsen (2010) "methodology is a proposed set of techniques combined with the underlying assumptions about the world (the ontology) and the assumptions about how to establish true statements about the world (the epistemology)" (2010: 2). On the other hand, methods are embedded with the methodology and they represent the different set of techniques to collect and analyse the data (Olsen and Morgan 2005). The tools used in this thesis have a mixed nature. The words mixed-methods inevitably evoke specific philosophical connotations. For instance, statistical techniques tend to evoke structuralism (Olsen 2010). These philosophical assumptions might be particularly accentuated in fields where one technique predominates over another. This is the case of political science. Ron (2010) highlights the mismatch between the methodology and methods applied in political

science research. This seems to be the case when the methodology is justified by the methods and when the latter are introduced without an ontological and epistemological support.[16] The field of political science is not an exception. Other disciplines have also incorporated a mixed-method research detached from its ontological and epistemological roots (Ron 2010). Yet, due to the essence of mixed-methods, merging different "worlds", researchers should be compelled to engage with these discussions (Mason 2002; Denzin and Lincoln 2008; Olsen 2010; Ron 2010).[17] Still, ontological and epistemological positions tend to be omitted, leaving readers to make their own assumptions. In order to contribute to a more reflective methodology in the fields of sociology and political science, this chapter scrutinises the epistemological and ontological foundations of the mixed-methods approach.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, it begins with an ontological and epistemological discussion. Then, it moves on towards the quantitative section, where I describe the procedures of the data collection, its analysis, the description of the dependent and independent variables, and some reflections of the limitations of this method. Next, the qualitative section is introduced. This section gathers information about the justification and applications of qualitative interviewing, justification of Spain as a case-study, data collection procedures, the analysis, ethical considerations and the limitations of this method.

3.2. Ontological and epistemological grounds of a mixed methodology

Mixed-methods emerged as an alternative methodology after the vast majority of social scientists overcame the paradigm wars[18] (i.e. empiricist vs. phenomenological paradigms) that took place between the 1960s and the 1980s (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). Since then, the array of possibilities merging quantitative and qualitative approaches has grown enormously. There is a tendency when combining various methodologies to integrate epistemologies from different philosophical worlds. This connects with the research design, and with the process of writing the theoretical framework of this thesis. The reason for this influence emanates from the fact that a mixed-methods approach "involves switching

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[16] "Political scientists, especially those who practice regression analysis, often use the terminology of empiricism to interpret their work. However, in many cases this terminology does not correspond to the actual content of their work or the nature of their terminology and try to practice regression analysis without discussing the philosophical foundations of their work" (Ron 2010: 273).

[17] In Ron's words: "I do believe that an adequate explication of scientific activity is important for the work of scientists themselves. An adequate explication is needed for connecting social sciences with social activity" (Ron 2010: 270).

[18] This is a term coined by Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie (1998) referring to the discrepancies between positivists and constructivists.

iteratively between deductive and inductive reasoning" (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998: 52). Frequently, researchers applying mixed-methods gather data combining different techniques and epistemological perspectives to analyse the similarities, and disparities of respondents in a given topic (Creswell and Clark 2007).

The choice of a multi-faceted approach of mixed-methods research lies in the idea that the use of different philosophical and academic foundations offers a perspective that cannot be exclusively attained using quantitative or qualitative tools (Creswell and Clark 2007). In other words, applying both methods improves the work more than if only one is taken into consideration. This is due to the fact that, while statistical techniques reach large numbers of the population and can become highly representative, they normally offer fixed answers, lacking the interaction and detailed information gathered from respondents through qualitative means (Corbetta 2003). Given the type of research questions of this research and their connection to multiple disciplines, a multi-faceted methodology seems ideal.

When researchers apply mixed-methods, the use of triangulation strategies is implicit. Simply put, a triangulation technique "involves the combination of data sources to study the same social phenomenon" (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998: 41). Taking into consideration the multiple dimensions of identity and voting behaviour, the measurement of the dependent variables through different methodological approaches seems optimum. Given that transnational studies frequently lack the triangulation of data and techniques (Smith and Guarnizo 1999), and the dominance of quantitative research in European identity and European voting behaviour research, this thesis aims at bridging this methodological and empirical gap with the EB and in-depth interviews.

The use of mixed-methods poses questions on the ontological coherence of the research (Walby 2001; Olsen 2010; Downward and Mearman 2010) because it frequently emanates from different philosophical grounds. A priori, the distance between some of these philosophical worlds may seem insuperable. This may be the case between positivism and social-constructivism. For instance, Popper believed that scientific knowledge should be advanced through the empirical falsification of hypotheses. Based on that conception, Popper's method was offered in opposition to the inductive logic "we know its truth from experience usually means that the truth of this universal statement can somehow be reduced to the truth of singular ones, that these singular ones are known by experience to be true; which amounts to saying that the universal statement is based on inductive inference"

(Popper 1934: 42). At the other end of this epistemological spectrum, Simmel (1908) conceives society as a conscious and inner representation shared among individuals. Compared to nature, which is external, the study of society requires the incorporation of individuals' ego, on one hand, and understanding the interpretations or psychology behind subjects' thought, on the other. Furthermore, this substantive distinction requires a separate methodology than the one typically used in natural sciences (Simmel 1908). Even though social research may not explicitly discuss the study of "the truth" in Popper's terms, the influence of positivism is still very vivid in social sciences (Downward and Mearman 2010). Equally, the existence of this impeccable Minotaur[19] (Gouldner 1962) in social sciences remains a fact. However, "can scientists be objective?" and "how do scientists achieve objectivity?" (Williams 2010: 305). Or as Olsen questions: "is it possible to carry out post-structuralist research without an excessive relativism or a total constructivist ontology?" (2010: 11).

Critical realism offers an alternative that deals with this methodological dilemma. The strength of critical realism relies on the reconciliation between positivistic and social constructivist approaches. This reconciliation is based on acknowledgment of the scientist in the research; mostly because as social scientists immersed and studying social relations, it is inevitable to avoid influencing and being influenced by the social world (Simmel 1908; Gouldner 1962; Becker 1973; Bashkar 1975; Harding 1991; Sayer 1992; Olsen 2010). In this sense, the existence of "objective" structures is acknowledged but in the same terms as researcher's subjectivity. In doing so, realists hope to improve the ontology (Olsen 2010). Yet, critical realists' recognition that science might not be as pure and objective as in structuralists' terms does not imply that a non-value free science should be accepted. On the contrary, social realists apply different techniques to compensate for this gap. For instance, critical realists must seek a situated objectivity, focusing on the objectivity not only of the individual researcher but also of his/her colleagues (Williams 2010).

Another technique that realists use in order to achieve this "scientific awareness" is retroduction. From the four typical logics applied in social sciences, (i.e. induction, deduction, abduction and retroduction; Olsen 2010), retroduction is at the heart of all critical realistic methods. Retroduction arises through critical thinking, a reflective dialogue that realists seek while bearing in mind the key question: why does this phenomenon appear as it

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[19] "This is an account of a myth created by and about a magnificent minotaur named Max-Max Weber, to be exact; his myth was that social science should and could be value-free" (Gouldner 1962: 199).

is? (Olsen 2010). Answering this question encompasses three main areas: the set of theories that has been used or could be used to address a specific object of study (i.e. why does this theory explain or fails to explain this phenomenon?), the behavior of the data (i.e. why does the data present this pattern?) and, finally, how could researchers analyse it? (Olsen 2010: 15). Furthermore, retroduction buries the hatchet between deductive and inductive logics (Downward and Mearman 2010; Olsen 2010). Realists choose an expansive position since they do not confront the inferences of information from large quantities (i.e. induction) with the one from small scale data (i.e. deduction). Instead, through retroduction realists query the procedures in which data is collected, who gathers it and the conclusions reached (Sayer 1992).

In most cases, the use of retroduction (and attaining a situated objectivity) necessitates a variety of methods. This tends to be achieved using quantitative and qualitative techniques. However, realists go a step further and carry out a methodological pluralism (Olsen 2010; Downward and Mearman 2010) in combination with multiple levels of triangulation. Triangulation may be applied very differently depending on where researchers' interest lies. For instance, Denzin (1970) distinguishes four types of triangulation: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theoretical triangulation and methodological triangulation. Data triangulation requires acquiring chronologically and situationally variety of the data. The investigator triangulation implies that there is more than one researcher collecting the data. The third type of triangulation, the theoretical, emanates from the use of various disciplines. For this reason, this is also known as multi-disciplinary triangulation (Downward and Mearman 2010). Finally, through the methodological triangulation, researchers execute different methods. However, this can be done in two different ways (Denzin 1970). The first one, so-called "within method", requires several arrays of the same method, while the second one, "between method", incorporates different methods. Throughout this thesis, the use of the data, theoretical and methodological triangulations at different stages will become evident. For instance, in the literature review a theoretical triangulation is present thanks to the critical study of theories from the fields of sociology and political science. Moreover, the next section of this chapter is dedicated to the description of the triangulation between the methods and the data applied in this research. It will commence with the description of the quantitative methods and then continue with the application of qualitative methods.

3.3. Quantitative methods: the Eurobarometer

This thesis adopts a "quan → QUAL" research design (Creswell 1995; Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). In other words, it begins with a quantitative analysis, to then contrast, compare and complement the results at the macro level with qualitative in-depth interviews. The nature of mixed-methods encouraged me to profoundly reflect on the epistemological and ontological roots emerging from these techniques. As a consequence, in the previous section, I manifested that a coherent philosophical use of mixed-methods can be achieved through critical realism. Given that critical realism requires the acknowledgment of the origin and treatment of the data (Sayer 1992; Olsen 2010, 2010; Williams 2010), this section provides descriptive information of the data collection, data analysis and operationalisation of the EB.

3.3.1. Data collection

At present, the EB has been the most commonly used quantitative dataset among academics interested in citizens' recognition of the European project and European identity feelings (Inglehart 1970; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Duchesne *et al.* 1995; Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Carey 2002; Rohrscheider 2002; Ray 2003; Kuhn 2011). The information of the EB is drawn from one of the most prominent European institutes for Social Sciences: GESIS (Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences). According to the GESIS the sample design is "a multi-stage, random (probability) one. The sampling is based on a random selection of sampling points after stratification by the distribution of the national, resident population in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas, i.e. proportional to the population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to the population density" (GESIS 2015).

In this thesis, I analyse seven EB datasets prior to and after the 2008 financial crisis comprising information on European identity and participation at the EP elections.[20] In contrast to qualitative techniques, one of the strengths of the EB resides in the possibility of studying social and political phenomenon over time and in large populations. According to the Eurostat (2012), the levels of intra-EU mobility since 2008, the beginning of the Eurozone crisis, have increased. This has been particularly the case among southern EU member-states (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). Analysing data pre- and post-2008 provides a

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[20] The datasets included in the analyses are EB 54.1 (2000), EB 60.1 (2003), EB 64.2 (2005), EB 71.3 (2009), EB 77.4 (2012), EB 82.3 (2014) and EB 85.2 (2016).

picture of the impact of transnationalism on the dependent variables before and after the financial crash.

3.3.2. Data analysis

The statistical analysis applied to the data is logistic regression. This type of regression aims to "find the best fitting and most parsimonious technique to describe the relationship between an outcome variable and a set of independent variables" (Hosmer and Lemeshow 2000: 1). Considering that the dependent variables of this study are binary, logistic regressions represent the most adequate statistical tool. The dependent variables in this research are European identity and European political behaviour (i.e. participation in the EP elections). The purpose of applying the regression to these variables is to explore the influence of transnationalism on European identity and European political behaviour when controlling for a set of socio-demographic variables. In addition to the regressions, the quantitative analysis includes estimating the marginal effects among transnationalism on European identity and voting behaviour, the interaction effect between transnationalism, European identity and education, and detailed descriptive information of the reasons for vote abstention. Chapters 4 and 6 expand on these analyses and the information of these sections.

3.3.3. Dependent variables

Recent studies stress that the understanding of complex feelings (such as European identity) with quantitative techniques must be done through the use of multidimensional items (Bruter 2004, 2013; Goyder 2003; Ruiz Jimenez *et al.* 2004; Sinnott 2006; Hanquinet and Savage 2011). This has been the case for Bruter (2004), who included civic and ethnic items in his study, and for Favell et al. (2011) who distinguished between cognitive/evaluative and affective/emotional items. Nonetheless, making use of the EB does not allow such creativity since the items and their measurement are already established.

In 2005 Richard Sinnott assessed the formulation in which identity had been scored in crossnational surveys (e.g. EB, World Values Survey). In his article, the author identifies three main types of identity measurement: A) identification ranking (i.e. "belong to/identify with/think of yourself as", B) proximity ranking (i.e. "feel close to") and C) identification rating (i.e. "think of yourself as"). Although some surveys have consistently adopted one of these approaches, other have not. This is the case with EB which started with an identification ranking type of question, shifted to a categorical question in 1982 and has been

using the identification rating since 1992. The main difference between types A and C concerns the registration of the answers (see Table 3.1). As Sinnott (2005) puts it, the scale in the identification ranking is very vague, while the identification rating is "anchored" (221: 2005). The fact that the identity questions of the EB vary, allowed Sinnott (2005) to compare the accuracy of these formulations. According to Sinnott (2005), identification rating questions (i.e. type C) grant more robust results than type A or B.[21]

Table 3.1. Type of identity questions included in the Eurobarometer.

Type	Question	Answers
Identification ranking (type A)	"Which of these geographical groups would you say you belong to first of all…?"	The locality or town where you live; the state or region of the country where you live; name of country as a whole; name of continent or sub-continent; the world as a whole
Identification rating (type B)	"Do you think yourself as a citizen of Europe?"	Often; Sometimes; never
Identification rating (type C)	"Do you see yourself as…?"	Nationality only; Nationality and European; European and nationality; European only; Don't know

Source: Sinnott (2005)

The first dependent variable, European identity, is based on questions falling into the category type C category (identification rating). Although this variable allows multiple answers, for the purposes of this study, European identity was transformed into a binary variable. Two reasons justify this decision. First, the original formulation of the question on

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[21] Sinnott explores the relationship between of these identity questions. According to this author "a comparison of the strength of the relationships between identity as measured in each of these three ways and a series of dependent variables across different surveys suggests that Type B measures are superior to Type A measures and that Type C are at least as good as and may be better than Type B. The crucial tests come, however, when one compares the performance of the measures in the same surveys (…) In the case of the measurement of European identity by means of a Type C identification-rating measure, the degrees of attachment scale is to be preferred to the more commonly used scale running from nationality only to European only" (Sinnott 2005: 221).

European identity allowed respondents to identify themselves with more than one identity (if necessary). However, the possible answers present a confrontational display (e.g. "I only feel national" or "I feel national and European" or "I feel European and national" or "I only feel European"). These answers are structured and hierarchized,[22] pushing respondents to position and exert a sort of dominance of one identity over another. The interplay of different identities goes beyond the scope of this thesis, which exclusively focuses on the manifestation of European identity. Therefore, in creating a new and dichotomous European identity variable, I obtained a more theoretically coherent variable than the original one. The second justification for creating a binary dependent variable is methodological. This is based on the fact that having an outcome variable that would only allow two values, guarantees a higher number of responses of just one outcome. This is particularly relevant for the transnational group, which is significantly smaller than the group of non-transnational Europeans. Any variable that would not present enough number of cases in each category would interfere with the reliability and validity of the model(s). As it may occur with the operationalisation of variables, this decision limits the measurement of the dependent variable to a less graded information into a binary type of variable.

The analysis of the second dependent variable (EP's election turnout) is rooted in the EB datasets 71.3 (2009) and EB 77.4 (2012). Responses to the questions utilised are binary. Both questions present a similar format. More specifically, EP's turnout is measured asking respondents if they participated in the 2009 EP elections. This type of question is known as reported vote, and it is believed to be an accurate measurement of turnout (Achen and Blais 2016; Quitelier and Blais 2016). The analysis section of Chapter 6 provides more information on the application of these two questions. It should be noted that I originally included one EB dataset prior to the Eurozone crash (EB 60.1, 2003). However, given that in 2003 this question was not formulated in the same way than in post-crisis surveys (i.e. hypothetical vote as opposed to reported vote) I decided to exclusively focus on the years 2009 and 2012.

3.3.4. Transnationalism

In this thesis, transnationalism (the main explanatory variable) is measured through citizenship. At the beginning of the questionnaire, the EB registers the nationality of the interviewees. Provided you are an EU citizen, you can participate in the survey. In order to register the interviewees who are living in a different European member-state, I created a

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[22] This hierarchy frequently excludes local identification.

dummy variable. Respondents with –at least– one European nationality different from the country where the dataset was being conducted are considered transnationals (e.g. a French respondent answering the EB in Belgium). Respondents with the same nationality of the country in which the survey was conducted are considered non-transnationals (e.g. a German citizens replying the EB questionnaire in Germany). Although past studies have used or created more sophisticated operationalisations of transnationalism (see Favell *et al.* 2011), this operationalisation facilitates the inclusion of more datasets before and after the 2008 crisis. To my knowledge, Kuhn (2012, 2015) is the only academic who adventured in the creation of a more accurate transnational variable using the EB.[23] Kuhn's work study exclusively analyses data prior to 2008, which prevented me from replicating this approach.

3.3.5. Limitations

The main limitations of the quantitative analyses rely on the constraints that secondary data typically pose. The lack of my input in the elaboration of the questionnaire and the items implemented to measure European identity and voting turnout are the two main caveats that I encountered. In the last decade, identity scholars have emphasized the benefits and necessity of assessing feelings of identification through multidimensional items (Goyder 2003; Ruiz Jiménez *et al.* 2004; Sinnott 2006; Hanquinet and Savage 2011; Bruter 2004). Although EB data may be superior to other crossnational surveys (Sinnott 2005), the items to study European identity and voting behaviour in EB data are scarce. Had I elaborated the questionnaire and my own survey, I could have included more original items like Bruter (2004) or Favell *et al.* (2011), such as, Europeans' socialisation, supporting the idea of having a European football team or positive experiences trying other European gastronomies (Bruter 2004; Favell *et al.* 2011). In the case of turnout, the EB also lacks items assessing non-voters' motivations at the EP elections. These limitations impede the advancement and the understanding of low levels of participation at the European level.

At the same time, my own alterations to the data may also bring limitations. The bulk of these weaknesses relates to the operationalisation of the variables. The transnationalism variable presents several limitations. Although this variable is rooted in citizenship, distinguishing nationals who acquired a different European nationality in their adulthood from EU citizens who acquired their nationality at birth is not possible. It is expected that citizens who acquire

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[23] Kuhn's (2012, 2015) transnational index accounts for transnational background, transnational practices and transnational human capital.

a European nationality as adults will relate to their European identity differently than citizens who have resided in a European country since early stages. This may be even more the case for individuals with a non-EU background (e.g. Moroccan citizen with a French nationality). In spite of these constraints, the variable transnationalism groups these two cases under the same category. In other words, a dummy transnational variable cannot account for all these subtle disparities.

Despite the differences that may appear between a non-national from a different EU member-state (e.g. Portuguese living in France) and a non-national with a non-EU background (e.g. Moroccan with a French nationality living in the EU-15), transnational citizens with a non-European background present a minimum level of integration. For this particular case, this is a linguistic integration. EB is conducted in the EU member-states' official language(s).[24] Therefore, non-national respondents must possess a minimum knowledge of the official language of the EU member-state where they reside. As a consequence, some respondents were interviewed in a different language than their mother tongue. Being multilingual is an asset that contributes to transnationalism (Kuhn 2015), particularly due to the strong connection between transnationalism, identity and language skills.

It should be noted that the use of a mixed-methods partially fills the gap of some of these limitations. For instance, the operationalisation of transnationalism and the selection of respondents with qualitative tools facilitated a more inclusive and creative definition of this variable. The next section justifies the use of the case-study of Spain and in-depth interviews as part of the qualitative methodology of this research.

3.4. Qualitative methods: Spain as a case-study

As part of a mixed-methodology, case-study aims to complement the large-N analysis at the macro level. In other words, while the quantitative section addresses a phenomenon "in width", the case-study tackles the same phenomenon "in depth" (Swanborn 2010: 2-5). The object of study of the case-study ranges from individuals, groups to institutions (Gillham 2000). Compared to extensive studies, case-studies prioritise comprehending social mechanisms over generalisations (Flyvbjerg 2006; Swanborn 2010; Gillham 2000; Yin

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[24] Author's communication in November 2015 with Dr Meinhard Moschner (Department Data Archive for the Social Sciences Team International Surveys). The Official website of Dr. Moschner can be found here:http://www.gesis.org/en/institute/staff/?no_cache=1andalpha=Mandname=meinhard%2C moschner visited in October 2015.

2012). According to Swanborn (2010) a social scientist interested in tackling a case-study normally "focuses on process-tracing: the description and explanation of social processes that unfold between persons participating in the process, people with their values, expectations, opinions, perceptions, resources, controversies, decisions, mutual relations and behaviour, or the description and explanation of processes within and between social institutions" (2010: 13). This definition displays strong parallelisms with the foundations of European identity and voting behaviour. In order to understand how transnationalism shapes European identity and turnout at the EP elections, focusing on the case-study of Spain seems ideal. Furthermore, given that quantitative methods cannot attain this level of individuals' introspection, the case-study of Spain potentially strengthens macro and micro methodologies.[25]

A review of the modern migratory history of Spain will elucidate the main transnational aspects that make this Mediterranean EU member-state a relevant case-study. In the next paragraphs, the three main migratory landmarks that this country has witnessed will be expounded. The first one took place during the 1950s and 1970s. At that time Spain was still under the dictatorial system of Francisco Franco that lasted for more than three decades (1939 – 1975). After years of political isolation and economic stagnancy, the impulse of recovery among surrounding post-war European countries in need of manpower opened the migratory door to Spaniards.[26] On the other hand, Franco's authorities encouraged and established official migratory channels through bilateral agreements (e.g. with France in 1958 and Germany in 1960). In fact, according to the Spanish Institute of Migration at the time (IEE), approximately a million Spaniards migrated between 1959 and 1973. These results do not include any illegal or clandestine migration, which was extremely frequent during the Spanish dictatorship (Sanz 2010), particularly among those who opposed the system. Prior to the Spanish adhesion to the EU in 1986, this transnational group did not have the same social and labour rights as French and German citizens, and in common with other non-EU migrants, fell into the category of "guest workers" (Sanz 2010).

The second migratory change began in the 1970s continuing into the 1980s, and was accompanied by the end of the dictatorial system and the establishment of the democracy. On

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[25] Flyvberg (2006) makes a strong argument in favour of case-study research debunking five common misunderstandings (e.g. context-independent knowledge is more valuable than context-dependent knowledge).
[26] Although the economic and political conditions were probably the main factors, other conditionings like forced migration should not be disregarded in the complexity of the migratory decision-making.

the 20th of November of 1975 Franco died in Madrid. In the following years Spain walked its first democratic steps. In 1977 the first general elections were held and in 1978, more than a century after the creation of the first Spanish constitution in 1812 (also known as *La Pepa*), the current democratic constitution was approved. These political events influenced the migratory Spanish pattern enormously since neighbouring European countries promoted the return of transnational Spaniards after the death of the dictator. In other words, migrants were offered a number of benefits if they returned to their home-country. The promotion of these polices and the establishment of a democratic system, among other factors, were highly effective. For instance, approximately 80% of the Spanish migrants living in Germany returned to Spain. More specifically, the levels of migration fell from 600,000 Spaniards residing in Germany in 1975 (Sanz 2010) to 129,893 in 1999 (Coordinadora Federal del Movimiento Asociativo en la RFA 2014).

The last and third migratory landmark began in the 2000s, at a time when the EU hit a period of critical economic instability: the genesis of the Eurozone crisis. Mediterranean EU member-states (i.e. Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain) –together with Ireland– were the most severely affected. If periods of economic prosperity were accompanied by an increase of migrants in past decades, high levels of unemployment, public cuts and austerity measures reversed the migratory pendulum in Spain. From 2000 to 2009, Spain gathered 50% of all migration living in the EU-15 (Focus Migration 2013). However economic hardship drastically modified this trend. As a result, since 2008 –for the first time in two decades– Spain maintains a negative migratory balance (Focus Migration 2013). These migratory changes are shown in Figure 3.1. In 2002, the Spanish net migration[27] scored 17.9 (13.4 points higher than the EU-15), followed by Portugal (4), Italy (2.8) and Greece (2.6). Compared to other Mediterranean EU member-states, Spain has undergone the most drastic migratory drop. This third demographic landmark has been a peculiarity of Spain at the beginning of this century.

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[27] Eurostat states that net migration "is usually estimated as the difference between the total population change and the natural increase during the year. The ratio of net migration (including statistical adjustment) during the year to the average population in that year. The value is expressed per 1000 persons" (Eurostat 2014).

Figure 3.1: Net Migration of Mediterranean member-states.
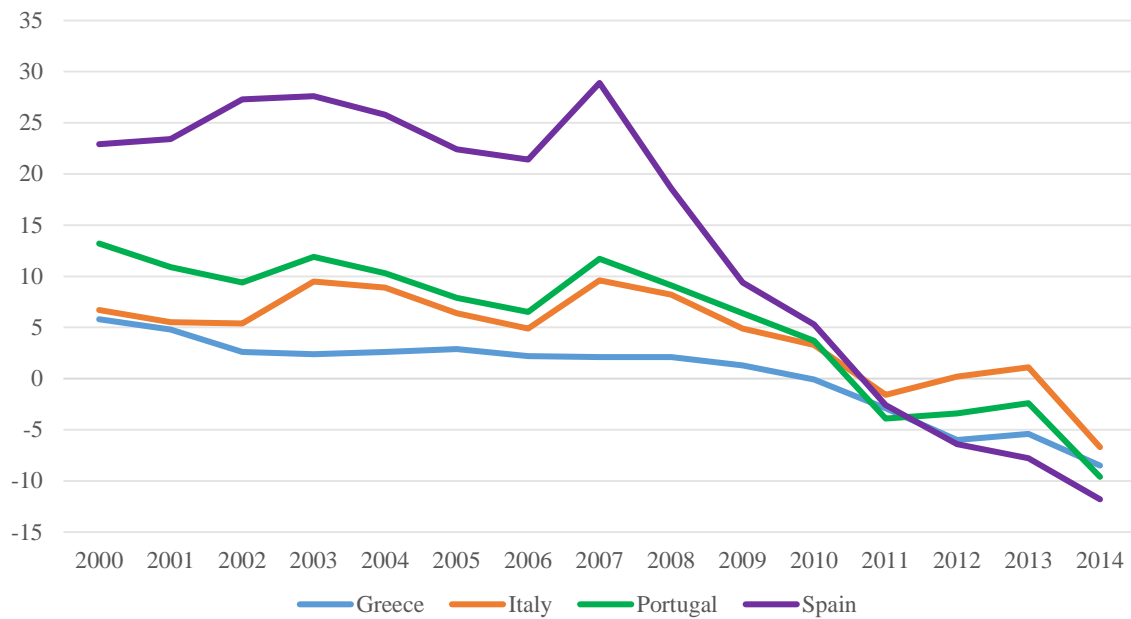
Source: Eurostat (2016). Own elaboration.

3.4.1. Qualitative interviewing: "conversations with a purpose" [28]

The qualitative tool chosen to collect the empirical data is in-depth interviews. The essence of interviewing is embedded with one of the most basic social acts: dialogue. A dialogue must involve at least two individuals. According to one of the earliest models of communication (Shannon 1948), the act of communicating a message requires three elements: a sender, a channel and a receiver. However, qualitative interviews go beyond the basis of any communicative structure; this tool also engages with the explicit and implicit content taking place in conversations. Two main questions will be answered in this section: what do qualitative interviews entail? And, what makes this tool the most adequate for the aim I pursue?

Nowadays interviews are used so frequently that some authors believe that modern society has turned into an "interview society" (Atkinson and Silverman 1997). Even when interviews emanate from dialogues, they – even unstructured interviews – are "conversations with a purpose" (Mason 2002). This implies that the dialogue present during any interview leads towards a specific direction. In most cases, researchers dictate an interview's direction. Depending on the type of interview (i.e. unstructured, semi-structured or structured), the level of freedom that respondents possess will vary. However, not all interviews constitute

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[28] Mason (2002).

qualitative interviewing. According to Mason, "qualitative interviewing" presents four characteristics: 1) the interactional exchange of a dialogue, 2) a relatively informal style, 3) a thematic, topic-centred, biographical or narrative approach, and 4) the perspective that knowledge is situated and contextual (Mason 2002: 62). The first and the fourth features provide qualitative interviewing with its distinctive trademark. The process of interviewing requires both, interviewer and interviewee(s), to be active agents. It is precisely during the course of this social interaction that data will be generated and, in some cases, even negotiated (Denzin and Lincoln 2008). This first aspect is strongly connected with the fourth feature: knowledge is contextual. In this case, the word contextual refers to two different aspects (Mason 2002; Denzin and Lincoln 2008). Firstly, qualitative interviews must be understood and interpreted in the context where they took place. This context refers to the physical context –which would include telephone and Internet– and the social context (e.g. cultural values, political atmosphere or respondent's circumstances). Secondly, contextual knowledge centers on the role of the interviewer in the interview. Conducting an interview with the same topic and sample by different social scientists will obtain different results. This is rooted in the social nature of dialogues, a very intimate act that is influenced by the ability of researchers to gain respondents' trust, understanding of the language and cultural background of the sample, establishing a rapport or respecting respondents' needs (Denzin and Lincoln 2008).

Interviews are one of the most common qualitative tools in social science. Their use is so broad that researchers may take their application for granted overlooking an adequate justification and coherence within their research (Mason 2002). However, considering the impact that research tools have upon the collection, interpretation of the data and the role of researchers, I offer a reflection on these matters. More specifically, I will introduce the three main reasons that lead me to incorporate qualitative semi-structured interviews in my research.

First, semi-structured interviews represent the most suitable qualitative technique to answer the research questions. This justification includes not only the formulation of these questions but also the essence of the topic of this research. In order to fully understand the influence and impact of transnationalism on European identity and voting behavior, I have triangulated methods from two different epistemological worlds. Otherwise, these research questions would have only been answered partially; showing the patterns or tendencies from the quantitative results but lacking in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon of transnationalism

and *vice versa*. An intimate and personal theme like identity and vote requires a technique able to collect the nuances of a conversation, cultural and contextual subtleties, prioritising respondents' experiences and perceptions, without imposing rigid methodological structures (e.g. closed questions interviews).

Second, the use of semi-structured interviews is framed under the epistemological and ontological grounds, critical realism, explained at the beginning of this chapter. As Mason highlights:

> *"if you choose qualitative interviewing it may be because your ontological position suggests that people's knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of the social reality (…) [also] you should have an epistemological position which allows that a legitimate or meaningful way to generate data on these ontological properties is accounts and articulations, or to analyse their use of language and construction of discourse"* (Mason 2002: 63).

It has been previously stated that data emerging from the interviews should always be analysed in context. In order to achieve this, researchers must bear in mind the socio, cultural and political idiosyncrasies at micro and macro levels. In the case of qualitative interviews, this implies thinking "how the framing is being done and who is doing the framing" (Denzin and Lincoln 2008: 138). The fact that critical realists, and implicitly qualitative interviews, express that interviewing is not a neutral process (Simmel 1908; Gouldner 1962; Becker 1973; Bashkar 1975; Sayer 1992; Mason 2002; Olsen 2010; Williams 2010; Denzin and Lincoln 2008), challenges social researchers to reflect upon, both, respondents' and social scientists' beliefs (Mason 2002; Denzin and Lincoln 2008). As mentioned above, this level of introspection and reflection is what critical realists denominate retroduction, the conscious act of critical thinking. Therefore, an explicit description of the ontological and epistemological positions of studies conducting qualitative interviews becomes more relevant than in other types of research. Despite not being able to attain a qualitative value-free method,[29] awareness of this limitation can be achieved through retroduction and reflectivity, which requires that interviews' data should always be interpreted taking the context into consideration.

Finally, the use of semi-structured interviews was also selected as the most suitable qualitative tool due to specific characteristics of the sample's identity and voting behaviour.

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[29] "There is a growing realization that interviews are not the mythical neutral tools envisioned by survey research. Interviews are increasingly seen as active participants in an interaction with respondents that are shaped by the context and situation in which they take place" (Denzin and Lincoln 2008: 144).

These peculiarities should not be necessarily interpreted as a negative aspect but more as limitation based on qualitative skills and ethical values: sensibility and respect (i.e. not causing any emotional distress) to the sample. National and local Spanish identities have been a sensitive topic prior to the establishment of the democracy. During Franco's dictatorship (1939–1975), the majority of cultural regional manifestations outside the dominant nationalistic view were forbidden. For instance, the use of regional languages like Catalan or Basque was prohibited. Since the instauration of the democracy, Spain took a more inclusive approach (e.g. establishing 17 autonomous communities, recognizing several co-official languages). However, in the last decades there have been social and political groups claiming for the independence of their autonomous community. This has been the case of Catalonia. In 2014, 2.305.290 Catalans participated in a non-binding referendum in which they were asked "do you want Catalonia to be a State?" and "if so, do you want Catalonia to be an independent State?" (Catalonia Votes 2014). To sum up, in the light of these socio-political circumstances, in-depth interviews represent one of the most effective tools for the discussion of identity and voting behaviour.

3.4.2. Data collection

The collection of the data – establishing contact with future respondents – was carried out through Social Network Sites (SNSs). Boyd and Ellison define SNSs as "web-based services that allow individuals to 1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, 2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and 3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (2008: 211). The use of SNSs was based on the fact that transnational Europeans represent a 'hard-to-reach' population. Although this type of population has been frequently located through snowball sampling[30], (Atkinson and Flint 2001; Brickman-Bhutta 2012; Baltar and Brunet 2012), in the last decade the use of SNSs for gathering "hard-to-reach" respondents is getting more popular among social scientists (Brickman-Bhutta 2012; Baltar and Brunet 2012).

Fifty years ago, locating Spaniards living in other European countries could have been easily done through the so-called "Casa España" (Spanish Home). "Casa España" were associations founded by transnational Spaniards in host countries with different social functions. More specifically, it was in these associations that transnational Spaniards exchanged cultural and

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[30] According to Vogt (1999) snowball sampling is defined as: "a technique for finding research subjects. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on".

political interests, established bonds, received support and created connections with other Spanish migrants (Sanz 2010). With the development of the Internet and new technologies, Social Network Sites (SNSs) fulfil some of the main needs provided by "Casa España". SNSs are detached from physical contexts, thus allowing instant communication and the access of information at any given time. These characteristics are ideal for mobile individuals like transnational Spaniards, because the exchange of information not only requires a reduced amount of time and money but is free from physical barriers. Thanks to the Internet, transnational citizens can contact people in similar circumstances, whilst the information exchanged remains in a platform suiting everybody's schedule.

Another reason that supports the use of SNSs for transnational Spaniards is the fact that they cannot be easily located. A high number of transnational Spaniards choose not to notify the Spanish embassy after settling in another European city. Therefore, the use of traditional channels is not as reliable as it might have been in the past. For instance, data gathered on southern-European migrants by the research project *Generation E* (2016)*,* shows that compared to transnational Italians, Portuguese and Greeks, Spaniards represent the group with higher numbers of no registration at the consulate (58% does not register vs. 42% that registers). [31] Despite the limitations of this data, more rigorous studies confirm this tendency. According to González-Ferrer (2013), one of the caveats of the data from the Spanish government is that it relies on deregistration on the census, which only takes place when migrants register at the consulate. González-Ferrer (2013) highlights that registering at the consulate does not present enough advantages, discouraging European transnational Spaniards from doing so. On the contrary, registering at the consulate may cause more harm than not notifying the Spanish authorities: a) travel to the consulate requires time and money, particularly for those who live far from it and b) registering at the consulate automatically deregisters Spaniards from the Spanish census, losing basic rights like accessing Spanish healthcare system or applying for social housing in the future. There is an alternative registration for transnational Spaniards: registering as a temporary resident. However, Spanish authorities do not gather this information, reinforcing the fact that the official data is fallible. González-Ferrer (2013) has made this caveat clear when she compares the differences between migration census from hosting European countries and the Spanish migratory census, being the latter the one that shows the lower number of registrations. At present, transnational Spaniards are a high mobile population within the EU that might not

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[31] These results refer to 256 Spanish respondents (Generation E 2016).

always make use of official registration offices. Given this gap on the data, transnational Spaniards could be considered a "hard-to-reach" population. For this reason, the use of SNSs would facilitate access to a high number of respondents, under more economic means and with faster means than through the use of the official channels.

3.4.3. Locating respondents

In order to understand the strategy used for contacting respondents, the definition and application of transnationalism for the qualitative methods should be developed. While transnationalism at the quantitative stage was defined through citizenship, transnationalism for qualitative methods presents more sophisticated characteristics. The transnational and non-transnational respondents interviewed for this thesis have a Spanish nationality, reside in a European capital and are between 18 and 30 years old. This is the population that has been affected the most by the crisis in the Eurozone since 2008.[32] As a consequence, this has been one of the demographic groups that migrated the most within the EU after the economic recession (González-Ferrer 2013; Prats 2014; Borraz 2016). Non-transnational Spaniards are settled in Madrid, the capital of Spain and have never lived abroad (although they may have travelled as tourists). On the other hand, transnational Spaniards have been residing in a European capital for at least six months. A minimum of six months of residence in another EU country aims at reducing the selection of respondents who might have settled recently but may relocate again. According to Article 6 of the directive 2004/38 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (Eur-Lex 2014) "EU citizens can reside on the territory of another EU country for up to three months without any conditions other than the requirement to hold a valid identity card or passport." On many occasions, during that six months period, transnational Europeans will have to become familiarized with these requirements and decide whether the time and monetary costs will compensate living abroad in that country.[33]

Residence and registration requirements after the three months mark varies. For instance, in the Netherlands after four months, transnational Europeans who wish to reside longer must register with the municipality, which will allow them to obtain the *Burgerservicenummer* or BSN (i.e. National Insurance Number). However, this is not the only requirement. On top of that, in order to be employable and have basic health coverage, transnational EU citizens

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[32] In 2015 the youth unemployment rate in Spain reached 46,5% for those between 20 and 24 years, and 28.9% in the age group 25-29 (Sevillano and González 2015).
[33] This may be particularly the case among Spaniards with low resources.

have to cover the costs of their own health insurance.[34] Without these requirements, EU transnationals would not be allowed to open a Dutch bank account, access the labour market or the health care system. Things are different in other EU countries like the United Kingdom. The UK permits Europeans to access the National Health Service (NHS) once they are registered with the municipality. Although the UK health system is based on co-payments, these are not paid monthly but charged for every visit to the healthcare services. These are just examples to illustrate some of the procedures that transnational Europeans deal with once they have resided for longer than three months, and they intend to settle in another EU member-state. Based on the institutional implications of exceeding this "three months mark", in this research, interviewees must had lived in another European capital for at least six months. To a certain extent, defining transnationalism under this time limit has potential limitations. Delimiting transnationalism depends on how this term is conceptualised. For this reason, establishing the beginning or the end of what constitutes transnationalism varies in academia. For instance, Pötzschke (2012) labels a minimum of three months residence in another EU member-state as a "cross-border practice."

Given the hard-to-reach nature of transnational respondents, I utilised SNSs to locate potential interviewees. Facebook exemplifies an ideal example of SNSs fulfilling needs similar to those met by the Spanish associations during the last century. In order to transmit reliability and credibility, I created a professional Facebook profile for the sole purpose of contacting potential respondents. This profile contained my full name and a picture where my face was visible. Then, I joined several Facebook groups of transnational and non-transnational Spaniards. In the case of the non-transnational sample, I contacted potential respondents through three Facebook groups with non-political or religious orientations that were related to the city of Madrid: *Madrid, Madrid Diferente, Secretos de Madrid*. On the other hand, transnational Spaniards were contacted in six different Facebook groups, corresponding to Spaniards[35] living in London, Brussels, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam and Berlin. Targeting transnational young Spaniards residing in European capitals has a transnational rationale. The United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands are the EU countries hosting the highest numbers of EU-15 internal migration (Eurostat 2015). On top of this, capitals are perceived by migrants as the hub urban areas full

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[34] In 2017 the monthly price of the most basic health insurance (*basisverzekering* in Dutch) ranged from €92 to €104 (Zorgkiezer 2017).
[35] It should be noted that these groups are not exclusively for Spaniards. Thus, these groups often include other Spanish-speakers, mostly from the Hispanic community.

of opportunities. Restricting this search to European capitals facilitates certain contextual and social similarities. For instance, despite the cultural differences between these six European countries, comparing respondents who live in Berlin and Paris will present more cosmopolitan similarities of their social, cultural and integrational experiences than citizens who live in Berlin and Montpellier (or any other smaller city). Locating Facebook groups with transnational Spaniards is not an arduous task. In most cases, these groups present the format of "Spaniards in London" or "Spaniards in Paris."

The strategy for contacting respondents was initiated with messages uploaded on the Facebook groups. However, the response rate was so low that I decided to contact respondents directly using a more private and personal message. From March 2015 to July 2015 a total of 694 messages were sent to transnational and non-transnational respondents. Although with more positive results than with group messages, only 37.7 % (262) of potential respondents read this private message. This is due to the fact that unless Facebook users are friends on this network, s/he would not see the message in the main inbox.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), the way in which researchers introduce themselves "leaves profound impression on the respondents and has a great influence of the success of the study" (2008: 32). For this reason, this first message intended to be approachable, clear, providing respondents with basic information, and was originally written in Spanish with an informal tone. An English transnational of this message can be found in the appendix A.1.

The use of SNSs was implemented in combination with an on-line questionnaire. Once respondents answered the private Facebook message, they would have the chance to get involved following a link provided at the end of the message. The aim of this e-questionnaire was threefold. On one hand, considering that respondents were contacted through a virtual profile detached from any organisation, it would give the research more credibility. This is due to the fact that this on-line questionnaire was hosted in an official university URL, had the logo of the University of Leicester visible, and included my university e-mail account. The e-questionnaire gathered basic demographic information about respondents. It specifically asked about gender, date of birth, place of birth, place of residence, level of education and occupation. This allowed me to filter respondents based on their main demographic requirements: being born in Spain, being between 18 and 30 years and living in one of the six selected European capitals. Thus, an adequate filter of respondents was the second goal of the e-survey. At the end of this e-survey, respondents had to provide an e-mail

account. This step was essential to send the ethical consent to respondents and arrange an appointment for the interviews. This final stage, obtaining informants' contact information, was the third and last purpose of the e-survey. The Facebook messages targeting non-transnational young Spaniards followed a similar pattern. However, in the Facebook messages it was explicitly written that these respondents must reside in Madrid and have never lived abroad.

The response rate of the e-survey was significantly lower than the reading rate of the Facebook messages. For instance, only 96 out of the 262 potential respondents who read the first Facebook message filled in the e-questionnaire. There were 8 subjects who despite completing all the demographic information did not provide an e-mail address and, therefore, could not be further contacted. In order to be as respectful and non-invasive as possible, potential respondents were contacted through e-mail only once a week in the course of three times. In these e-mails I enquired about an appointment, sent the ethical consent form and asked respondents' to add their virtual signature in the ethical document prior to the interview. The interviews were conducted through telephone or Skype and, occasionally, through video conference. All the interviews were conducted in Spanish. Despite using the telephone, all calls were executed through a computer. Thanks to new technology, I used an additional program that digitally recorded all the interviews[36]. Furthermore, I annotated most interviewees' replies and impressions on a notebook (see appendix A.5).

By the end of July 2015, a total of 58 in-depth interviews had been conducted. In terms of the two sample groups, there are 27 non-transnational and 31 transnational respondents. The average length of an interview was 35 minutes, being 17 minutes the shortest and 54 minutes the longest. Although the majority of the interviewees were contacted through Facebook, some of them were also reached through snowball sampling. Respondents who contacted other individuals through snowball were asked not to share any of the content of specific questions discussed during the interview.

3.4.4. In-depth interviews

Given that the majority of citizens do not question their identity (Díez Medrano 2003; Bruter 2004) or reflect through the prism that researchers do, the format of the interview was designed to facilitate respondents' comfort and engagement with the topics. In other words,

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[36] Respondents were informed, both at the ethical consent and prior to the interview that all the information would be recorded and treated anonymously.

the questions of the interview were designed with a structure that would firstly tackle tangible and situated aspects (e.g. local contexts) and move forward to abstract levels. The triangle shape of Figure 3.2. represents the sequence of these topics: from micro to macro contexts. Voting behaviour queries were carried out with a similar pattern (i.e. from local, regional and national to European elections).

Figure 3.2. Structure of the semi-structured interview.

Local level:
place of birth,
residents' description,
local attachment

National Level: definition
of Spaniards, Spanish
attachment

European level: first EU
association, EU symbols
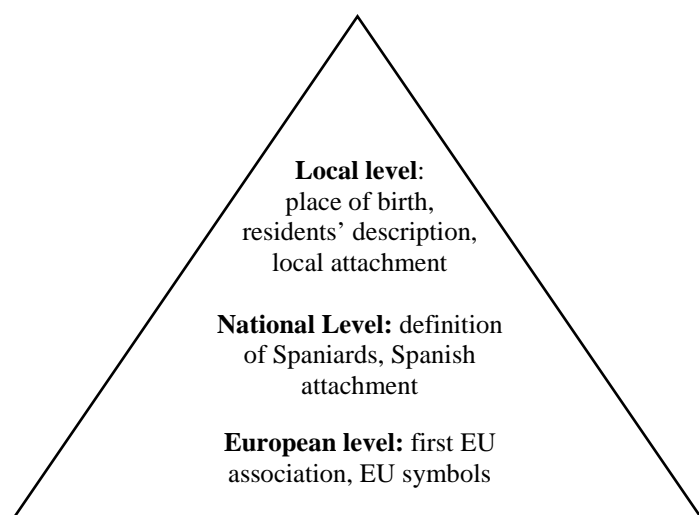
In order to avoid seeding concepts[37] on respondents, keywords like "European", "identity" or "EU" were avoided when contacting potential respondents. Although this presented a challenge, I tried to explain my research in broad terms without violating any ethical regulations. Generally, I introduced my research as a comparative study of social and cultural perceptions of young Spanish citizens in EU capitals with Spaniards living in Madrid.

The exploration of the first dependent variable, European identity, was carried out through the following question:

> *Finally, I have previously asked you about your perceptions at local and national levels, but if I ask you now "Do you feel European?", What would your answer be?*

Contrary to the Moreno scale used to measure European identity in the deductive phase (i.e. through the EB), this is an open question that does not constrain respondents to a pre-established answer. Therefore identities are not confronted or displayed in a conflictive way. As it was expected, not all respondents perceive themselves as Europeans. While the bulk of

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[37] This was a suggestion made by Professor Martin Parker (University of Leicester), Professor Stephen Gibson (York St. John University) and emeritus Professor Janet Newman (The Open University).

European identity research disregard respondents who do not feel European, during the interviews I investigated these queries:

> *(Ask respondents who feel European) In your opinion, why do some citizens do not feel European?*
> *(Ask respondents who do not feel European) In your opinion, why do some citizens feel European?*

The relevance of these questions resides on the ability of respondents to understand feelings of identity – or its lack – that other Europeans have. Although there have been questions in the EB dataset asking which elements create feelings of European identity, this has always been presented through a closed list of possible answers. An example of this type of question appears in the EB 80.1 (2013) with the following format: QD9: 'In your opinion, among the following issues, which are those that most create a feeling of community among EU citizens?' A: History; religion; values; geography; languages; laws; sports; interventions, science and technology; economy; healthcare-education-pensions; solidarity with poorer regions; culture; other; none; none such a feeling does not exist; DK. Gathering information about the aspects that might promote feelings of European identity seems as equally relevant as unravelling the aspects that respondents' perceive impeding the development of such identification.

In order to investigate the second dependent variable, voting behaviour, I asked interviewees:

> *Regardless of your political views, may I ask if you have participated in any elections? Have you ever voted at local level, regional level, national level and/or European level?*
>
> *Why did you vote? Why didn't you vote?*

It should be noted that I deliberately avoided querying respondents about their political preferences, thus establishing a clear distinction between partisanship and voting behaviour. Although some respondents shared their political views spontaneously, from an ethical point of view, others may have considered this a sensitive question. For this reason, I intended to explore voting behaviour in the most discrete and sensitive possible way. The formulation of the queries "why did/didn't you vote?" allows researchers to understand the motives behind vote among the sample. This question is justified by the gap that researchers have stressed on multiple occasions: the lack of studies understanding low turnout results in the EP elections (Blondel *et al.* 1998). The participation in local, regional and national elections was also

included in the question. This is particularly significant for the group of non-voters and for the potential analysis of the relationship between voting at the domestic and European levels.

On top of the exploration of the two main dependent variables, the questionnaire includes a number of questions that are embedded in European identity literature. For instance, there are questions that are believed to influence European identity indirectly. More specifically I asked respondents to define the EU (Bruter 2004; Favell *et al*. 2011), familiarisation with EU symbols (Anderson 1998; Díez Medrano 2003; Favell *et al*. 2011), opinion about the crisis of the EU (Favell *et al*. 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012), hypothetical ways to improve the EU and interest in European politics (Favell *et al*. 2011).

Finally, the last section of the questionnaire includes a set of questions collecting transnational information. These questions are connected with Khun's (2015) work. They refer to the European social capital of respondents (i.e. having friends from other EU countries), the language skills, the use of a foreign language to read or consume media (e.g. watching TV in another language), and the number of countries visited within the EU. These queries connect with Bellucci *et al.*'s (2012) finding that trusting other EU citizens strengthens feelings of European identity or the influence that using other EU languages has on respondents' identity (Favell et al.2011).

3.4.5. Ethical considerations and reflections

This section reflects on the ethical considerations as a scientist collecting and analysing data from individuals. As Alan Bryman (2008) stresses "ethical reflections are necessary not only to show the degree of the researcher awareness and familiarity of their sample, but also because avoiding an ethical reflection "damages social research"" (2008: 116). Most ethical guidelines inquire researchers to take into account ethical concerns on four main areas: harm to participants, lack of informed consent, privacy and deception (Diener and Crandall 1978).[38] These aspects are also reflected on the basic principles of the Code of Practice for Research Ethics Concerning Human Participants of the University of Leicester (2014b). Firstly, social researchers must avoid causing any physical or emotional harm. Considering

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[38] As a postgraduate student affiliated to a particular institution, the most immediate ethical procedures begins with the University of Leicester. According to point 3.2.1 of the Code of Conduct of the University of Leicester (2014a), I was required to obtain ethical approval prior to contacting respondents or conducting any interviews. Following these requirements, on January the 6th of 2015, a copy of the participation form, inform consent and the questionnaire of the interviews were sent to the Ethics Committee. After incorporating a small number of amendments, my research project received ethical approval on February the 16th -2015. Once these documents were ethically approved, the majority of the ethical concerns narrowed down to my interaction with participants.

that my interviews took place using a telephone or a computer, the probability of causing physical damage was minimum. In the case of emotional harm, I had two main concerns. The first one was the psychological distress that discussing cultural and political matters could have on the sample. This may have been particularly the case among transnational Spaniards. Every migratory experience is unique. While some transnational citizens may perceive it as a positive experience, others may have struggled, and have kept a negative impression. Due to the idiosyncrasy of individual experiences, I was aware that discussing the remembrance of cultural values of their homeland could cause emotional distress (e.g. missing family and friends). Furthermore, addressing feelings of identity and political participation could also cause discomfort among participants from regions that had their local traditions severely constrained during the dictatorship (e.g. Basque country), or regions where nationalistic and independence debates remain highly active. For these reasons, I believed that being aware of the sensitivity of these topics and addressing them with caution was crucial to prevent the sample from any harm.

In order to address these concerns, I consciously used neutral vocabulary, particularly among respondents originally from Galicia, Catalonia, Basque Country and Valencia. For instance, instead of asking: "How would you define people at the national level?", I would ask "How would you define people from the peninsula?" Sometimes, I also omitted the word Spanish. For example, I asked respondents if they knew any European symbol. In many cases, respondents would mention the European flag. Then, I would broadly enquire respondents if they identify with other flags. Although this question could be perceived as too generic, opposite to "Do you identify with the Spanish flag?", it avoided the imposition of any political or ideological symbols at local, regional and national level. This may be particularly the case among Catalonians or Valencians in favour of independence. The Catalonian independent movement utilises a flag, *la estelada,* to represent their ideology. However, this symbol is embedded with political controversy since it is not officially recognised by the Spanish state. On top of these measures, all respondents had been previously informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had no obligation to address any question. This aspect connects with the second area discussed by Diener and Crandall (1978): the informed consent.

Prior to the interview, participants received the participation form as an e-mail attachment. This form (see appendix A.3 and A.4) was divided into three parts. The first section included

the title of my research, full name, the name of the institution, the department of my affiliation, and a brief description of the different stages of my research. The second section, stated that the participation was voluntary, that all answers would be treated anonymously, that respondents could withdraw any information from the interviews and the necessity of their virtual signature at the end of the participation form. This second section also included an estimated time of the duration of the interviews (i.e. 30 to 60 minutes) and the possibility of being rewarded for their participation with a 70 Euros Amazon voucher.

The informed consent and avoiding any harm to participants are intertwined, especially in the areas of confidentiality and anonymity. Disclosing personal respondents' information or disregarding anonymity would breach all privacy agreements stated in the participation form. Furthermore, misusing research data is punishable in the UK under the Data Protection Act (1998) which in the section 'data for research, history and statistics purposes' 33.1.b, states that "the data are not processed in such a way that substantial damage or substantial distress is, or is likely to be, caused to any data subject". Moreover, in section 33.4.b, the Data Protection Act (1998) defends individuals' privacy "the results of the research or any resulting statistics are not made available in a form which identifies data subjects or any of them."

The use of the SNSs to contact respondents (i.e. Facebook) also poses ethics and privacy concerns. Drawing a line between what is public and private information from the Internet is not always clear. Although individuals may share information in open sites, these do not necessarily grant their use for research purposes (Bryman 2008). It should be noted that I did not analyse any content shared in the Facebook groups. Although Facebook was the mean in which I located potential respondents, these were asked for voluntary participation. Under any circumstances, the discussions and information uploaded in this network were utilised as part the analysis of this thesis. Although Facebook's (2014) privacy regulations forbid institutions or individuals to use users' information with commercial purposes, these regulations do not prevent researchers from establishing contact with potential respondents.

Social science research has not always respected the last ethical rule: deception. A famous example comes by Milgram who in 1963 studied individuals' behaviour to inducing pain (i.e. through electric shocks) under strict and persistent orders[39]. Deceiving participants not only

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[39] Milgram (1963) carried out this laboratory experiment trying to shed light on the atrocities taking place in the Nazi concentration camps.

generated emotional distress but also discredited Social Sciences[40] as a rigorous and moral science. For this reason, prior to and during the interviews, I strove to offer information about my research as transparent as possible. To a certain extent, this was achieved both through my e-mail correspondence, and facilitating a context where respondents could address any questions at any time during the interview.

3.4.6. Limitations

As it has been previously mentioned, the majority of respondents were located through Social Network Sites. Making use of technological networks to contact "hard to reach populations" presents several potential limitations. First of all, contacting respondents through Facebook implies an inherent technological savviness from the sample. This bias seems to indicate that respondents feel comfortable with technology and the use of virtual social networks. It should be noted that according to INE (Spanish National Statistical Institute), in 2014 67.1% of the youth Spanish population (16 to 74 years) were active users of social networks. More specifically, students (92%) and Spaniards between 16 to 24 years (91,3%) presented the highest participation percentages (INE 2014). On top of that, the OBS Business School (2014) provides further information of the use of Facebook. First, in 2015 Facebook was the most widely used virtual social network; followed by Google+ and Twitter.[41] Second, the population that used a mobile phone to access the Internet the most ranges between 16 and 34 years. In fact, 55% of Spaniards between 16 and 24 years used their phone to get on-line and 52% for those aged 25 to 34 years. Situating the reality of the use of technology and SNSs among youth Spaniards illustrates that the overall young Spaniards feel comfortable with the use of technology and SNSs like Facebook. Considering that transnational respondents were found in Facebook groups, a tendency of socialising and openness to others should be acknowledged. Particularly in the relation with identity formation and the social construction side of it.

On top of this limitation, this study is partially constrained by the strategy employed during the data collection. Potential respondents from a specific generational cohort, with a Spanish nationality, based on a European capital, and who had never lived in another EU member-

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[40] Deception has also occurred in other disciplines. For instance, participants in the Tuskegee syphilis experiment, a clinical experiment taking place in the US between 1932 and 1972. In this experiment, some of the participants were not informed of having been infected with syphilis. Furthermore, there were participants who were told to be treated while they were receiving placebo treatment, just to see the evolution of the illness, at a time when penicillin had already been found to be a cure to syphilis (CDC 2015).

[41] Also the OBS highlights that 88% of Spaniards with an Internet connection have a Facebook account.

state –for non-transnationals– or had been living for at least six months in a European capital –for transnationals– constituted an eligible sample. In other words, data were selected based on age, nationality and the absence or presence of transnationalism. However, respondent's levels of education were not employed as a condition factor for data collection. As a consequence, a high number of respondents reached high educational levels. For instance, the majority of transnationals respondents have an undergraduate degree (13 out of 31) and 17 out of 31 a postgraduate degree. In the case of non-transnational Spaniards, the bulk of respondents have undergraduate studies (18 out of 27), followed by high-school education (7 out of 27) and 2 postgraduates. Given the strong relationship between education, and European identity and voting behaviour, not having distinguished Spaniards with different educational levels poses certain limitations. In this particular case, the sample's profile may imply positive impact on European identification and voting behaviour. Although a more extensive future research is required to overcome this limitation, I attempt to minimise this limitation complementing the qualitative results with a statistical analysis including respondents with different educational backgrounds.

3.5. Conclusions

The present chapter tackled major epistemological and ontological debates of a mixed methodology. One of the main strengths of a mixed-methods design is the data enrichment that comes from the triangulation of several techniques. As a result, a mixed methodology offers an analysis that could not be simply attained exclusively using one of these two methods. Given the different epistemological grounds between quantitative and qualitative methods, I explained how the use of critical realism facilitates the implementation of these methods coherently. Then, chapter 3 provided an in-depth discussion of the quantitative and qualitative analyses, their data, variables and potential limitations. More specifically, the quantitative analyses explore the impact of transnationalism on European identity and voting in the EP elections at the macro level (EU-15). At the micro level, 58 in-depth interviews to transnational and non-transnational Spaniards complement the results obtained in the quantitative stage. From a transnational perspective, the case-study of Spain provides a deep insight of the influence of intra-EU mobility in European identification and voting behaviour in a post-crisis EU.

The next chapter marks the beginning of the empirical analyses. More specifically, chapter 4 investigates the impact of transnationalism on European identity at the macro level.

CHAPTER 4. TRANSNATIONALISM AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN A POST-CRISIS EU (MACRO ANALYSIS)

4.1. Introduction

The financial struggle after 2008, considered the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression in 1929 (Barroso 2010), transcended the economic sphere. Increase of the levels of unemployment, cuts to education, health and public administrations, on top of a tumultuous anti-austerity (e.g. *15-M* in Spain), anti-EU movements (e.g. *Que se Lixe a Troika,* "Troika go to Hell" in Portugal) and support for Eurosceptic political parties are some of the most prominent socio-political changes it brought about. The financial crash affected all EU member-states. However, a high number of Mediterranean citizens –the EU member-states damaged the most by the crisis and its austerity measures– opted for the migratory path, shifting the demographics and net migration of some of the southern EU member-states (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). According to the Eurostat, the number of transnational Europeans has grown by 2 million, from 2.5% in 2010 to 2.8%, of the total EU population, in 2014 (Eurostat 2011, 2015). At present, transnational Europeans represent 14.3 million of EU population (Eurostat 2015).

Transnationalism resides at the core of one of the fundamental values of European citizenship: freedom of movement. As Europeans, transnational EU citizens are entitled to residence, health care, unemployment benefits or participation in local elections, among other rights, while living in another EU member-state. All these advantages, consolidated after the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, opened the door to Europeans lacking labour and educational opportunities in their homeland, particularly among Mediterranean member-states (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014; Lafleur and Stanek 2017). From a citizenship point of view, transnational Europeans are inescapably active users of their EU rights, and whether we call them "Eurostars" (Favell 2008) or "Pioneers" (Recchi and Favell 2009) transnational Europeans represent an ideal bottom-up group of study.

Moreover, understanding the impact of transnationalism on European identity becomes particularly relevant for two more reasons. First, identity can be affected during periods of social, political and economic unrest (Risse 2010). In the last decade, Europeans increasingly identify with Eurosceptic and populist political parties (e.g. *Le Front National)*, the image of the EU has worsened, and a higher number of Europeans tend not to trust European bodies

like the EP (Eurobarometer 2008 – 2016). According to the Eurobarometer (see Figure 4.1), the number of Europeans who exclusively identify with their national identity has declined since 2010, while the percentage of Europeans who identify as a national and European has increased. One of the implications of this change is the necessity of further studies establishing a clear cut between European attitudes and European identity. Given that there is a gap of transnational studies before and after the 2008 crisis, in this chapter, I explore how transnationalism shapes European identity along the 2000s.

Figure 4.1. In the near future, do you see yourself as...? (EU-15, in percentages)
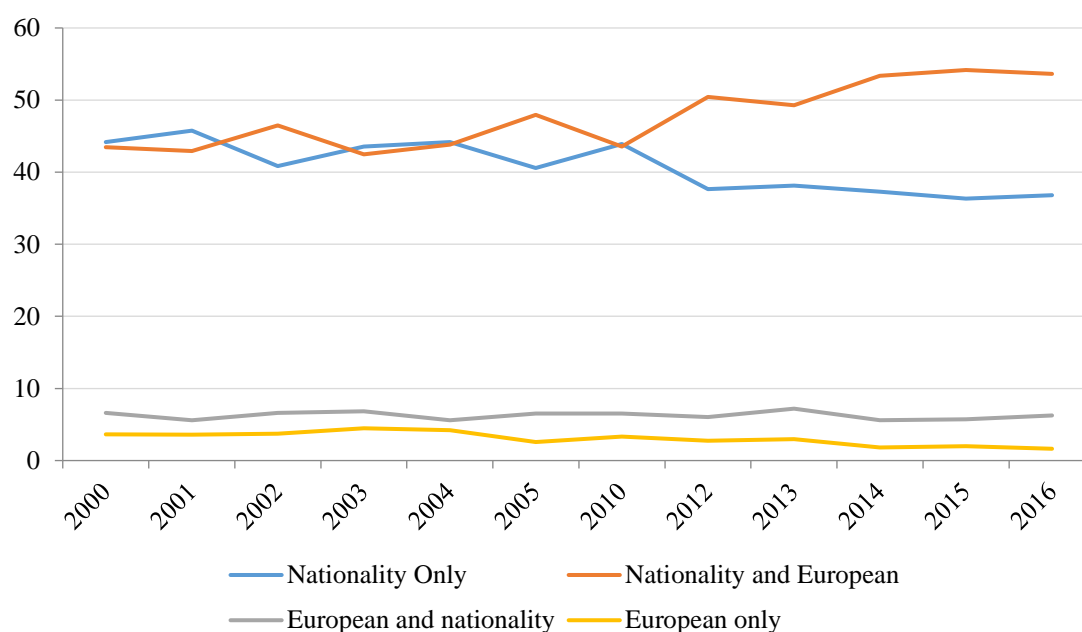
Source: Eurobarometer 2000 – 2016. Own elaboration.

Secondly, the reality of transnationalism or intra-EU mobility in relation with national and European identities has acquired more prominence among politicians.[42] Easton (1965) claims that the relation between political systems, the people who work for these systems, the citizens of the system and their identity are deeply entangled. Political systems and the individuals that compose them are not only connected through a particular identification with the system, but it is through identity that political apparatuses receive *diffuse support*, and have its legitimacy perpetuated (Easton 1965). Furthermore, national and European identities shape political behaviour (de Vreese and Tobiasen 2007; Pallarés *et al.* 2007; Llera 2009).

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[42] This has been the case for the EU referendum in the UK. According to the Centre for Research in Communication and Culture, intra-EU mobility was the second issue most covered in UK media after economy (Loughborough University 2016).

The relationship between identity and politics is so deeply interconnected that some academics distinguish two types of European identity: ethnic/cultural and civic/political (Giesen and Eder 2001; Bruter 2004; Ruiz-Jimenez *et al.* 2004; Favell *et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012).

Although similar research has been conducted in the past (Favell 2008; Recchi and Favell 2009; Bruter 2004; Kuhn 2015), the bulk of these studies have not addressed the latest socio-demographic and political impacts since the financial struggle. For this reason, this chapter investigates the influence of transnationalism on European identity with EB data prior to and after the 2008 financial crash for the EU-15. Finally, it also explores the effect of transnationalism on education and European identity. Even when education has been found to be one of the strongest predictors of European identity, studies combining transnationalism and education have not always been conclusive. A number of academics studying the impact of the Erasmus university exchange on European identity (Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011) claim that this experience did not influence European identity because these students were feeling European prior to this transnational sojourn; while there are researchers that claim that becoming an Erasmus student strengthened this identification (King and Ruiz-Gélices 2003; Mitchell 2012). However, as Theresa Kuhn (2012) highlights, these studies exclusively focus on highly educated Europeans and do not include a comparison between transnational and non-transnational Europeans with different educational backgrounds. This chapter complements previous research on transnationalism and education that did not include educational differences (King and Ruiz-Gélices 2003; Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Mitchell 2012) or omitted comparative data before and after the Eurozone crisis (Kuhn 2012).

This chapter has the following structure. First, I review two main sets of literature: a) European identity and transnationalism and b) transnationalism and identity among Europeans with different educational backgrounds. At the end of each theoretical block I include the main hypotheses. Then, I provide a description of the operationalisation and justification of the dependent, independent and control variables vis-à-vis the logistic regressions and the literature. The next section comprises the description and discussion of the results. Finally, I conclude stressing the implications of the results, future research and their connection with the next empirical chapter. The empirical analyses highlight two main findings. First, transnational Europeans identify more as European than non-transnational EU

citizens before and after 2008. Second, the effect of education on European identity is lower among transnational Europeans than non-transnational Europeans.

4.2. European identity and transnationalism

Identity resides in all of us. At the individual level, identity forms, shapes and dictates our persona, while at the social level, identity provides support, integration, a sense of wholeness and, at times, feelings of group empowerment (Simmel 1908; Turner 1977; Jenkins 2004; Ellemers and Barreto 2008). This research focuses on a very specific type of social identification: European identity. Reconstructing a complete picture of the creation, meanings and future tendencies of the European identity is not an easy task. Although there are a small number of studies attempting to provide a holistic –both methodologically and theoretically– picture of it (Favell *et al*. 2011; Belluci *et al.* 2012), the lack of common definition, the variability of the interpretation of European identity among member-states and its fluid nature are some of the main factors that challenge the growth in this field. But part of this literature bewilderment may also stem from the fact that in the early stages of the European integration, European identity research was strongly associated with support for EU membership. To depict this idea, it is almost as if the state of art is represented by a blank piece of paper with dots in it and even when academics are trying to connect these dots, they are still failing at connecting *all* the dots.[43] For this reason, the line between European attitudinal and identity theories' has not always been clear. However, attitudes and identity should not be treated indistinctively (Favell *et al*. 2011). For instance, Bellucci *et al.* (2012), distinguish three main blocks of attitudinal theories: *cognitive mobilisation, instrumental rationality* and *judgmental heuristics. Cognitive mobilisation* is based on the impact of individuals' knowledge (e.g. media exposure, education) on their support for the European integration (Inglehart 1970; Duchesne and Frognier 1995; Bruter 2005). The second group, *instrumental rationality,* is based on the idea that European attitudes vary depending on the costs and benefits that citizens perceive as members of the EU (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998; Carey 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2004). Lastly, *judgmental heuristics,* conceives European attitudes based on national performance (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Rohrschneider 2002; Ray 2003). It should be noted that findings in this category are not always in harmony (see Sánchez-Cuenca 2000 and Rohrschneider 2002).

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[43] This is what Hanquinet and Savage (2011) consider a lack of theoretical consensus.

Drawing from Tajfel's work, this study understands social identity as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (1981: 255). In spite of the fact that the manifestation of identity varies enormously from subject to subject, Tajfel's definition rests on socio-constructivist theorists and the impact that social interaction has on the construction and/or reconstruction of individuals' persona. Whether it is individually or socially, identity requires a sense of familiarity, a feeling of sameness towards other individuals or social groups. However, in the case of the European identity, reaching this familiarity does not necessarily occur frequently. On one hand, this is due to the fact that the majority of individuals do not necessarily reflect on the foundations, meanings and expressions of their identity (Díez Medrano 2003). In this sense, it is precisely a transnational essence that embeds mobile Europeans with an ideal scenario where their social, cultural and political attributes will be questioned. At identity and cultural levels, transnational citizens are constantly reminded that they have a different origin. This may simply come by having to spell their surname for a routinely bureaucratic transaction or understanding – for transnational Europeans living in England – that skipping the queue is perceived as extremely offensive. Suddenly, transnational Europeans can no longer take many of these aspects and customs for granted. This "new" society has rules that, though invisible, are well known to everybody but them.[44]

Although interacting with every citizen of a specific community is not necessary to identify as part of a nation (Anderson 1991), for macro international communities like the EU, these interactions may be key in the comprehension of the European identity. The idea that cross-border interactions would foster a sense of an international or shared identity is not new and has been discussed in the past in some of Deutsch's work (1954; 1957). Even when the development of a mutual identity may not necessarily emerge among citizens who travel to different international communities[45] (e.g. U.S. citizens in Japan), the economic realm, common history and political apparatus shared by all Europeans in combination with the right of freedom of movement makes Deutsch's theories particularly interesting for the European case. Up to this point, there seems to be a small, but growing, number of studies supporting the positive impact of transnationalism on European identification (Fligstein 2009; Rother

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[44] For an excellent ethnographic piece on "invisible rules" see Kate's Fox (2005) work: *Watching the English: the Hidden Rules of English Behaviour.* London: Hodder.

[45] Jones (2014) reveals that U.S. transnational citizens experienced a reinforcement of their national identity, despite developing more positive attitudes towards individuals from different cultures.

and Nebe 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012; Triandafyllidou and Maroufof 2012; Ciornei 2014; Potzchke and Braun 2014; Kuhn 2015). In fact, academics have shown that transnational Europeans experience other significant changes. According to Fligstein (2009), transnational EU citizens are more prone to develop a sense of solidarity towards other EU fellows. However, this solidarity does not exclusively entail social solidarity but also extends to economic solidarity (Ciornei 2014). Furthermore, the impact of transnationalism goes beyond European identity since it has a positive impact on EU knowledge and attitudes towards EU integration (Rother and Nebe 2009). Finally, if transnationalism expands to the public sphere, this would constitute an ideal context for European identity to be constructed, debated and legitimated (Risse 2010). In spite of all these studies, there is still a research gap understanding the impact of the 2008 economic crisis on European identity from a transnational perspective. Thus, contrary to what utilitarian theories would posit, I hypothesize that, despite the Eurozone financial struggles (2008), transnationalism still has a positive impact on European identity. In other words:

> *$H_{4.1}$: Transnational EU citizens feel more European than non-transnational Europeans prior to and after 2008.*

4.3. Transnationalism, education and European identity

Freedom of movement is one of the core rights of European citizenship. Thanks to the lowering of physical and bureaucratic barriers within EU member-states, more Europeans have moved and settled in another European country. In the last decades, the relationship between mobility and education in the EU have become stronger. According to the EU, "higher education systems play a crucial role in the creation of knowledge which underpins human and societal development and the promotion of active citizenship" (European Union 2011). With the EU minimising structural educational differences since the origins of the Bologna process back in 1999, the door to transnationalism has been particularly accessible to highly educated Europeans. One of the most popular university exchanges reflecting this reality is the *Erasmus* program.[46]

In the last decades, there has been a proliferation of scholars studying the impact of the Erasmus exchange on European identity. Despite positive findings connecting transnationalism with European identity (Fligstein 2009; Rother and Nebe 2009; Fligstein *et*

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[46] The total of Erasmus Students continues to increase. According to the latest data in 2008 there were 28,283 Erasmus students, while in 2013 this augmented up to 36,759 (Statistics for all 2013).

al. 2012; Triandafyllidou and Maroufof 2012; Ciornei 2014; Pötzchke and Braun 2014; Kuhn 2015), it seems that the Erasmus exchange may not necessarily make university students more European because this experience is "preaching to the converted" (Kuhn 2012: 995). This idea is based on the fact that Erasmus university students may feel European before they embark on the Erasmus sojourn (Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Kuhn 2012). Thus, the Erasmus exchange simply strengthens a pre-existing European identity (King and Ruiz-Gélices 2003; Mitchell 2012). To certain extent, it is not a surprise that university Europeans who study in a different EU city may not experience major changes in their European identity. After all, younger Europeans with highly educational levels tend to identify as Europeans the most, either because they have been brought up and benefitted from some of the major changes during the process of EU integration and globalisation (Fligstein 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012) or because citizens who reach high levels of education are accustomed and immersed to relate to abstract and "imaginary" entities (Anderson 1991; Díez-Medrano 2003) like the EU. Still, these studies (King and Ruiz-Gélices 2003; Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Mitchell 2012) are missing a comparative analysis of transnational and non-transnational Europeans with different educational levels. Otherwise, how could the impact of transnationalism on European identity be assessed?

An article by Theresa Kuhn in 2012 has partially bridged this academic gap providing some clarity about European identity and the impact of transnationalism in relation to education. According to her analysis, transnationalism shapes European identity with more intensity than education. This is particularly the case for lower educated Europeans. Therefore, transnational Europeans with lower educational levels feel more European than non-transnational Europeans with the same educational experience. In the line of Kuhn's (2012) work, this chapter aims at complementing past research testing this second hypothesis:

> $H_{4.2}$: *education has a lower effect on European identity for transnationals than for non-transnational Europeans.*

In spite of the parallelisms with Kuhn's (2012) work, her analysis exclusively utilises one EB dataset 67.1 (2007). In the light of the increase of intra EU-mobility since the Eurozone crisis in 2008, I analyse the impact of transnationalism and education on European identity prior to and after 2008. The analysis and results of this chapter represent an original contribution. Although the study of European identity and transnationalism is not novel, the majority of past research exclusively analyses feelings of European identification prior to the EU

financial crisis. For instance, King and Ruiz-Gélices (2003) conduct their survey in 2000 – 2001, Sigalas (2010) analyses data from 2003-2004 and Kuhn (2012) utilizes the EB 67.1 (2007).

4.4. Data analysis

In order to measure the relationship between European identity (i.e. dependent variable) and transnationalism (i.e. explanatory variable), I applied several logistic regressions to six EB datasets from 2000 to 2016. Furthermore, I control for socio-demographic variables. This section includes the justification and description of all the variables included in the regressions.

4.4.1. The dependent variable

At present, the EB represents the most common quantitative dataset used among academics interested in citizens' European identity (Inglehart 1970; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Duchesne *et al.* 1995; Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Carey 2002; Rohrscheider 2002; Ray 2003; Kuhn 2011; 2015). The dependent variable of this study, European identity, is based on two different questions from the EB. The first question appeals to respondents' projection of national and European identities (i.e. "In the near future do you see yourself as…? A: nationality only; nationality and European; European and nationality; European only").[47] The second question presents a similar format than the previous query but is formulated in present tense (i.e. "Do you see yourself as…? A: nationality only; nationality and European; European and nationality; European only."). While the first question appears in the EB 54.1 (2000), 60.1 (2003), 64.2 (2005) and 77.4 (2012), the second one is present in the datasets EB 82.3 (2014) and EB 85.2 (2016).

This original dependent variable is categorical. However, it was converted into a binary variable. The justification of this decision is theoretically-driven. Even when the original formulation of these questions allows respondents to identify themselves with more than one identity (if necessary), they present a confrontational display: "I feel national and European" or "I feel European and national." The possible answers are structured and impose a hierarchy,[48] push respondents to position and exert a sort of dominance of one identity over another and embed identity with a dominant and static state; factors that have been

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[47] This question is typically known as the Moreno-scale (1988), who acquired this type of identity measures inspired by Linz's work (1973; 1986).
[48] Hierarchy that, in most cases, omits local identities.

considered to limit the study of identity (Goyder 2003; Sinnott 2005; Ruiz-Jiménez 2007). Furthermore, analysing the weight of identities goes beyond the scope of this research. For all these reasons, the new recoded "European identity" dependent variable clusters more than one identity despite its hierarchy or dominance. More specifically, the variable "European identity" is coded as 0 for respondents with an exclusive national identity (i.e. nationality only), and it is coded as 1 for respondents who express that they exclusively feel European or manifest a European identity in coexistence with a national identity (i.e. nationality and European; European and nationality; European only). Compared to other types of regression, the logistic regression represents one of the most adequate statistical analysis for binary dependent variables.

4.4.2. Explanatory and control variables

The operationalisation of transnationalism (the main explanatory variable) is based on nationality. At the beginning of the questionnaire, the EB registers the nationality of the interviewees. Provided you are an EU citizen, you can participate in the survey. In order to register the interviewees who are living in a different European member-state, I created a dummy variable labelled 'transnationalism'. This variable acquires the value 0 when the respondent is a national of the country where the interview took place. However, the value of transnationalism is 1 when the respondent presents a different European nationality than the country of the interview. Respondents who have more than one nationality, including the country where the interview was conducted, are also considered transnationals. Although this analysis is restricted to the EU-15, the variable transnationalism includes non-EU-15 Europeans living in one of these fifteen countries (e.g. Polish citizens living in the Netherlands). This choice is also theoretically coherent since it allows me to compare feelings of identity among members that belong to the European Union for similar and extended periods of time, and might not exclusively understand their European identity or political behaviour in instrumental terms (Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998). Furthermore, considering that the formation of European identity is understood as a dynamic process, socially constructed and embedded within historical events, it may be premature to contrast feelings of identification in countries of a recent incorporation.

According to literature on European identity, there are also a number of variables that should be controlled for (see Table 4.1). Previous research has highlighted how younger

generations[49] feel more European than older ones (Duchesne and Frognier 1995; Díez-Medrano 2003) due to their facilities to learn other languages, travel and interact with other Europeans (Fligstein 2008). In this analysis, age is a continuous variable. Gender and occupation are also included in the logistic regressions. This is based on the idea that male in higher occupational status tend to see themselves as Europeans, among other reasons because they possess higher financial means and less family burdens, facilitating businesses or personal travels (Fligstein 2008). For this reason male is the reference category of gender.[50] The variable occupation has been divided into six categories: managerial, white-collar, manual worker, self-employed, unemployed and retired (reference category). Another control variable included in this analysis is education. In this case, it is expected that highly educated EU citizens identify more as Europeans than lower educated ones. The reasoning behind this educational difference is that this type of identity is more present among Europeans who are more exposed and aware of EU affairs (Inglehart 1970; Gabel 1998), have been socialised at university developing abstract and complex thinking, are more able to relate to an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991), learned about European history (Díez-Medrano 2003) or experiencing the EU as a more present entity (Bruter 2004; Fligstein 2009; *Favell et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.*2012). The education variable is composed of four main categories (based on the age when they ended their studies): up to 15 years, from 16 to 19 years, more than 20 years (reference category) and those who are still studying. Finally, I have included a dummy variable measuring political perspectives at the far right end of the spectrum (i.e. respondents who placed themselves at 9 and 10 in an ideological scale measured from 1 to 10, where 1 represents a "left" ideology and 10 represents "right" political views). This is based on the idea that far right Europeans are expected to understand their national identity as rigid and something "worth fighting for"; in this sense, European identity may be perceived as a danger to national identity for citizens with far right-wing political views (Fligstein 2009; Muxel 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012).

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[49] According to Favell *et al.* (2011) older generations present higher levels of European identity.
[50] According to Favell et al. (2011) women present higher levels of European identity.

Table 4.1. Control variables.

Variable	Type	Clusters
Age	Continuous	18 – 90 years
Gender	Dichotomous	Female
		Male
Education (finished education)	Ordinal	Up to 15 years
		16 – 19 years
		More than 20 years
		Still studying
Occupation	Categorical	Self-employed
		Managers and White Collars
		Manual Workers
		Unemployed
		Retired
		Students
Radicalism	Dichotomous	Far Right

Source: Eurobarometer

4.4.3. The effect of transnationalism

The logistic regressions in this chapter are complemented by the marginal effects of transnationalism on the dependent variable. This effect complements the results of the logistic regressions because "coefficients depend both on effect sizes and the magnitude of unobserved heterogeneity, we cannot straightforwardly interpret and compare coefficients as we do in linear regression" (Mood 2010: 79). Marginal effects assess the effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable (Jann 2013). The marginal effect provides a tentative result of the degree of variation in the dependent variable (i.e. either increasing or decreasing) for a unit change in a factor variable; in this case, the change from being transnational to not being a transnational European. Analysing the marginal effect is normally done in two different forms: as observed-value approach and as average-case approach.[51]

At the same time, evaluating the variations of the log-odds ratios or odds ratio is rather counterintuitive and may cause heterogeneity issues (Mood 2010; Hanmer and Kalkan 2013).

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[51] In 2012, Hanmer and Kalkan studied the calculation of marginal effects used in three main journals for 2006: *American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science,* and *Journal of Politics.* In their research they discovered that the bulk of chapters (68%) applied the average-case approach. However, this high percentage contrasts with the solely 1% of chapters that calculated marginal effects as observed-value (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013: 264). The main concern of the authors about the (ab)use of the average-case in social research resides in the three statements: observed-value and average-case are mathematically different, theory should be the main motor in the application of one method over the other, and average-case approach – the dominant approach in these three journals – offers higher results which could mislead researchers as to the real impact of the effect (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013).

Therefore, an adequate use of the marginal effects requires further explanation. Even though there are fundamental mathematical differences between the average-case and observed-value approaches that should be taken into consideration,[52] I will particularly focus on the theoretical aspect of it, the concepts behind these two approaches that determine their application. In this sense, one of the main critiques of the average-case approach concerns the notion of "average" itself. Particularly because it creates a disparity between theoretical and empirical grounds. The fact that the average-case approach calculates the mean of categorical and ordinal variables, could lead, for instance, to the calculation of an average case of a half-transnational and half non-transnational case, which fails to reflect reality. Thus, the inability to draw inferences about the population that the average-case approach presents, has been the main reason that led me to apply the observed-value approach instead, as Hanmer and Kalkan put it: "evaluating one's theoretical expectations regarding the effect of changes in the independent variable(s) of interest on the dependent variable is the primary goal of observational studies" (2013: 267).

4.5. Limitations

The lack of my input in the elaboration of the questionnaire and the items implemented to measure political behaviour are the two main caveats that I encountered. In the last decade, identity scholars have emphasized the benefits and necessity of assessing feelings of identification through multidimensional items (Goyder 2003; Ruiz Jiménez *et al.* 2004; Sinnott 2006; Hanquinet and Savage 2011; Bruter 2004).[53] Albeit the superiority of the EB over other crossnational surveys has been demonstrated (Sinnott 2005), the items to study European identity and political behaviour in this survey are scarce. Had I elaborated the questionnaire and my own survey, I could have included more original items like Bruter (2004) or Favell *et al*. (2011) did: socialising in European contexts, supporting the idea of having a European football team or positive experiences trying other European gastronomies.

4.6. Results

This section includes the most significant results of the logistic regressions applied to six EB datasets along the 2000s. On top of this, descriptive information of all the variables is available and can be found at the appendices (see A.6., A.7., A.8., A.9., A.10., and A.11.)

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[52] For those with a mathematic curiosity please refer to Hanmer and Kalkan (2013: 265-266) and Mood (2010: 74).
[53] For a more sophisticated operationalisation of transnationalism from a cosmopolitan and globalisation perspective see Kuhn 2015.

section. Table 4.2 presents the results of European identity, transnationalism and the control variables for the years 2000, 2003, 2005, 2012, 2014 and 2016. According to these results, transnationalism has a positive and highly statistically significant impact upon European identity. In fact, p values remain below 0.001 for all the years included in the analysis, confirming the expectations stated in the first hypothesis. Thus, transnational EU citizens feel more European than non-transnational EU citizens.

In the case of the control variables, there is a similar outcome with previous research. Compared to women, men feel consistently more European. In the line with Fligstein's work (2008, 2009) opposite to retired citizens, Europeans in managerial, white collars or self-employed positions see themselves as Europeans. Moreover, and as it has been repeatedly mentioned among academics (Inglehart 1970; Gabel 1998; Duchesne and Frognier 1995; Díez Medrano 2003; Bruter 2004; Favell *et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012; Kuhn 2012; 2015), contrary to highly educated Europeans who ended their education at 15 or 19 years, present negative results, in other words: they tend not to acknowledge a European identity. Finally, Europeans who placed themselves at the far right of the ideological spectrum do not tend to identify   as   Europeans.

Table 4.2. Logistic regression of European identity (EU 15).

	2000 coeff.	2000 s.e.	2003 coeff.	2003 s.e.	2005 coeff.	2005 s.e.	2012 coeff.	2012 s.e.	2014 coeff.	2014 s.e.	2016 coeff.	2016 s.e.
Transnationalism	1.268***	(.162)	.988***	(.157)	1.168***	(.142)	1.163***	(.105)	1.128***	(.099)	1.261***	(.113)
Male	.225***	(.038)	.273***	(.042)	.254***	(.038)	.201***	(.036)	.145***	(.036)	.161***	(.037)
Age	-.005**	(.002)	-.008***	(.001)	-.002	(.002)	.003	(.002)	-.001	(.002)	-.002	(.002)
Education (ref. more than 20 years)												
Up to 15 years	-.607***	(.056)	-.870***	(.079)	-.911***	(.055)	-1.01***	(.053)	-1.191***	(.054)	-1.157***	(.055)
16 to 19 years	-.378***	(.048)	-.595***	(.048)	-.537***	(.047)	-.635***	(.044)	-.618***	(.043)	-.706***	(.043)
Studying	-13.131	(430)	-.198	(.345)	.344	(.114)	.321*	(.119)	.063	(.123)	.113	(.127)
Occupation (ref. retired)												
Managers	.471***	(.085)	.567***	(.093)	.529***	(.084)	.559***	(.080)	.469***	(.083)	.554***	(.085)
White Collars	.386***	(.077)	.327***	(.081)	.442***	(.077)	.425***	(.073)	.051	(.074)	.266***	(.073)
Manual Workers	.099	(.072)	-.049	(.078)	-.047	(.070)	.179**	(.066)	-.176*	(.067)	.066	(.067)
Unemployed	-.071	(.094)	-.153	(.097)	.005	(.096)	-.073	(.083)	-.266*	(.079)	-.249**	(.084)
Self-employed	.351***	(.077)	.282**	(.088)	.379***	(.083)	.579***	(.081)	.217**	(.081)	.121	(.081)
Far right	-.443***	(.089)	-.514***	(.098)	-.372***	(.093)	-.512***	(.084)	-.539***	(.085)	-.599***	(.091)
Constant	.508***		.855***		.601***		.181***		.858***		1.120***	
LR chi^2	691.85***		668.69***		994.77***		1079.60***		1196.93***		1253.17***	
Pseudo R^2 count	.094***		.047***		.113***		.206***		.098***		.103***	
% Correctly Classified	61.12		64.22		63.56		63.21		64.27		64.95	
N / N transnational	15570 / 368		15705 / 460		15184 / 431		15039 / 709		15359 / 836		15283 / 717	

Note: Figures are coefficients of logit models, standard errors in parentheses. p*<0.05, p**<0.01, p***<0.001.

Source: Eurobarometer 54.1 (2000), 60.1 (2003), 64.2 (2005), 77.4 (2012), 82.3 (2014) and 85.2 (2016).

Table 4.2 clearly shows the positive impact of transnationalism on European identity. The marginal effects (see Table 4.3) indicate that on average, transnationalism presents a positive marginal effect over 20%. The highest marginal effect occurs in 2000 with an effect of 24.5%, while in 2003 the effect presented an increase of 18.5%. These results are in harmony with the results shown by the improvement of the model or pseudo-R^2. All the datasets included in the logistic regression register that the model ameliorated up to 10% when the variable transnationalism was included. Furthermore, the bulk of the logistic regressions correctly classifies more than 60% of the cases. These findings reinforce the positive and highly significant impact of transnationalism on European identity, and consolidates the support for hypothesis 4.1. As it was expected, since identity is socially constructed (Tajfel 1981), transnationalism, that is, being part of a context where it is possible to interact with other Europeans, having your identity frequently questioned, speaking other European languages and travelling to other EU member-states, has a positive effect on the development of European identification.

Table 4.3. Effect of Transnationalism upon European identity (EU 15).

Year	Contrast	S.E.	95% Confidence Interval	
2000	.249	.024	.201	.296
2003	.185	.026	.135	.235
2005	.216	.218	.173	.259
2012	.226	.173	.192	.262
2014	.212	.015	.128	.242
2016	.225	.016	.194	.255

Note: contrast displays the predicted probability of European identity when transnationalism changes from 0 to 1 while the rest of independent variables are held to their means.
Source: Eurobarometer 54.1 (2000), 60.1 (2003), 64.2 (2005), 77.4 (2012), 82.3 (2014) and 85.2 (2016).

4.6.1. Transnationalism and education.

Up to this stage, data are supportive of the first hypothesis ($H_{4.1}$). Simply put, European identification is higher among transnational Europeans than among non-transnational Europeans. If the colours of the spectrum of European identity are varied, so are the possible factors that affect the emergence or reinforcement of these feelings. Research studying European identity has already identified a different number of variables that shape this

identification and this influence has also been confirmed in the logistic regressions present in this study (see Table 4.2).

As the results in Table 4.2 confirmed, highly educated EU citizens are more likely to identify themselves as Europeans than EU citizens who have been enrolled in education either up to 15 or 19 years. A clear educational gap in European identification persists. Although this gap is present in Europeans as a whole, this section tests whether the effect of education is lower for transnational citizens compared with others (hypothesis 4.2). In order to understand the relationship between transnationalism and education in European identity, I added interactions between each level of education and transnationalism to the models in Table 4.2. Figure 4.2 presents the effects of these interactions on the dependent variable. One of the most noticeable aspects that can be appreciated in the graphs is the variation of the impact of education on transnational and non-transnational Europeans in the EU-15. For instance, non-transnational Europeans who only studied up to 15 years present the lowest levels of European identification while transnational Europeans with the same educational background present higher levels of European identification. We can observe a similar pattern for transnational and non-transnational Europeans who studied up to 19 years. For both educational levels (up to 15 and up to 19 years), transnational EU citizens feel more European than non-transnational respondents with the same educational achievements. These findings confirm the second hypothesis ($H_{4.2}$) since they provide evidence of how transnationalism lessens the educational gap in European identity. As it was expected, highly educated Europeans present the highest levels of identification for both groups of the sample. The fact that the gap for highly educated Europeans is much smaller than other educational supports previous research that did not find major differences of European identification among Erasmus and non-Erasmus university studies (King and Ruiz-Gélices 2003; Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Kuhn 2012).

Figure 4.2. Interaction between transnationalism, education and European identity (EU-15).
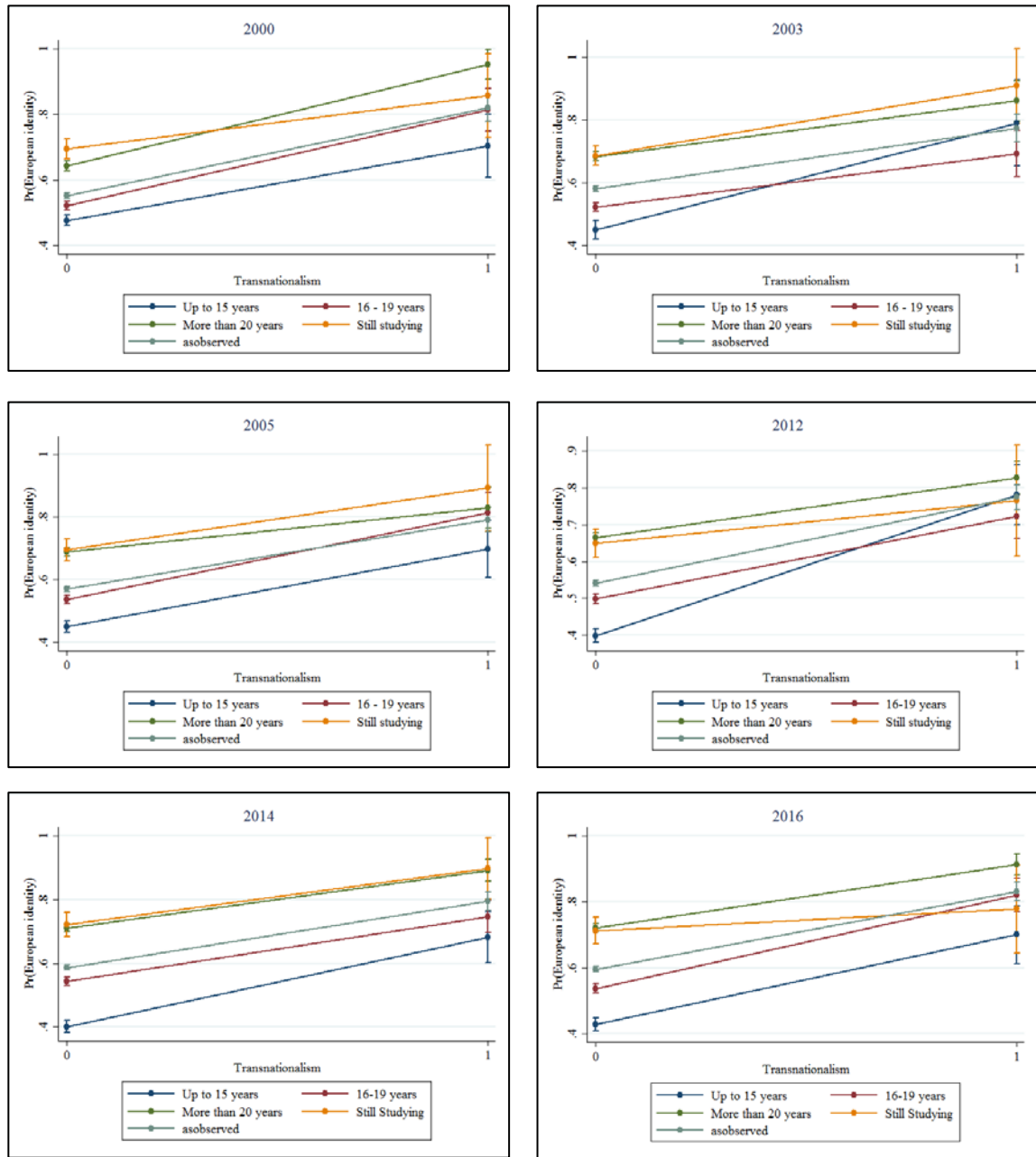
Source: Eurobarometer 54.1 (2000), 60.1 (2003), 64.2 (2005), 77.4 (2012), 82.3 (2014) and 85.2 (2016).

Understanding the effect, or predicted probability, that these interactions have upon European feelings is complemented by the calculation of the marginal effects of these interactions. The size effect of the interactions that are statistically significant can be found in Table 4.4.[54] According to these results, compared to Europeans who studied up to 20 years or more,

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[54] The interaction terms appear in the appendix A.12.

transnationalism has a positive impact on Europeans with the lowest educational levels. For instance, in 2016, transnationalism had a 9.1% higher effect on European identity among transnational Europeans who studied up to 19 years. There is a similar, but slightly higher effect (14%), among transnational EU citizens with the same educational level in 2005. In the case of Europeans who ended their education at the age of 15, transnationalism has a positive and statistically significant effect of 10% in 2014, 22% in 2012 and 16.3% in 2003. In 2000 the only significant category was 'still studying'. Surprisingly, compared to highly educated Europeans, transnationalism had a negative effect of 14.7% on the European identity of students. Considering that the logistic regressions did not show any significant results for students – always in comparison with the reference category 'Study 20 or more years' – and that this category only appears significant in 2000, this result does not seem to reflect any trend among students. These findings challenge existing literature supporting that transnationalism did not cause any significant changes in European identification (King and Ruíz-Gelices 2003; Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011) particularly because these authors exclusively focused on university students, the group that experiences the least changes on their European identity due to transnationalism. Thanks to an inclusion of Europeans from different educational backgrounds, it has been clear that the impact of transnationalism becomes even stronger among lower educated Europeans (i.e. up to 15 and 19 years).

Table 4.4. Interaction effect between transnationalism and education on European identity (EU-15).

Year	Education	Contrast	S.E.	95% Confidence Interval	
2000	Still studying	-.147	.071	-.286	-.008
2003	Up to 15 years	.163	.079	.008	.318
2005	16 to 19 years	.139	.047	.046	.232
2012	Up to 15 years	.219	.048	.125	.313
2014	Up to 15 years	.099	.046	.009	.188
2016	16 to 19 years	.0912	.032	.028	.154

Note: contrast displays the predicted probability of European identity when transnationalism changes from 1 to 0 while the rest of independent variables are held at its mean.
Source: Eurobarometer 54.1 (2000), 60.1 (2003), 64.2 (2005), 77.4 (2012), 82.3 (2014) and 85.2 (2016).

4.7. Conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to explore the impact of transnationalism on European identity prior to and after the financial crash in 2008. In the last decade, further studies which hlp to understand the relationship between transnationalism and identity have become more

necessary. First, the impact that this migratory reality has on Europeans' identity in a post-crisis EU has not been deeply studied. This has been particularly the case of past transnational studies that solely analysed data before 2008 or that lacked the inclusion of transnationalism and European identity for Europeans from different educational backgrounds (King and Ruiz-Gélices 2003; Favell 2008; Fligstein 2009; Recchi and Favell 2009; Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Mitchell 2012; Kuhn 2012, 2015; see Triandafyllidou and Maroufof 2012, Ciornei 2014 and Pötzschke and Braun 2014 for exceptions). Second, limiting the right of freedom of movement and questioning the impact of EU residents in other EU member-states have been more frequently used as mobilising arguments among politicians. In this sense, this chapter aspired to contribute to this theoretical and methodological gap.

First, in this chapter I demonstrate that transnationalism continues to have a positive and highly significant impact on European identity before and after the 2008 crisis. These results confirm my first hypothesis ($H_{4.1}$). The idea that transnational EU citizens are more likely to present a European identification than non-transnational EU citizens is supported by socio-constructivist theories on identity (Simmel 1908; Turner 1977; Tajfel 1981; Jenkins 2004). While living in a different EU member-state, transnational Europeans are more exposed to different European cultures, broaden their social circles, experience other values and have their identity questioned. More specifically, transnational Europeans present a predicted probability of feeling almost 25% more European than citizens who never lived in another EU member-state. The financial crash of 2008 shaped attitudes towards the EU. However, transnational EU citizens feel more European than non-transnational citizens before and after the financial crash.

Based on these results, it seems that citizens who build a stronger European identification through social interactions with other EU-peers may increase feelings of cultural attachment. For this reason, applying an exclusive cost-benefit approach –typically addressed by utilitarian theorists –in the understanding of European identity, European support and Euroscepticism will only tackle a few variables of the whole equation. This seems to be the case particularly among transnational Europeans. Although the image of the EU has deteriorated (Eurobarometer 2008 – 2016), this attitudinal shift does not necessarily translate into a lack of European identity. At least not among transnational Europeans, the population group who displays stronger feelings of this identity. This idea goes in line with recent European identity studies stressing the relevance of distinguishing between citizens'

dissatisfaction towards EU democracy and their feelings as European citizens (Heath and Spreckelsen 2016).

Second, the results of the interactions indicate that transnationalism influences European identity in stronger terms than education ($H_{4.2}$). Similar to past results, the logistic regressions confirm the positive impact of high educational levels on European identity. As it has been previously stated, higher levels of EU cognition, knowledge of how the EU works or its history foster a sense of closeness, awareness and understanding that seems to reinforce or trigger a sense of European identification. In this regard, education has always been considered an essential piece in the comprehension of the European identity puzzle. However, my analyses provide empirical evidence that when we compare transnational and non-transnational Europeans with low educational levels, transnational citizens with similar educational backgrounds identify more as Europeans than non-transnational ones. As a result, not only does transnationalism have a stronger impact on European identity than education, but it helps to bridge the current educational gap.

As part of the mixed methodology of this thesis, the next chapter will tackle the impact of transnationalism on European identity from the perspective of 58 transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards. Through in-depth interviews, the next chapter will complement, and explore the relation between national and European identity, the different aspects that Spaniards use to portray their identity and the influence that living in another EU member-state has had on them. As it has been previously stated, all these aspects cannot be *exclusively* attained through quantitative means. Consequently, the next chapter relevance resides in the contribution of the in-depth interviews to a more exhaustive knowledge of the dyadic between transnationalism and European identity in post-crisis EU.

CHAPTER 5. EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN CONTEXT: THE CASE OF TRANSNATIONAL AND NON-TRANSNATIONAL SPANIARDS.

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated that throughout the 2000s, transnational Europeans (i.e. intra-EU citizens residing in the EU-15) present higher levels of European identity than Europeans who reside in their country of birth (i.e. non-transnational Europeans). Whereas chapter 4 tackles the research question "How does transnationalism shape European identity?" at a macro level, this chapter addresses the same research question with context-dependent data. Through the use of semi-structured interviews it provides explorative and in-depth data on the impact of transnationalism on European identification among young Spaniards. Though the results from the previous chapter give some indications of what findings we might expect at the micro level, the exploratory nature of the methodology implemented here prevents establishing a set of specific and quantifiable hypotheses. Instead I will approach European identity through the eyes of transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards. The data presented in this chapter are based on 58 in-depth interviews. These interviews not only explore the impact that living in another EU member-state has on Spaniards' European identity but also how respondents portray their feelings of identity, or lack thereof. Also explored here are attitudes towards the EU, the types of values used to describe European attachment, and whether such values stress more civic or ethnic aspects.

The 2008 financial crash was not just an *economic* crisis. This financial struggle also triggered social, political and institutional crises in southern EU member-states affected by the economic recession and EU austerity measures (Torcal 2014; Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014). In spite of the EU's bailout, Spanish inequality has increased enormously (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014; Dowsett 2015). For instance, one out of three children in Spain, approximately 2.3 million, are at risk of poverty and social exclusion (Dowsett 2015). Cuts on welfare spending, education and persistent high levels of unemployment have also shaped the demography of Spain (Focus Migration 2013). For the first time since the instauration of democracy in the early 1980s, Spain has shifted from being a country hosting the highest migration per-capita in the EU (Focus Migration 2013), to becoming one of the main EU member-states with a negative net migration (Eurostat 2016). Considering that from 2008 – 2013 Spaniards aged 15 to 24 faced unemployment rates of 55%, and those aged up to 29

years old, a rate of 34%, (Fundación Novia Salcedo 2013; The New York Times 2013; Aguinaga 2014), it should not come as a surprise that the youth is one of the groups that have migrated the most (Generation E 2014). Although many transnational Spaniards may have perceived residing in another EU member-state as a chance for education and professional growth (Triandafillidou and Gropas 2014), little is known about the impact that transnationalism has on young Spaniards' European identity. In the light of these caveats, this chapter contributes to previous research on transnationalism and European identity with 58 in-depth interviews with transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards.

Given the socio-demographic and political changes in a post-crisis EU and their impact on European attitudes (e.g. increasing mistrust towards EU institutions), this chapter also explores utilitarian and cost-benefit arguments in relation to European identity. Investigating the use of rational items in the portrayal of European identity in a post-crisis EU is particularly relevant for this Iberian case-study. Spain has traditionally been one of the EU member-states presenting the highest levels of support for EU integration and European identification (Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002; McLaren 2006; Pötzschke and Braun 2014). A link between positive attitudes towards the EU and European identity can be observed due to the fact that European identity tends to be more present among Europeans who benefit from EU integration (Duchesne and Frognier 1995; Gabel 1998; McLaren 2006; Fligstein 2008; Risse 2010; Favell *et al.* 2011). Although this positive relationship has been demonstrated in the past, the consequences of transnationalism on European identity, and the relationship between cultural, civic and utilitarian aspects since the Eurozone crisis have received limited attention. My results show that the majority of transnational Spaniards became mobile as a consequence of the financial struggles and lack of professional opportunities in Spain. In other words, for this sample, transnationalism is strongly connected with the outcome of the Eurozone crash in 2008. For this reason, this chapter investigates the tension between European attachment and cost-benefits theories.

The main conclusion of this chapter is that, similarly to chapter 4, transnationalism fosters European identity. Overall, more transnational than non-transnational Spaniards identify as Europeans. At the same time, the interviews highlight that European identification between transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards presents disparities. While transnational respondents attach cultural qualities to their European identity, non-transnational respondents are more prone to portray their European identity in rational terms connected to European citizenship and EU membership. It has also been observed that there is a small group of

transnational Spaniards who utilised logical arguments to address their European identity. However, contrary to non-transnational respondents, these logical explanations are embedded with some of the utilitarian advantages from European citizenship.

In exploring the impact of transnationalism on European identity from a Spanish perspective, I begin by reviewing the literature on European identity formation from a socio-constructivist and bottom-up point of view. I then link this literature with previous theories on European attitudes and utilitarianism, especially relevant for the present case-study due to the impact that the European crisis and EU austerity measures has had on the Spanish sample. Next, I present the methodological approach used, followed by a description of the sample, and then move on to identify the potential limitations of this study. After that, I highlight the most frequently occurring themes from the 58 interviews. Finally, I present the core findings of this chapter and the implications for the first research question.

5.2. A socio-constructivist approach on identity

A socio-constructivist approach to identity conceives interaction among individuals and social groups as the main emanative form of identity construction (Simmel 1908; David and Bar-Tal 2009). This conception opposes top-down studies focusing on the influence of elites and institutions in the creation of nationalisms and identity formation (Rokkan 1974; Gellner 1983; Rokkan and Urwin 1983; Subotic 2011). Far from establishing any dominance between top-down and bottom-up theories about identity formation[55], this literature review focuses on bottom-up and socio-constructivist theorists. This choice is coherent in the sense that it sets up a harmonic theoretical and methodological relationship. In fact, transnational Spaniards represent an ideal bottom-up sample in European identity studies: they are active users of their European citizenship, they are exposed to other European languages and cultures, and they will potentially be confronted by their own values. Thus, this chapter positions Spaniards and their portrayal of their European identity at the core of the analysis. First, I depart from a broad outlook, focusing on three key academics with bottom-up perspectives: Georg Simmel, Gordon W. Allport and Karl Deutsch. Next, I continue with a review on contemporary research on European identity.

Georg Simmel is a classic theorist tackling the systemic and interactionist nature of individuals' identity. According to Simmel (1908), humans are interactive animals and they

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[55] As Fligstein states "while I would agree that these top-down processes are important, they are only part of the story" (2008: 126).

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are always embedded within social circles. This constant immersion in social circles can be seen from the early stages of development in the nuclear family, to further socialisation processes, such as forming friendships, attending educational institutions, undertaking employment or joining social clubs. Despite being part of a bigger group, subjects also face an individual struggle. A personal conflict exists between the duality of individualization (i.e. not being similar to others) and the search for non-differentiation (i.e. belonging to a group wherein one shares common features). One of the most interesting concepts developed by Simmel (1908) in the realm of social integration among different ethnic and cultural groups – as could be the case of European identity– is the notion of *the stranger*. According to Simmel, the newcomer is a social type, someone who mingles with a social group he/she did not originally belong to. One of the main characteristics of the stranger resides in his/her double nature, simultaneously endowed with remoteness and nearness aspects, indifference and involvement. Although the concept of the stranger might evoke a sense of exclusion, Simmel (1908) considers him/her as a component of the group, focusing on the social-psychological process in the establishment of new social relations and their impact on the social-cultural structure when pursuing the outsider's assimilation (McLemore 1970). The motives driving a stranger to becoming part of a different social circle are not random. They tend to appear between social circles that are both alike and apart from each other (e.g. immigrants from different backgrounds in a host society). In fact, these similarities will foster mutual ties and relations based on solidarity. Although Simmel does not state that expanding into a bigger social circle will definitely occur, he strongly believes that there is a pattern, a predisposition that echoes among societies. Joining larger social circles has an impact on the individual's identity since it enlarges it. The process of social circle growth comprises a social paradox in the individual. Moving to a broader circle fosters a higher sense of individualization while hampering its non-differentiation. Consequently, the individual finds him/herself in between two conflictive worlds, as a subject seeking for his/her differentiation and as part of a group in the search of commonness.

Simmel (1908) establishes a strong connection between individuals' uniqueness needs (i.e. differentiation) and a feeling of familiarity within a group. However, under what circumstances may individuals reach this level of group familiarity? According to Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory, there are four conditions required for an ideal context of positive intergroup contact: equal status, common goals, intergroup cooperation and the support of authorities, laws or customs. Due to these conditions, individuals develop positive

images and behaviour towards other groups, which lessen ethnic prejudice (Allport 1954). Yet, in order to explain the motives behind attitudes' change towards other groups, Pettigrew (1998) broadens Allport's work stating that these conditions are not sufficient. For Pettigrew (1998) the following factors are also essential: learning about the group, changing behaviour, generating affective ties and in-group reappraisal (1998: 70). The significance of these factors resides in the idea that Allport and Pettigrew's conditions offer an ideal scenario for friendship among different individuals to emerge. In this sense, Simmel's *stranger* (1908), an external individual who through interaction eventually develops a friendship with a member of a group will then feel at ease, closer to other members of the group, and less anxious of the unknown (Pettigrew 1998). As Pettigrew states "since similarity attracts, initial stages of intergroup contact benefit from not making group membership salient. Later, as anxiety and threat subside, group membership must become salient to maximize the generalization of positive effects beyond the immediate situation" (1998: 80).

While Simmel and Allport's interest lays on individuals' adhesion to social circles, Deutsch's (1954) study expands the reality of individuals' closeness to groups, and explores motivation as a foundation of social identity that leads to the consolidation of nation-state identities. This type of identification is crucial for the continuity and legitimacy of states (Easton 1965). Deutsch (1957) highlights the significant role of communication and culture. For him, the pre-existence of a national story and the reproduction of the nation through state structures, trigger a mutual feeling of identity. According to this author, national identities are constructed and fluctuate between the requirements of a historical background within a state and the horizontal spread of a shared culture.[56] Moreover, Deutsch's communicative notion of nation-building moves beyond national borders since he states that "what would tie people together *within* nations, should also tie them together *across* nations" (Kuhn 2015: 43). This idea is fundamental for the study of European identity among transnational Spaniards, a group of EU citizens embedded in an ideal context to interact and establish connections with other Europeans.

5.3. European utilitarianism and European identity

Although utilitarian attitudes and identity are not always related, empirical evidence highlights that there is a strong relationship between pro-European attitudes (i.e. support for

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[56] In Deutsch's eyes, culture is defined as "a common set of stable, habitual preferences and priorities in attention and behaviour, as in their thoughts and feelings" (1974: 89).

EU integration, benefitting from EU membership) and European identity (Gabel 1998; McLaren 2006; Van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016). As McEwen (2002) states, when it comes to international entities – like the EU – feelings of solidarity among citizens from different member-states protected under the same "welfare umbrella" may appear.[57] In fact, it is precisely through citizenship that individuals may develop a feeling of security and attachment towards their nation-state (David and Bar-Tal 2009). These emotions are believed to be fundamental for citizens to cope with a status apparatus, due to the fact that they must perceive the state as a meaningful protective entity (Deutsch 1974).

Focusing and comprehending the relationship between a cost-benefit approach and identity among EU citizens seems even more pressing after the outcome of the Eurozone crisis in 2008, particularly in the case of EU Mediterranean countries like Spain. Simply put, from a utilitarian point of view those who gain from the EU are more likely to support it, whereas those who do not benefit from it will not be in its favour (Gabel 1998; McLaren 2006). Spain has traditionally been one of the EU member-states with the strongest levels of EU integration support and European identity (Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002; McLaren 2006; Pötzschke and Braun 2014). Following McLaren's (2006) utilitarian approach, the positive attitudes of the Spanish public towards the EU could be explained through three main types of utilitarianism: Spain's gain as a EU member-state (i.e. sociotropic utilitarianism); advantages from the incorporation of specific economic agreements, such as freedom of movement of capital and individuals, or fiscal agreements (i.e. egocentric utilitarianism), and citizens' consciousness of actively benefitting from the EU (i.e. perceptive utilitarianism).

Spaniards' support of the EU has been suggested as residing in the perception of the EU adhesion as a sign of democratic progress and the closure of the dictatorial past (Díez Medrano 2003), the acknowledgement of the economic and welfare benefits of EU funds (McLaren 2006) or the vision of EU institutions as less corrupt than domestic ones (Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002).

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[57] Instead of studying the EU, McEwen (2002) approaches identity and welfare states in the multinational cases of Canada and the UK, but her findings are applicable to the study of the EU.

Figure 5.1. Spain's image of the EU (in percentages).
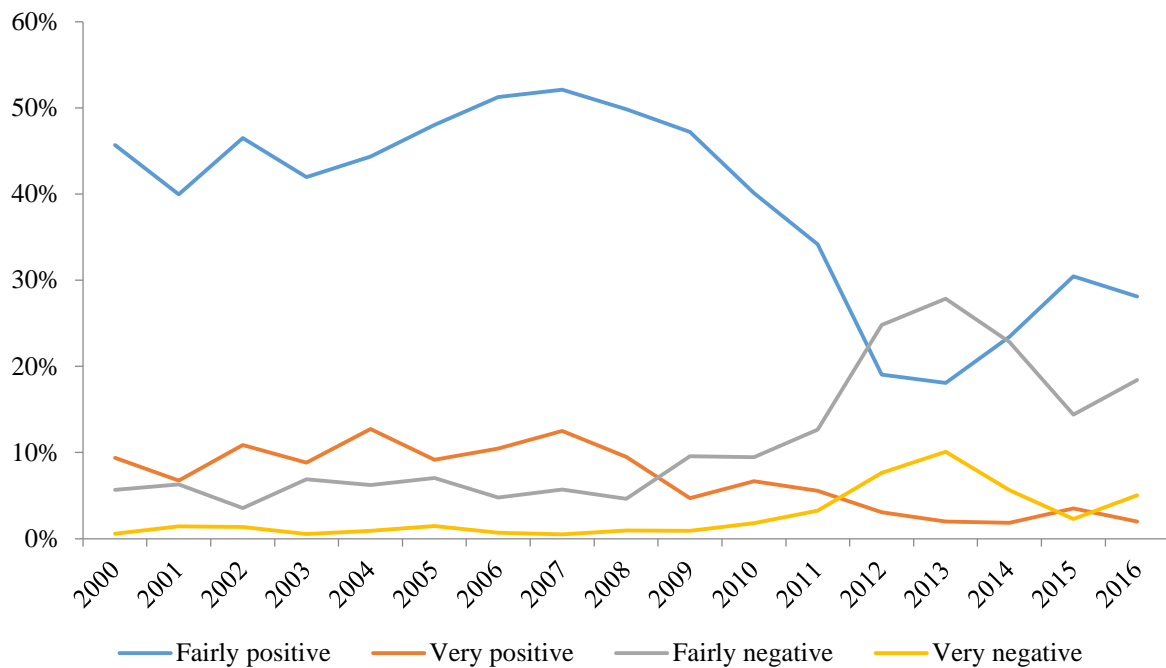
Source: Eurobarometer 2000 – 2016. Own elaboration.

In spite of the historical utilitarian support from this Iberian country, Spainiard's image of the EU has deteriorated since 2008 (see Figure 5.1). Spain had to comply with severe EU austerity measures implemented to overcome financial issues (Torcal 2014; Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014) like GDP shrinkage and persistent high levels of unemployment. Since then, Spanish demography has witnessed a radical migratory shift, turning from a "migrant-receiver" to a "migrant-giver" type of EU member-state (Eurostat 2016). Furthermore, the 2008 financial crisis also brought about an institutional crisis (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014), and the rise of mistrust towards Spanish political systems and public institutions due to the lack of a satisfactory political response from the elite (Torcal 2014). The detriment of the Spanish democratic arena has also echoed at the political level, with the appearance of novel grassroots movements (e.g. 15-M, *Indignados*) and political parties (e.g. *Podemos, Ciudadanos*). Considering that the salience and awareness of identities are influenced by the (de)construction of discourses during periods of crisis (Risse 2010), this chapter explores the relationship between identity and utilitarian perspectives among transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards.

5.4. Spain: a case-study shaped by transnationalism.

This chapter focuses on the case-study of Spain as part of an in-depth analysis. According to Simons (2009) "a case-study is the process of conducting systematic, critical inquiry into a phenomenon of choice and generating understanding to contribute to cumulative public knowledge of the topic" (2009: 19). Instrumental case-studies are those which aim to answer a specific research question (Stake 1995).[58] Focusing the analysis on one case becomes an excellent tool for answering "how" and "why" type research questions, in addition to addressing subjects' perceptions connected to a specific context (Simons 2009). In contrast to large sample analyses, case-studies are not representative-oriented.[59] Yet, they are useful tools that can be used to enrich and complement macro-level analysis. In spite of the socially constructed nature of identity (Simmel 1908; Castells 2004), identity remains intrinsically distinct from one individual to another. Thus, gathering one-to-one, context-dependent information through semi-structured interviews seems ideal to contributing to European identity literature, a goal that cannot be achieved with the exclusive use of quantitative techniques (Flyvbjerg 2006).

In this thesis, I have selected the case of Spain to help me understand the impact of transnationalism on European identity. In the last decades, Spain has been strongly shaped by transnationalism. More specifically, three main landmarks shape the migratory patterns of this southern member-state.[60] The first migratory landmark occurred during Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939–1975). After years of economic stagnation, in the 1950s, the regime established bilateral agreements –commonly known as "guest workers" agreements– with other European countries in need of manpower to recover from the post-war period (Sanz 2010). As a consequence, the flux of Spaniards migrating to other European countries increased significantly. The second transnational landmark took place during the Spanish transition to a democratic system. In the 70s and 80s, the government implemented returning policies targeted to the previous population who migrated as "guest workers." According to Sanz (2010) these policies were strikingly successful among Spaniards living in Germany, with a returning rate of approximately 80% of the total transnational population. The last migratory landmark reflects a period of contrasts. On one hand, the economic stability of the

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[58] The other two types of case-studies are: intrinsic (i.e. exploration of a specific case) and collective (i.e. cases that may help to understand a collective concern) (Stake 1995: 3-4).

[59] A profound debate around the strengths and limitations of case-study can be found in Flyvbjerg (2006) and Simmons (2009).

[60] An expanded explanation of the transnational history of Spain can be found in chapter 3.

first decade of the 2000s attracted a high number of intra-EU migrants. For instance, from 2000 to 2009 approximately 50% of the transnational European population of the EU-15 was residing in Spain (Focus Migration 2013). Yet, the demographic pattern of Spain once more reversed after the 2008 financial crash. According to the Eurostat (2016), Spain had the most drastic negative migratory balance. Similarly to the dictatorship period, the bulk of Spaniards preferred other EU member-states as part of their migratory destination (followed by the US and Latin America, Informe Injuve 2013). More specifically, from 2009 to 2013 a total of 120.000 Spaniards settled[61] in France (see Figure 5.2). Apart from France, the most popular EU destinations are Germany, the UK, Belgium, Italy, The Netherlands, Ireland and Sweden.

Figure 5.2. Number of transnational Spaniards officially registered in another EU member-state (2009-2013).
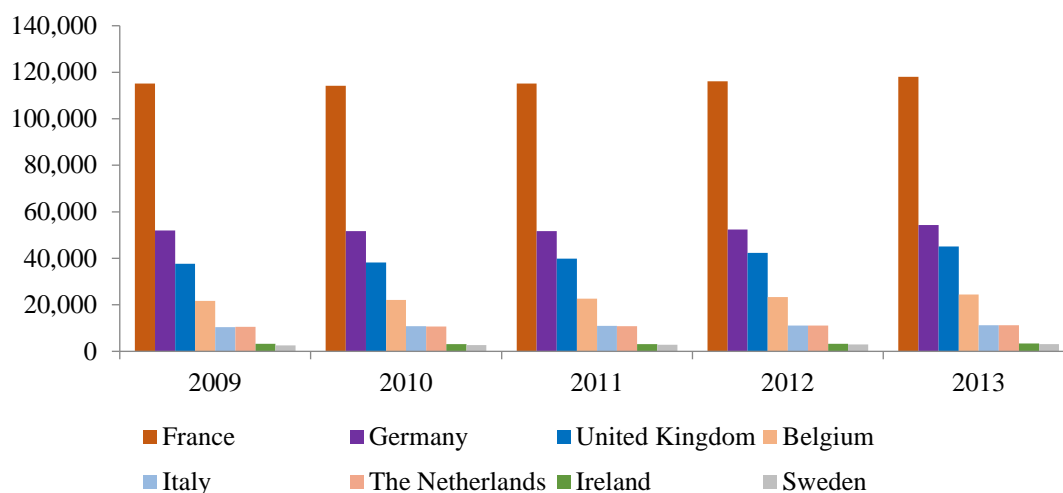
Source: Informe Injuve 2013. Own elaboration.

In spite of these migratory changes, particularly in a post-crisis EU, little is known about how transnationalism has impacted Spaniards' European identity. This chapter aims at filling this gap analysing the narratives of transnational Spaniards residing in the EU member-states where they settled the most: France, Germany, the UK, Belgium, Italy and The Netherlands, and compare their responses with non-transnational Spaniards living in Madrid. The next section provides information of the data collection, the use of qualitative techniques for the analysis of the in-depth interviews, and potential limitations of the sample.

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[61] This number reflects Spaniards who officially notified their change of residence to the Spanish authorities.

5.5. Data

The analysis of this chapter is based on 58 in-depth interviews. In order to compare the impact of transnationalism on European identity, the interviewees have been divided into two main groups: 31 transnational and 27 non-transnational Spaniards. The group of transnationals consists of Spanish citizens who had been living for at least 6 months in one of these EU capitals: Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris and Rome. The group of non-transnationals is composed of Spaniards from different regions, currently residing in Madrid and who have never lived abroad. Comparing transnational Spaniards with those who are residing in Madrid, one of the Spanish cities that attracts the highest number of Europeans (INE 2016), I aim to establish as many contextual similarities as possible between these two groups.[62] It should be noted that the selection of both groups of respondents was constrained by nationality, transnationalism and age. All respondents were raised in Spain, held a Spanish citizenship, and at time of interview were residing in a European capital with an age range of 18 to 30 years old.

Respondents were initially contacted through the virtual social networking site Facebook and a snowballing sampling method was employed to recruit suitable participants. The use of the Internet and social networks sites[63] (SNSs) as sample collection technique is becoming more popular among researchers.[64] This approach is ideal for the so-called *hard to reach* populations (Brickman-Bhutta 2009; Baltar and Brunet 2012). Although hard to reach populations have been traditionally associated with at-risk societal groups (Atkinson and Flint 2001), transnational Europeans also fall into this category. This seems to be particularly the case among transnational Spaniards due to the limitations and difficulties that official channels face in providing accurate information about Spanish migrants (Navarrete-Moreno *et al.* 2012; Focus Migration 2013). While transnational Spaniards during the 1960s and 1970s –the previous Spanish emigration wave– created an associative network (the so-called "Casa España" or *Spanish Homes)* in the host-countries and could be easily contacted through these associations (Sanz 2010), modern groups of transnationals lack a similar physical, or face-to-face, context. Instead, they turn to SNSs. A virtual platform like

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[62] According to the Spanish National Institute (INE 2016), more than 50% of migrants reside in Madrid, Barcelona, Alicante and Malaga.

[63] A more refined definition of SNSs can be found in the methodology, chapter 3.

[64] For another type of research gathering information of the migratory path among transnational Mediterranean Europeans using SNSs check the project *Generation E* on www.generatione.eu directed by Jacopo Ottaviani, Daniele Grasso, Katerina Stavroula and Sara Moreira.

Facebook facilitates a context free of physical and time attachments, where transnationals Spaniards have a voice, read individuals' concerns, and interests, and establish contact with other people in similar circumstances. Locating Facebook groups specifically aimed at transnational Spaniards is relatively straightforward. For example, entering the search-term "Españoles en Berlín" ("Spaniards in Berlin") within an SNS is a direct, yet simple, way to establish contact with potential transnational Spaniards living in the capital of Germany. Although locating transnational Spaniards may not encounter any initial difficulties, Facebook groups like these are often opened to other Spanish-speaking communities such as Latin Americans. Non-transnational Spaniards were contacted through non-political or non-religious Facebook groups. Thus, potential non-transnational respondents were contacted through three cultural and community-based Facebook groups: "Comunidad de Madrid", "Madrid Diferente" and "Secretos de Madrid." Finally, both groups of the sample were asked to provide with further respondents that fitted in the desired profile. Thus, the use of snowball sampling was used sporadically.

From March 2015 to July 2015 a total of 694 transnational and non-transnational Spaniards were asked to participate in this study. From this, 37.7% (262) subjects replied to this initial invitation and expressed an interest in further collaboration. In order to do so, potential respondents had to fill in an e-survey[65] that filtered out participants to fit a specific profile (living abroad for at least 6 months in an EU capital vs. not having lived abroad in the past, falling into the 18 to 30 years range and being Spaniard). A total of 96 Spaniards filled in this e-questionnaire, in which they provided an e-mail account for further contact. At the end of this process, 58 transnational and non-transnational Spaniards were identified and approached for participation in this study and were interviewed online through Skype. This allowed me to record all the interviews, always with the approval of respondents who had signed a consent form.[66] The length of the interviews ranged from 17 to 54 minutes. All the interviews were conducted in Spanish and have been transcribed and translated into English.

It should be noted that the interviews were partially shaped by certain socio-political events taking place in the EU. For instance, the responses of transnational and non-transnational Spaniards were influenced by the political and economic context of Greece. More specifically a number of Spaniards considered that the EU handled the Greek bailout unfairly. This idea was particularly prominent among respondents who were interviewed after the Greek

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[65] More information about the content of this e-survey can be found in the methodology chapter.
[66] A copy of the consent form can be found in the appendix A.2. and A.3.

referendum took place (5th of July 2015). Respondents' answers reflect their political disappointment and an implicit sense solidarity towards the Greek society. Their disappointment is based on the perception that EU's austerity measures were imposed regardless of the result of the referendum, which in turn increased social inequality and political disaffection. At the same time, the sense of solidarity is rooted in the parallelisms that respondents establish between how the EU handled the impact of the financial crash in Greece and in Spain.

5.5.1. Analysis

The 58 in-depth interviews were analysed using several qualitative techniques, guided by the researcher's epistemological position (social constructivism, critical realism), and in combination with the use of the qualitative software NVivo 10. Interviews can be broadly defined as "directed conversations" (Lofland and Lofland 1984, 1995) or "conversations with a purpose" (Mason 2002). The interviews in this study were semi-structured and followed guiding topics.[67] Interviews are always constructed by the interviewee and interviewer (Fontana and Frey 2008; Olsen 2012). While unstructured interviews only possess a reduced number of themes and are not constrained by time, semi-structured interviews are guided by specific topics, discussion of which is desirable but not mandatory (Denzin and Lincoln 2008). Basically, "the researcher is involved in an informal conversation with the respondent; thus, the researcher must maintain a tone of "friendly" chat while trying to remain close to the guidelines of the topics of inquiry that he or she has in mind (…) the researcher should avoid getting involved in a "real" conversation in which he or she answers questions asked by the respondent or provides personal opinions on the matters discussed" (Fontana and Frey 2008:139).

During the analysis of the interviews I strived to identify patterns. The adaptation of a person in a social context is constrained by personal drives and others' disapproval. Therefore, humans explain their world and experiences through social concepts (McKinney 1969). Investigating, understanding and identifying these social concepts is at the core of the interviews' analysis, especially for European identity and the use of the sample of ethnic, civic and utilitarian constructs. McKinney labels these social concepts as *typification* (1969). Other researchers have named this qualitative technique *coding* or *category construction* (Charmaz 2006; Saldana 2011). According to Saldana "category construction is our best

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[67] The full questionnaire can be found in the appendix A.4.

attempt to cluster the most seemingly alike things into the most seemingly appropriate groups. Categorizing is organizing and ordering the vast array of data from a study because it is from these larger and meaning-rich units that we can better grasp the particular features of each one, and the categories' possible interrelationships with one another" (2011: 91). One main caveat can be derived from this definition. It is widely acknowledged and accepted that researchers may perceive different patterns from the same interviews. Thus, coding is based on researchers' own interpretation (McKinney 1969; Charmaz 2006; Saldana 2011; Olsen 2012). To a certain extent it could be stated that ordering and organising ideas through coding takes priority over the typical rigors of quantitative analysis. However, this should not be used as a justification for poor analysis. On the contrary, the process and analysis of any interview should be made as clear as possible; this would include drawing attention to the use of non-verbal descriptors, original quotations and the formulation of researchers' questions. Providing such detailed information will help other researchers to understand and assess the rationale of researchers' own coding.

5.5.2. The stages of coding

The process of coding involves two main stages. According to Charmaz (2006) in the earliest stage researchers read the interviews with an open mentality, trying to remain as close as possible to the data, without making theoretical inferences and annotating expressions or ideas that may be worth analysing later. In addition to this, initial coding should be broad, inclusive and short. Researchers can choose to use several types of initial coding (e.g. word-by-word, incident-to-incident). The initial analysis of the present interviews were made through "line-by-line coding" (Charmaz 2006). One of the advantages of applying "line-by-line coding" is that it helps researchers to see the interviews from a different angle. As Charmaz highlights "when you code early in-depth interview data, you gain a close look at what participants say and likely struggle with (…) studying your data through line-by-line coding sparks new ideas for you to pursue" (2006: 50-51). Coding each line in terms of actions will facilitate the analysis during the second stage. Assigning action to interviewees' sentences is known as *process coding* (Charmaz 2006; Saldana 2011). Simply put, the researcher turns verbs into gerunds, which invokes a "language of action" (Charmaz 2006: 48) turning interviewees' data from passive to active, which facilitates the analysis. Figure 5.1 displays a "line-by-line coding" example with respondent NT26. Figure 5.3 shows an extract of some of the initial process coding that I created when I asked respondents about

their European identity. Nvivo allowed me to cluster respondents who provided similar answers (as indicated by the number of "References" in Figure 5.4 below).

Figure 5.3. Line coding example.

Excerpt of interview	Line coding
I feel European because Spain was part of the EU before I was born	Linking European identity to EU membership
and since I was little I heard that Spain is Europe.	Being aware of EU membership since childhood
So, yeah, Spain is Europe.	Asserting that Spain is part of Europe
Why wouldn't be Spain European, you know?	Reaffirming his position with a rhetoric question
Besides, apart from the times I was told that Spain is Europe in my childhood	Including other identity influences beyond EU membership
the blue flag is waving everywhere and there're more and more European news.	Stating that European symbols and European news shape his European identity
I've always cared about it, but I do care even more now…	Emphasising that he cares about Europe
Now, that European politics and domestic politics are practically the same.	Stressing the influence of the EU in Spanish politics.

Figure 5.4. Example of initial process coding of European identity.

Line-by-line Coding	References
Expressing pride in European identity	1
Expressing disappointment towards EU	9
Feeling an outsider	1
Feeling European implies freedom	1
Feeling European is feeling supported	1
Having a European identity due to the advantages of the EU	20
Having similar culture and values generates European identity	19
Justifying lack of European identity due to distance	7
Justifying lack of European identity due to lack of information	13
Justifying lack of European identity due to political performance	3
Knowing that the EU helps create identity	1
Lacking the capacity to understand others' identity	1
Showing difficulties to reply	2
Showing uncertainty about feeling European	2
Stressing differences among other EU member-states	6
Stressing the weight or differences of other identities over European identity	9

5.6. Data Limitations

There are three main sample biases that I would like to stress concerning the data collection and the nature of the sample. First, the interviewees belong to a social group that feels comfortable with the use of new technologies and the Internet to interact with others. Although this might appear a limitation, the counterargument is easy, since according to the Spanish Statistics Institute (INE 2014) in 2014 approximately 91% of the Spanish youth aged between 16 and 24 years use the Internet. This age cohort and students are the social groups in Spain that access the Internet the most. Furthermore, another study from the University of Barcelona reveals that 88% of all Spanish Internet users have a Facebook account (Online Business School 2015). These results indicate that, although there is a bias in the use of technologies and SNSs among the sample, the number of Spanish citizens familiarised with the use of virtual social networks is not significantly reduced.

Second, there is a potential bias rooted in the Facebook groups that were used to contact respondents, especially for the transnational groups. As has been mentioned, transnational Spaniards were located through Facebook groups labelled as "Spaniards in Paris, Brussels or Amsterdam". From an identity point of view, becoming part of a group labelled under the terminology "Spaniards" might imply that its members will be engaged with socio-political topics concerning Spain. Nonetheless, even when these groups are labelled under the concept "Spanish" or "Spaniards", this virtual network is opened to individuals from other Spanish-speaking countries. Furthermore, it should be noted that on most occasions transnational users use this platform to sell and buy second-hand furniture, give or obtain information of the host-country or to gather in social activities. Third, transnational respondents were selected based on a minimum of a six months period of residence in the host country. Given that the length of residence in another EU member-state is expected to shape respondents' civic and cultural experiences, a potential bias between transnationals who lived abroad longer and those who may have recently moved exists.

A last potential limitation resides in one of the main characteristics of the sample: its age. At the time of the interviews the age of respondents ranged from 18 to 30 years old. This generational group belongs to the group of EU citizens who tends to present the highest levels of European identification and pro-EU attitudes (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; McLaren 2006). Naturally, this may skew the sample towards a more favourable vision of their

European attachment. Yet, given that this research focuses on one generational cohort, it should be feasible to analyse the impact of transnationalism on the two groups of the sample.

5.7. Results

This section discusses three main areas that emerged from the in-depth interviews. First, I provide a brief description of the sample followed by the contextualisation of the decision-making process of transnationalism. Comprehending the reasons that motivated young transnational Spaniards to move to another EU member-state gives meaning to the background of the sample and its implications for the study of European identity; particularly due to the direct connection between the 2008 financial crisis and intra-EU mobility in Mediterranean member-states. Next, I address respondents' European attitudes. Since the 2008 crisis, Europeans' attitudes towards the EU have deteriorated. Given the strong connection between European identity and European attitudes, this first section begins with an overview of how transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards perceive the EU. Finally, the third section engages with the presence of a European attachment or the lack of European identification among respondents.

5.7.1. Brief description of the sample

After four months of contacting potential participants, a total of 58 transnational and non-transnational Spaniards agreed on being interviewed. The gender of the sample is equally distributed (29 female and 29 male respondents). However, the group of transnational Spaniards is slightly bigger, a total of 31 individuals, while the group of non-transnationals is composed by 27 respondents. The cohort of the sample gathers young Spaniards between 18 and 30 years old. More specifically, a total of 18 transnationals were born between 1986 and 1988, while the majority of non-transnational Spaniards were born between 1990 and 1993 (a total of 16 respondents). The age selection has been based on the impact of the economic crisis on Spaniards. For instance, Spanish citizens between 18 and 30 years old were hit the hardest citizens by unemployment rate, with a 55% of unemployment (Fundación Novia Salcedo 2013; The New York Times 2013; Aguinaga 2014).

All respondents had a Spanish nationality and resided in European capitals. Transnational citizens were living in London, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Berlin or Rome, while non-transnational respondents were based in Madrid. However, the place of birth of these latter respondents was varied. For instance, two non-transnational respondents were born in the

surroundings of Madrid (Móstoles and Leganés) and five respondents were originally from cities from another autonomous community: Ávila, À Coruña, Bollulos del Condado, Extremadura y Pontevedra. The place of birth of transnational Spaniards is more varied. For instance, there are transnational Spaniards from southern Spain (Granada, Sevilla, Jaén, Huelva, Málaga), from the Canary Islands (Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Las Palmas) and from middle-north areas of Spain (Madrid, Pontevedra, Vigo, Barcelona, Zaragoza, and Palencia).

5.7.2. What drives transnationalism?

The Eurozone crash has had a detrimental impact on Spanish demography. For the first time since the end of the 1980s, the number of Spanish citizens emigrating has been higher than those who settled in Spain. While transnational Spaniards residing within the EU are protected under European legislation and entitled to certain rights, the EU austerity measures adopted in Spain have also led to socio-political and institutional crises (Torcal 2014; Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014). On one hand, transnational Spaniards may perceive that being European has benefitted them, since they can access a broader market and seek the opportunities that they lack at home (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). At the same time, considering the Spanish anti-austerity movements and hostile attitudes against EU austerity measures, transnational Spaniards may feel that migrating to another member-state has been an "imposition" as a consequence of cuts on public funding and persistent high levels of unemployment. Either way, it is essential to explore the motivations that drove Spaniards to become transnational Europeans in the first place. Feelings of European identity will potentially differ between those who move based on personal drives and those who do it due to the lack of a career. Furthermore, even when transnational Spaniards are active users of their citizenship and beneficiaries of the right of freedom of movement –which according to cost-benefit theories should have a positive impact towards the support of the EU and European identity (Gabel 1998; McLaren 2006)– we cannot assume that making use of these rights will be interpreted from a privilege perspective. Therefore, this first section explores the motives behind Spaniards to become transnational and reside in a different EU member-state.

Transnational Spaniards stress two main reasons that lead them to become mobile within the EU: the financial crisis in Spain and personal motivations. However, compared to the perception of transnationalism as an opportunity to fulfil personal projects, the impact of the crisis in Spain is the most recurrent reason behind transnationalism. Twenty transnationals

migrated due to the crisis, while eleven stated that this choice was not motivated by labour scarcity. It should also be highlighted that at the time of the interviews (2015) there were five transnational Spaniards who had previously lived in a different EU member-state. This indicates that respondents with a transnational experience feel more comfortable in continuing this transnational path. Although this is not representative of the whole population of transnational Spaniards, it is indicative of this specific sample and key to situating the reality of respondents. The bulk of Spaniards who took the transnational path expressed the idea that the Spanish labour market could not provide them with their professional needs. For instance, for the transnational respondent T 15[68], this decision is based on a loss of hope and the urge of changing the course of her life after finishing her university degree[69]:

> *I finished my studies and I could not see any future perspective in Spain. There was nothing I could do, I couldn't work in the labour market, I know I wouldn't have been hired. That's why I moved to France* (T 15, female, graduate, residing in Paris).

There are transnational Spaniards who decided to move to a different EU country based on push-pull factors (Zimmermann 1994) and managed to find a job in their field. This is the case of T 11 who, after working for a Spanish university without a salary for 18 months obtained a *Leonardo* grant (i.e. EU Lifelong Learning Programme) and moved to the Netherlands:

> *Once I finished my undergraduate I looked for a job. I started to work, I worked in a lab and the atmosphere was really nice, in a Spanish university, and I was very happy. But, I stayed there for 18 months and I didn't earn any money (laughing nervously). And...This opportunity came to me, a Leonardo grant to live abroad for six months. So, I took the plunge and sent my CV...And, in the end I can say that I'm much happier because I think they treat workers better and it's true that they invest the money in forming us and keeping us motivated* (T 11, female, postgraduate, residing in Amsterdam).

However, transnational Spaniards do not always find a job that matches their academic training. In some cases, finding a job is not necessarily an opportunity for professional growth but the sole choice to make a living. A young male with a post-secondary degree, respondent T 13, migrated so he would no longer be a financial burden to his family and currently works in London as an au-pair:

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[68] In order to comply with ethical policies, I have removed the names of all respondents. Still, I have distinguished between transnational –labelled with the letter T– and non-transnational –labelled with the letters NT– Spaniards. This information appears at the end of every quote and it is complemented by demographic information (gender, level of education and place of residence).

[69] The Spanish educational levels follow the guidelines of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). For more information see the appendices (A.13.).

I moved out because of work. My parents are still unemployed and my sister and I were living at home. So I decided to send my CV and apply to all positions. So…I found a family in London, I applied and, by chance, they picked me. I moved here and I said to myself: "Here I can earn money, I can have a better life and my parents won't have another person that they need to give money to." So I decided to move here (T 13, male, 2nd cycle vocational education, living in London).

As these quotes show, poor working conditions, labour insecurity, stress on the family and scarcity are other factors that have pushed Spaniards to become transnational. In some cases, transnational Spaniards found professional positions within their field, while in other instances earning a salary implied an economic security regardless of the professional preferences or educational achievements. Whether this is portrayed as a working opportunity or as the only choice depends on each individual. Still, the majority of transnational Spaniards decided to live in another EU member-state because of the financial instability in Spain. Although this section has focused on the group of transnationals motivated by financial and professional constraints, as previously mentioned, a smaller number of transnational Spaniards argued that their decision to reside in another EU member-state was not necessarily connected to labour opportunities. Previous research studying southern European transnationals found similar results combining adventure and necessity as further motivating factors (Triandayfillidou and Gropas 2014).

5.7.3. European attitudes

Compared to identities, attitudes are easier to tackle because they reside at the surface. Simply put, attitudes are perceived as "salient evaluative beliefs" (Eiser and van der Pligt 1977: 364). An interesting aspect of attitudes for this thesis is that these "evaluative beliefs" shape European identification and European voting behaviour (Gabel 1998; Mattila 2003; McLaren 2006; Flickinger and Studdlar 2007; Stockemer 2011). In this section, European attitudes refer to respondents' answers to the question: "*If I say the words 'European Union', what's the first thing that comes into your mind?*" It should be noted that this is the first time during the interviews that the words "European Union" are included in a question. Until this point, the questions discussed entailed local, national and European identities. The logic behind this strategy is twofold. First, I intended to create a neutral context that would not necessarily predispose respondents to associate European identity with the EU. Instead, I examined the type of discourses emerging from the interviews, and whether respondents differentiate ethnic or civic aspects while discussing their European identity. Thus, excluding the words "EU" seemed the best option. Secondly, omitting the words "EU" until this point

of the interview provides a more accurate answer of respondents' first impressions of the EU. Since respondents had not been exposed to a discussion about the EU until that moment, they were less likely to offer a deliberate answer about the EU. Still, on some occasions I had to clarify that I was not seeking for an in-depth definition of the EU.

The word clouds (see Figure 5.5 and 5.6) represent the terms that respondents most frequently used when addressing their first thoughts about the EU. Size and darkness represent the frequency in which these terms have been coined (bigger and darker words were mentioned more repeatedly). In the case of non-transnational (figure 5.3) Spaniards the word "cooperation" was mentioned 8 times, followed by economy (4), crisis (3), unity (3), corruption (2), positive (2) and travel (2). For transnational respondents, the frequency of the words are: economy (12), countries (8), travelling (8), positive (7), politics (5), beneficial (4), unity (4), Brussels (3), cooperation (3), Germany (3) and cultures, France, Greece, losers/winners, map, peace (2). These figures provide useful visual support because they display differences and similarities of European attitudes between transnational and non-transnational Spaniards. At first sight, the most obvious difference resides in the density of these clouds. Figure 5.5 contains fewer terms than Figure 5.6. This density difference mirrors a gap between the two groups of the sample. In this case, transnational Spaniards present a wider range of thoughts –reflected by the incorporation of more terms– and communalities while addressing their first impressions of the EU. The word clouds only display words that have been repeated at least twice. For instance, some other words used once by non-transnational individuals are: peace, community, in/equality, friendship, freedom, mafia, euro, prosperity and passion. In order to facilitate the analysis, the words have clustered answers with similar meanings. For instance, 'economy' refers to the European Central Bank, the euro or the financial transactions between EU member-states.

Figure 5.5. First EU thought association (non-transnational Spaniards)

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Figure 5.6. First EU thought association (transnational Spaniards)

"Cooperation" is the term that has been most frequently used among non-transnational young Spaniards. Looking closer at the meaning behind this word, it becomes clear that cooperation is viewed through different prisms. In spite of the plurality of respondents' interpretations, all of these connect with some of the main pillars of the EU: a common European financial and labour market (see respondent NT 8), educational agreements and freedom of movement (see respondent NT 23).

> *It's a group of countries with mutual cooperation and that have connections and plans to promote the economy, employment... (thinking) So they can help each other when other countries are in debt, so they can help each other and things like that* (NT8, female, graduate, residing in Madrid).

> *The European Union? So... well, all countries from the European Union and I don't know... a project of...integration, where they try, for example...I don't know... all these projects with the university and Erasmus students, that type of...for example, I don't know... I think that in Switzerland and Finland, if you study in their universities and you're a member of the European Union, then tuition fees are free...They could have said: "No, just for those from our country", but they include other members of the European Union. So, it's like trying to help the rest of the countries that form it* (NT23, female, graduate student, residing in Madrid).

The second concept shared among non-transnational respondents is "economy". The fact that respondents associate the EU with the economy in a post-crisis context is not surprising. Particularly in the case of Spain, one of the EU member-states most severely shaped by the financial crisis. As is well known, in order to reduce public expenditure, the EU responded with austerity measures constraining public funding. These austerity measures damaged Spaniards' attitudes towards the political system due to the ineffectiveness of institutions' response (Torcal 2014; Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014). The next quotes reflect non-transnationals' concerns of the outcome of the 2008 crisis. For instance, respondent NT15 expresses her disagreement towards the political decisions behind austerity measures and the lack of EU's transparency (see respondent NT15):

- If I say the words "European Union", what's the first thing that comes into your mind?

-Money (laughing). No, I mean, I think it's good that we're part of the Union because well...I guess it helps. But, lately they are not doing it right. I've got no idea who makes the decisions, or who doesn't, but, but they're doing some stuff that it isn't helping, definitively not helping the European Union (NT15, female, graduate, living in Madrid).

Furthermore, non-transnational Spaniards highlight an increase of socio-economic inequality within the EU. To respondent NT 16, this injustice is rooted in a lack of political and financial response from the EU. On the other hand, respondent NT 21 highlights how EU's relation with Greece demonstrates the "greediness" of the EU. It should be noted that some of these interviews were conducted parallel to Greek's referendum about the incorporation or rejection of EU's austerity measures.

We're part of a Union, we're part of a Union with deep inequality and plenty of times the Union does not react to these inequalities. Like I just said, they generally help with the economic development of some impoverished areas and stuff... But the European Union doesn't try to make all members equal, as it may happen in the US, right? So, in that sense, it kind of sucks to be in the European Union (NT16, male, graduate, living in Madrid).

- If I say the words "European Union", what's the first thing that comes into your mind?

-So... (thinking), "bad economy" comes to my mind, that's what crossed my mind. Like a strong economy that's getting worse... especially with everything that's going on... with Greece and even before that. I get the feeling that it was all made under a mutual agreement but with the intention of earning more money, so... that never works out (NT21, male, secondary education, residing in Madrid).

To some non-transnational Spaniards, the EU reminds them of the concept "crisis". In this case, crisis is framed under financial and power inequality. The crash of the Eurozone and the measures to overcome this crisis impacted directly on respondents' lives (e.g. high levels of unemployment). However, respondent NT 7 believes that the financial crisis has stressed power differences within the EU. This idea contrasts with the expectation that the EU should have promoted mutual understanding and coexistence.

-Worldwide, in general...crisis...not just an economic one, that's evident, but a multilevel crisis, you know? Because there are countries that want to be above other countries, and if this is supposed to be a European Union it is because everybody should be at the same level, you know? It's as if there's not a tendency of coexistence.
- When you say that some countries want to be above others, what do you mean?
- Germany, France and possibly Spain...Maybe even England, but England it's not so much into it... I don't know, I don't know what to say. The main powers compared to

other countries, as if they were more than other countries, you know? But they are just another country (NT7, male, graduate, residing in Madrid).

Up to this point, the bulk of non-transnational respondents portray the EU as a cooperative *club* of European countries dominantly interested in economic agreements. In a post-crisis context, non-transnational narratives were recurrently embedded in the EU's response to the financial crisis both in Spain and other EU member-states (e.g. bailout inefficient response and increase of socio-economic inequality).

If we turn our attention to the word cloud of transnational Spaniards (Figure 5.4), we can see that "economy" is the most recurrent descriptor. To a certain extent, transnationals' portrayal of "economy" shares certain similarities with the notion of "cooperation" previously discussed. This is the case of respondents T 12 and T 11 who establish a direct association between the EU and "money". These responses transmit a sense of disagreement with this financial side of the EU, an aspect previously mentioned by non-transnational Spaniards. To some respondents, this disappointment stems from a "business-driven" perception (see T 12), while respondent T 11 infers she belongs to the EU-group "that is worse off". In other words, the financial crisis has broadened the division between "losers" and "winners":

> *- I see. And if I say the words "European Union", what's the first thing that comes to your mind?*
> *- Money (laughing). Money. Some of us lost and others won* (T11, female, postgraduate, living in Amsterdam).
>
> *-Ok, and changing a bit the subject. If I say the words "European Union", what's the first thing that you think about?*
> *-Money.*
> *-Money, in what sense?*
> *-Because…because I think that in the end all this stuff about the European Union has been created for the sake of money, for international trade and all that… Even when it has nothing to do with us, in the end it has to do with us but they just leave us out most of the citizens from the European Union. I mean, I think that it's positive the freedom of movement and stuff, even when it's not really as we've been told, but in the end it's all a good business between… Businessmen playing to make business* (T12, female, postgraduate, residing in Berlin).

However, interrelating the EU with its financial aspects may not necessarily appear under the adversities as a consequence of the 2008 crisis. There are transnational young Spaniards who complement the economic facet of the EU with some of its advantages. To respondent T 26 the main advantage resides in the use of a single currency. However, according to T 26, the advantages of the euro are not necessarily connected with the benefits of the single market

(and its impact at the European level), but with the eradication of currency exchanges while travelling within the EU.

> *- I see. And if I say the words "European Union", what's the first thing that comes to your mind?*
> *- The euro (laughing). I can explain myself if you want... If you ask me about the European Union at this moment I'm going to say euro, and travelling... to travel. Because, despite all the issues we've had, even with this currency, in the end I think it's great, you know? The fact that we can say: "Today, I'm going to France and I don't have to go to the bank and exchange francs...or I'm going to Italy and instead of changing lyres, I have my own currency... So...that's the only... that's what the European Union means to me...that's their biggest accomplishment* (T26, female, graduate, residing in Rome).

Even when transnational responses dominantly discuss the relevance of the economy, compared to non-transnational peers, these answers tend to be intertwined with the right of freedom of movement. This seems to indicate that the performative quality of transnationalism fosters a sense of awareness of the benefits of making use of European citizenship (i.e. enhancing a cost-benefit approach). Nonetheless, this positive image should not be confounded with a non-judgemental vision of the EU. As we have previously seen with respondent T 11, transnational respondents also have a critical vision of the EU. However, contrary to non-transnationals, transnational Spaniards establish a balance between some of the negative qualities of the EU and its advantages. In other words, despite the imperfections stressed by transnational respondents, they still acknowledge the positive aspects of the EU. However, this positive description of the EU varies. Respondent T 10, for example, associates this positive image with a sense of liberty attached to the freedom of movement within the EU:

> *- If I say the words "European Union", what's the first thing that you think about?*
> *-Well, the European Union is a group of countries with mutual agreements. In this case, I think that we're benefitting a lot from the European Union. Because, for example, in my case it allows me to be living in Germany without a visa permit, without making me feel...to a certain extent, a foreigner, right? When I think about the European Union, I think of something positive* (T10, female, postgraduate, residing in Berlin).

As we can see, freedom of movement is perceived by transnational Spaniards as a positive aspect of the EU. The presence of this quality was not as frequently mentioned among non-transnational Spaniards. This seems to indicate that residing in an EU capital increases self-awareness of the facilities of being a transnational European. Freedom of movement is vividly present as a positive feature of the EU among transnational Spaniards. Furthermore,

there are respondents who broaden this favourable image beyond mobility. For instance, respondent T 23 considers that, in spite of EU's faults, the EU is "the best invention of the twentieth century":

> *-OK. Great. And if I say the words "European Union", what's the first thing that crosses your head?*
> *-Best invention of the twentieth century.*
> *-In what sense?*
> *- Well deserved Peace Nobel Price. The end of centuries of war and death among countries. The first attempt to unify the world and to maintain peace and strengthen links with different communities. I don't know…It's everything, I don't know…and even when I'm aware that it has plenty of dysfunctions. In my opinion there're some aspects that just don't work but even when I think particularly about Spain it's the best thing that has ever happened to Spain in its whole history. I mean, all positive things. I mean, 90% of the things I can think of are positive* (T23, male, postgraduate, residing in Berlin).

In sum, respondents dominantly perceive the EU from an economic perspective. In the case of non-transnational Spaniards the EU is perceived as a cooperative entity, while transnationals discuss more specific aspects of its economy (e.g. the euro). Although both groups of the sample believe that the EU has not handled the financial crisis correctly (increasing social and economic inequality), transnational young Spaniards tend to incorporate advantages attached to their transnational experience as European citizens such as the lack of using their while travelling within the EU.

5.7.4. European identity as a syllogism

Henri Tajfel (1981), a social behaviour psychologist, defined social identity as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (1981: 255). This definition does not just include a self-acknowledgment towards a membership, but also that this is complemented by, and intertwined with an emotional attachment. Although understanding identity from a rational perspective may seem rare, the interviews revealed that a high number of non-transnational (and some transnational) respondents addressed this identity through EU membership. Thus, European identity was recurrently defined as a syllogism[70] following the structure of: a) "I am Spanish. Spain

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[70]Aristotle was the first to introduce the concept of syllogism. Considered by some "the founder of logic" (Malink 2013: 1), through syllogisms Aristotle established the origin of deductive reasoning. Although the work of this Greek philosopher described an array of possible syllogisms, very simply put "syllogisms are arguments about the properties of entities. They consist of two premises and a conclusion" (Khemlani and Johnson-Laird

belongs to the EU. I am European" or b) "I am Spanish. Spain belongs to the European continent. I am European". The first syllogism bridges identity with political spheres; it alludes to citizenship and to the fact that Spain is an EU member-state. In this case, the European membership is determinant in forging European identity in these respondents.

> *I belong to the European Union... I must belong to the European Union, so (he laughs)... At least I do belong for the moment* (NT3, male, graduate, living in Madrid).

> *I feel European because I live in Europe, but that's it. Because Spain belongs to the EU, but apart from that I don't feel European* (NT 12, male, 2nd cycle vocational education, residing in Madrid).

> *Do I feel European? Man... I am in Europe, so yes...I feel European (laughing) but, I don't know, I mean, it's not as if I have a feeling: "Oh my god! I'm a super European". Well... that's not really the case. It is not very important to me* (NT 23, female, graduate living in Madrid).

These three quotes epitomise a general view expressed by non-transnational respondents who feel European, that European identity is not embedded in emotional attachments. European identity is part of European citizenship. Thus, it is linked to Spain's membership to the EU. Although the interviews revealed that, at times, transnational respondents may use syllogisms to frame their European identity, these present one main difference: transnational respondents include cost-benefit aspects (while non-transnationals' syllogisms are more concise and restricted to European membership). This indicates that to some individuals transnationalism may trigger a different awareness towards European citizenship and membership to the EU. With reference to Erasmus grant for his MA studies, respondent T 7 mentions the lack of bureaucratic hurdles and the freedom to work in any EU member-state as having shaped his European identity. All the facilities derived from European citizenship provided T7 with a sense of inclusion, a sense of what it means being European, far from feeling a *stranger* (Simmel 1908) or an *outsider* (Becker 1973):

> *-I think that… it depends on history. I mean, it depends on what's happening in the European Union. Particularly while I was becoming an adult, with the incorporation of the euro and all that… The Schengen area and all that. And then… the fact that I have used the European Union. I've been an Erasmus, I did my master studies abroad, the fact that I could work here [Brussels]… And that I don't have any administrative barriers. All those things, even when they look silly, little by little make*

2012). A classic example of a syllogism is "All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Socrates is mortal" (Ellis 1938: 174).

you European. Because in the end, when it comes to bureaucracy there are no differences between Belgium and Spain. I don't have to go through more obstacles, I don't feel like a shitty foreigner because I need this paper, a visa... No, I feel at home. And I think that's a consequence of the development of the Union. It's not because I have a feeling, a super European Union feeling, you know? If it had been the same but between Spain and Portugal, I would probably tell you that I feel truly Iberian. It's... it's because I've enjoyed it[71] (T 7, male, graduate, living in Brussels).

This account provides evidence that for some transnational Spaniards European identity is performative, and has been shaped through the individuals' use of their European citizenship. This result goes in line with the idea that welfare states' rights create feelings of attachment and a sense of security in their citizens (McEwen 2002; David and Bar-Tal 2009). To some respondents European identity emerges from the awareness of the advantages granted to EU member-states. As a consequence European identity is portrayed around the privileges derived from European citizenship (Gabel 1998; Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002; McLaren 2006; Van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Pötzschke and Braun 2014; Curtice 2016).

5.7.5. The cultural side of European identity

Since the 2000s an increasing body of literature supports the need for establishing a clear cut division between civic and cultural aspects of a European identity (Eder and Giesen 2001; Bruter 2004, 2013; Ruiz-Jiménez *et al.* 2004; Favell *et al.* 2011; Bellucci *et al.* 2012). In broad terms, while ethnic refers to the cultural side[72] of identity (i.e. "feeling European"), civic identity connects this idea with citizenship (i.e. "being European"). Contrary to the rational approach that respondents utilised in the previous section, this part focuses on the cultural side of European identity. Cultural features are particularly prominent among transnational Spaniards. Specifically, transnational respondents emphasize three aspects: cultural proximity and assimilation, feeling closer to the European context and identification with EU values.

Individuals who move to a different country encounter social, institutional, political and cultural changes. The bulk of cultural assimilation studies has traditionally focused on first and second-generation migrants in the US (Portes *et al.* 1980; Portes and Zhou 1993). In the EU case, transnational studies centre around migrants from different religious backgrounds in the EU (Güngör *et al.* 2011; Ali and Fokkema 2014). Although compared to non-EU

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[71] Original quote: "Es porque lo he disfrutado", which implies a sense of benefit from the EU but with a joyful sense.
[72] To Castells (2004) the cultural side of identity refers to: "the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is given priority over other sources of meaning" (2004: 6).

transnationals, EU legislation guarantees that Europeans share the same group of rights facilitating freedom of movement, the integration of transnational Europeans cannot be taken for granted. In the case of the transnational Spaniard T 11, for instance, the assimilation of the customs of the Netherlands –in other words adapting to the lifestyle of the host country– has increased her levels of European attachment:

> -*Living abroad has made me more European.*
> -*Why do you think... why do you think that is the case?*
> -*Because I've completely adopted the habits over here. I mean, it's not as if I have a choice (laughing). People start working at nine, they leave at five...at noon, everybody, everybody at work goes for lunch, so I eat when everybody does. When I get home at six or seven it's already late and I get dinner because I'm starving. And then you're tired because there's barely any light outside and...You make dinner, you watch something and you go to bed. That's the life that most of my colleagues at work have. However, in Spain, my life was different* (T 11, female, graduate, living in Amsterdam).

This extract supports the contact theory, epitomising an example of how positive inter-group interaction may reduce prejudice towards other cultures and encourage social proximity (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998). Sometimes, as transnational T 28 states, transnationalism may not require a process of assimilation since other European cultures feel similar to the Spanish one. This is the case of T 28, who expresses a feeling of closeness to the Italian culture, which has reinforced his European identity.

> -*I feel European because in the end, the small things...well, I don't think they are that small...but, yes, we share common values. And these values we share are not so obvious and, in fact, aren't shared in other parts of the world, they don't even have them. I feel European and I feel European because I'm in Italy and I don't feel too much of a foreigner because... after all, we're not so different and our values are not that different* (T 28, male, graduate, living in Rome).

Respondent T 28 acknowledges a sense of familiarity with Italian values. Residing in Rome has allowed him to realise that the similarities between the Italian and the Spanish cultures outweigh their differences. For this particular case, transnationalism facilitates the transmission of cultural values between two distant contexts. As a consequence, transnationalism generates a sense of familiarity with and closeness to other European cultures. To respondents T 27 and T 2, this experience is mostly based on the impact of travelling and familiarising with other EU member-states through their job:

> - *I work for a low-cost airline, I work for EasyJet, so... I lived in England, now I'm in Italy... so, in the end you feel you're from Europe, right? Because I always travel in*

Europe and because of that you end up feeling part of that Union (T 27, male, graduate, living in Rome).

-Man… I guess it's because of the education I received from my parents, the fact that I've always studied, even before I went to university, abroad, and that has, maybe, given me a better idea of Europe.
-May I ask where you studied?
-Well…when I was little I studied in Switzerland and Canada, then in France and Belgium. Man… I mean, it's something that I deal with every day, right? (Respondent currently works for the EU) So I don't see Europe far from my life (T 2, female, graduate, living in Brussels).

Finally, there are transnational Spaniards who express a direct connection between their European identity and the values promoted by the EU. Studies stress the significant impact that sharing a set of common values has on the establishment and consolidation of national identities (Henderson and McEwen 2005). The quotes of respondents T 5 and T 30 exemplify that identity can also be influenced top-down, in this case by the EU. These respondents state that their European identity is rooted in EU values (see T 5), in the historical achievements of the EU (e.g. peace among European countries) or a common religious background (see T 30):

-And why would you say that you feel European?
-Well… It has to do with what I just said. I think that … that if it was, I mean, the European Union has its own values which... which I do like... such as sticking together, mutual help, cooperation but... and I would like to keep close to those values (T 5, female, graduate, living in Brussels).

- I understand. And when you say that you identify with the European culture, do you have any specific values or features that you believe relate to a European culture?
- Aiming at an egalitarian… sorry... I mean a fair development. For example, fighting for living together peacefully. This wouldn't exist and everybody would be doing their own thing without the European Union, you know? And also I think it's about the values… values that make me feel European. For example, the traditions, Christian roots of the European Union, right?...To me that's also a big influence on how I perceive the European Union and the European culture (T 30, male, graduate, living in Rome).

Similarly, Díez-Medrano (2003) discovered in his interviews that respondents also tackled European identity embedded with these values. However, this vision of a Christian European society remains controversial. According to Risse (2010), the process of Europeanization of the public spheres portray two opposing European identities: "a modern and secular Europeanized identity head on against a more nationalist vision of European and its boundaries" and "European as predominantly Christian civilization" (2010: 14). In the case

of transnational Spaniards, Christian values and a peaceful coexistence are perceived as complementary to European society.

5.7.6. The absence of a European identity

Equally important to the understanding of the portrayal of European identity is the observation and justification that respondents use to explain their lack of European identification. Why do some young Spaniards identify as Europeans while others doubt or deny this identity? In this last section, it will be shown that many of the logical arguments used in the explanation of European identity tend to appear among respondents who do not feel European. First, even when respondents are aware of their membership as part of an EU member-state, they do not identify as Europeans. Second, the lack of European identification is also justified among respondents who feel that "Europe" is a distant reality. Finally, non-transnational Spaniards believe that the lack of information about the EU has a negative impact on their European identity. Given that there is a higher number of non-transnational respondents who do not feel European (7 vs. 3), the absence of a European identity exclusively engages with the narratives of the non-transnational sample.

At the beginning of the results' section, I utilised the metaphor of syllogisms as a rational constructor of the European identity. From this perspective, non-transnational respondents frame their European identity through EU membership and citizenship, excluding any emotional attributes to this identity. The relevance of the application of syllogisms does not reside on the essence of this concept itself, but on the fact that there are respondents who deny having a European identity, despite acknowledging the membership status of Spain in the EU. In other words, not all respondents follow the linear logic behind syllogisms. In fact, respondents NT 1, NT 10 and NT 16 declare not to feel European regardless of an EU membership. Non-transnationals were the only respondents providing this type of answer:

> -You see…no, not to that point. I do know, more or less, that I am European but I do not feel European, I mean, we have a Union but that doesn't mean I feel European, I don't (NT1, female, graduate, living in Madrid).

> -No… way less, I don't… I don't feel European because I don't feel Europe. I think that the European feeling would mean something more territorial, unlike the Spanish one. In Europe…it has less meaning (NT10, male, secondary education, living in Madrid).

> -I believe that also in the good sense… regarding economic activity, external trade and stuff like that, it is very positive that we are part of a Union. However, at the

same time, I don't think that the European Union creates any territorial identity, I mean, nobody feels... I don't feel European and I think that most people don't feel European. It is not like American people, you know? (NT 16, male, graduate, living in Madrid).

Non-transnational respondents state that, even when the European Union shares a common ground –the European continent– this does not generate a European identity. This idea is supported in comparison to other identities. For respondent NT10, compared to the Spanish identity, the European one lacks solid roots and it does not go beyond the European territory, while respondent NT16 stresses the failure of the EU in creating an identity similar to the American one (i.e. United States).

While it seems that transnationalism has promoted an experience of familiarity and closeness towards the EU and European cultures, the absence of this experience has also been expressed as a deterrent of European identification. This is precisely what respondent NT 6 believes. She fails to identify with contexts beyond her local environment, because compared to her local identity, the European identity and European surroundings seem too distant for this respondent to relate to it.

> *- OK. So, I've asked you about Galicia, well, À Coruña, Madrid, Spain and if I ask you at the European level, if I ask you if you feel European, what would you reply?*
> *- (Silence. She thinks) Well...Well, we're back where we were, right? I identify with very small contexts, I don't know if it's also due to a lack of experience living abroad, perhaps if I had had other experiences...Maybe it is not something very present in me. I don't know... All my answers are very dubious (she laughs, I laugh)* (NT 6, female, 2nd cycle vocational education, residing in Madrid).

There is no doubt that compared to Spain, the EU comprises a vast territory, 4 million km^2 as opposed to 506,000 km^2 as opposed to be precise (Europa.eu 2016). Still, if size was the sole catalyst or inhibitor of identity, respondents would exclusively feel attached to local contexts, and not even to national ones. Yet, size has not always impeded the emergence of European identity or other type of imagined communities (Anderson 1991). Another non-transnational respondent who denied feeling European justifies her answer based on the distance and lack of familiarity towards the EU (see below NT14). When enquired further about this matter, the respondent alluded that not having the EU in her routine (e.g. working environment, media information) impedes this proximity (see below NT14).

> *-To be honest I don't know if I feel European... because it is way too far, you know? You don't, I mean, it doesn't feel as close as to be from Extremadura, or to be a Spaniard as to be from the European Union. Well, you are from the European Union*

so… of course we belong to it, but maybe not as closely as we are to Spain or Extremadura.
- And why would you say it is not as close?
-Because, I don't know, maybe it is because it is not part of my daily life. It is not as if it is present everyday unless it appears on the news… but right now in my project (…) Maybe tomorrow I will be working on something and this is a job in which the European Union will be part of my daily life. But to tell the truth at this moment it is not as if… no, it isn't part of my everyday life (NT 14, female, graduate, living in Madrid).

Although some non-transnational Spaniards allude that the size of the EU deters a European identification, this detachment could be interpreted in terms of an absence of familiarity. Non-transnational 14 believes that if the EU formed part of her routine, she would develop a European identification. Respondent NT 1 expresses that the lack of EU-related news prevents her from feeling European.

- Ok. Perfect. And why do you think is that? Is it because of what you were telling me before that it is not present in your daily life?
- Yes, that's it. It's something far, and you don't really see it much or receive much information about it. It's true that a lot of things that happen in Spain are developed with European funds, but it's all up in the air, or at least, it's the kind of information that doesn't reach me (NT 1, female, graduate, living in Madrid).

It should be noted that NT 1 affirms not to feel European in spite of the acknowledgment of the benefits of Spain's EU membership. This quote reflects how in some instances a positive cost-benefit attitude towards the EU is not directly translated into citizens' European attachment.

5.8. Conclusions

This chapter offers an in-depth analysis of the influence that transnationalism has on European identity, and its absence for the Spanish case. In order to provide a more detailed picture of respondents' understanding of European identity, it also addresses attitudes towards the EU and the factors that encouraged young Spaniards to become transnationals.

The first conclusion is that transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards relate to the EU differently. When asked about their first impressions of the EU, transnational Spaniards provide a more specific set of items such as the economy, concrete EU member-states or rights of freedom of movement. In the case of non-transnationals, they tend to emphasise the financial and market aspects of the EU from a cooperative perspective, followed by some of the outcomes of the economic crisis. European attitudes are strongly influenced by the economy (e.g. common market). Both groups of the sample stress the EU's poor management

of the crisis and show concerns about the rise of social and financial inequality. However, the European attitudes of transnational Spaniards incorporate positive aspects of the EU. The advantages of the EU are perceived at the individual level (e.g. European citizenship's benefits as a transnational) but also at the global level. Although the bulk of transnational Spaniards moved to a different EU member-state as a direct consequence of the financial crisis, their perception towards the EU has not been completely be tainted by the detrimental outcome of the crash. In other words, transnational Spaniards remain critical with the EU whilst being able to acknowledge their advantages as European citizens.

The second conclusion refers to the fact that the results at the macro level from the previous chapter are mirrored at the micro level. In other words, transnationalism has a positive impact on European identity. Thanks to an explorative and context-dependent analysis, this chapter highlights the multiple layers and interpretations of the European identity. For instance, non-transnational Spaniards justified their European identity through logical arguments (i.e. syllogism). Specifically, Spaniards who never lived abroad believe that their European identity derives from both their European citizenship and EU membership. Under this rational perspective, European identity is perceived as an obviousness, a quality that does not get questioned because it is a given. Even when a numerous group of non-transnational respondents establish a direct connection between their European citizenship and European identity, it cannot be inferred that this vision would be true to other non-transnational Spaniards. In fact, the results also showed that there are non-transnational Spaniards who do not establish this "obvious" relationship. A number of non-transnational respondents who do not feel European claimed not to identify as Europeans in spite of being aware of their European citizenship.

Departing from this rational layer of the European identity expressed by non-transnational Spaniards, the interviews reveal that transnationalism fosters a cultural side of this identity. Residing in a European member-state modified transnationals' self and group perceptions. Through social interaction, taking place in professional and non-professional contexts, transnational Spaniards have become familiarised with other European habits. Transnational respondents describe how this sense of familiarity emanated from cultural assimilation, establishing positive connections with other Europeans or through their travelling experiences. Regardless of its source, the transnational experience developed a sense of inclusion and commonness towards others Europeans and European societies. Furthermore, this feeling of cultural proximity is extrapolated to physical spaces. Transnational Spaniards

express that intra-EU mobility transforms their mental image of EU's territory into a more tangible reality. As a consequence, they feel that it is easier to relate to other EU member-states and, therefore, to the European culture as a whole. Although European identity has been approximated through a bottom-up approach, transnational respondents' answers to the interview show that European identity may also receive top-down feedback. Thus, as occurs with nation-states, common values promoted by the EU (e.g. cooperation, solidarity) are perceived as qualities that facilitate European identification.

In spite of the impact that transnationalism has on an ethnic European identity, a small group of transnational Spaniards utilised rational arguments to justify their European identification. However, contrary to non-transnationals, the use of syllogisms among transnational respondents tends to be complemented by a sense of benefit from the EU. Thus, in some instances, being an active user of European citizenship increases respondents' awareness of certain utilitarian aspects (e.g. freedom of movement) which are incorporated in the portrayal of transnationals' European identity. It should be noted that during the interviews both groups of the sample expressed disappointment with the EU. However, comments discussing the poor European political performance did not emerge in the discussion of European identification *per-se*. Despite high levels of European support among Spaniards (Duchesne and Frognier 1995; Gabel 1998; Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002; McLaren 2006; Pötzschke and Braun 2014), negative attitudes towards EU's management of the financial crash do not seem to have negatively impacted on the sample's European identity. Still, respondents highlighted feelings of shame towards Spanish government performance and national corruption *vis-à-vis* their national identity.[73], the lack of changes in European identity could be explained by citizens' perception of EU institutions as a better alternative than national institutions, an idea frequently found in countries with poor national performance (Sánchez-Cuenca 2000; Ray 2003; Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002). In conclusion, this chapter provides empirical evidence to the argument that even when identity may become salient in time of crisis (Risse 2010), the financial crash of the Eurozone may have damaged European attitudes –which tend to reside at a more superficial level– but may not have affected European identity. To a certain extent, it should not be surprising that, as it tends to occur with national and local identities, a future development of a values-based type of European identity will promote a clearer distinction between a European identity that exclusively relies on the EU and European identity as a personal and

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[73] This idea is expanded in the qualitative chapter on voting behaviour.

cultural experience. A deeper sense of a cultural European identity may lessen the interrelation between European attitudes and European identity. In the same line as Heath and Spreckelsen (2016), assessing the relationship among European identity, European utilitarism and hostile attitudes towards the EU may require new research to discern democratic satisfaction and political performance from European identity, the EU and public attitudes.

Finally, the last conclusion of this chapter stresses that the lack of European identity relies on some of the main characteristics that transnational Spaniards express as fundamental to the development of this identity. Although there are non-transnational Spaniards who recognise their European citizenship, when they compare domestic identities with a possible European identity, they do not perceive European citizenship to be a sufficient reason for the emergence of this macro identification. A lack of familiarity with other European cultures and EU member-states, a lack of EU-related information, in other words, the perception that the EU and its countries are not part of their daily life, are the main characteristics that non-transnational Spaniards express to have deterred them from feeling European.

Up to this point, I have analysed the impact of transnationalism on European identity from macro and micro prisms. In both cases, the empirical evidence sustains that in a post-crisis EU transnationalism continues to positively influence European identity. The next empirical chapter will tackle the second research question of this thesis: the impact of transnationalism on EP elections' turnout for the EU-15.

CHAPTER 6. EUROPEAN VOTING BEHAVIOUR AND TRANSNATIONALISM.

6.1. Introduction

After the analysis of the impact of transnationalism on European identity, this third empirical chapter initiates the investigation of the second research question: How does transnationalism shape European voting behaviour? The present chapter offers a tentative answer to this question utilising quantitative techniques. More specifically, the influence of transnationalism on turnout in the EP elections is measured through logistic regression analyses of two EB datasets for the EU-15.

The EP elections represent one of the most symbolic acts of the democracy of the EU. Since 1979, Europeans have had the opportunity to cast their vote and select a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) on eight different occasions. Some of the main characteristics of these elections have evolved since they were first held. For instance, after 1992 –thanks to the advancements of the Treaty of Maastricht– transnational Europeans were granted the vote in local and European elections while residing in another EU member-state. As a consequence, EP elections became strongly intertwined with one of EU's main core values: freedom of movement. Approximately 14.3 million Europeans –2.8% of the total EU population– live in a different EU member-state from that of which they are citizens (Eurostat 2013). Given that this number has considerably increased after the 2008 crisis (Dumont 2014), this chapter contributes to the understanding of voting behaviour of this group of the EU population that remains understudied (Shaw 2010; Collard 2013).

Academics and European institutions regarded the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) as a milestone in European citizenship (Bellamy *et al.* 2006). Yet, the perception of this civic achievement may not have reached Europeans, taking into account that the levels of participation in the EP elections tends to decline since 1979. Levels of turnout of the EU-15 have evolved from 66.02% in 1979, to 51.84% in the last EP elections (see figure 6.1). Except for the 1999 elections, compared to the EU-15 Spain presents lower levels of turnout at the EP. However, in both cases the levels of participation among Europeans steadily fall. Two main debates explain low levels of turnout in the EP elections. The first debate places its attention on structural constraints. From this perspective, lower levels of participation are partially rooted in the system. In other words, EU institutions may deter Europeans from further political

engagement (Wallace and Smith 1995; Majone 1998; Moravcsik 2002; van der Brug and de Vreese 2016). Whether these structural consequences are intended or unintended (van der Brug and de Vreese 2016), academics debate the outcome of EP elections as a possible reflection of a European democratic deficit (Majone 1998; Moravcsik 2002; Banducci 2016). The second strand of literature places its interest in citizens' perceptions. According to the second-order elections model, low levels of turnout are partially explained by citizens' perception that there is "less at stake" in these elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005; Hix and Marsh 2011).

Figure 6.1. Turnout at the European Parliament Elections of the EU-15 and Spain (in percentages).
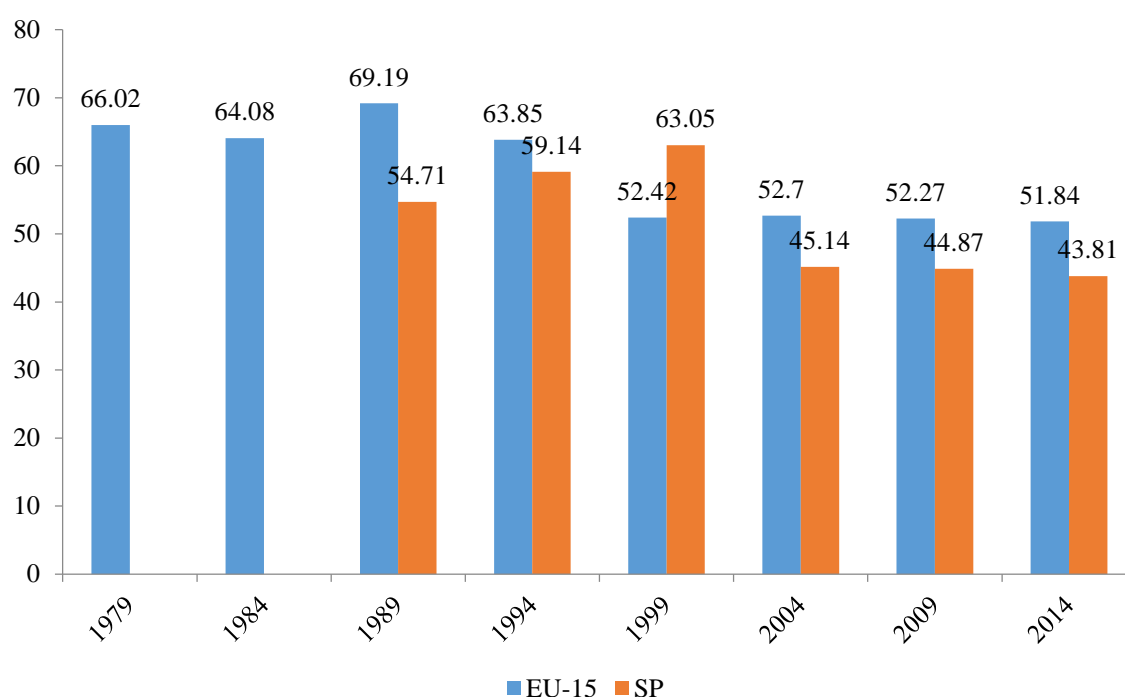
Source: European Parliament 2014

In its early stages, the bulk of research tackling the European democratic deficit focused on the impact of EU and domestic structures on political behaviour. However, in the last decades a growing body of research has been concerned with individual-level factors (Franklin 2001; Franklin and Hobolt 2011). From all the individually-based justifications, the "less at stake" explanation remains the most influential. According to academics, this perception could be related to the lack of European political debates (Follesdal and Hix 2006), shadowed by domestic issues during EP elections (Flickinger and Studlar 2007), or due to Europeans' perception of the lack of influence of the EU (Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Schmitt 2005). Among all the possible psychological characteristics influencing individuals' European vote,

in this research I have focused on European identity and European attitudes. Chapter 4 and 5 provided empirical evidence about the impact of transnationalism on European identity. Generalising these results, it can be affirmed that in a post-crisis EU, transnational EU citizens feel more European than non-transnational citizens. In the case of voting behaviour, European identity and positive attitudes towards the EU have been proved by several authors to increase citizens' participation in European elections (Blondel *et al.* 1998; van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Sotckemer 2011; Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016).

From an identity and attitudinal perspective, transnational Europeans –a demographic group more likely to feel European and who tends to have a positive image of the EU– should participate more in the EP elections than non-transnational citizens. In spite of presenting "ideal" emotional and attitudinal conditions, transnationalism is embedded with civic exclusion (Day and Shaw 2002; Kochenov 2009; Janoschka 2010); thus, preventing transnationals from participating both in the EP and domestic elections. Given that little is known about the consequences of transnationalism in voting behaviour in a post-crisis EU, this chapter assesses the impact of transnationalism on EP elections. More specifically, I test one main hypothesis using two EB datasets (2009 and 2012). My results indicate that in spite of the strong feelings of European identity and positive attitudes towards the EU, transnational Europeans are less prone to engage with the European elections. To this specific population, the "less at stake" argument does not sufficiently explain low levels of participation. Instead, even when the EU matters to transnational Europeans, institutional barriers seem to exert a stronger force than individual factors. Given this limitation within the second-order elections debate (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmit 2005), I argue that understanding the political behaviour of transnational Europeans necessitates further engagement with democratic deficit debates at the European level. Furthermore, I sustain that this debate should not only be regarded as a structural constraint, but should also consider the potential political inequality of the electoral system (Banducci 2016) emerging as a side-effect of transnationalism.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: first, I begin with a review of the second-order elections literature. Second, I narrow this review down to more specific literature on European political behaviour and transnationalism, and their relation to the main hypothesis of this chapter. Then, I discuss the data, operationalisation of the dependent and independent variables, on top of the methodology applied testing the hypothesis. Next, I present main descriptive results of the education, age and occupation of the sample. These descriptive

results are followed by t-tests of independence between transnationalism and a number of micro variables. This results section finalises with the outcome of the two logistic regressions and an exploration of the main reasons behind vote abstention for the EU-15. At the end of this chapter, I conclude highlighting the main findings.

6.2. Literature review

This section provides the theoretical review of one of the most fundamental democratic acts in the EU arena: participation in the EP elections. In order to understand the impact of transnationalism on voting behaviour, I provide a review of the meanings and implications of second-order elections, past debates on the European democratic deficit, factors at macro and micro levels shaping EP's elections turnout and voting behaviour of transnational Europeans. At the end of the section I will introduce the main hypothesis of this chapter.

The engagement of citizens in democratic activities is a commonly studied topic in political science. Democratic participation is key since "democracy is unthinkable without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the governing process" (Verba, *et al.* 1995: 1). Compared to the impact of other political acts (e.g. citizen-initiated contact) on influencing the government, the scope of voting is fairly limited (Verba and Nie 1972). For instance, citizens cannot choose when elections take place, the affairs discussed in the agenda or manifestos or the candidates of the political parties. Yet, according to some authors, the small participatory effort that voting requires from its citizenry compensates these limitations (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.* 1995).

For the purpose of this chapter, I will be exclusively focusing on Europeans' participation in the EP elections. Contrary to the general elections, the EP elections represent a case of second order elections *par excellence* (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005; Follesdal and Hix 2006)*.* While: "*first-order* elections in parliamentary systems are the national parliamentary elections, and in presidential systems, the national presidential elections, (…) *second-order* elections [are]: by-elections, municipal elections, various sorts of regional elections, those to a "second chamber"" (Reif and Schmitt, 1980: 8). Thus, the second-order nature at the European level is rooted in the contrast between European elections' turnout and turnout levels of general elections. According to Reif and Schmitt, there is a major characteristic that conditions first and second-order elections, the fact that the latter are considered less significant than the former or, as it is frequently put, in which *less is at stake* (1980: 9, 10, 16). As a consequence EP elections obtain significantly lower levels of turnout

than national elections. Furthermore, if "where a few take part in decisions there is little democracy; the more participation there is in decisions, the more democracy there is" (Verba and Nie, 1972: 1), low levels of turnout at the European level arose debates about a European democratic deficit.

At present, academics disagree on whether the current levels of low turnout reflect such deficit. There are authors who believe that the lack of participation in the EP elections stems from the European technocracy (Wallace and Smith 1995). Others claim that the detachment of European politics is "democratically justified" (Majone 1998: 7) because it helps to preserve national sovereignty and the successful continuity of the European integration project. Moravcsik (2002), on his part, sustains that "EU officials (…) insulate themselves from direct political contestation. The apparent 'undemocratic' nature of the EU as a whole is largely a function of this selection effect" (Moravcsik 2002: 613).

Departing from these controversies, the *less at stake* assertion remains dominantly valid for most authors to explain low levels of turnout in the EP elections. In the light of this argument, why is there *less at stake* in EP elections, and what aspects shape European voting participation? According to Follesdal and Hix (2006), an increase in political contestation would have a positive influence on the European public sphere. EP elections remain second-order elections because national political parties take advantage of European elections to debate domestic issues (Flickinger and Studlar 2007), especially when national and European elections are close to each other (Franklin 2001). Furthermore, two other aspects explain *why* citizens may perceive that there is *less at stake* in these elections. First, Europeans may have frequently voted less strategically than in national elections due to the perception of a lack of EU authority over domestic matters (Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Schmitt 2005). This proposition may require to be reviewed due to the impact of EU austerity policies after the 2008 financial crash. Second, EU citizens struggle to identify with European political leaders (Follesdal and Hix 2006). These authors highlight that clear differences between political candidates would enhance conversations and criticism of specific issues –not to be perceived as a form of Euroscepticism. In return, through this deliberative process, political identification may emerge, encouraging Europeans to engage and hold European politicians accountable for their political proposals (Follesdal and Hix 2006). In fact, Schmitt *et al.* (2015) provide empirical evidence of candidate identification as a mobilising factor in the 2014 EP elections, the first EP elections with *Spitzenkandidaten* (i.e. party list leaders).

6.2.1. Macro and micro factors constraining the European Parliament elections

Once the characteristics of the second-order elections and the influence of the *less-at-stake* argument have been addressed, there are further macro and micro factors affecting European voting behaviour. Macro level constraints tend to be intertwined with domestic electoral structures. For instance, EP turnout varies as a result of the compulsory vote (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Blondel *et al.* 1998; Mattila 2003; Stockemer 2011), the time span between EP and national elections (Blondel *et al.* 1998; Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Rose 2004; Stockemer 2011), whether the elections take place in a weekday or during the weekend (Franklin *et al.* 1996; Blondel *et al.* 1998; Mattila 2003), depending on national turnout (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Stockemer 2011) and national party identification (Schmitt 2005; Franklin and Hobolt 2011). Naturally, the bulk of these authors perceive structural changes as a vehicle to increase the levels of turnout in the EP elections.

However, EP turnout should also take into consideration individual factors. These factors are crucial, and may be complemented by macro characteristics in order to provide a more complete picture of voting behaviour at the European level (Mattila 2003). For this reason, in the last decades an increasing number of academics incorporate micro factors in their analyses. For instance, voting socialisation shapes Europeans' likelihood to participate or not in these elections. More specifically, the experience of voting for the first time in a second-order election seems to have a negative effect on participation in future elections (Franklin and Hobolt 2011). Another aspect deterring voting in the European elections among first-time voters may be the lack of information about the EU and the EP (Hogh and Larsen 2016). In this sense, political contestation (Follesdal and Hix 2006), the Europeanisation of the public sphere (Risse 2010) and cognitive mobilisation (Inglehart 1970) are believed to positively influence political engagement at the individual level. Secondly, Europeans who trust the EU or present positive perceptions of it, are more likely to participate in the EP elections (Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Stockemer 2011). Blondel *et al.* (1998). Whereas Europeans' who do not support for EU integration and EU membership tend to participate less in the EP elections (Stockemer 2011). However, the directionality of these factors may not always be as straightforward. Recent studies have stressed how it is precisely EU cost-benefit attitudes that mobilised voters to support exiting the EU for the EU referendum in the UK (Vasilopoulou 2016). In the case of national and European identities, an exclusive national identity is positively correlated with Euroscepticism, while EU citizens who see themselves

as Europeans are more prone to support the EU and participate in the EP elections (Blondel *et al.* 1998; van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Stockemer 2011; Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016).

Despite the constant decline of participation in the EP elections, academics have placed more interest in the conditionings that may motivate Europeans to get involved in these elections as opposed to the reasons sustaining vote abstention. At present, Blondel, Sinnot and Svensson's (1998) may be one of the few studies utilising large-N datasets to analyse voters' circumstances. In their study, they distinguish two kinds of non-participation: *circumstantial* and *deliberate*. While *circumstantial* abstention includes unavoidable events that would prevent citizens from casting their vote, *deliberate* abstention refers to conscious motivations against exercising the right to vote (e.g. distrust of the system). Blondel *et al.* (1998) discovered that according to the EB 41.1 (1994), 40% of Europeans did not vote because of external agents, while 60% of non-voters' actions were deliberate. Although there is always a possibility of implementing new policies promoting political participation, this study reveals that a lack of interest, distrust of or dissatisfaction with politics and politicians, lack of knowledge and dissatisfaction with the EP electoral process are the most popular reasons among deliberate non-voters (Blondel *et al.* 1998: 50). According to these results, low levels of participation may not be overwhelmingly rooted in Europeans' interest in the EU (i.e. *less-at-stake* argument) but also in negative attitudes towards EU and its politicians.

In sum, positive attitudes concerning the EU impacts participation of Europeans in the EP elections. In other words, Europeans who support the EU are more likely to get engaged in the EP elections (Mattila 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2004; Stockemer 2011). Furthermore, the existence of a European identity among voters also shapes EP elections' turnout. Similarly to European attitudes, stronger feelings of European identification increase the probability of Europeans' participation in the EP elections (Blondel *et al.* 1998; Studlar *et al.* 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2004; Curtice 2016). Based on these studies, from an identity and attitudinal point of view –and according to the results of the two previous empirical chapters– transnational Europeans present an ideal profile of an active voter. However, the next section will reveal how transnationalism impedes voting to this particular sample.

6.2.2. Transnationalism and voting behaviour

The Treaty of Maastricht established a landmark in European citizenship (Bellamy *et al.* 2006). Thanks to this treaty, certain Europeans' rights (e.g. voting locally and at European levels while residing in another EU member-state) broadened regardless of Europeans'

working conditions. At present, the notion of citizenship is unconceivable without the right to vote (Kochenov 2009). In the case of Europe, the electoral rights derived from European citizenship aim at promoting civic inclusion and diminishing the gap between "supranational governance structures in terms of legitimacy, democracy, participation and constitutional culture" (Day and Shaw 2002: 185). In spite of an increasing number of intra-mobile Europeans, research assessing their political behaviour is scant (Shaw 2010; Collard 2013). While there is abundant research analysing levels of participation in the EP elections among non-transnationals (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Follesdal and Hix 2006; Franklin and Hobolt 2011; van der Brug and de Vreese 2016), the question of how transnational Europeans behave in EP elections remains insufficiently investigated.

From a normative and legislative point of view, transnational Europeans should be able to participate in the EP elections in the same conditions as non-transnational EU citizens. However, research highlights the hurdles that transnationalism adds to the political behaviour of Europeans. What is more, these difficulties not only constrain voting at the European level. In fact, making use of the freedom of movement and residence within the EU frequently results in a disenfranchisement (Kochenov 2009). Even when low levels of participation may be interpreted as a lack of a sense of community and identity in EU member-states for the whole population (Day and Shaw 2002), academics stress the impact that member-states' electoral disparities have on transnationals' political engagement. The structural barriers that transnational Europeans face while residing in another EU member-state partially stem from the lack of European harmonisation. Instead, the transnational vote is regulated at the national level. The absence of an EU regulation for transnational Europeans puts this demographic group at risk of electoral exclusion (Kochenov 2009). Consequently the disparities of voting registration shape levels of political engagement (Collard 2013; Braconnier *et al.* 2017).[74] Moving beyond these structural barriers, Muxel's (2009) politicization index provides original empirical data that also bring light to the attitudinal and emotional side of the political behaviour of transnational Europeans.[75] There are three main findings that I would like to stress. First, European identity has a positive impact on Muxel's politicization index (2009: 159 – 160). Second, transnational Europeans tend to have more positive attitudes

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[74] Collard (2013) compares the electoral systems in France and the UK. Vote registration in the UK is notified by post and subjected to sanctions (e.g. preventing citizens from obtaining a loan). However, France presents a softer approach which partially explains lower levels of registration among transnational Europeans.

[75] In her study, Muxel (2009) created a politicization index with the variables: interest in politics, contact a politician, signed a petition, took part in lawful public demonstration, participated in a trade union, participated in a political party and voted in the last general elections.

towards politics, even when they may not get involved as much as non-transnational Europeans. Finally, compared to non-transnational Europeans, transnational Europeans present higher levels of participation in the EP elections. According to Muxel "half of them [transnational Europeans] have voted a similar proportion or even slightly higher, than that recorded within the general population. So EU movers make use of their citizens' right more at the European level than at the national level" (Muxel 2009: 172). Muxel's findings seem "an exception to the rule", and cast doubt on previous research (Janoschka 2010; Shaw 2010; Collard 2013). Unfortunately, secondary data measuring EP and domestic elections (e.g. European Election Study, EB) fail to register this type of information (i.e. questions on domestic elections exclusively refer to non-transnational Europeans).[76] Considering all the obstacles described above, it is expected that transnationalism may cause a negative impact on the European political behaviour. Therefore, this chapter tests the following hypothesis:

> $H_{6.1}$: *Transnational Europeans are less likely to participate in the EP elections than non-transnational Europeans.*

6.3. Data

This section describes the dependent, independent and control variables incorporated in the logistic regression models, their operationalisation and the justification as part of the statistical analyses.

6.3.1. Dependent variable

The dependent variable measures participation in the EP elections. In order to analyse EP elections' turnout, the dependent variable was based on two items of the EB 2012 (77.4) and 2009 (71.3). Two main reasons justify the selection of these datasets. First, the EB includes a reduced number of surveys capturing participation in the EP elections. Although other datasets (e.g. European Election Study) could have been used, comprising datasets that were used as part of Chapter's 4 analyses strengthens the comparison between EP elections' turnout and European identity among transnational and non-transnational citizens. Unfortunately, the most recent EB datasets lack information about the 2014 EP elections. As a result, the two datasets of this chapter exclusively reflect vote turnout for the 2009 European elections. In spite of the limitations that presenting an analysis for a sole year pose,

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[76] I would like to thank Dr. Van der Brug for confirming this resource and methodological gap in this debate.

including these two datasets facilitates a minimum of consistency of the results for the 2009 EP elections.

Second, different types of EB's operationalisation of citizens' participation in these elections hinder statistical comparison. For instance, the EB 2003 (60.1) was initially included in the analysis. However, the distinct nature of the dependent variable and the required operationalisation for this year was problematic. Instead of gathering information of the reported vote, the EB 60.1 comprised respondent's likelihood of voting (measured from 1 (definitively would not vote) to 10 (definitively would vote)). At present, discrepancies exist regarding the comparability between intended vote and reported vote type of questions (Brady 1999; Achen and Blais 2016; Quintelier and Blais 2016). Due to these disparities, comparing the results of the datasets in 2009 and 2012 with those gathered in 2003 was not feasible. Therefore, the EB 60.1 (2003) was eliminated from the analyses.

As it has been previously mentioned, the questions that form the dependent variable gather information of respondents' reported vote for the 2009 EP elections (see Table 6.1). Compared to other regressions, logistic regression is "able to predict important outcomes that are not continues in nature" (Osborne 2012: 1). Given that the format of the dependent variable is binary, logistic regression is one of the most adequate statistics technique (Osborne 2012).

Table 6.1. Formulation of the dependent variable.

Eurobarometer	Year	Item	Question/Answer
77.4	2012	SD0	Q: The last European elections took place in 2009. Did you vote in these European elections? A: Yes, no, Don't know.
71.3	2009	QK1	Q: European Parliament elections were held on the (INSERT CORRECT DATE ACCORDING TO COUNTRY). For one reason or another, some people in (OUR COUNTRY) did not vote in these elections. Did you yourself vote in the recent European Parliament elections? A: Voted, did not vote, Don't know.

Source: Eurobarometer

6.3.2. Explanatory and control variables

The main explanatory variable –transnationalism– is measured through citizenship. Individuals with the same nationality of the EU member-state where the EB took place are operationalised as non-transnational, while Europeans with a different nationality than the

place where the study was conducted are considered transnational. Thus, transnationalism is operationalised as a dummy variable (i.e. 0 for non-transnational and 1 for transnational Europeans). Although the analysis exclusively focuses on EU-15 member-states, transnational citizens include EU-27 Europeans living in the EU-15 (e.g. a Polish transnational residing in Germany), which increases the total of the transnational sample. Europeans holding a second or third EU nationality, even if they have the same nationality of the member-state where the EB is being conducted also count as transnational Europeans.

The operationalisation where transnationalism is rooted in nationality presents certain limitations. As a consequence, distinguishing nationals who acquired a European nationality in their adulthood or at birth is not possible. For instance, becoming European (or acquiring another EU nationality) as an adult or being raised in a family with parents from different EU member-states may potentially shape voting socialisation, and other individual-based attitudes to voting. This is even more the case for citizens who do not have a European background (e.g. a Moroccan with a French nationality). The historical, societal and political aspects perceived by someone from a non-EU country who acquired a European nationality will likely differ from those who belong to the EU and are not residing in their country of origin. However, the variable transnationalism groups these two cases under the same category.

In order to account for the impact of the variables discussed in the literature review that shape voting behaviour, I have classified these controls variables into three different clusters: socio-demographic, micro and macro variables (see A.14. of the appendix for more detailed information). The socio-demographic variables included in the model are: a) gender (male as reference category), b) age (as a continuous variable), d) education and e) occupation. As it was discussed in the literature review, according to the *Civic Voluntarism Model* (Verba *et al.* 1995), those who *can, want* or *are asked* –qualities that require time, money and civic skills– will be more politically engaged. This profile translates into higher educated individuals with sufficient oral and written language skills to get politically involved, on top of citizens with higher occupations –the demographic groups possessing stronger material and financial means. Thus, previous research provides evidence that highly educated, older male in high labour positions present higher levels of political engagement (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.* 1995; Banducci 2016).

At the micro level, I comprised a set of variables gathering information about citizens' emotions, perceptions and awareness of the EU and the EP. As in the first empirical chapter, I controlled for citizens' identification as Europeans. In this case, European identity (f) is constructed by opposing those who feel European or complement this identity with local/national identities and citizens with an exclusive sense of local/national identity. This operationalisation avoids identity confrontation and provides a more accurate image of citizens who identify as Europeans, since this supra-national identity frequently coexists with other identities (Díez Medrano 2003; Ruiz-Jiménez 2007; Fligstein 2008; Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez 2010).

There are three different control variables in the model measuring European attitudes (g): EU membership (i.e. EU-membership is good/bad), having a positive image of the EU and trust in the EU/EP. European identity and European attitudes behave similarly with regard to European political behaviour. Individuals who feel more European are more likely to vote in the European elections (Studlar *et al.* 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2004; Risse 2010; Curtice 2016) and positive attitudes towards the EU promote European political engagement (Matilla 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2004; Stockemer 2011). As it has been previously mentioned, Europeans who believe in benefitting from the EU (Gabel 1998; McLaren 2006) are more prone to support it. At the same time, the *diffuse support* (Easton 1965) received by identity sustains the legitimacy of political systems (Easton 1965; Risse 2010), in this case of the EU.

If high levels of education promote political engagement, Europeans who are more aware of EU institutions –either through political contestation (Follesdal and Hix 2006) or their own experience– should present more abilities to relate to the EU (Inglehart 1970) and be more engaged in the EP elections (Schmitt *et al.* 2015; Hogh and Larsen 2016). Thus, I use a proxy control variable of European cognition (f) measuring whether citizens "know about the functioning of EU institutions" (EB 77.4) or "have ever heard of the European Parliament" (EB 71.3). The last micro variable controls for Europeans who place themselves at the far-right (h) end of the political scale. With the increase of Eurosceptic political parties in the EP elections, Europeans with far-right political views will show their support for these political groups (Vasilopoulou 2016; Curtice 2016). However, since holding far-right views implies an enhancement of the nation-state and rejection of the European identity (Fligstein 2009), some authors have expressed that Eurosceptic citizens against EU membership present less motivations to participate in the EP elections (van Klingeren *et al.* 2013).

The group of micro variables is complemented by a second cluster of *macro* variables. This cluster includes most of the structural variables influencing domestic vote: (i) compulsory vote, (j) elections' day (i.e. during the week or at the weekend), (k) whether the EP election takes place coinciding with any other national elections, (l) residence size, (m) control for EU-15 and (n) vote/seat disproportionality (i.e. Gallagher Index). Europeans from EU member-states with a (i) compulsory voting system –either based on fines due to absence or on participatory incentives– are more politically engaged than those where voting is not as highly regulated (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Blondel *et al.* 1998: 36; Mattila 2003; Stockemer 2011). Therefore, I have created a dummy variable controlling for the EU member-states where voting is mandatory (i.e. Belgium, Cyprus, Greece and Luxembourg). Whether (j) elections take place during the week or at the weekend influences levels of turnout. According to Blondel *et al.* 1998: 48, casting your vote during the weekend has a negative effect in levels of turnout. This is based on the idea that citizens may forget or prefer to get engaged in other activities during the weekend rather than in voting. If (k) national and EP elections happen simultaneously or close to each other, there is a higher chance of Europeans casting their vote in the European elections (Blondel *et al.* 1998; Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Rose 2004; Stockemer 2011;). The size of the community (l) where Europeans reside also affects participation. According to Verba and Nie (1972), smaller communities possess a stronger sense of unity which promotes political participation due to exposure and/or engagement in conversations during the electoral campaign. Such sense of community and neighbourhood tends to disappear in bigger urban areas. Therefore, residence in smaller populations will produce more politically active individuals. Finally, the last two types of macro variables control for (m) EU-15 member-states and (n) vote/seat disproportionality in the EP elections (Farrell and Scully 2007; Gallagher and Mitchell 2008).

6.3.3. Profile of the sample

Socio-demographic features have been shown to strongly determine citizens' voting behaviour (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.* 1995; Banducci 2016). For this reason, this section gathers descriptive information of the sample. More specifically, it comprises a number of socio-demographic characteristics (age and levels of education) of transnational and non-transnational respondents, as well as t-tests of independence displaying the relationship between transnationalism and a series of variables measuring European identity

and European attitudes (e.g. pro-EU membership).[77] This descriptive information provides a more accurate image of the socio-demographic background of the sample whilst strengthening the results of the logistic regressions.

The total of transnational respondents ranges from 400 to approximately 700. To be more precise, in 2009 transnational respondents reach 582, and in 2012 there are 696 transnational EU citizens. As it occurs with European society, and as it is expected, the presence of non-transnational respondents in the datasets is higher: 14878 in 2009 and 13893 in 2012.

Age and the levels of education are the socio-demographic variables detailed in this section.[78] Overall, transnational respondents are younger than non-transnational respondents (see Figure 6.2). While non-transnational respondents' third quartile surpasses the age of 60, in 2012 and 2009, this same quartile remains below 50 among transnational respondents. In fact, the median –represented by a white line– of non-transnational Europeans remains higher than transnational citizens. More specifically, in 2012 the average age of non-transnational respondents was 51, whereas transnationals' average age was 44; in 2009 on average non-transnational respondents were 50, while transnational respondents were 8 years younger (42).

Figure 6.2. Boxplot of Age by Transnationalism (2012 and 2009)
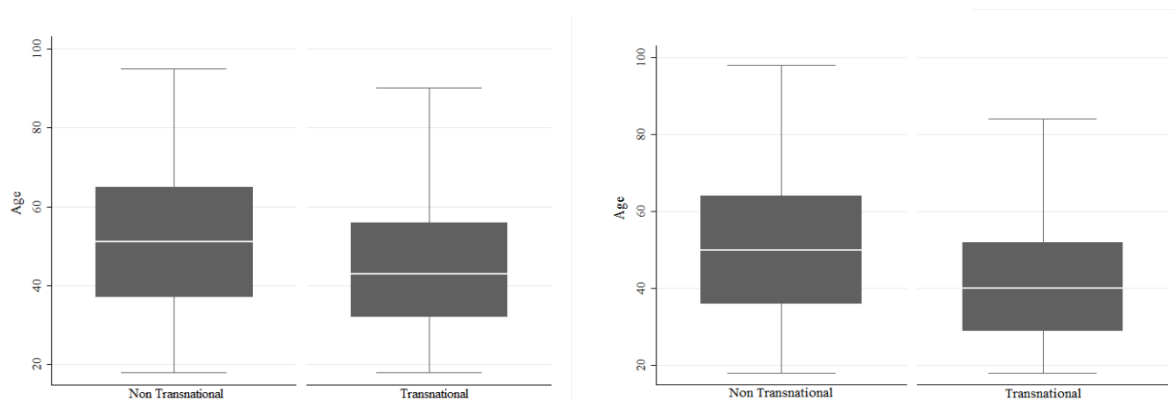
Source: Eurobarometer 71.3 (2009) and 77.4 (2012).

Figure 6.3 displays information on educational differences between transnational and non-transnational respondents. Looking at the levels of education of the lower and higher end, two

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[77] Further detailed descriptive information for all the variables included in the logistic regression model can be found in the appendices A.15 and A.16.

[78] More details about the different levels of occupation of transnational and non-transnational Europeans can be found in the appendix A.17.

main disparities can be appreciated. First, transnational Europeans present higher levels of education than non-transnational respondents. For 2009 and 2012, the percentage of transnational EU citizens who studied for more than 20 years is superior to the percentage of non-transnational Europeans. Moreover, the total of highly educated transnational respondents increased from 2009 to 2012. Secondly, the number of respondents who ended their education at 15 for 2009 and 2012 is more abundant in non-transnationals.

Figure 6.3. Educational levels of the sample (in percentages).
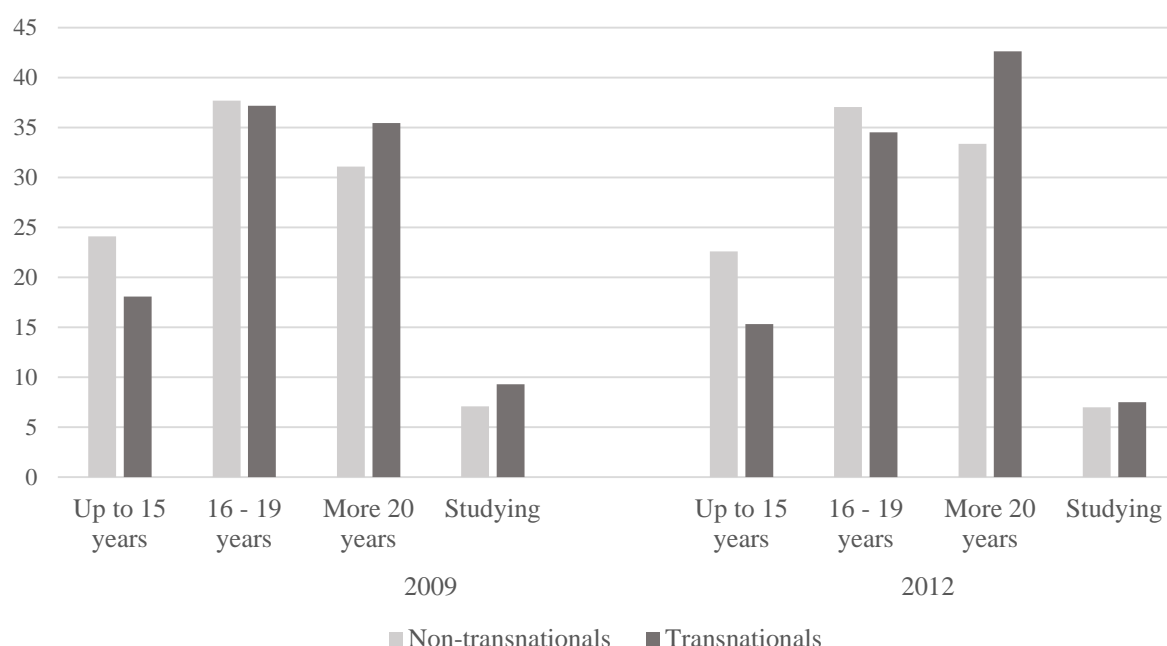
Source: Eurobarometer 71.3 (2009) and 77.4 (2012).

Based on the descriptive results of age, where transnationals tend to be younger than non-transnationals, it could be expected that transnational Europeans are less prone to vote (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.* 1995). At the same time, from an educational perspective, the sample of transnationals reached higher educational levels than non-transnationals. Given that higher levels of education tend to positively correlate with higher levels of participation, from an educational perspective transnational Europeans are expected to participate more during elections (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.* 1995). These results provide preliminary information on voting in relation to the age and levels of education of the sample. Next, I explore the relationship between transnational and a number of European identity and European attitudes variables proven to shape EP turnout.

European identity and participation in the EP elections (Studlar *et al.* 2003; Flickinger and Studlard 2004) are positively correlated, and other micro variables (e.g. support for EU membership or positive EU image) behave similarly. In other words, citizens with positive attitudes towards the EU (Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Stockemer 2011) and more EU knowledge (Hogh and Larsen 2016) vote more in the EP elections.

Table 6.2 displays the results of the tests of independence between transnationalism and European identity, and four types of European attitudes: European cognition, support for EU membership, positive image of the EU and trust in the EP. All these micro variables have been included in the logistic regression models. Although this type of test does not provide information about the strength of the relationship between transnationalism and these variables, it stresses that there are statistically significant differences between transnational and non-transnational respondents. These differences appear in European identity, in European cognition, support to EU membership, having a positive image of the EU and trust in the EP.

Table 6.2. Chi-square test of independence of between transnationalism and micro variables.

	2009	2012
	$\chi^2(1)$	$\chi^2(1)$
European identity	46.701***	170.841***
European cognition*	2.251	11.696**
Pro-EU membership	28.035***	48.848***
Positive image of the EU	27.535***	34.021***
EP trust	24.067***	N/A

Source: Eurobarometer 71.3 (2009), 77.4 (2012).

*Note: European cognition in 2009 was measured as "have you heard of the EP?", while in 2012 it was measured as "do you know about the functioning of EU institutions?"

The chi square test is ideal for categorical variables. Given the high levels of significance (with p values< 0.001), it can be stated that there is a transnational gap in European identity and European attitudes. In other words, the relationship between transnationalism on one hand, and European identity and European attitudes on the other, is not independent. Moreover, further analyses reveal that the direction of this relationship is positive. In this case, transnational Europeans had a higher probability of saying they have a European identity, higher levels of European cognition, more support for the EU, positive image of the EU and trust in the EP.

6.4. Results

According to the results of the logistic regression, transnational Europeans are less likely to participate in the EP elections than non-transnational EU citizens (see Table 6.3). This negative effect is highly significant (with p values < 0.001), 2009 and 2012. More specifically, according to the average marginal effect, in the 2012 dataset transnationalism decreased the likelihood of voting in the 2009 EP elections by 31.7%, while this likelihood decreased by 26.4% in 2009. These results provide empirical evidence supporting my hypothesis ($H_{6.1}$), and indicate that transnationalism is embedded with particular conditionings that deter political participation in the EP elections (Kochenov 2009; Muxel 2009; Shaw 2010; Collard 2013).

Table 6.3. European elections turnout in the EU-15 (2009).

	2009		2012	
	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.
Transnationalism	-1.142***	(.144)	-1.45***	(.107)
Socio-demographic				
Male	-.030	(.055)	-.050	(.059)
Age	.022***	(.002)	.031***	(.002)
Education (ref. +20 years)				
Up to 15 years	-.712***	(.067)	-.289**	(.090)
16 – 19 years	-.404***	(.054)	-.197**	(.072)
Still Studying	-.104	(.138)	-.981***	(.157)
Occupation (ref. retired)				
Self-employed	.186	(.114)	.290**	(.104)
Managers	.341*	(.119)	.315*	(.126)
White Collars	.228	(.103)	.128	(.118)
Manual Workers	-.065	(.103)	.084	(.109)
Unemployed	-.205	(.129)	.031	(.136)
Micro Variables				
European Identity	.325**	(.061)	.276***	(.054)
European Attitudes				
EU membership	.598***	(.057)	.509***	(.060)
European Cognition	.381**	(.138)	.780***	(.072)
EU image	.018	(.105)	.399***	(.083)
EP trust	.384***	(.081)	N/A	N/A
Far right	.815***	(.127)	.009	(.129)
Macro Variables				
Compulsory Vote	.571***	(.103)	1.436***	(.113)
National and EP elections	.086	(.063)	-.381***	(.067)
Election Day (week)	.313**	(.059)	-.019	(.077)
Gallagher Index	.024	(.013)	.075***	(.014)
Residence Size (ref. rural area)				
Small/Middle Town	-.165*	(.052)	-.281***	(.057)
Large Town	-.125*	(.056)	-.345***	(.064)
Constant	-1.711***	(.261)	-1.701***	(.175)
Pseudo Adjusted R^2	0.130		0.238	
N / N transnational	14878 / 582		12976 / 696	

Note: Figures are coefficients of logit models, standard errors in parentheses and p*<0.05, p**<0.01 and p***<0.001.

Source: Eurobarometer 71.3 (2009) and 77.4 (2012)

According to the results, there are no significant differences between the voting behaviour of men and women. However, age presents a positive and highly significant effect on voting in the EP elections. Since this is a continuous variable, older generations are more likely to get

more engaged in the EP elections than younger generations. In the case of education, Europeans with the lowest educational level (up to 15 years) are less likely to cast their European vote. Citizens who ended their education at the age of 19 present similar results. It should be noted that the results for these two educational levels are calculated in comparison with highly educated respondents. The students' category is only statistically significant in 2012. Its negative coefficient indicates that students were less inclined to participate in these elections. Similar to past research, age and education continue to be two of the strongest explanatory variables of political behaviour (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.* 1995; Banducci 2016). The majority of the categories of the variable occupation lack significant p values. However, managers obtain p values below 0.05 in 2009 and 2012, and self-employed respondents present p values below 0.01 in 2012. According to these results, managers and self-employed Europeans may be more prone to participate in the EP elections than retired individuals.

In the case of the micro variables, it is observed that these characteristics shape voting in the EP elections positively. Thus, feeling European, believing that being part of the EU is beneficial, knowing about the EU, having a positive image of the EU and trusting the EP increase the probability of casting your ballot in the EP elections. On the other hand, extreme political views that tend to be associated with Euroscepticism such as far-right ideologies only present significant coefficients levels in 2009. For this year, respondents positioning themselves in the far-right end of the spectrum were more likely to participate in the EP elections. This result goes in line with previous research highlighting the support of far-right Europeans supporting to Eurosceptic political parties during European elections (Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016).

The results of the macro-control variables vary. As it is expected, compulsory vote has a positive impact on European voting behaviour. However, the variables measuring the celebration of European and national elections on the same day (only statistically significant in 2012) or whether election occurs during the week/weekend (statistically significant only in 2009) lack across time consistency. The Gallagher Index, measuring vote/seat disproportionality presents a similar pattern. In 2009 the index lacks statistical significance, while in 2012 this index is highly statistically significant. A possible explanation for these disparities may lie in the fact that both datasets refer to the 2009 EP elections. Due to time differences, respondents may have more accurately remembered their voting behaviour in

2009 than in 2012. Lastly, compared to living in a rural area, residing in a middle or large size area has a negative effect on levels of participation in the EP elections.

In order to measure the goodness of fit of these models, I have included the adjusted count R^2. This pseudo-R indicates "the proportion of correct guesses beyond the number that would be correctly guessed by choosing the largest marginal" (Long and Freese 2014: 128). In this particular case, the adjusted r square has been calculated comparing the logistic regressions with and without the variable transnationalism. According to the adjusted R^2, the model that offers the highest proportion of correct guesses, is the model in 2012, with an improvement of the fit of 23.8%. This is followed by the model in 2009 with a count R^2 of 13%.

In sum, the 2009 and 2012 logistic regression models confirm the hypothesis tested in this chapter: transnationalism hinders voters' participation in the EP elections. Furthermore, according to the socio-demographic variables younger and lower educated EU citizens are less prone to get involved in these elections. At the same time, European identification and positive European attitudes present highly statistically significant coefficients. In other words, these micro variables potentially increase EP turnout. Finally, there is a positive relationship between EU member-states with an obligatory voting system and levels of EP elections' participation –an expected result.

6.4.1. Reasons behind non-voting

Although the logistic regressions confirm that transnational Europeans are less prone to participate in the EP elections than non-transnational Europeans, little is known about the reasons behind vote abstention. Ideally, every dataset would provide a closer look at the non-participation voting behaviour in the EP elections between transnational and non-transnational EU citizens. This type of information would confirm whether vote abstention depends more on circumstantial or on deliberate factors (Blondel *et al.* 1998). Due to the limitations of the EB, only one of the dataset (EB 71.3, 2009) captures information about vote abstention. For instance, respondents were allowed to choose three options from a total of 15 reasons not to vote (question QK4b). Figure 4 displays the answers to the question QK4b: "What are the main reasons why you did not vote in the recent European Parliament elections?"

The information in Figure 6.4 displays the non-voting answers of transnational (purple colour), and non-transnational respondents (blue colour). As we can see, the three least

popular reasons among transnational respondents not to cast their European ballot are: family commitments, EU opposition and lack of public debate during the EP elections campaign. At the other end of the spectrum, Figure 6.4 reveals that the three most frequent reasons behind vote abstention among transnational Europeans are: the lack of interest in politics with a 17.5% (vs. 14.7% for non-transnationals), registration and voting card struggles with a 14.7% (vs. 3.3% among non-transnationals), and asserting that they barely or never vote with a 13.7% (vs. 8.9%).

Figure 6.4. Reasons for vote abstention in the 2009 EP elections of the EU-15 (in percentage).
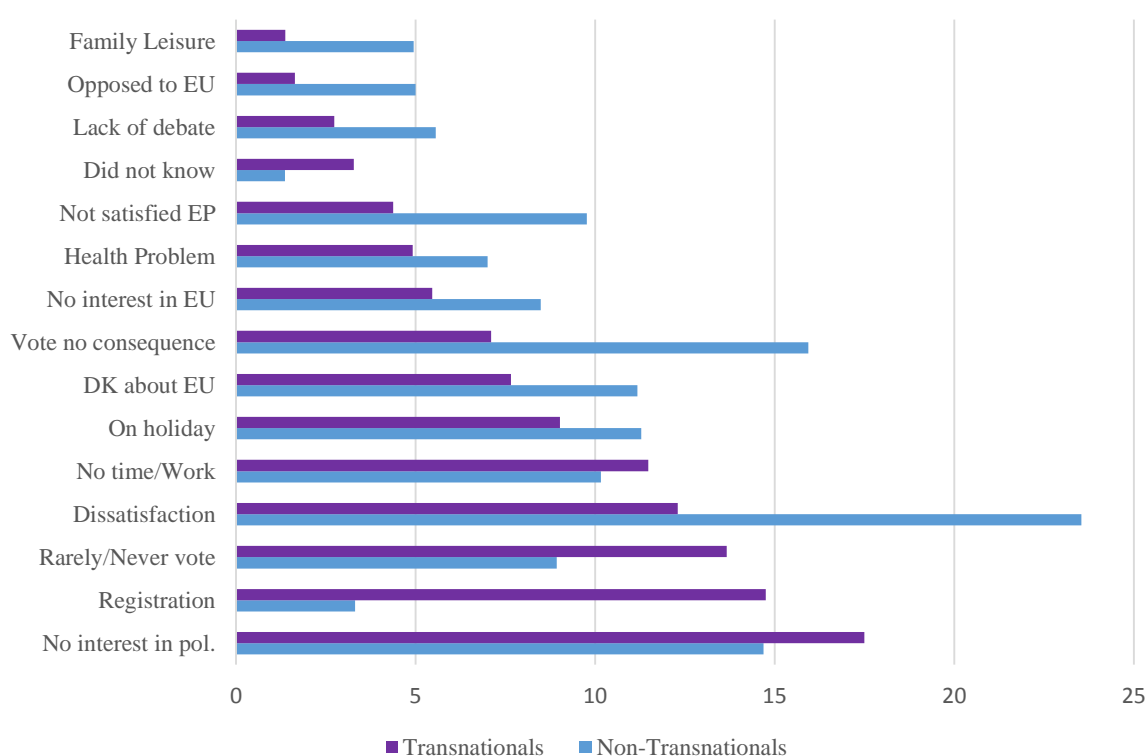
Several reflections derive from these results. First, a lack of political curiosity should not be confused with a lack of interest in the EU. For instance, non-transnational Europeans are less interested in the EU (8.5%), as opposed to transnational Europeans (5.5%). Furthermore, the chi-square test of independence shows no statistical differences between transnational and non-transnational Europeans answering "no interest in politics." Thus, this type of answer is not dependent on transnationalism.

Second, vote abstention due to registration and voting card struggles presents the most acute difference (with a 11.4 percentage points difference) between transnational and non-transnational EU citizens –followed by "disaffection" with a 11.24 percentage points

difference. It should be noted that the t-test of independence between transnationalism and registration hurdles presents highly statistical p values (<0.001). These results suggest that transnationalism and "registration problems" are not independent of each other. Such difficulties could be linked to the impact that not being integrated in the community has on political behaviour (Verba and Nie 1972) or registrations differences in the host society (Erikson 1981; Verba *et al.* 1995; Blondel *et al.* 1998; Ansolabehere and Konisky 2006; Brown and Wedeking 2006; Burden and Neiheisel 2011). In spite of the detrimental impact of registration on political behaviour among transnational Europeans, the EB does not gather information on whether these bureaucratic hurdles rely on host member-state's institutions or the country of origin's institutions. This is an essential piece of information in the comprehension of political behaviour among transnationals, since they are entitled to cast their vote for a European MP from their country of origin or the EU member-state where they reside. Considering that the lack of registration has a negative impact on the participation in any election (Brown *et al.* 1999; Ansolabehere and Konisky 2006; Brown and Wedeking 2006; Burden and Neiheisel 2011), it is expected that these difficulties will also deter EP elections' vote among transnational Europeans.

Finally, the third most frequent reason for vote abstention among transnationals was that they "rarely or never vote" in EP elections (13.7%). Given that there are no statistically significant differences between transnational and non-transnational respondents, this result seems to connect more with the *less at stake* (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005) argument than with the difficulties attached to transnationalism.

6.5. Conclusions

This chapter analyses the impact of transnationalism on the EP elections through quantitative techniques and at a macro level (for the EU-15). Given the results, three main conclusions can be stressed. First, transnationalism has a negative impact on Europeans' voting behaviour. The results of the logistic regressions applied to the different EB datasets support the main hypothesis ($H_{6.1}$) of this chapter. For instance, according to the average marginal effect in 2012 transnationalism decreased the voting chances in the 2009 EP elections to approximately 32%, as compared to 2009, with a percentage of 26.4%. In order to complement these results, for the year 2009 (EB 71.3), this chapter provides substantial information on Europeans' reasons not to cast their vote in the EP elections. Although there were preliminary indications that transnationals' main conditionings not to vote were strongly

connected to their lack of interest in politics, a t-test of independence shows that this peculiarity is not linked to transnationalism (i.e. there are not significant differences with non-transnationals). However, a high number of transnational Europeans have not voted due to circumstantial factors (Blondel *et al.* 1998). In this case, registration and issues with the vote cards are two of the main circumstantial factors. In fewer quantities, other causes of abstention for transnational Europeans may be related to deliberate factors (Blondel *et al.* 1998) such as non-voting habits.

Second, these results pose a socio-political paradox. In line with previous research (Mattila 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Stockemer 2011;), the logistic regressions reveal that EU citizens who feel European and present positive European attitudes are more likely to get engaged in the EP elections than EU citizens who feel detached both emotionally and attitudinally. As it has been demonstrated in this chapter, transnational Europeans present higher levels of European identity, and more favourable European attitudes (e.g. positive image of the EU) than non-transnational Europeans. Yet, this "ideal" socio-attitudinal profile is not translated into higher levels of turnout in transnational citizens. On the contrary, transnational Europeans participate less in the EP elections than non-transnational EU citizens. All of this seems to indicate that the *less at stake* argument (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005) cannot explain transnationals' levels of participation in the EP elections. As it has been demonstrated in this chapter, this mobile population displays more interest in the EU and the EP, yet EU member-states' bureaucratic and institutional constraints are potentially deterring their political expression.

Third, a comparison of the levels of participation between transnational and non-transnational Europeans indicates that turnout in the EP elections is unevenly distributed across the EU population. In this particular case, transnational Europeans vote proportionally less than non-transnational Europeans. As a result, low levels of EP turnout among transnationals potentially reflect electoral inequality of the system –an idea that has been recently shared by other academics (see Banducci 2016). Furthermore, the reality of transnational Europeans casts doubt on the concept of EU citizenship. Even when European citizenship aimed at promoting civic inclusion, which was then expected to foster a sense of European community (Day and Saw 2002), the electoral hurdles that transnationals encounter impede a full enactment of their European citizenship. European citizenship is partially fulfilled. In spite of the positive impact of freedom of movement and settlement in another EU member-state – derived through EU citizenship– on European identity and European attitudes,

transnationalism is potentially deterring turnout in the EP elections. Considering that "where a few take part in decisions there is little democracy" (Verba and Nie 1972: 1), understanding differences in EP election turnout in a democratic EU between transnational and non-transnational Europeans necessitates further deliberation. This is particularly the case for transnational Europeans who cannot vote due to difficulties connected with electoral registration and vote card issues. Unfortunately, the EB is unable to provide further information on this regard, or if these issues exclusively rely on individuals or on EU member-states disparities.

In the light of these limitations, the next chapter complements the results of this chapter with a qualitative case-study. Chapter 7 tackles voting behaviour of young transnational and non-transnational Spaniards. More specifically, it engages with the meanings that voting has to respondents, their participation in national and EP elections and the reasons and factors that influenced the act of voting for this sample.

CHAPTER 7. EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN CONTEXT: A CASE-STUDY OF TRANSNATIONAL AND NON-TRANSNATIONAL SPANIARDS.

7.1. Introduction

Since 2010, several EU member-states have witnessed a number of events stressing the connection between identity and political behaviour. For instance, in September 2014, Scottish people voted on independence. With a turnout of 84.6%, and opposing results of 55% vs. 45%, Scotland did not become an independent country (BBC 2014). Along the same line, and a couple of months later, Catalonians participated in a non-binding referendum for their independence. Although the implications of these referenda were different –mostly because the Spanish Constitution does not contemplate that regional governments can call referenda about independence without the consent of the central government, which was the case–both political acts were strongly motivated by a combination of identity, culture, history, and economy. A more recent example is provided by the European referendum held in Britain in June 2016. The leave campaign sent a message emphasizing the distinction between "us" and "the others." Looking more closely at the results between national identity and the demographics of the vote of this European referendum, 79% of voters who identified as English but not British voted to leave (with 21% who voted to remain), while a 60% of voters who considered themselves to be British but not English voted to remain in the EU (with a 40% who voted to leave) (Lord Ashcroft 2016). As we can see, exclusive and inclusive types of national and local identification are related with political behaviour, and with feelings and attitudes towards the EU. This type of political expressions epitomizes the strong relationship between identity and political behaviour.

While two of the three examples set above stress an exclusionary usage of identity (i.e. obtaining political independence), identity may consolidate political unity. In this sense, identification with a political apparatus sustains the legitimacy of a system through *diffuse support* (Easton 1965). According to Easton (1965) the continuity of every political system necessitates a minimum reservoir of this support. If we interpret voting as another expression of system support, understanding the role of identity for the EP elections becomes essential. In fact, citizens who feel more European are more likely to participate in the European elections, an idea that has been supported by past research (Mattila 2003; Flickinger and

Studdlar 2007; Stockemer 2011; Curtice 2016), and to which the findings of the previous quantitative chapter could be added. As part of the mixed-methodology used in this thesis, this chapter complements chapter 6, exploring the impact of transnationalism on EP elections in context. More specifically, I provide in-depth qualitative data on the voting behaviour of young transnational and non-transnational Spaniards.

This chapter has the following structure. First, I introduce the most relevant literature on European citizenship and transnationalism. Second, I describe the data and methods employed in the analysis. This section will be followed by a discussion of the data based on interviews with 58 transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards. More specifically, the results section expands three different areas: the definitions and meanings of voting, participation in national and EP elections, and reasons behind vote abstention. Finally, I conclude offering a summary of the main findings and implications of the chapter.

7.2. European citizenship

Considered a milestone in EU citizenship (Bellamy *et al.* 2006) the Treaty of Maastricht (1993) established major advancements in Europeans' rights. Prior to this treaty, in 1991 an intergovernmental conference discussing European citizenship acknowledged that the expansion of European citizenship should diminish socio-political differences between non-transnational and transnational Europeans.[79] Although mobility among Europeans was originally facilitated through the labour market, it was not until this Treaty that Europeans acquired complete freedom of movement, welfare benefits and certain political rights (e.g. right to an ombudsman) while residing in another EU member-state. Since then, the European Commission have held the belief that this change in citizenship would positively impact the "we-feeling" among EU citizens. For instance, in 2000 the EC stated: "the political rights conferred on Union citizens residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals are an important factor in fostering a sense of belonging to the European Union and a key element in successful integration in the Member State of residence" (COM(2000)843 final 2000: 3).

The relationship between identity and citizenship has been studied in different disciplines. From a sociological point of view, Chandra and Wilkinson (2008) distinguish between nominal ethnic identities and activated ethnic identity. According to Chandra and Wilkinson

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[79] "Any genuine Union will have to endeavour to overcome the inequalities which still exist today between Community citizens because they reside in different regions of the Community, and take specific steps to encourage greater economic and social cohesion in this particular respect" (Spanish Delegation. Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union 1991: 329).

"nominal ethnic identities are those for which we possess the attributes of membership while activated ethnic identities are that subset of our nominal categories in which we profess membership or are assigned membership by others" (2008: 517). From a political science perspective, citizenship provides a number of rights and responsibilities through a legal status (Lehning 2001), and its definition generates inclusion and exclusion among different societal groups (Pfister 2011). In spite of these specificities, these disciplines converge towards the idea that citizenship is performative (Lehning 2001; Chandkra and Wilkinson 2008; Pfister 2011; Isin 2012). As Isin puts it, "enacting citizenship places emphasis on the transformation of practices that lead to the emergence of creative, inventive and autonomous acts of becoming political subjects" (2012: 109). Transnational Europeans are unavoidably active users of the European citizenship. This is at least the case for their right of freedom of movement. Yet, little is known about the consequences of transnationalism on political behaviour (Kuhn 2015).

7.3. European voting behaviour and transnationalism

In 2013, the last report from the European Commission on European citizenship began with the following sentence: "Citizens are and must be at the heart of European integration" (European Commission 2013). Yet, even when European citizenship was expected to promote political integration and strengthen community feelings, more than twenty years after the Treaty of Maastricht (1993), the development of this concept remains in its infancy (Day and Shaw 2002). Considering that the amount of south to north intra-EU migration has significantly increased since the financial crash in 2008 (LaFleur and Stanek 2017), assessing the consequences of transnationalism on European political behaviour exposes the reality of approximately 3% of the total of the EU population. Moreover, exploring the impact of transnationalism on political behaviour provides unique information about the reach that European citizenship has had on social and civic European integration, two major expectations set by the EU.

As previously mentioned, EP elections are considered second-order elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980). Thus, levels of turnout are expected to be lower than in national elections. But which factors beyond those intrinsically attached to the EP elections may hinder the transnational vote? Registration is one of the main obstacles preventing mobile citizens from exercising their right to vote (Erikson 1981; Verba *et al.* 1995; Blondel *et al.* 1998; Ansolabehere and Konisky 2006; Brown and Wedeking 2006; Burden and Neiheisel 2011;

Braconnier *et al.* 2017). The access to electoral rights for transnational Spaniards partially depends on the electoral structures of the host country. Compared to non-transnational Europeans, transnational citizens' electoral registration is not an automatic procedure. At present, only 9 EU member-states out of 25 have an electoral system that automatically registers transnational Europeans once they have settled in the host society (Arrighi *et al.* 2013: 30-33). Therefore, in most cases transnational Europeans require to actively register, which assumes that this population possesses a minimum sense of familiarity with the electoral structures of the host country.

Furthermore, in the case of transnational Europeans, the procedures of vote registration are based on the specific legislation in each EU member-state. Although transnational Europeans are entitled to vote in municipal and European elections while residing in another EU member-state, Article 19 EC does not offer a vote guarantee, even though this article stands against discriminatory rights (Kochenov 2009). On top of the fact that responsibilities for voter registration procedures lie with every member-states, the present lack of regulation generates high levels of disparities in the procedures and political behaviour between transnational and non-transnational Europeans (Kochenov 2009; Shaw 2010; Collard 2013).[80] In spite of difficulties with registration, research reveals cases of successful transnational Europeans who have got politically involved and become political candidates in a different EU member-state. In the Mediterranean city of Alicante (Spain), for example, transnational Europeans have been elected with the backing of other EU transnationals residing in Spain (Janoschka 2010). At the same time, the variation of EU member-state's electoral systems potentially perpetuates low levels of turnout among transnational EU-citizens (Collard 2013).[81]

Another hurdle that may hinder transnationals' likelihood of voting is information. Transnational Europeans must be familiarised –at least to a certain extent– with the electoral regulations and registration of the new country of residence. However, past research stresses how this is not necessarily the case (Shaw 2010; Collard 2013). This lack of knowledge is ingrained in many different areas. For instance, a high number of transnational Europeans are not aware of their right to vote locally and in the EP elections (European Commission 2013)

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[80] For instance, Collard (2013) has exposed the disparities on vote registration between two EU member-states. According to this author, the UK has a restrictive approach to vote registration while France presents more flexible requirements. While in France registration is voluntary, in the UK failing to register with the city council may have negative consequences on individuals' lives (e.g. denial of a bank mortgage).

[81] There are a few exceptions to this. For instance, Muxel (2009) obtains higher levels of participation among mobile than non-mobile Europeans.

nor of the fact that they can vote for a national MP or an MP from their host EU member-state.[82] Furthermore, the absence of contestation of EP elections, and the dominance of debates over national issues (Follesdal and Hix 2006) also explain low levels of participation in the EP elections. If the lack of contestation at the European level in the EP elections is considered to reinforce the nature of second-order elections, because there is "less at stake" (Reif and Schmitt 1980), the levels of engagement in the EP elections may decrease among transnational Europeans who wish to vote in the EU member-state where they reside. Political cognition and participation among transnationals will be constrained by the understanding and interest of the political debates taking place at the host country. In order to get involved with this type of political discussions, transnational Europeans may require either fluent skills of the official language(s) of the country of residence or to acquire this information from external sources available in their language (e.g. Euronews). At the same time, transnational Europeans who would like to support a political party from the host EU member-state must follow the procedures of the country of residence in the same conditions as non-transnational Europeans,[83] and would therefore need to be familiar with the electoral procedures of the arrival country.

Finally, two more aspects that may shape political behaviour of transnational citizens are living in the same residence for short periods (Verba and Nie 1972) and the lack of community ties (Verba *et al.* 1995). When it comes to transnationalism, these two aspects are strongly connected. Compared to non-transnational Europeans, transnational EU citizens have to adapt to a new environment and, unless their reasons to move to an EU member-state have been based on social ties (i.e. having relatives or friends in the host country), they will have to establish new social circles. Apart from fulfilling social integration, the conversations that arise in these social networks increase political awareness and civic integration (Verba *et al.* 1995). Due to the lack of comparative data or research in the political behaviour of transnational Europeans, it is difficult to comprehend the explanations, obstacles, consequences and motivations of the vote (or its abstention) among transnational Europeans. Unfortunately, there is no consistent comparative data that can be used to understand the

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[82] Voting in the European elections can be either directed to a political party from transnationals' country of origin or from the new EU member-state where they reside. Europeans who live abroad but want to participate in the EP elections of their nation have two options. First, this vote can be cast through the embassy; which requires being registered at the embassy and knowledge of the dates for claiming registration and voting cards. Alternatively, transnational Europeans can cast their vote returning to their homeland on the day of the elections.

[83] In either case, and in order to avoid irregularities, transnational Europeans are obliged to sign a document declaring that they will only vote in one EU member-state.

implications of transnationalism on the core electoral right of voting (Shaw 2010; Collard 2013). This chapter contributes to this debate providing in-depth and primary data of the case study of Spain.

7.4. Spain as a case-study of voting and transnationalism

In order to understand the relevance of Spain as a case-study, I will offer a brief socio-political review of this country. Compared to other EU member-states, democracy in Spain is relatively young. The current constitution was promulgated in 1978, after more than 35 years of a dictatorship which ended in 1975, with General Franco's death. As it is known, Franco's dictatorship consisted of a catholic and far-right nationalist regime. This type of regime suppressed essential manifestations of regional identity such as the use of local vernacular languages in Spain, which was banned and persecuted. As a result, the Spanish democratic transition and the creation of the Spanish Constitution –the *Magna Carta* that recognized the plurality of Spanish identities– opened the doors to their expression and defense. From 1979 to 1981, the Basque Country, Catalonia, Galicia and Andalusia became the first Autonomous Communities, giving birth to the *Estado de las Autonomías* (Autonomous Communities), which later led to the recognition of the other thirteen regions (Llera 2009). Thanks to this identity and political aperture Spaniards were able to openly express their feelings of attachment to more than one identity. In some cases, the coexistence of local and national identities can be found in opposition (Llera 2009), while in other instances these types of Spanish identities, on top of the European one, can be nested (Díez Medrano 2003; Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez 2010).

Lachen Chernyha and Steven Burg (2012) have studied the impact of Spanish identities on local and national Spanish elections. According to these authors, Spanish identity (local and national) is mostly rooted in cultural aspects or descendent attributes (Chandra and Wilkinson 2008). Thanks to the theoretical distinction between identity and political behaviour, the authors are able to study the impact of these variables beyond the typical measures based on social class and demographic predictors (Chernyha and Burg 2012). Through the quantitative analyses of two regional CIS ("Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas", Spanish research centre) datasets from 1998 and 2005, the authors obtain highly statistically significant results confirming that national and regional identities have positive impacts on voting in regional

and general elections.[84] Furthermore, they discover that Spaniards with a strong local identity and regional language skills, are more prone to vote for political parties that protect these languages. Their article highlights the influence that political parties may have in attracting potential voters through their political manifesto and debates, demonstrating the influence of identity and ideology in the understanding of voting behaviour. This strong link goes beyond the Spanish case, since European identity and positive attitudes towards the EU have been shown to increase turnout in the European elections (Van Kingleren *et al.* 2013; Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016).

According to the Eurobarometer, Europeans' tendency to trust the EP and the levels of European identity of the EU-15 along the 2000s (see figures7.1 and 7.2) have been altered since the 2008 financial crash. Overall, we observe an opposite behaviour between European identity and this type of European attitude. The number of EU-15 citizens who identify as Europeans on top of their national identities has increased, while the levels of tendency to trust the EP drops after 2008. Spain is not exception to this pattern (see figures 7.1 and 7.2). However, a few specificities to the Spanish case stand out. Compared to the EU-15 Spain presents higher levels of European identity. Moreover, the decline of Spaniards' tendency to trust the EP is significantly shaper than for the EU-15.

Figure 7.1. In the near future do you see yourself as...? (Spain, in percentages)

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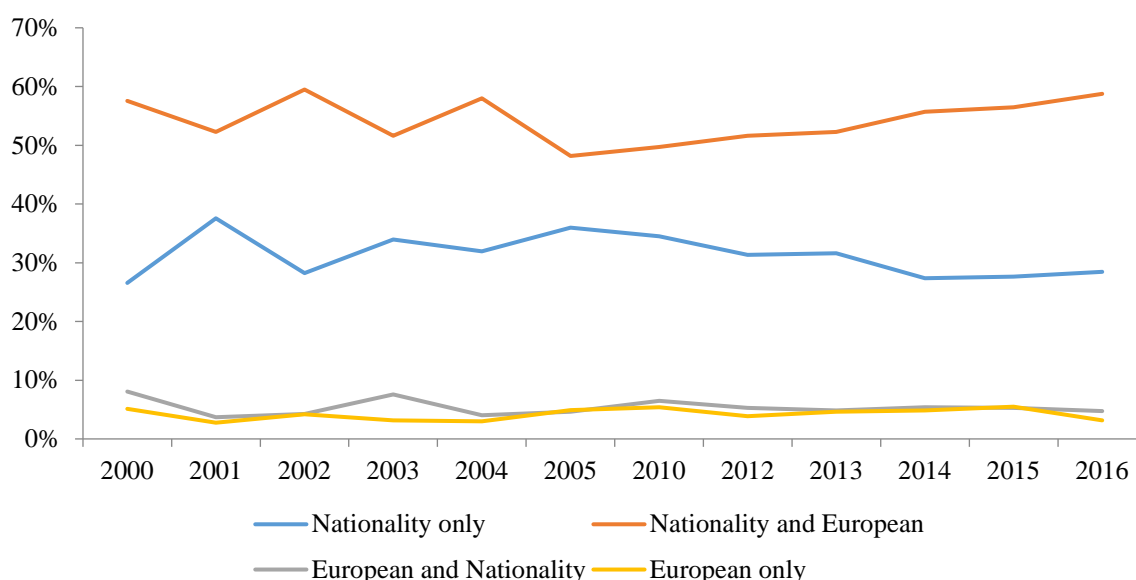
[84] This study only included four Spanish Autonomous Communities: Basque Country, Catalonia, Galicia and Valencia.

Figure 7.2.. Do you tend to trust or not to trust the EP? (Spain, in percentages).
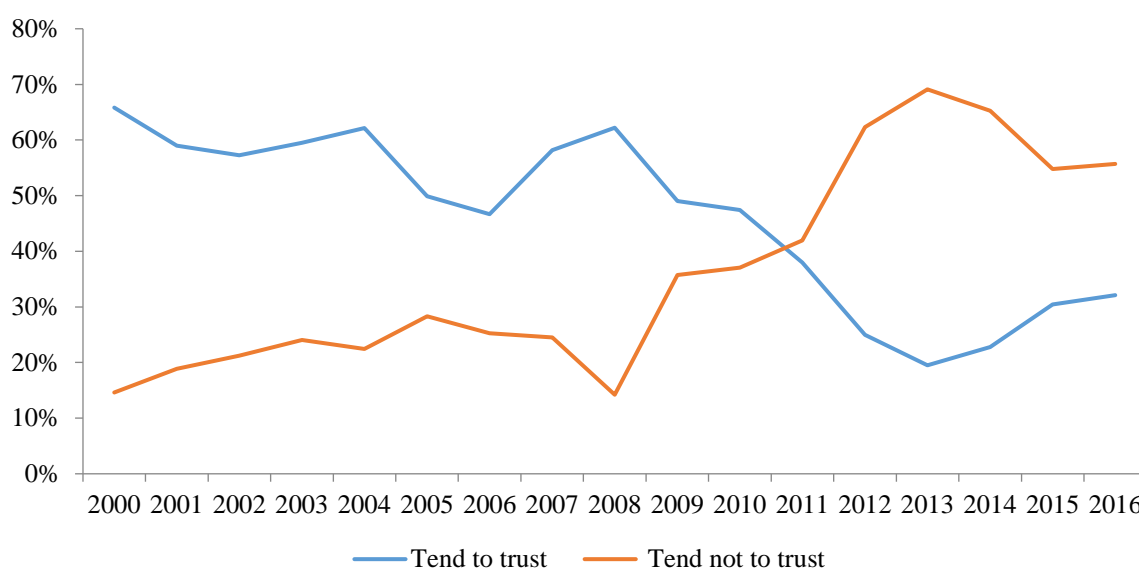
Source: Eurobarometer 2000-2016. Own elaboration.

These graphs reflect feelings of European identification and European attitudes for non-transnational Spaniards. As it has been previously mentioned, from an emotional and attitudinal perspective, it could be expected that transnational Spaniards vote more in the EP elections than non-transnational Spaniards. This assumption relies on previous studies establishing a strong link between European identity and European attitudes in voting behaviour. Chapter 6 has also provided evidence supporting this connection.

In spite of this expectation from transnational citizens, transnationalism seems to override the positive relation between identity and salient beliefs on the act of voting. The difficulties and irregularities that transnational Spaniards experience in casting their vote have been actively exposed by the organization Marea Granate.[85] One of the aims of this organization is to provide political and civic information to mobilise Spaniards living abroad during elections. According to the newspaper "El Diario", approximately 92% of transnational Spaniards could not participate in the Spanish general elections back in 2016 (Borraz 2016). Some of the main reasons behind vote abstention were: problems with the registration procedures, irregularities in voting by post (e.g. documents arrived after the elections), changes in legislation, lack of information and fear of being deprived of accessing the Spanish healthcare system (El Diario 2016). Lafleur and Stanek (2017) discuss the deliberate act of Mediterranean transnationals who avoid notifying their homeland of their status as "abroad citizens", based on the

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[85] See http://mareagranate.org/ for more information.

repercussions of being excluded from their national healthcare system. The association Marea Granate has also exposed the high levels of healthcare exclusion that transnational Spaniards face when they decide to settle in another country. The lack of participation among transnational Spaniards in the general elections of 2016 is not specific to these elections. For instance, in 2008, 31.8% of transnational Spaniards casted their vote, while this number dropped dramatically to 4.9% in 2011 (El País 2015). Furthermore, even when official Spanish institutions announced an increase in voter registration of 11% for the elections in 2015 among transnational Spaniards, only 4% of the votes reached the ballot box that year.[86] Although these results refer to general elections, the difficulties that transnational Spaniards face seem to indicate that for this population all elections become second-order elections.

7.5. Data

This chapter draws on 58 in-depth interviews with transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards. As has already been explained in the description of the methodology (chapter 3), I conducted 31 interviews with Spaniards residing in Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris and Rome, and 27 semi-structured interviews with non-transnational young Spaniards residing in the capital of Spain (Madrid). At the time of the interviews, transnational Spaniards had been living for at least six months in an EU member-state, while the non-transnational Spaniards had never resided in a different European country. Selecting a time limitation of six months is to a certain extent arbitrary. However, passing the three months mark of residence in a different EU member-state requires certain bureaucratic processes (e.g. health services or municipality registration). These processes could be associated with an intention of a long-term[87] settlement. Thus, it is assumed that transnational Europeans residing for a minimum of half a year present a minimum period of integration (e.g. socially, politically or professionally) in this new society. Although a number of respondent had resided in the host society for more than six months, this time constraint posed certain limitations upon the analysis of their voting behaviour. More specifically, in some instances the EP elections had not occurred while respondents were residing abroad –the last EP elections took place in May 2014 and the interviews were conducted from February to June 2015. Still, transnational respondents shared their voting experience both at the EP elections and for general elections, being the latter the most recurrent topic of the two.

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[86] In order to counteract administrative and structural struggles, on top of the lack of support from Spanish politicians, the association Marea Granate started an initiative coined "Rescata mi voto" ("Rescue my vote"). This initiative asked indecisive Spanish voters living in Spain to vote "in the name" of transnational Spaniards.
[87] Once more, "long-terms" is used loosely and refers to periods of at least 6 months up to 1 year.

Although controlling for all socio-cultural aspects of the sample is unattainable the sample presents a minimum of basic similarities: cultural background –both groups of the sample were born and brought up in Spain–, same age cohort –their age ranges from 18 to 30 years[88]– (i.e. the generation most severely affected by the EU crash), and the circumstances that all respondents reside in a European capital. In spite of the inherent differences among these capitals, these cities are strongly influenced by transnationalism. In fact, they all belong to the EU member-states with the highest numbers of intra-EU migrants (Eurostat 2013).

Making use of virtual social networks sites (SNSs), respondents were contacted through non-political and non-religious Facebook groups. SNSs are particularly useful for studying *hard to reach populations* (Brickman-Bhutta 2009; Baltar and Brunet 2012). Difficulties establishing contact with transnational Spaniards are partially based on European citizenship, since freedom of movement granted through it implies that registration with official institutions is not required.[89] Contrary to the south-north Spanish migration which took place under Franco's regime, high numbers of transnational Spaniards do not notify embassies and consulates of their status as nationals residing abroad. As a consequence, there is a lack of contact information of transnational Spaniards residing in the EU. Naturally, the absence of registration through official channels leads to a) an underestimation of the numbers of transnational Spaniards and b) hinders analysing the reality of this population (Navarrete-Moreno 2012; González-Ferrer 2013; LaFleur and Stanek 2017). In the past, transnational Spaniards who migrated during the 60s and 70s gathered in Spanish associations or "Spanish homes" (Sanz 2010), physical contexts where Spaniards could engage in social and cultural activities. Contrary to the last generation of transnational Spaniards, current transnational Spaniards do not group together through Spanish homes but establish new connections through virtual SNSs. For instance, Spaniards utilise Facebook groups to exchange information, organise meetings or sell/buy personal items. Further information of the data collection can be found in the methodology chapter (chapter 3).

7.5.1. Analysis

The information from 58 respondents was gathered through semi-structured interviews. In semi-structured interviews, researchers tend to follow guiding topics.[90] Thanks to these

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[88] This age is accurate for 2015, year when the interviews were conducted.

[89] Not only this is not required, but many transnational Europeans avoid embassy registration because they fear that they will lose certain nation-based welfare rights (LaFleur and Stanek 2017).

[90] A full description of the topics can be found in the appendix .A.4.

topics, interviewer and interviewee engage in a guided conversation (Lofland and Lofland 1995; Mason 2002). One of the advantages of semi-structured interviews resides in the flexibility offered to researchers to omit certain topics for the sake of exploring further conversational cues (Denzin and Lincoln 2008). For this reason, interviews are sometimes perceived as half way between formal and informal conversations (Fontana and Frey 2008).

The interviews were conducted in Spanish and had an average length of 20 to 25 minutes. Once all the interviews were transcribed, I utilised NVivo 10 to carry out an in-depth analysis consisting of two main phases. In the first stage I applied a "line-by-line coding" which required annotating ideas for every sentence or line of thoughts mentioned by respondents. Secondly, by turning these ideas into active words (i.e. using "ing" words), I turned the information into *process coding* (Charmaz 2006; Saldana 2011). Finally, I was able to cluster similar codes among respondents using NVivo 10. Further information about the analysis of the interviews can be found in the methodology (chapter 3) and European identity chapters (chapter 5).

These interviews aim at exploring the impact of transnationalism on European political behaviour among young Spaniards. From a qualitative point of view, assessing the impact of transnationalism on these political practices entails –to a certain extent– an approximation to respondents' reality. In this case, 'reality' refers to comprehending individuals' construction of the world they live in and perceive as part of their identity. This reality is normally taken for granted. Yet, it shapes subjects' behaviour (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Luckmann 1983). For this reason, an in-depth analysis highlighting the impact of *context* strengthens the understanding of this case-study.

The results section is divided into two main areas. The first section offers a portrayal of what voting means to respondents. Considering that respondents were socialised in the same country, this section elucidates that transnational and non-transnational respondents share a common definition of voting rooted in cultural, historical, institutional, and family values. The second section tackles the reasons that prevented respondents from voting and their relation with transnationalism.

7.6. Contextualising the act of voting

Understanding respondents' participation (or its absence) in the EP elections, necessitates the contextualisation of how the sample portrays the act of voting. Considering that "context-

dependent knowledge and expertise lie at the center of the case-study as a research and teaching method" (Flyvbjerg 2006: 222), tackling voting behaviour would not be feasible without an in-depth understanding of respondents' context (i.e. perceptions, definitions and origins of voting). In other words, this requires an exploration of the construction of their social reality and knowledge of this participatory act. Overall, respondents tend to interiorise and normalise their reasons to vote or not to vote in any given election. But in order to analyse this civic act, social scientists must deliberately disclose individuals' reality and disentangle their assumptions (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Luckmann 1983) about voting since these determine voting behaviour.

For the purpose of the explorative nature of the interviews, respondents were queried about their understanding of voting in general. Normally, this question was preceded by whether respondents had voted in local, regional, general or European elections. This type of broad formulation avoided seeding concepts or insinuating concrete levels of elections, thus providing a more neutral and spontaneous environment for respondents. As a consequence of this broad formulation, respondents referred to national or to European elections indistinctively. At times, vote is related to specific Spanish historical events (e.g. dictatorship) and domestic elections, indicating that respondents' may be more compelled to vote domestically than in the EP elections. However, other respondents express a sense of civic duty towards voting that could be extrapolated to the European elections.

Considering that the sample has been socialised in Spain (i.e. respondents share a historical, cultural and political past), it is not expected to find major differences in the definitions of voting between transnational and non-transnational Spaniards. In other words, although the reasons behind voting may vary from one subject to another, the common socialisation background has potentially formed similar definitions of their voting narratives. Throughout this first section it will become clear that there are three meanings attached to the act of voting: voting as a historical achievement, voting as a civic duty and voting as a tool for political change. It should be noted that this first section is structured around the common definitions expressed by the sample, whereas the second section of the results ("vote abstention") tackles the differences of voting behaviour between transnational and non-transnational respondents.

7.6.1. Voting: a historical achievement

Compared to other EU member-states, the right to vote in Spain is relatively recent. The earliest signs granting this type of political participation can be found in the *La Pepa,* the first Spanish Constitution promulgated in Cádiz in 1812. This *Magna Carta* was highly advanced for its era. According to *La Pepa,* and for the first time in the Spanish history, sovereignty lied upon the nation and not the king, establishing a milestone in power and status distribution. Considering that all interviewees belong to a generation that has been brought up in a democratic realm[91], mentioning this historical achievement in the justification of the vote, as happens in certain cases, is certainly remarkable. The history of a nation can be learned through formal institutions. However, "at the micro level, political socialization frames research on the patterns and processes by which individuals engage in political development and learning, constructing their particular relationships to the political contexts in which they live (Sapiro 2004: 3)." In this case, young Spaniards highlight the influence of family in their political socialisation. For instance, respondent NT 15 remembers the suffering that her father experienced during Franco's dictatorship and uses this memory, the struggle of a family member, as a lever that pushes her to vote. At the end of this quote NT 15 states that the vote is a tool that can change those holding political power, and that the outcome of the elections helps her to evaluate and understand the perception of other citizens.

> *-Ok. And when you voted, why did you decide to do it? What was your motivation to vote?*
> *-So, I always think that it has to do with my dad's words: "I used to go out to the streets after school, once I was done studying, to protest, because we didn't have that right. Nobody could vote"… They had their wings clipped , so...man! That's really motivated me. Because they went through really fucked up moments and... I apologise for my language. When you can't choose who you want to govern, who will lead your country, your village or else. It must be really tough. So, he convinced me. Simply by saying: "I had to get into the streets and protest, get hit so we could reach the democracy that we have nowadays…" So, to tell the truth, that motivates you. And it's not just that, but also for myself. Think about it and I would say: "If I don't have the choice to vote, to choose, what should we do?"… I vote because we must do it, there's no choice. It should be more an obligation* (NT15, female, graduate, living in Madrid*).*

The sacrifice and fight that respondents' previous generation experienced in order to obtain the right to vote is so engrained, that there are respondents who address this question in the first person. This is the case of NT 3 (see below) who states "*we* have been fighting for years." After this assertion he immediately corrects himself by saying "well… *they* have been, not me, not us":

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[91] The sample was born between 1985 and 1997. Franco's dictatorship ended in 1975.

-Great, and why did you decide to exercise your right to vote?
-Because I believe that we all should have the right to choose. Besides, even if you don't like any... any of the political parties. I still believe that we should all either way vote, vote the one that represents your ideals the most, because we have been fighting for so many years, well... they have been, not us (laughing). Well, at least I wasn't fighting because I'm too young, I wasn't there... but a lot of people have been fighting for the right to vote (NT3, male, graduate, living in Madrid).

The heritage of history through family transmission is not the only agent influencing the act of vote. As it has been previously mentioned, the first Spanish constitution was promulgated in 1812. However, the 1812 constitution only acknowledged male suffrage. Female suffrage in Spain was firstly recognised during the II Spanish Republic in 1931. However, a civil war (1936 – 1939) and more than thirty years of dictatorship (1939 – 1975) meant that general suffrage would not see the light again until the promulgation of the current constitution in 1978. Compared to NT 15 and NT 13, the voting motivations of transnationals 26 and 10 are not exclusively influenced by the experiences of family members. Instead, they show high levels of awareness of the historical hurdles from a community perspective and political dearth that individuals, and particularly women, underwent to be able to vote:

-Ok, so when you voted, what was your motivation, I mean, why did you vote?
-Because some years ago people... there were people who fought, and specially women, so... they fought and gave everything they had, they did all they could so that, at present, we, as regular citizens, and particularly women, could vote. So, when somebody tells me "No, I'm not going to vote", the first thing that comes to my mind is all those people who fought so we could have these rights (T26, female, graduate, living in Rome).

-What motivated you to vote?
-Well... man, I think that...Look, I've studied history and the truth is that voting is something too serious and too important to simply... And I know that a lot of people are just like "well, they're fixed elections [referred to as "el pucherazo"], it doesn't change a thing"... Well, look, it won't change anything but a lot of people died and they died fighting just for you to get the right to put your ballot in the ballot box and make a choice. (…) Even more if you're a woman, what the heck! We were just set aside all our lives, we couldn't even open a bank account without a husband, without a father and all, so today you have that freedom of choice and you don't use it or you do it differently or... That's horrible! I mean, I think that if we nowadays we have all the rights you have, you have to use them, at least use them (T10, female, graduate, living in Berlin).

Another example of a respondent who shares similar points of view with T 10 can be found in the words of NT 4 (see below). The main reasons that pushed NT 4 to vote are based on respect towards all those who fought in the past so present generations could have this right. Again, this respondent emphasizes the oppression that women encountered at the time.

Voting is so significant to respondent NT4, "a commitment", that she openly admits to getting upset when others do not exercise this right:

> -Sure, perfect. And regardless of your priority or your political interest, would you mind me asking you if you have ever voted?
> -Yes, I have voted every time because I believe that it is a right that a lot of people worked for and fought for so we could have this right. Women above everything, and to me when you don't vote you are insulting all those people, it's an insult or even to our own Constitution, you know? An insult to all those people who fought against the dictatorship, against all dictatorships that were in the world and to those who didn't have a choice. So, to me, when someone doesn't vote I get angry. Well, even if it's a blank vote, it's worthless, but at least you exercised your right to vote, a right that took a lot of effort so we could enjoy it. In that sense, I'm a committed subject (NT4, female, graduate, living in Madrid).

7.6.2. Voting: a right that must be exercised

This section presents narratives with a shared feeling of duty towards the act of voting. The idea that voting can be perceived as an obligation is not new (Morris 1976; Verba *et al.* 1995). Similarly to the last section, the motivations that justify a sense of obligation are context-dependent. For instance, the bulk of respondents manifest an implicit consensus about the idea that participating in a democratic election is unquestionable. Although in a small number of EU countries voting is mandatory, this is not the case of Spain. Still, the degree of responsibility that respondent NT 17 attributes to the act of voting leads her to assert that it should be *enforced*, exerted by law:

> - Sure, and when you voted, why did you decide to do it? What were your motivations?
> -Because I think that voting should be an obligation. Everybody should have an opinion, even if it's tiny. I mean, I'm saying this even when I barely have any information about politics, economy and stuff, but I think that everybody should have a formed idea about where you would like to go and in that sense voting should be mandatory. And those who don't want to vote should be punished, do you know what I mean? I think it's necessary that we know the opinion of all citizens and not just the opinion of a bunch that always vote the same (NT17, female, up to 19, living in Madrid).

Although not all respondents address this sense of duty as explicitly as NT 17, interviewees emphasise that voting is extremely relevant to them, their peers and society. On top of this sense of duty, transnational and non-transnational respondents conceive voting as an opportunity. This political act is perceived as one of the tools allowed in their society to express themselves; even if this is perceived as a scarce opportunity that takes place every four years (see T 13) or in which respondents' opinions are taken on board (see NT 18):

-And why did you decide to vote?
-Well, I think voting is very important, voting is very important. Because if you want to complain later or if you want stuff, well, I don't buy it when those then say "I don't like that one", "I don't like this other one" but, did you vote or have you expressed yourself? No, right? And I think that it is very important considering that they only give us the opportunity to vote once every... I don't know how many years. Then, I think we have to vote (T13, male, graduate, living in London).

-Ok, so when you voted, which were your motivations? Why did you do it?
-Because I think that voting... voting is a right but it's not just that, it's also something that must be done. If you don't agree that's fine but there are different options anyone can vote for, aren´t there? But at the same time I feel that since it's one of the few times they take us into consideration... then you have to do it (NT18, female, graduate, living in Madrid).

Naturally, voting strongly relates to democracy. This is also reflected in respondents' narratives. As individuals immersed in a democratic system, voting is also understood as an opportunity to sustain and strengthen democracy. According to respondent T 23, the legitimacy of democracies lies in an informed and reflected vote. Those who do not cast their votes, continues T 23, become *less* of a citizen because they neglect their civic duties. In this case, vote and citizenship are strongly intertwined with identity and community. From this perspective, omitting the act of participation in an election erodes your identity as a citizen and implies a lack of empathy towards a political community.

-I see. So, regardless of who you have voted, because I'm not interested in that, what I would like to know is, why have you exercised your right to vote when you voted?
-Because I strongly believe that democracy only works if people exercise their right to vote. And not only that they exercise their right to vote but that they also learn about it so it can be a vote with a relatively good quality. In the sense that they should have a rough idea of what they are voting for. In the end, if people don't vote, I believe that what you are doing is leaving behind your responsibilities as a citizen. I think that... I don't know... you're less of a citizen, I mean, you don't care of what's happening around you. That's a protest vote. To me a protest vote is a blank vote or when you vote in numbers, but it's not: "not to vote." Even with a protest vote...you just don't care. As if, I wasn't a citizen in a society and I don't care about what's going on. Thus, this is a different category. Since I see myself as an "average mind" citizen, I care about what's happening around me so I make sure that I always vote (T23, male, graduate, living in Berlin).

This quote reflects what Verba *et al.* (1995) identified as "the satisfaction of performing a civic duty or doing one's share to make the community, nation, or world a better place" (1995: 102). The interviews provide further examples of respondents linking political behaviour, democracy and a sense of community. In the case of T 22, he highlights the role of voting from an inclusive approach. Voting makes you part of a democratic system, despite

the fact that a vote may be an insufficient participatory mechanism. Whereas other respondents (NT 23) believe that participating in an election is a chance to select the next political representative, the one who will decide the future of their nation.

> -*When you voted, why did you exercise your right to vote?*
> -*Well, because it's my right and I believe it's important to exercise it.*
> -*In what sense is it important?*
> -*So... because, because to me it's part of a very important decision, I mean, yes, exercising the vote is important. Well, yeah... I mean, it's practically the only possibility that we have to participate in democracy. In other words, I mean, the model should include more democratic means through new platforms and stuff, but it seems that once more, in Spain, that doesn't take off (laughing). And since voting only happens every four or two years, depending on which election we can exercise it so... let's exercise it* (T22, male, graduate, living in Berlin).

> -*I see. And when you vote, what were your motivations? I mean, why did you vote?*
> -*So... the way I see it, if you belong to a European Union country or whatever... you are given the opportunity to choose who's going to represent you, who's going to pick the measures that will change that... your country. So, to be honest it's vital. Also, don't complain afterwards if you don't like the government or if you didn't vote* (NT23, female, graduate, living in Madrid).

The last two quotes recapitulate the main ideas introduced thus far about voting. The act of voting is perceived as a citizen's duty, for this reason respondents firmly answer that voting is crucial, is a must, an inexorable civic act. This civic responsibility is rooted in the idea that performing a vote is an opportunity that brings a number of benefits: democratic legitimacy, sense of community, the chance to express yourself and deciding on politics (Morris 1976; Verba *et al.* 1995).

> -*Ok, and when you voted, what was your motivation? Why did you decide to do it?*
> -*Well, it's always been a conviction, because I think we have to vote. I mean, it's like I was telling you earlier. I think we have to be part of a shared project because it's good for us as individuals and because it's good for the common project itself. Because the higher number of perspectives there are the richer. And, well, of course, and I know that this is very mythical but it's also because... well, it's true, the fact that there are people dying in this world fighting for the right to vote and the right to be able to have a word in the decisions of their country, their political projects and, well, I think that since it's so accessible for us we have to take advantage too. That's nice, isn't it? (laughing)* (NT27, male, graduate, residing in Madrid).

> - *Ok, and whenever you have voted, why did you do it? What was your motivation?*
> - *Well, because there's not another option, is there? (laughing)*
> - *I don´t know (laughing). You tell me.*
> - *(laughing) We must always vote. Because I am a citizen and I have to exercise my right.*
> -*Why? Why do you have to exercise it?*

-Because it's taken us a lot of effort to achieve it, because it's our right, because otherwise we can't complain at ease (laughing) and because yeah... because even when my vote gets lost among millions of votes, in the end you are putting your two cents. Therefore, I think it's necessary that we all go and vote (NT25, female, graduate, residing in Madrid).

7.6.3. Voting: expressing a voice, seeking a political change

Apart from the responsibilities of voters and the influence of history in respondents' motivations, the act of voting is also tied up to one of the most basic democratic values: freedom of expression. Thus, respondents feel that voting grants them with the opportunity to express themselves. As it was also stated in previous quotes, respondent NT 8 believes that this opportunity is insufficient –"it only takes place every four years" (referring to the Spanish general elections)– and should be made more accessible through modern means (e.g. the Internet).

-Well... and, when you have voted, why did you decide to do it?
-Well... because I think that democracy gives us some chances to express ourselves. Because, even when I think every four years is too long, but it's true, I don't know, all the paperwork that implies... and all... I guess it could be easier, for instance, now they could facilitate voting on-line and if this could be achieved well, I don't know, with the digital certificate or something like that. If they wanted to make it easier, they could make it easier, but (...) But if they give us the chance in that moment, unless you take advantage of it at that moment, when will you express your opinion? (NT8, female, graduate, residing in Madrid).

To the non-transnational Spaniard 21, voting is rooted in the possibility of sharing your ideas with others, because it brings citizens together. Furthermore, this respondent conceives political parties as mediators of her ideas. Based on the foundation that politicians reach and gather vast numbers of citizens, NT 21 seeks to vote the MP that represents her beliefs the best, and expects this political advocate to spread her ideals.

-And when you voted, what was your motivation, why did you vote?
-Well... because, it's the way in which my ideas can reach more people, I mean... to get together with others who think the way I think. And... and I believe that all political parties are pretty much that, a consensus of ideas and trying to gather all the people who think like you (...) Here in Spain I'm still searching... I mean, every time that it's elections time I seek for those who are closer to my ideas even when it's not directly... I mean, even if I just get an MP and a half. I think that even when you just get half an MP who has the same ideas, someone who can be heard, because as a single person, I can't be heard as much, right? (NT21, female, graduate, residing in Madrid).

Finally, respondent NT 13 –along the same line of the previous respondent– stresses the need of "having a voice." This voice is expected to reach high political spheres like the

government. On top of this, respondent NT 13 associates this freedom of expression with the power that goes hand in hand with the act of voting and politicians. For this reason, she states that not voting results in an irreversible situation of the deprivation of expressing your opinion.

> -And when you voted, what motivated you to exercise your right to vote? Why did you decide to vote?
> - Well, more than anything because of the government that represents me, because we don't have that voice, or that power to defend our views, if we don't vote then... Even when you don't know who to vote for and stuff, or you don't have your mind made up yet, in the end if you don't vote you're not saying your opinion. After that, there's not coming back, then whatever is said at the Parliament and stuff, the government voted by everyone will be the ruling one, and if you don't vote then... So, yeah, I've always voted (NT13, female, graduate, residing in Madrid).

To some respondents, the notion of "being heard" through a vote is strongly connected with the intention of causing a shift in politics. Respondents who establish this association are implicitly stating their discomfort with the current political arena. Such socio-political disenchantment cannot come as a surprise in a country where the consequences of the financial crash highlighted the inefficacy of political actors and public institutions (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014; Torcal 2014). Despite the poor management from certain political and institutional structures, the Spanish civic society witnessed unprecedented changes in the political sphere. The formation of two new political forces: "Podemos" (left wing) and "Ciudadanos" (centre-right wing), and the election of municipal mayors from grass-root organisations (e.g. Manuela Carmena, the mayor of Madrid). In the case of NT 10, he expresses a sense of tiredness of Spanish political parties. This tiredness is based on the lack of new political groups.

> -So when you voted, what were your motivations to do it?
> -Because I want to produce a change, try to change what's there so there's more variety of political parties, so it's not always the same ones (NT10, male, primary education, residing in Madrid).

Considering that since 1982 the leadership of the Spanish government has been dominated by PSOE (left-centre wing) and PP (right-centre wing), the recent political changes stir citizens' hope; at least in those who seek an alternative to the current political scenario. Respondent T 25 stresses his wishes to end bipartisanship, which seems to indicate that in the next elections he would be casting his vote to a non-majoritarian political party:

> -And when you have voted, why did you exercise your right to vote?

-Because when I voted in 2011, well... I did it because, on one hand I would like to end two-party predominance, that's something that seems to happen only in Spain, because in Italy, for example, there is more variety of political parties, but I don't like the Spanish bipartisanship, and I voted PSOE and PP in the past because I trusted them but now I would like bipartisanship to end, I really do (T25, male, graduate, living in Rome).

A similar sentiment is shared by the next transnational residing in London (T 19). Respondent T 19 expresses a strong tension of voting connected with the bipartisanship of PP and PSOE in Andalusia. On one hand, the respondent cast her vote in this regional election seeking a change of the dominant political party. However, given the results of these elections she feels dishearten. Once more –she expresses– PSOE has perpetuated the status quo in the southern region of Andalusia.

-What would you say were your motivations to cast your vote?
-Because I think voting is important, even if you vote blank, but it's important because otherwise you will contribute to bipartisanship. And we must end bipartisanship in Spain. So, since... since last month that I voted in the Andalusian elections... I specifically voted in the Andalusian... well, it doesn't matter now since the same people have won [she refers to PSOE], oh well... But I think that voting is very important. If you want to change something, if you don't vote, you're not even trying (T19, female, graduate, living in London).

At the time of the interviews (February – June 2015), young Spaniards were still facing extreme social, political and economic circumstances. Since the beginning of the Eurozone crisis, Spain reached an unemployment rate of 55% for those aged 20 to 30 years the second highest of the EU (Fundación Novia Salcedo 2013; The New York Times 2013; Aguinaga 2014), and faced other circumstances like dismantled cases of corruption within the two main Spanish political parties (PP and PSOE), cuts in the health and education system. All these circumstances have particularly shaped the perception of the Spanish youth. These social and political struggles also emerged during the interviews. The impact of the Spanish crisis is reflected in respondents' answers. To respondent T 20, voting is an opportunity to fight against corruption:

-And why did you decide to vote?
-Because it's one of the few things that they let us do! Considering that it's something they let us do, voting, we should do it. Man, also because I think the future of our country is in our hands. Otherwise, we're leaving it under the same ones. And the same ones... all they are going to do is to keep on stealing. So, yeah. I think it's very important to vote (T20, female, graduate, living in London).

As it has been previously mentioned, the act of voting is perceived as a pressing matter even more since the financial crisis. Respondent NT 19 admits that he was interested in voting

before the financial crash. But at present he expresses his worries about unemployment, precarious working conditions, lack of labour opportunities –even for those with university studies– and the likelihood of becoming transnational. For all these reasons, he believes that in order to trigger a change to this socio-political reality, voting is required:

> *-I see. And when you voted, when you cast your vote, why did you do it? What motivated you to vote?*
> *-Because since I was eighteen everything looked stable in Spain. Spain seemed stable and since then there have been two elections in which I couldn't... (laughing), I couldn't and, well, I didn't vote, and now this is... this is a joke, this crisis. To be honest, I'd like to see a change, I'd like to see this changing. Because in the end, at this pace, I can see that we are all going to move to another country. Because it seems that, I don't know, a little bit, don't know, it's enough this... all of this. And you say: "Well, I need to work", but even when you search for a job and nowadays, it's impossible! It's impossible! I had a friend who searched for a job for four years, four years! And looking for it and nothing, he's still looking for one. And I have another friend who has just finished Aeronautical Engineering and I say: "oh, my God! But that's one of the strong studies with plenty of opportunities" but... nothing, he's a waiter. So, you tell me, an engineer working as a waiter. I mean, honestly, I don't think that's normal, you know? (laughing) Well, not me and not for a lot of people, you can ask them... "so what have you studied?", "Me? Architecture", "And what do you do for a living?" "I work at the Burger King", "Oh, that's great!" (Sarcastic tone)* (NT19, male, primary education, residing in Madrid).

The quotes exploring the meanings of vote for the sample emphasise the relevance of historical, social, political and cultural background for case-study analyses. The process of political socialisation is conditioned by actors and structures involved during individuals' learning experience (Sapiro 2004). The sample frames voting within moral and civic duties, transmitted by family values and the vision of overcoming the struggle of Spaniards towards democracy. Furthermore, the economic and labour difficulties since the financial crash have ignited a sense of willingness for a political change, and socio-political justice. Only through the exploration of the meanings of the vote can the complexities and nuances behind the act of voting be elucidated. Although in the majority of the cases vote is connected to national events (e.g. Spanish bipartisanship), this section has also provided examples of the vote under more intersectional items (e.g. civic duty) that could be applied to European elections.

7.7. Vote abstention

This section focuses on transnational and non-transnational non-voters. A total of nineteen Spaniards living in Madrid have participated in the EP elections as opposed to five respondents who did not vote. In the case of transnational Spaniards, participation or abstention in the EP elections is almost equally divided. There are fourteen transnational

Spaniards who voted in the last EP elections as opposed to thirteen transnational Spaniards who did not make use of this right. Furthermore, there are six interviewees who could not recall whether they got involved in the EP elections or not. These results are in accordance with the results obtained at the macro level: transnationalism has a negative effect upon European political behaviour. Bearing in mind that voting presented similar meanings for both groups of the sample, why do non-transnational Spaniards present higher levels of participation in these elections than transnationals?

In the light of the negative impact that transnationalism has upon participation in the EP elections, it is important to understand the reasons behind vote abstention. According to the quantitative results, transnationalism diminishes participation in the EP elections. On a minor scale, these results echo with the interviewees. As it was mentioned at the beginning, five non-transnational Spaniards did not participate in the elections of the EP, while this number increases to thirteen in the group of transnational Spaniards.

Two non-transnational young Spaniards justify their lack of participation in the EP elections with personal circumstances: absent-mindedness, lack of information, being overwhelmed with other duties or political disaffection. Respondent NT 22 expresses a sense of duty towards voting. However, this civic obligation seems to exclusively apply to domestic elections. As a consequence, it appears this respondent does not portray their national vote in the same terms as with the European vote. This could be a possible explanation of the disparity between the participation in domestic elections (i.e. local and general) and at the European level. Furthermore, this respondent justifies the lack of participation in the EP elections with personal circumstances. This indicates that the European elections are perceived differently from domestic elections, shaping the levels of involvement during electoral periods.[92]

> *- Have you ever voted?*
> *-Yes, yes, yes (enthusiastically).*
> *- And, at what level did you vote: locally, general elections, European ones…?*

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[92] One transnational (T 19) respondent provided a similar answer. Although this transnational Spaniard openly admitted a sense of duty towards domestic elections, to the point that she flew back home to cast her vote in Spain, when queried about European elections, this was her answer:
-And have you ever participated in the European Parliament elections?
- No, I've never participated in the European Parliament elections. I mean… the European ones…I don't know, that's not something I think about. I don't even know much about the European level (T19, female, postgraduate, residing in London).

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-Well, just locally and in the general elections.
- OK. And, when you voted, why did you do it? What was your motivation?
-Well, because... I think that's a right for all citizens, the fact that you can vote and have a saying about which political party you want to govern your country. So, when I see that's something necessary, to have the right to vote and choose who you would like to be governing.
-I see. And why do you think it's necessary? Why do you consider it so important?
-Because in the end... freedom of speech in a first world country, with a welfare... well, if they don't let you vote it would be like a dictatorship... I don't know, something like that, an absolute monarchy, wouldn't it? But... you must vote because you have to show your discontent (expressing certainty), if something isn't working then it must be changed. So, in that sense...
-I understand. And you didn't vote, because you mentioned that you didn't vote in the European elections, why didn't you vote?
-Like I said, because I forgot or because I've been snowed under with a lot of work, I live in my world (laughing) and I just let it happen, I don't know, I didn't realise (NT 22, male, vocational education, residing in Madrid).

Along the line with respondent NT 22, non-transnational 24 justifies his non-participation in the EP elections due to political discrepancies with the system. More specifically, he claims that he did not vote in the last EP elections (2014) due to feelings of disaffection with the EU.

-Ok, so, regardless of your political preferences or your political affinity, may I ask: have you ever voted?
-Yes, yes, of course.
-Have you ever voted? (laughing)
-Mmmhmm (assenting).
-Ok, and at what level did you vote? Was it at the local, national, autonomic and European?
-Well, every now and then in all of those. Well... yeah... in the last European elections I didn't vote but precisely because of that disaffection, but in the previous one I did vote. Yes, I voted (NT24, male, vocational education, residing in Madrid).

Up to this point, two (out of the three respondents whose answers have been transcribed above) non-transnational Spaniards opted not to vote in the EP elections because of their personal views. Compared to domestic elections, the lack of participation in non-transnational Spaniards may reflect that these elections are perceived as second-order elections. Young transnational Spaniards highlight three factors that shaped their voting behaviour: lack of knowledge on voting procedures, mobility hindrances, and institutional barriers.

First, unawareness of the participation procedures of European elections is considered as a deterrent among some of the transnational respondents (see T 16 and T 15). In the case of T 16, his non-participation is justified by this lack of knowledge: "I didn't know how to do it", personal circumstances: "I was too busy with work" and lack of interest. However,

respondent T 15 confuses the procedures of the domestic vote with the European one. For instance, she believes that in order to be an eligible voter, she has to be registered at the Spanish embassy.[93]

> *-May I ask you, have you ever voted?*
> *-Yes, I voted once when I was 19 or so and I've never voted again. No, I don't think so, no. But in the elections of my city. So, no... since then I've never voted again. Not even in the general elections, no, I don't think so... I'm very apolitical in that sense.*
> *-And why haven't you voted again? Or if you don't vote, is it because you're not interested?*
> *-So... do you mean in the Spanish case? Is that so?*
> *-Well, in the Spanish case but also in the European elections, that took place last year, you could have voted then too.*
> *-Yes, that's true... actually, I tried last year, it's true, I tried, but I couldn't do it on-line. And I talked to my parents and... so I don't know how... I don't know how to do it. I was... I was very busy, that's true, working. I remember now that I couldn't vote because of that. But, like I said, it's not as if I know what's going on in politics and stuff* (T16, male, vocational education, living in London).
>
> *-Ok. So when you voted, could you participate in any European elections too?*
> *-Yes, but I didn't do it.*
> *-Was it because you couldn't or because you decided not to?*
> *-No, no... because, besides... I can't vote here, because I'm not registered at the embassy, is that so?*
> *-Well, if you're registered locally you can vote in the European elections, yes.*
> *-Well, I don't know here, I'm not registered at the Spanish embassy. So, I should go and register and all that boring stuff, so no. Even if I wanted, I couldn't have done it. I would have had to go to Spain and all that stuff* (T15, female, graduate, living in Paris).

Second, living in another EU member-state poses several complications to electoral participation. During the interviews, transnational Spaniards highlighted two main issues attached to mobility: context permanence or stability, and structural barriers. Context permanence refers to the fact that transnational citizens may not reside for long periods in the same city, and at times not even in the same household. Generally speaking, electoral systems are not intrinsically designed to facilitate transnationalism, by, for example, making electoral registration easier to transnational citizens. In order to be an eligible voter, citizens must notify a change in the address to be able to receive the adequate information prior to any elections (either through the embassy or at the city or municipal council). Unfortunately, as it has been discussed, transnational respondents either miss the voting opportunity due to

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[93] Although this is mandatory for transnational citizens who want to cast their vote while living abroad, at the European level, citizens who would like to vote abroad could also participate through council registration. Once this registration has been completed, transnational Europeans should receive the notification of the EP elections vote through post.

mobility (T 14) or have an information deficiency of the procedures of their vote when they migrate (T 27), which may be a consequence of being less politically integrated and informed in the host society.

-So, have you ever participated in the European elections?
-Do you mean in a political party?
-No, if you voted in the Europeans one.
-Yes, in the last ones.
-And, why did you vote in the Europeans?
-To tell the truth, now that I think about it, I don't think I voted. But I didn't vote because it was when... well... I had this period when I went to Barcelona and I couldn't vote because of that (T14, male, primary education, living in London).

-Then, why did you vote or why didn't you exercise your right to vote?
-Look, at a certain time I was registered in Nerja [Spanish village], then I moved to Madrid, then I went somewhere else and I was registered in another place, then I moved abroad and I have never... I've never voted. I've always forgotten to request the vote by post, you know? Since I live abroad, it's been like three years and a half, and, well, I don't know where I had to go so I let it be.
-I see. OK. So, are you saying that if you had been living in the same place for a longer period you would have voted?
-Yes, yes, yes... if I'd had the chance I would have voted (T27, male, graduate, living in Rome).

The second struggle that transnational Spaniards face is in relation with bureaucratic and institutional hurdles. These difficulties occur both in domestic and in European elections. If transnational citizens face higher disadvantages due to the lack of information when voting abroad, this adversity increases with the lack of efficiency and transparency of certain institutions, particularly the Spanish embassy. Thus, references to this institution are embedded with negativity and disaffection. The disappointment it is not exclusive to Spanish consulates and embassies in one city or in the same EU member-state. For instance, respondent T 3 expresses her frustration with the consulates of Lyon (France) and Brussels (Belgium). In both cases, these complaints refer to the lack of efficiency, a delayed delivery of the voting cards to cast her vote. Furthermore, T 3 suspicions about this poor performance have been reinforced with the narrative of similar experiences that other transnational Spaniards living in Brussels have encountered.

-So, can I ask you if you have ever voted?
-Yes, but just once (laughing).
-And why just one time?
-What? Ah, because the embassy of Lyon was shit (laughing) and you couldn't vote. I mean, you couldn't vote, they wouldn't notify me or they would do it after the deadline. And last year I went through the same here [refers to Brussels].

-Oh...
-When I received the letter [postal voting letter], it was too late. I don't know if you've heard of all the problems that we had here in Brussels to vote.
-No, what happened?
-Well... people got the postal voting when it was too late. A lot, a lot of people... I mean, I have a friend who works for the European Parliament and he couldn't vote (laughing) in the European elections. I mean, that's just ridiculous! In other words, maybe you receive the letter, maybe you don't... And there's people who got the letter a week after the elections... and you say: "Well, thank you! Honestly, thanks! (sarcastically)" (T3, female, graduate, living in Brussels).

In the case of T 1 (see below), she states that her vote for the European elections was constrained due to registration hurdles at the Spanish embassy, which she missed because "it had to be claimed six months in advance." Theoretically these procedures should occur without any incidence. However, as Kochenov highlights: "in practice the requirement to travel 'home' for every election is little short of disenfranchisement, since it demands of the expatriate citizens a considerable investment in terms of time and money, and makes the exercise of political rights directly dependent on such an investment. The connection between voting and travelling puts an unreasonable burden on the nationals residing abroad, resulting in active discouragement of the expatriate vote (2009: 22)." As we can see, the difficulties that T 1 experienced in order to cast her vote led her to consider travelling to Spain instead of voting in Brussels. This way she "won't be fooled" since she considers that only making an explicit and physical use of the ballot box she will have a guarantee that her vote has been placed correctly:

-So... I didn't vote in the European Parliament elections because I don't know if they took place in May or so and you had to request the vote before December... that's mental... and so... I have just moved here and I didn't really know how it worked. When I realised the deadline was over, because it was like six months in advance... way too early. And now, in the Spanish general elections, I'm already checking how to vote... but as far as I've read it's a mess, they make it very complicated when you want to vote from abroad. But since I like it and it's Spain I was planning on going there directly. They won't fool me that way (laughing) (T1, female, vocational education, living in Brussels).

Respondent T 20 gives further evidence stressing the hurdles that transnational Spaniards have to go through when they want to cast their vote abroad. The answer of T 20 is narrowed to domestic elections. This respondent is originally from Andalusia and emphasizes the difficulties and lack of support from the Spanish embassy. T 20 expresses how she felt deprived from her vote in the regional elections of Andalusia due to an inadequate information from the Spanish embassy of the registration deadlines. Despite her involvement

in a public protest against this situation, the words of respondent T 20 express high levels of frustration and disappointment. According to this respondent, this dissatisfaction seems to be rooted not only in the poor performance of this Spanish institution, but also in the inability as a citizen to cast a vote that is intended to end the corruption of the traditionally leading political party in Andalusia, PSOE:

> *-So, and you were saying how the political circumstances and that a bit your opinion about the flag it's not because of the current political atmosphere. Does that mean that you have a different political view about the political situation in Andalusia?*
> *-No, it's disastrous. No, it's worse, it's even worse than in Spain. They've been... how long? PSOE has been stealing [she implies the misappropriation of public funds] for thirty eight years and they have been elected again. And something else, for example, they didn't let me vote in the Andalusian elections. Because the deadline ended in November but they didn't tell us, so... the elections were a month ago, right? And they wrote this clause that those who weren't registered at the embassy before November couldn't vote. But they told us in January, right? The deadline had ended two months before and nobody could vote. We even protested and all that, but it didn't matter, we couldn't vote. Only fourteen people voted, well, as far I've seen or heard on the Internet, only 14 people. So, there are millions of Spaniards living abroad and we couldn't vote. Well, Spaniards and Andalusian* (T20, female, graduate, living in London).

7.8. Conclusions

Based on the case-study of Spain, this chapter explores two main pillars in relation to EP elections' turnout from a transnational approach: meanings of the act of voting, and the reality that non-voters' remain absent from European elections. These two aspects have been investigated with context-dependent data –58 in-depth interviews to transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards.

The meanings of the vote for this case-study reveal the influence that culture and history exert on this political behaviour. Transnational and non-transnational Spaniards' comprehension of the vote has been strongly shaped by the political socialisation in the family realm. An important part of this young Spanish generation shows a high sense of loyalty and respect to the vote because it is perceived as a family struggle. Due to the difficulties during the Spanish dictatorship (1939–1975), grandparents and parents transmitted the values of voting as a democratic achievement to younger generations. Values transmission through the family constitutes a micro example of the political socialisation of the Spanish history. In some cases, respondents perceive voting as a means to expressing oneself –particularly for women since, with the exception of the II Republic period (1931–1939), Spain did not recognise female suffrage until 1978. Respondents sustain that having a

political voice contributes to the strengthening of their community. Another use of casting a ballot comes with the idea of generating a political change. This urge for a different socio-political reality seems to have been reinforced since the 2008 financial crisis. The hope for a political shift is strongly motivated by ending Spanish bipartisanship of PP and PSOE, the lack of response from political actors, awareness of cases of political corruption, and the desire of moving beyond the Spanish financial crash.

The main conclusion of this chapter is that transnational Spaniards participate less in the EP elections than non-transnational Spaniards. Given the results at the macro level, this outcome was –to a certain extent– expected. However, the in-depth analysis facilitates the contextualisation of the vote for this case-study, whilst providing unique information of the relationship between domestic and European elections. The majority of respondents relate the act of voting to national aspects. When queried about their reasons not to vote, both groups of the sample were more prone to assume that voting referred to national elections. This seems to indicate that both groups may perceive European elections as second-order elections. However, even when this second-order perception may be shared by all respondents, chapter 5 stressed how transnational young Spaniards feel more European and present more positive attitudes towards the EU than non-transnational Spaniards. Given the positive correlation between European attachment and EU's positive salient beliefs in EP election turnout (Mattila 2003; Follesdal and Hix 2006; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Risse 2010; Stockemer 2011; van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016), transnational Spaniards should participate more in these elections. Yet, in the case of transnational Spaniards, not being as politically active as their non-transnational fellows may not necessarily be linked to a lack of EU awareness, not feeling European, absence of political contestation or negative attitudes towards the EU. According to the interviews, the majority of transnational Spaniards have not cast their vote in the European elections due to a lack of knowledge on voting procedures, mobility constraints or lack of a stable residence, and institutional barriers.

A second conclusion of this chapter is that lower levels of turnout among transnational Spaniards cannot be interpreted as a lack of interest in politics. On the contrary, transnational Spaniards are concerned with politics. Most of them perceive the act of voting as a civic obligation and as an opportunity for a political change. However, while residing abroad, transnational Spaniards are exposed to high levels of misinformation, on top of political and institutional exclusion. Transnationals' narratives support the idea that transnationalism not only hinders vote in EP elections but tends to disfranchise transnational Spaniards. This

reality has been exposed by other scholars (Kochanov 2009) in the past, and by Spanish associations like Marea Granate. Transnationals' disfranchisement is rooted in the poor performance of the Spanish embassies and consulates. These obstacles have prevented them from casting their vote. Political socialisation at the national level shapes voting participation in the European elections (Franklin and Hobolt 2011). Given this domestic-European relationship, the negative impact that the Spanish embassies and consulates had on these transnational Spaniards may bring further political disaffection both at the national and European levels.

To sum up, the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) paved the way for a consolidated European citizenship with the expectations of generating a sense of community and civic inclusion. As it has been demonstrated in chapters 4 and 5, active users of the right of freedom of movement (i.e. transnational Europeans) develop stronger feelings of European attachment and a higher sense of acknowledgement of the benefits as an EU member. For this reason, it can be stated that –as it was foreseen by the Treaty of Maastricht– European citizenship is promoting social inclusion. However, being a mobile European is also embedded with certain civic exclusion. In spite of feeling European, of feeling a moral duty to vote and having positive images of the EU –factors that increase turnout for non-transnational Europeans– transnational Spaniards encounter external hurdles that prevent them from fully exercising their voting rights as European citizens.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1. Introduction

Transnationalism represents one of the core values of the EU. Thanks to European citizenship, EU citizens are entitled to travel freely, temporarily or permanently, to any EU member-state they desire. The total of transnational Europeans has remained between 2% and 2.5% since the 2000s; it is only after the 2008 financial crash that this number has significantly grown (Eurostat 2013; Dumont 2014). At present, intra-EU mobility remains unequally distributed and it presents a clear pattern: southern Europeans moving to northern EU member-states (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). Making use of their European citizenship, southern transnational Europeans moved to northern EU member-states attracted by educational and labour opportunities lacking in their countries (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). Besides the migratory and financial changes which have taken place since the 2008 Eurozone crisis, European societies have also experienced further socio-political crises (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014). Many southern Europeans perceived an absence of democratic response to the crisis from national and European institutions, increasing the levels of distrust towards political systems (Torcal 2014). The EB corroborates this type of hostile public attitudes. For instance, Europeans' positive image of the EU and their trust in the EP have dropped dramatically (Eurobarometer 2002 - 2016). Given that the levels of participation in the EP elections have constantly decreased since 1979, an increasingly negative perception among Europeans could have detrimental consequences for the legitimacy of European democracy.

In spite of the growth in intra-EU mobility in a post-crisis EU, the socio-political consequences of transnationalism remain broadly unknown (Kuhn 2015). One key aspect that makes the study of transnationalism unique is its performative essence. Whether they are aware of it or not, transnational Europeans are, intrinsically, active users of their European citizenship. The Treaty of Maastricht (1992) –the European Treaty that consolidated European citizenship as we now know it– aspired to generate further social and political integration (Shaw 2000). Yet, strengthening the cohesion of the EU does not solely rely on this civic quality. From a social perspective, European identity acts as a catalyst of cultural and political cohesion. In fact, EU citizens who feel European show more tolerance towards other European cultures, and believe that their country benefits from EU membership (Mattila 2003; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Risse 2010; Stockemer 2011; Vasilopoulou

2016). From a political point of view, European identity contributes to the legitimacy of the EU through *diffuse support* (Easton 1969). For instance, EU citizens who feel European are more active during European elections than citizens with exclusive local and national identities (van Klingeren et al. 2013; Curtice 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016).

Given the close link between European identity and European political behaviour, this research has revolved around two distinct –but interconnected– research questions: in a post-crisis EU a) how does transnationalism shape European identity? And b) how does transnationalism shape participation in the EP elections? Academics have studied European identity and participation in European elections from a transnational perspective in the past. According to the literature, residing in another EU member-state fosters European identification (Fligstein 2009; Recchi and Favell 2009; Risse 2010; Bellucci *et al.* 2012; Fligstein *et al.* 20112; Triandafyllidou and Maroufof 2012; Ciornei 2014; Pötzschke and Braun 2014; Kuhn 2015), while, at the same time, posing high voting constraints (Day and Shaw 2002; Kochenov 2009; Janoschka 2010; Shaw 2010; Collard 2013). The bulk of this research is dominantly quantitative and utilises data before the 2008 Eurozone crash. In the light of this gap, my thesis aims at contributing to past research, analysing EB datasets from the 2000s for the EU-15. However, these data do not stand alone. As part of a mixed-methodology, the macro-results are complemented with the case-study of Spain, one of the southern EU member-states that has been highly impacted by transnationalism, and the aftermath of the financial crisis. In sum, through the use of a mixed-methodology I have sought to improve the sociological and political understanding of transnationalism in a post-crisis context.

This chapter presents four main sections. It begins with a summary of the main findings of the four empirical chapters. Then, it presents the contributions of my PhD thesis. Next, I acknowledge some the limitations of my research. Finally, I offer suggestions for future research.

8.2. Main findings

Through the use of a mixed-methodology in my empirical analyses, three main conclusions have been reached: transnationalism continues to foster European identity and diminishes the educational gap in European identity However, it has a negative impact on voting behaviour. This section develops these findings.

8.2.1. Transnationalism continues to foster European identity

The results at macro and micro levels confirm that transnationalism fosters European identification in a post-crisis EU. Based on the analyses of six EB datasets along the 2000s, chapter 4 provided empirical evidence at the macro scale (for the EU-15) of the positive impact of transnationalism on European identity. More specifically, the logistic regressions reveal that while controlling for gender, age, education, occupation, and ideology, transnational EU citizens feel more European than non-transnational Europeans before and after the 2008 financial crash ($H_{4.1}$). In fact, according to the marginal effects, in 2000 transnationalism increased the likelihood of claiming a European identity by 24.9% and in 2016 this likelihood was 22.5%.

Although the macro analyses provide useful information for the EU-15, this methodology offers little explanation of *how* transnationalism shapes European identity. For this reason, chapter 5 explored European identity in a post-crisis EU from the perspective of young Spaniards. Drawing on 58 in-depth interviews, I gathered information on 31 transnational Spaniards residing in six major European capitals (Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris and Rome), and 27 non-transnational Spaniards based in Madrid (the capital of Spain). Generally speaking, transnational Spaniards feel more European than non-transnational Spaniards. Moreover, transnationalism generates different perceptions of European identity. A deeper exploration of respondents who feel European elucidates the levels of idiosyncrasy of this type of identity. A group of non-transnational Spaniards attach a specific structure to their European identity: "I am Spanish. Spain belongs to the EU. I am European." In this sense, European identity is embedded in logical constructors or syllogisms, and it strongly connects with European citizenship. From this rational approach, non-transnational respondents perceive this vision of European identity as the most common one, taking it for granted –which explains why some of these respondents showed surprise when queried about this specific topic.

Departing from this rational definition of European identity, and contrary to non-transnational Spaniards, young transnational respondents tend to relate to their European identity from a cultural perspective. Under certain conditions, social interactions may generate an ideal context for the formation of new friendships with individuals from other groups (Allport 1954). The development of positive experiences, an increasing knowledge of other groups'

reality and the generation of affective ties shaped transnationals' behaviour and attitudes towards these new groups. In this case, this behavioural shift among transnational Spaniards seems to strengthen a sense of familiarity and closeness towards other Europeans, establishing fertile ground for European identity to grow or to be nurtured –in the case of transnationals who already felt European. For this reason, transnational Spaniards express how their European identity was forged through the incorporation of new cultural habits and a sense of familiarity with other EU member-states. As a consequence, these experiences promoted the perception that a shared European culture exists. Through an augmented cultural perception of a European identity, transnationalism diminished the sense of being an outsider (Becker 1973) and the resulting otherness when settling in a different European country.

Based on national studies, Deutsch (1954; 1957) believed that the cohesion of national communities was rooted in aspects such as communication and trust; and that if these aspects sustained communities nationally, an interplay of these factors internationally would also generate ties beyond the nation-states. Previous studies highlighted that –although still timidly– transnationalism has spread a sense of European identity (Kuhn 2015). My results confirm that in spite of the negative effect of the financial crash on European attitudes, the positive relationship between transnational and European identity persists in a post-crisis EU. Furthermore, transnationalism enhances a cultural side to European identity. As a consequence, non-transnational Spaniards portray their European identity under rational arguments, an identity that derives from European citizenship, while transnationals respondents make use of emotional and cultural aspects to this type of identity.

8.2.2. Transnationalism diminishes the educational gap in European identity

In my research, I have also engaged with the impact of transnationalism and education on European identity. European identification has been clearly divided between highly and lower educated Europeans (Duchesne *et al.* 1995; Fligstein 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012), and according to the logistic regressions, this educational gap persists. Past research on this subject obtained differing results. Some supported that the European university exchange Erasmus promoted European identity among students (King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003), while others highlighted that this experience solely reinforced an existent identity (Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Kuhn 2012; Mitchell 2012). Yet, these studies failed to compare European identification for transnational Europeans with different educational levels (Kuhn 2012). In

chapter 4, I interacted European identification and transnationalism in Europeans with different educational levels. These interactions support that in the case of transnational Europeans, education is not as influential in explaining European identity as initially thought. In other words, lower educated transnational EU citizens (those finishing education at the age of 15) feel more European than lower educated non-transnational citizens. These results support the second hypothesis ($H_{4.2}$) of chapter 4.

8.2.3. The trade-off of transnationalism

In spite of the positive effect of transnationalism on European identity, there is a trade-off to it. While transnationalism fosters European identity, it hinders participation in the EP elections. Chapters 6 and 7 unpack the impact of transnationalism on EP elections turnout at macro and micro levels. Based on EB data from 2009 and 2012, chapter 6 begins its empirical analysis with several chi-square tests of independence between transnationalism and European identity, European cognition, support for EU membership, image of the EU and trust in the EP. With the exception of European cognition, the tests of independence reveal that there are high statistical differences between transnational and non-transnational Europeans. Past research for the whole EU population stresses how these micro factors promote voting behaviour in the EP elections (Studlar *et al.* 2003; Flickinger and Studlard 2004; Flickinger and Studlar 2007; Stockemer 2011; Hogh and Larsen 2016). The logistic regressions highlight that these micro factors positively influence turnout in EP elections. Given this positive relationship, transnational Europeans should be more active in these elections. Yet, transnationalism deters participation in EP elections (confirming the hypothesis of this chapter, $H_{6.1}$).

In chapter 6, I examine the reasons behind vote abstention in 2009 (EB 71.3) for transnational and non-transnational Europeans. According to the EB 71.3 (2009), transnational Europeans are exposed to institutional obstacles that impede them from voting in the same conditions as non-transnational Europeans. The bulk of transnational Europeans expressed difficulties to vote in the EP elections based on issues connected with electoral registration. The negative effect of registration and turnout is not exclusive of the European elections (Eirkson 1981; Brown *et al.* 1999; Ansolabehere and Konisky 20006; Brown and Wedeking 2006; Burden and Neiheisel 2011). However, these limitations contrast with the high expectations placed on European citizenship as a tool for socio-political integration (Day and Shaw 2002; Kochenov 2009; Janoschka 2010; Shaw 2010; Collard 2013). To transnational Europeans, making use

of their freedom of movement and settlement in another EU member-state jeopardises their rights as European citizens to vote in the EP elections.

Through semi-structured interviews, chapter 7 enhances the macro results with context-based information. More specifically, it explores the meanings and definitions of the act of voting among young Spaniards. Considering that the sample shares a common cultural and historical background, it is not surprising that transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards portray this civic act similarly. In their case, voting is strongly shaped by Spain's dictatorial past. Although respondents were born and raised in democracy, many of these respondents associate the act of voting as a moral duty with the memory of family members who fought for a democratic system during Franco's dictatorship. In some instances, this moral duty goes beyond their national history, reaching women's struggle for universal suffrage. Lastly, some of the respondents perceive voting as a tool for political change. In this case, political change mostly refers to a sense of disappointment with Spanish politicians, democratic corruption, inefficient institutional responses since the financial crisis and a sense that Spanish elections are fixed.

Finally, chapter 7 investigates vote abstention among transnational and non-transnational Spaniards. The results for the EU-15 on EP elections' turnout are also reflected at the micro level. In the case of the Spanish sample, transnationalism constrains turnout in EP elections. Querying interviewees about their reasons not to vote reveals that non-transnationals embed their responses in a lack of interest, absent-mindedness, dissatisfaction with politics, and lack of information. Although some transnational Spaniards use similar justifications for their vote abstention, the bulk of this mobile group expressed frustrations connected with institutional constraints during elections. Voting while residing abroad demands more skills (e.g. time and knowledge) from transnationals Europeans. Compared to non-transnationals, transnational Spaniards must be aware of the voting deadlines and requirements while residing abroad. These deadlines differ from casting a vote nationally (domestic and EP elections) –since Spanish embassies require transnational Spaniards to request their vote in advance– and in the new place of residence –since they must familiarise with the electoral system of the EU member-state they reside in.

Furthermore, transnationals' answers elucidate that they are not fully informed of their rights as European citizens (e.g. being able to vote locally in another EU member-state). Besides cognitive hurdles, transnationals' vote was also constrained by the Spanish consulates and

embassies and the institutions of the host-EU member-state. The interviews reveal that, on certain occasions, the lack of information on European elections and voting procedures in the host society impeded transnationals' participation in these elections. However, another group of transnational Spaniards manifested how their voting intentions were undermined by bureaucratic and institutional hurdles both from the Spanish consulate and the host EU member-state. Transnationalism is potentially disenfranchising EU citizens (Kochenov 2009) and constraining their participation in EP elections.

8.3. Contributions

This research engages in some of the debates tackling the impact of transnationalism on European identity, European citizenship, second-order elections and turnout in the EP elections. Considering that the bulk of research in these fields utilises data prior to the 2008 financial crisis (Fligstein 2009; Recchi and Favell 2009; Risse 2010; Bellucci *et al.* 2012; Fligstein *et al.* 2012; Kuhn 2015), this thesis contributes to filling this gap with comparative analyses before and after the financial crash. Furthermore, given that micro-interactions represent small-scale patterns taking place at the macro level (Granovetter 1973), my main contributions stem from the complementary nature between macro and micro levels, on top of the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative techniques.

Considering the advantages of mixed-methods, three main contributions are stressed in this section: first, the distinction between European attitudes and European identity in order to understand feelings of attachment among transnationals in a post-crisis EU; second, the use of the case-study of Spain to understand how transnationalism lessens the educational gap in European identity, and, third, discussing the debates around EU's democratic deficit and second-order elections from a transnational approach.

8.3.1. European attitudes and European identity in a post-crisis EU

Past studies establish a strong relationship between citizens' cost-benefit perception of the EU and European identity. This utilitarian approach sustains that EU citizens who believe are benefiting from the EU are more prone to support European integration which in return positively shapes citizens' European attachment (Gabel 1998; McLaren 2006). At the same time, welfare states contribute to the appearance of positive feelings (e.g. empathy, security) among members of multinational communities, and the development of attachment to political entities like nation-states (McEwen 2002; David and Bar-Tal 2009). Although this

type of relationship between cost-benefit attitudes and European identity exists, the deterioration of EU's image, tendency not to trust EU's institutions, anti-austerity movements and an increasing identification with Eurosceptic political parties may have weakened it. These alterations may have been more prominent among transnational Europeans from southern EU member-states, the European countries most severely shaped by the aftermath of the financial crash (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014; Lafleur and Stanek 2017). In this regard, Spain represents a relevant case-study. Compared to other EU member-states, Spaniards have traditionally shown some of the highest levels of European identification and support for EU integration (Fernández-Albertos and Sánchez-Cuenca 2002; McLaren 2006; Pötzschke and Braun 2014). Since 2008, Spain incorporated severe anti-austerity measures recommended by the EU with the intention of drastically reducing Spain's public deficit. As a consequence, the lack of response of Spanish political elite and public institutions generated further socio-political crises (Zamora-Kapoor and Coller 2014; Torcal 2014). Moreover, Spain has also faced a demographic crisis, turning from attracting approximately 50% of intra-EU migration to becoming one of the EU member-states with the highest negative net migration (Eurostat 2013) –more citizens have emigrated than immigrated since the financial crash.

According to the in-depth interviews, half of the transnational sample settled in another European capital as a direct consequence of the financial crisis. When inquired about their first impressions of the EU, non-transnational Spaniards associate the EU with financial and labour cooperation, freedom of movement and the economy. While addressing the economic side of the EU, non-transnational Spaniards stress the rise of inequality in the EU since the 2008 financial crash. Although transnational Spaniards also criticised EU's poor management of the financial crisis and perceived the EU in terms of economic interests, these respondents were more prone to highlight the benefits of being European –placing particular interest in the advantages of the freedom of movement within the EU.

Based on these answers transnationals' European identity remains unaffected by the negative image of the EU. As it has been exposed, and connecting these results with the first research question, transnationalism continues to positively influence European identity in a post-crisis EU-15. This identity-EU's image discerner seems to indicate that transnational respondents establish a clear distinction between the EU and their European identity. While the former represents the political apparatus from which European citizenship derives, the latter is embedded in the experience of living abroad, closeness to other Europeans and embracing

cultural values. The dominant perception of a European identity as an ethnic experience and shared cultural values gradually fosters transnationals' detachment of this identity with EU's performance. As the interviews reveal, this is not the case among non-transnational Spaniards who tend to establish a strong association between their European identity and their rights as European citizens. In sum, a civic-ethnic identity distinction among transnational Spaniards partially explains why these respondents feel European in spite of the aftermath of the financial crisis.

While the first research question addresses European identity and transnationalism, the second research question tackles a specific aspect of European citizenship: the impact of transnationalism on voting in the EP elections in a post-crisis EU-15. One of the consequences of the 2008 financial crash is that the EU population has reached its highest levels of intra-EU mobility. An increasing volume of Europeans from southern EU member-states seeking professional and educational opportunities moved to northern EU countries (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). Past research highlights a positive correlation between European identity and participation in the EP elections for the whole EU population. EU citizens who feel European are more prone to vote in the European elections. However, the present research demonstrates that transnationalism reverses the direction of this correlation. In the case of transnational Spaniards, low levels of participation in the EP elections are explained by institutional hurdles, irregularities in the postal voting system, lack of information or the absence of a stable residence. In this sense, making use of the right of freedom of movement jeopardises the political voice of the transnational population. Consequently in a post-crisis context low levels of turnout among transnational Europeans has increased. The lack of support or guarantee of the full implementation of European citizenship from national and EU level institutions perpetuates this situation. For this reason, the case of transnational Europeans sheds light on a socio-political paradox of European citizenship. In sum, transnationalism fosters European identity yet it deters participation in the EP elections.

8.3.2. Understanding the educational gap in European identity: a socio-constructivist approach

Education represents one of the main channels through which Europeans have learned, and continue learning, about European history, EU politics and their rights as European citizens. This *cognitive mobilisation* (Inglehart 1970), brought the EU and other European cultures closer to EU citizens. Moreover, higher educated Europeans are more likely to speak other

European languages, thus facilitating interacting with other Europeans and taking part in a transnational experience (Fligstein 2009; Fligstein *et al.* 2012; Kuhn 2015). Chapter 4 provides empirical evidence supporting that lower-educated transnationals feel more European than non-transnational EU citizens with the same educational background. How and why does transnationalism bridge this educational gap?

After reflecting on past academic research and combining the results from both methodologies I provide the following explanation. In the case of lower educated transnationals, learning about the EU and European citizenship comes from the experience of residing in another European member-state. Transnational Europeans have their identity and cultural values confronted, share contexts with Europeans from different backgrounds, are exposed to other European traditions and languages, and are more likely to establish ties with other Europeans. All of this takes place whilst they are making use of their EU citizenship. As my interviews illustrate, transnational Europeans portray their European identity utilising more cultural factors than non-transnational Europeans. This seems to indicate that, due to geographical and cultural proximity with other Europeans, European identity becomes accessible to lower educated transnational Europeans. Transnationalism transforms the EU and its citizens into a more tangible reality. As a consequence, transnationalism may facilitate a cultural cognitive mobilisation among lower educated transnationals. Embracing this cultural side of European identity does not require socialisation in higher educational institutions. Instead, European identity becomes a meaningful experience adopted as part of transnationals' daily life. For this reason, lower educated transnational Europeans present higher levels of European identification than lower educated non-transnationals.

In the past, research on education and intra-EU mobility obtained mixed results. Some researchers discovered that the university exchange *Erasmus* fostered a sense of European identity (King and Ruiz Gelices 2003), while others contest this result claiming that highly educated students felt European prior to becoming transnational students (Sigalas 2010; Wilson 2011; Mitchell 2012). The bulk of these studies explain European identity variation through quantitative techniques and solely focused on highly educated Europeans in a pre-crisis context. Thanks to the incorporation of a mixed-methodology, my research contributes to these debates by interacting European identity, transnationalism and different educational background with EB datasets before and after the 2008 crisis. Furthermore, the exploration of respondents' European identification and their reasons not to feel European offers a possible

socio-constructivist explanation of the positive impact of transnationalism on lower educated citizens.

8.3.3. Debating EU's democratic deficit from a transnational perspective

The levels of turnout in EP elections have steadily decreased since they were first celebrated in 1979. In the last EP elections (2014), only 42.6% of the EU population cast their vote. With the image of the EU worsening and an increasing lack of trust in the EP since the 2008 financial crash, these levels of turnout may potentially decrease in the future. Loss of Europeans' participation raises questions on the support, legitimacy and democratic deficit of the EU. Concerns for the EU's democratic deficit and low levels of turnout at the EP elections have received several explanations (see Majone 1998 and Moravcsik 2002). For instance, academics have discussed how the predominance of domestic debates during EP elections (Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Schmitt 2005), lack of political contestation in the public sphere (Follesdal and Hix 2006; Risse 2010) or an identifiable candidate for the EP elections (Schmitt *et al.* 2015) negatively influence participation. From all these debates, the idea that lower levels of turnout in EP elections are strongly rooted in Europeans' opinion that they are minor elections remains dominant. For this reason, the EP elections are labelled as second-order elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005). However, this argument cannot explain why the levels of turnout have persistently dropped, whether this phenomenon is related to a lack of EU support (Kochenov 2009) or if low levels of EP turnout reflect "inequalities among its electorate" (Banducci 2016: 210).

Based on European identity and attitudinal characteristics, transnational Europeans should be more active in EP elections than non-transnationals. However, transnationalism deters voting behaviour. This participation deficit contrasts with the expectations on European citizenship after the Treaty of Maastricht (1992). At that time, the amendments surrounding European citizenship were perceived as a tool for social, civic and cultural inclusion (Day and Shaw 2002; Bellamy 2006; Connolly *et al.* 2006). For the first time, intra-EU mobility was not bound to specific labour conditions, and transnational Europeans were entitled to vote for a MEP standing for the same EU member-state where they were residing. The expansion of these European rights facilitated transnationalism. However, making use of the right of freedom within the EU poses serious threats to transnationals' right to vote while residing in another EU member-state. Furthermore, the case-study of Spain unveils that voting struggles also shape domestic vote. Solutions to low levels of turnout in the EP elections have been

widely discussed in the past, mostly from a top-down perspective (Franklin 2001; Mattila 2003; Follesdal and Hix 2006; Schmitt *et al.* 2015). Nonetheless, these debates omit the reality of transnational Europeans. Failing to include transnationalism in the democratic deficit and second-order elections' debates has several consequences. First, an approximation to transnationals' voting behaviour reflects a case where the full implementation of the European citizenship is questioned. Transnational Europeans cannot fully implement nor perform all their democratic rights as European citizens. Even when voting is one of the main pillars of democracy, the struggles among transnational Europeans question the *real* implementation of EU citizenship for one of the demographic groups who –paradoxically– most actively use their European citizenship. Analysing the vote in EP elections from a transnational perspective casts doubt on "the legitimacy of the use of the notion of citizenship itself" for domestic (Kochenov 2009: 2) and European elections.

Second, Europeans' perception that "there is less at stake" in EP elections has been considered one of the main explanatory factors behind the low levels of turnout (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005). However, at the macro level I have demonstrated that transnational Europeans present higher levels of EU cognition, more positive attitudes and stronger feelings of European attachment than non-transnational EU citizens; characteristics that have been found to positively influence vote in EP elections (Mattila 2003; Flickinger and Studdlar 2007; Stockemer 2011; van Klingeren *et al.* 2013; Curtice 2016; Hogh and Larsen 2016; Vasilopoulou 2016). At the micro level, transnational Spaniards' definitions of the act of voting and the reasons among non-voters not to cast their vote reveal the influence of cultural and political socialisation in the national realm. This seems to indicate that to transnational Spaniards EP elections may be considered less important than Spanish general ones. However, this gap between domestic and European elections should not be interpreted as a lack of interest in EP elections. Even when EP elections may be considered second-order elections by transnational and non-transnational young Spaniards, transnational Spaniards showed stronger feelings of European identity and more positive European attitudes.

Third, in line with Banducci's (2016) work, differences in voting behaviour between transnational and non-transnational Europeans reflect the "inequalities in the electorate, as non-voters are not evenly distributed across socio-economic groups" (Banducci 2016: 210). Even when citizenship is also considered a performative act of individuals' identity (Janoschka 2010; Pfister 2011), according to my analyses the difficulties that transnational Europeans encounter prevent these citizens from expressing their civic and cultural identities

in European elections. In the case of transnational Spaniards, these civic constraints go beyond EP elections. Changes in the Spanish legislation regulating postal vote (known as LOREG) and the irregularities of representative Spanish official institutions in other EU member-states are some of the main factors behind the low levels of participation of transnational Spaniards. The transnational vote for the Spanish general elections has dropped from 31.8% in 2008 to 4.9% in 2011 and to 4% in 2015, the year were the last general elections were held (El País 2015). Grassroots associations like Marea Granate have exposed these irregularities to the media and political parties, thus seeking for an effective electoral participation among transnational Spaniards. Unfortunately, electoral inequality and institutional obstacles for transnational Spaniards persist.

In sum, given that a gap of international comparative research on transnationalism and voting behaviour remains (Shaw 2010; Collard 2013), my research aimed at contributing to the impact of transnationalism and vote in EP elections with a macro analysis and the case-study of Spain. My research aims at strengthening past studies exposing the complexities that surround transnationalism and complementing these debates from a transnational perspective. Transnationalism generates a socio-political paradox: it fosters European identity but it deters voting in EP elections. The institutional hurdles attached to transnationalism expose how transnational Europeans cannot make use of their European citizenship in the same terms as non-transnational Europeans. From this perspective, it could be stated that a democratic deficit within the EU persists. Finally, even at risk of resulting in "ordering others and othering orders" (Pallí-Monguilod 1991), given the negative impact that transnationalism has on voting –both at national and European levels– this research contributes to generating a space for young non-transnational and transnational Spaniards to express their identity and political voice, while sharing their transnational experiences in a post-crisis EU.

8.4. Limitations

In this section I discuss the potential limitations of my research. These limitations connect with certain methodological aspects employed to answer the two main research questions. More specifically, I would like to emphasise limitations on these three areas: the operationalisation of transnationalism, the characteristics of the sample, and some of the implications of mixed-methodologies.

Transnationalism and transnational citizens are embedded in intricate realities. Depending on where academics place their attention, the operationalisation of transnationalism varies

enormously. For instance, Kuhn (2015) generates a transnational index based on different facets of transnationalism (e.g. transnational background and transnational human capital). Compared to this type of exhaustive operationalisation, in this research transnationalism is defined through nationality. In the macro analysis, EU citizens who either resided in a member-state different from their own or had more than one European nationality were considered transnational Europeans. One of the limitations of this definition is that it fails to encapsulate all the variations of transnationalism (e.g. first generation non-EU citizens who obtained European citizenship). On the other hand, this simplistic operationalisation allowed me to incorporate EB datasets before and after the 2008 financial crash, and provide a more inclusive cross-time explanation. While the variable transnationalism adapts a simplified definition for statistical analysis, I attempted to complement this constraint with a more sophisticated operationalisation for qualitative analysis. At the micro level, transnational Spaniards were selected because they had been residing in a European capital for at least six months, had been brought up in Spain and belonged to a specific generation cohort (18 to 30 years). On the other hand, non-transnational Spaniards presented the same characteristics as transnationals except that they had never resided abroad.

Second, the educational profile of the respondents represents another potential limitation. The data collection was based on nationality, age and the transnational experience. As a consequence, the educational background of respondents did not determine their selection. However, the bulk of respondents' had reached high educational levels. Given the positive impact of education on European identity, it should be noted that this characteristic may have skewed interviewees' responses. This statement also connects with the tendency of university students to speak other languages –a skill that facilitates interacting with other Europeans. Although the interviews still demonstrated differences based on transnationalism, similar research including respondents from different educational backgrounds will provide a more complete picture.

Finally, the last limitation discusses the use of one case-study. As part of a mixed-methodology I aimed at complementing the results at the macro level with the information gathered at the micro level –and vice versa. Spain represents just one of the southern EU member-states affected by the financial crisis. Yet, this case does not represent – nor can it be assumed it does– other member-states similarly shaped by the economic crash. Given the importance of culture and history for the responses of the Spanish sample, the incorporation

of other case-studies to contrast and complement the results at the macro level would help establish how far the findings on Spain can be generalised to other contexts.

8.5. Future Research

The findings and limitations of this research inspired me to offer four suggestions that can potentially strengthen the state of knowledge of European identity, voting behaviour and transnationalism:

First, emphasise a distinction between cultural and civic identities. Respondents stress that European identity adopts different layers. On one hand, to non-transnational Spaniards European identity lies in their European citizenship. On the other hand, transnational Spaniards have incorporated cultural aspects in their vision of European identity. To them, this cultural facet of European identity complements their European citizenship. However, acknowledging European citizenship does not exclusively establish a connection with European identity. In spite of being aware of their rights as European citizens, there are non-transnational Spaniards who denied feeling European. Given the differences that respondents established, I suggest that further research continues to differentiate civic and cultural European identities. As transnationalism increases, it is likely that European identity will move beyond its civic nature derived from the EU, thus deepening the emotional and cultural side of it. While a small number of academics have incorporated civic and ethnic differences in the past (Bruter 2004; Ruiz-Jiménez *et al.* 2004), the bulk of studies –particularly quantitative studies– unravel European identity as a whole and, in some instances, overlap this identity with European attitudes.

Second, harmonise the EB questions on European identity. This suggestion is connected with the statement of the previous point. The EBe is the most popular dataset among academics who study European identity. In spite of the advantages that this large-N dataset provides, items on European identity fluctuate and lack consistency. For instance, queries on European identity have been posed as a future projection: "In the near future do you see yourself as…?" (see EB 57.1, 60.1, 61, 62, 76.4, 78.2), in the present tense: "Do you see yourself as…?" (see EB 80.1), under European citizenship: "To what extent you feel you are a citizen of the EU" (see EB 79.3), as an attachment: "People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe" (see EB 58.1), and the level of pride: "Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud, not at all proud to be European?" (see EB 62). The lack of harmonisation of these questions hinders comparative

work, thus impeding a consensus of the definition and study of European identity. While this harmonisation can potentially advance European identity research, the format in which respondents' answers tend to be gathered also requires further scrutiny. Querying about European identity in the future has been the question most widely used in the EB. However, this type of question pushes respondents to establish dominance between their two identities ("I feel national and European" vs. "I feel European and national"). Although these answers capture significant information of the coexistence and hierarchy of multiple identities – considering the weight of local and national identities – opposing identities may give a false impression of the relevance that European identity has on EU citizens. In fact, other academics have raised their concerns about the limitations of this type of measurements (Goyder 2003; Sinnott 2005; Ruiz-Jiménez 2007). For this reason, I recommend that datasets like the EB consistently incorporate separate questions for each identity. For instance, the EB 71.3 (2009) includes an item (QE4) that exemplifies this recommendation: "Q: To what extent do you personally feel you are…? A: European / Nationality / Inhabitant of your region / Citizen of the world: to a great extent, somewhat, not really, not at all, don't know."

Third, incorporate more items measuring voting behaviour of transnational Europeans. Low levels of turnout in EP elections are largely explained as a consequence of citizens' belief that these elections are perceived as second-order elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005). While this argument remains valid for the general EU population, it partially explains low levels of participation in European elections for the transnational population. In order to make a more accurate assessment of this argument from a transnational perspective, large-N datasets require items measuring domestic (e.g. locally and nationally) and European votes – vote for a candidate from their member-state or the host member-state– of transnational Europeans. However, datasets like the EB do not register this type of information. The EB exclusively accounts for voting participation and preferences (i.e. political party) of non-transnational Europeans. Due to this gap, academics interested in conducting international comparative research of voting behaviour of transnational Europeans must obtain this information from local and national institutions. This tedious procedure deters harmonised international data and considerably limits understanding the reality of the transnational vote. Until this aspect has been covered, research will fail to fully analyse domestic and European voting behaviour for transnational Europeans. In addition to this, given the negative effect that transnationalism has on voting behaviour, it would be beneficial if macro datasets would consistently adopt further queries investigating the reasons for non-voting behaviour.

Throughout the 2000s the EB exclusively asked for non-voters' reasons in 2009 (EB 71.3). Adding similar questions in other EB datasets will potentially ameliorate future comparative research. Yet, the deficiency of transnationals' voting behaviour in macro datasets is not exclusive of the EB. For instance, the datasets of the European Social Survey and the European Elections Study solely gather data on the national voter for non-transnational Europeans.

Four, generate comparative studies combining transnationalism and voting behaviour at the meso level. The 31 in-depth interviews conducted to transnational Spaniards highlight the impact that institutions have on the political engagement of this particular group. In some cases, respondents expressed a lack of rigorous information from Spanish consulates and embassies. To others the voting card by post arrived past voting deadlines. Other respondents displayed unclear information regarding their electoral rights as European citizens. The institutional hurdles that transnational Spaniards encountered induce me to suggest meso level studies. Furthermore, I would encourage comparative studies at the meso level focusing on power dynamics between transnationals and institutions. Transnational individuals are embedded in multifaceted contexts. Contrary to non-transnational citizens, transnationals form socio-political spaces influenced by individuals and institutions from their original communities, and those established in the host societies (Smith and Guarnizo 1999). According to Guarnizo and Portes (2003), political behaviour among transnational individuals "reproduce pre-existing power asymmetries" (2003: 1211). In the Spanish case, transnational respondents expose how the lack of support from Spanish representative institutions, as well as changes in voting legislation, and irregularities of postal vote have persistently deterred transnational vote. The Spanish case poses questions about the impact of institutions for other transnational Europeans. While the case-study of Spain provides insightful information, the qualitative nature of these findings prevents their generalisability. Nevertheless, future research incorporating comparative mixed-methods studies for other EU member-states would potentially clarify the impact of institutions on transnationals' political engagement.

Appendices

A.1. First contact message (English translation)

Hello,

Let me introduce myself. My name is Ana Carrillo and I am doing a PhD in England (University of Leicester). My main topic of research is Spaniards' youth opinion towards some communities and cultures. In order to achieve this, I need to interview 60 people. Although this study has limited resources, everybody deserves to be recognised for their time. For this reason, I am raffling a €70 Amazon coupon among the 60 participants. This coupon will be sent once all the interviews have been conducted. I am specifically searching for Spaniards who are: living in a European capital (e.g. Berlin, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, London or Rome), have been living in this capital for at least 6 months and are between 18 and 30 years old.

If you have this profile (all the characteristics) and would like to participate click on the following link: [e-questionnaire link]. Thanks a lot for your time and collaboration.

A.2. Participation information form

European identity, voting behaviour and transnationalism

Good morning/afternoon, my name is Ana Carrillo and I am doing a Ph.D. on European identity funded by the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Leicester (UK). As part of my research, I am currently conducting interviews to Spaniards living in other European countries and Spaniards who remain in Spain. For this reason, I would like to invite you to participate in this research by answering questions about your perception and feelings as a citizen of the EU. This study consists of different stages. At the present and until mid-2015 the 'interview and data collection' stage will take place. Once I have conducted all the interviews, the information will be transcribed and translated into English with the purpose of being analysed and incorporated as part of my Ph.D. thesis.

I would like to let you know that your collaboration is voluntary and that all the information gathered during the interview will be analysed only by me, remaining anonymous and confidential, in other words, your name will not be disclosed or associated with any of your answers. You are entitled to withdraw any information (partially or totally) shared during the interview at any point. If you decide to participate, based on ethic regulations, I would need you to sign this consent form in which you voluntarily accept to participate in this interview, knowing that the information although subject to publication, will always be anonymous. The purpose of this study is to offer a better understanding of European identity perceptions' and how Spaniards relate to other identities. Depending on the length of the answers provided the average time of the interviews may vary from 30 up to 60 minutes. As a token of appreciation, a 70 Euros Amazon voucher will be raffled among all participants.

For further information you may contact me by e-mail: acl28@le.ac.uk , visit my university profile at http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/politics/people/research-students/ana-carrillo-lopez or contact my main supervisor Dr. Rick Whitaker (richard.whitaker@leicester.ac.uk), Thank you for your time and collaboration!

A.3.   Participation consent

1. Full title of project: European identity, voting behaviour and transnationalism.

2. Name, position and contact address of the researcher:

Ana Carrillo

Ph.D. Researcher

266 London Road. Brookfield.

LE2 1RQ. Leicester – United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0) 116 252 2585

e-mail: acl28@le.ac.uk

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotations in publications.

In order to comply with the University of Leicester regulations and if you agree with all the points described above, I would kindly ask you to include your signature below.

Thanks for your collaboration. May you have any queries, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Signatures and date of the participant and the researcher.

A.4. Preview of e-questionnaire

University of Leicester

Estudio de opinión de la juventud española.

0% completo

Página 1: Bienvenido/a

Este proyecto pretende estudiar las razones por las que las personas se sienten cercanas o afín a una comunidad. El estudio tiene dos fases:

1. La primera fase consiste en una serie de preguntas cortas (tiempo estimado 5 minutos) que se responden en línea. Tras rellenar estas preguntas se le pedirá que facilite un **correo electrónico**, en donde se le explicará el proyecto con más detalle.
2. La segunda fase del proyecto se trata de una conversación, por teléfono o por Skype, más distendida en la que le haré preguntas con respecto a su ciudad, su cultura, etc. Estas preguntas no requieren preparación o conocimiento previo dado que se tratan de su opinión y experiencia personal. Además, toda información será tratada de forma anónima y confidencial.

En agradecimiento por su participación **en ambas fases**, tendrá la posibilidad de ganar un **cupón de Amazon valorado en 70 €** que se sorteará entre todos los participantes (un total de 60 personas). El/la ganador/a será anunciado una vez que se hayan finalizado las dos fases del proyecto (aproximadamente a finales de mayo) y el cupón podrá ser canjeado a través de un enlace que recibirá por correo electrónico.

Si quiere ponerse en contacto conmigo, puede hacerlo a través de mi página del Facebook o de mi correo electrónico: acl28@le.ac.uk

¡Muchas gracias por su participación!

Para **rellenar las preguntas** de la primera fase tiene que **pinchar el** recuadro azul abajo a la derecha en el que se lee **'SIGUIENTE'**. Recuerde que es necesario responder todas las preguntas para poder facilitar una dirección de correo electrónico.

Siguiente >

A.5.   E-questionnaire

Could you please indicate your:

- Gender: female / male

- Place of birth

- Place of residency

- Date of birth

- Educational level

- Are you currently…? Working, unemployed, studying, other…

- Would you mind sharing your e-mail? This will be solely used for the purpose of this study.

Thanks for your time and participation!

A.6. Questionnaire

Good morning/afternoon/evening. First of all, thank you for your time and availability. Before we begin, I would like to briefly explain the dynamics of the interview and the purpose of this conversation. As I mentioned before, I am doing my thesis in England. I am interested in understanding cultural and political perceptions of young Spaniards living in different European capitals and living in Madrid. Basically, I am going to ask you open questions, in other words, questions that do not have a fixed answer. Although the questions do not require any preparation, sometimes you will need a few seconds to find your answer. Do not worry about it. There is no right or wrong answer, I am mainly interested in knowing your experience, opinion and perception on certain socio-cultural matters, that's all. Unless you have any queries, we can start with the first question.

Local level

If I remember correctly you mentioned that you were born in _____ Is that correct?

And for how long did you live in this city? Is this where you were brought up and/or spent most of your life until you reached adulthood?

How would you describe the people who come from your city? How would you describe ___ (demonym of the inhabitants of that city)?

National level

Thank you. And now, if we broaden the scope to the national level… I know that it is difficult to put all Spaniards in the same boat, under one definition, but if I asked you to do that, how would you describe Spanish people? Would you keep the same definition that you gave me to the people from your city? Would you add/remove other characteristics?

Feeling of belonging at local and national levels

Do you think it is important to feel that you belong to a specific place? Why? Why not?

Coming back to your city, do you feel that you belong to your city? Does saying 'I am from (NAME CITY)' mean anything to you? What does it mean? Which features do you think make you feel that you belong/or that you don't belong to that city?

And if we go back to the national level, do you feel Spanish? Why? Why not? Does saying 'I am Spaniard' have any meaning to you?

Defining the European Union

Leaving these topics behind, what is the first thing that pops into your mind if I tell you the words "European Union"? What do these words suggest to you?

How would you define the European Union?

(If respondent has difficulties answering) Imagine that I am someone from abroad, not from the European Union, actually from outside Europe. Let's say that I am from Thailand, how would you describe what the European Union is to someone from Thailand?

EU symbols

Do you know any symbol(s) of the European Union?

(If the flag is not mentioned), do you know the European Union flag?

Do you feel that the flag of the European Union represents you? Why? Why not?

Do you feel represented by any other flag(s)? Which ones? Why? Why not?

Perceptions of the EU

What is your opinion about the project of the EU?

Does the EU have any meaning to you?

(If yes) What does it mean?

(If not) Why not?

Would you say that the EU is in crisis? Why? Why not?

For this question, let's imagine that I have a magic wand, ok? With this magic wand you could modify any aspect (financial, legislative, economic and cultural) inside the EU. Is there anything you would change or you would keep the EU as it is?

European identity

Finally, I have previously asked you about your perceptions at local and national levels, but if I ask you now 'do you feel European?' What would your answer be? Could you explain further?

(IF AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER) In your opinion, why do some citizens do not feel European?

(IF NEGATIVE ANSWER) In your opinion, why do some citizens feel European?

Only ask to transnational citizens

I hope you don't mind me asking you but, why did you decide to live abroad?

Politic/civic aspects

Do you frequently read about or are interested in politics?

And when you read or get information through different means (social media, TV, newspaper), which news interest you the most: local news, national news, European news, international news…? Why?

Regardless of your political views, may I ask if you have participated in any elections? Have you ever voted at local level, regional level, national level and/or European level?

Why did you vote? Why didn't you vote?

Have you ever participated in a protest or manifestation?

Do you remember the nature of that protest? Was it educational, political, social security?

Have you ever signed an on-line petition from platforms like change.org, Greenpeace, International Amnesty? Which ones?

Social Capital

Do you have any friends from other EU member states? From which countries do they come from?

How many languages, apart from your mother tongue(s), do you speak fluently?

Do you use any of these languages frequently (reading books/news, watching movies…)?

Have you travelled within the EU? Which EU countries have you visited?

Well, this is the end of the interview.

Thanks again for your time and consideration. Is there anything you would like to ask me? Before we say "goodbye" I would like to ask you if there's anybody you know that would be interested in helping me as well. It must be someone in the age range of 20-30, living in Madrid and who has not lived abroad before or someone living in London, Rome, Brussels, Amsterdam or Berlin. Thanks again for your help! Have a nice day.

A.7.   Example of interview's annotations

T.6   Interview recorded in phone as # Voice 192.

ENTREVISTADO/A Chechu J. G.   **FECHA** 19/03/2015
LUGAR DE NACIMIENTO Madrid
LUGAR DE RESIDENCIA Amsterdam
COMENTARIOS

- Buscan la vida y abierto de mentalidad, sin problemas
- La .Abierto/ dentro: ruidosos, conectamos, calientes,
+ humanos,
- Tiramos tópicos < chulos
                         agarrados   ,
                         ... vagos
- 100% español.
- Sí, raíces, "lo que eres tú". No me siento, son muy diferentes.
- Integrado pero no identificado.
- "Mucho político" = EU. Alemania, Fª → poder con todo.
- Buena idea inicial, moneda "El mundo entero", no habría
- Económica/ → intereses y poder #
- Está todo destruido. Destruirlo todo y empezar de ∅. Derechos iguales. Igual de poder + económico, sin favoritismos.
- El euro,
- Pues sí, soy español, me siento.
- Diferencias < Norte ̶S̶u̶r̶ Europa.
                       Sur

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A.8.   Descriptive of variables (2000)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
European identity	15570	0.526	0.562	0	1
Transnationalism	16067	0.03	0.16	0	1
Male	17088	0.48	0.50	0	1
Age	16462	45.70	17.36	18	99
Education	17060	2.22	0.95	1	4
Occupation	14286	4.30	1.88	1	7
Far Right	17088	0.04	0.20	0	1

Source: EB 54.1

A.9.   Descriptive of variables (2003)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
European identity	15705	0.55	0.49	0	1
Transnationalism	16082	0.03	0.17	0	1
Male	16082	0.48	0.5	0	1
Age	15465	46.29	17.66	18	95
Education	14439	2	0.75	1	3
Occupation	13602	4.36	1.86	1	7
Community	15934	1.94	0.78	1	3
Far Right	16082	0.05	0.21	0	1

Source: EB 60.1

A.10. Descriptive of variables (2005)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
European identity	15184	0.56	0.49	0	1
Transnationalism	15578	0.03	0.17	0	1
Male	15678	0.45	0.49	0	1
Age	15097	48.37	17.40	18	98
Education	15120	2.21	0.91	1	4
Occupation	13828	4.29	1.80	1	7
Community	15503	1.89	0.79	1	3
Far Right	15754	0.06	0.24	0	1

Source: 64.2

A.11. Descriptive of variables (2012)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
European identity	15325	0.60	0.48	0	1
Transnationalism	15201	0.05	0.21	0	1
Male	15492	0.45	0.49	0	1
Age	15123	51.08	18.86	18	95
Education	15119	2.65	2.04	1	3
Occupation	14451	4.63	1.60	1	7
Community	15466	1.77	0.68	1	3
Far Right	15492	0.07	0.26	0	1

Source: EB 77.4

A.12.   Descriptive of variables (2014)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
European identity	15359	0.62	0.48	0	1
Transnationalism	15605	0.06	0.23	0	1
Male	15605	0.47	0.47	0	1
Age	15283	54.12	18.58	18	99
Education	15209	2.31	0.82	1	4
Occupation	14728	4.63	1.64	1	7
Community	15605	1.98	0.64	1	3
Far Right	15605	0.05	0.23	0	1

Source: EB 82.3

A.13. Descriptive of variables (2016)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
European identity	15283	0.67	0.46	0	1
Transnationalism	15564	0.05	0.21	0	1
Male	15564	0.46	0.49	0	1
Age	15257	52.08	18.71	18	99
Education	15222	2.42	0.80	1	4
Occupation	14730	4.61	1.69	1	7
Community	15556	1.97	0.59	1	3
Far Right	15564	0.03	0.19	0	1

Source: EB 85.2

A.14. Interaction terms between transnationalism and education (EU-15).

	2000		2003		2005		2012		2014		2016	
	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.
Transnationalism#up to 15 years	-1.450*	.566	.348	.560	.159	.358	.881**	.309	.053	.279	-.338	.313
Transnationalism#16 to 19 years	-1.023	.558	-.204	.335	.497	.350	.185	.233	-.233	.236	-.065	.281
Transnationalism#Still studying	-1.444	.743	.427	.796	.498	.784	-.298	.467	.029	.567	-1.005*	.460

Note: Figures are coefficients of interaction of logit models, standard errors in parentheses. p*<0.05, p**<0.01, p***<0.001.

Source: Eurobarometer 54.1 (2000), 60.1 (2003), 64.2 (2005), 77.4 (2012), 82.3 (2014) and 85.2 (2016).

A.15. International Standard Classification Education (ISCE) of the Spanish educational system.

Spanish classification	ISCED classification
EGB	Primary Education
Formación Profesional	Vocational education
Bachillerato	Secondary education
Diplomatura	Graduate
Máster/Doctorado	Postgraduate
Source: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED	

A.16. Control variables

Variable	Type	Clusters
Age	Continuous	18 – 90 years
Gender	Dichotomous	Female
		Male
Education (finished education)	Ordinal	Up to 15 years
		16 – 19 years
		More than 20 years
		Still studying
Occupation	Categorical	Self-employed
		Managers and White Collars
		Manual Workers
		Unemployed
		Retired
		Students
Far Right	Dichotomous	Far Right
European Identity	Dichotomous	Yes/No
EU membership	Dichotomous	Beneficial/Not beneficial
European cognition	Dichotomous	Heard of EU institutions/Not heard of…
EU image	Dichotomous	Positive/Negative
EP trust	Dichotomous	Tend to trust/Tend not to…
Compulsory vote	Dichotomous	Yes/No
National and EP elections	Dichotomous	Same day/Not same day
Election day	Dichotomous	Weekday / Weekend
Gallagher Index	Continuous	0 – 100
Residence Size	Categorical	Small/ Middle Town
		Large Town
		Rural Area

Source: Eurobarometer

A.17. Descriptive of variables (2009)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
EP vote	11952	0.43	0.49	0	1
Transnationalism	15460	0.04	0.19	0	1
Male	15465	0.43	0.49	0	1
Age	14959	46.80	17.41	18	94
Education	14897	2.23	0.86	1	4
Occupation	14286	4.50	1.73	1	7
European Identity	15208	0.70	0.45	0	1
European attitudes	15264	0.89	0.30	0	1
European Cognition	15264	0.81	0.30	0	1
EU image	15466	0.80	0.39	0	1
Trust EP	12706	0.38	0.48	0	1
Far Right	15465	0.75	0.30	0	1
Compulsory vote	15465	0.03	0.19	0	1
National and EP vote	15502	0.60	0.49	0	1
Week vote	15465	0.08	0.27	0	1
Type Community	15334	1.92	0.81	1	3
Gallagher Index	15465	0.52	0.49	0	1

Source: EB 71.3

A.18. Descriptive of variables (2012)

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
EP vote	11540	0.52	0.49	0	1
Transnationalism	13672	0.05	0.21	0	1
Male	12134	0.44	0.49	0	1
Age	11766	47.95	17.12	18	95
Education	11913	2.78	2.23	1	4
Occupation	11414	4.45	1.68	1	7
European Identity	11932	0.49	0.49	0	1
European attitudes	7156	0.76	0.42	0	1
European Cognition	11903	0.13	0.34	0	1
EU image	15466	0.64	0.47	0	1
Far Right	12134	0.08	0.27	0	1
Compulsory vote	12134	0.04	0.21	0	1
National and EP vote	12134	0.09	0.29	0	1
Week vote	12134	0.09	0.29	0	1
Type of Community	12131	1.92	0.80	1	3
Gallagher Index	12134	0.68	0.46	0	1

Source: EB 77.4

A.19. Levels of occupation between non-transnational and transnational Europeans (in percentages).

	2009		2012	
	Non-Transnationals	Transnationals	Non-Transnationals	Transnationals
Self-Employed	8.6	8.74	8.03	7.93
Managers	9.56	8.36	9.65	8.69
White Collars	13.12	15.61	12.95	15.55
Manual Workers	21.76	30.86	20.87	27.9
Unemployed	8.66	9.11	8.55	13.26
Retired	30.77	17.47	32.64	18.9
Students	7.53	9.85	7.32	7.77
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Eurobarometer 71.3 (2009 and 77.4 (2012)

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