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**Social Representations
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*“Applying the Facet Theory and Statistical Analysis
via HUDAP software to Research on
Social Representations:
Theoretical and Methodological
Computer Mediated Training Sessions”*

at the European PhD on Social Representations & Communication
Multimedia LAB & Research Center
in Rome

**Modeling Social Representations of European Nations
and European Union:
A Facet Theory Approach**

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Abstract: The goal of the *EuroSkyCompass* research program is to analyze how cross-national positioning is expressed via attitudes and the social representations (SR) of geopolitical entities (nation, Europe, world, European states), conceived as a system of interrelated representations in relation to the North-South- East-West geo-political parameters.

Consistent with a multi-method approach, data analysis includes the use of various techniques to provide cross-analysis of results obtained.

Results obtained by WASSA1 and Facet Analysis conducted on the data collected in 2003, one year before EU enlargement, via an Attitude Scale towards 38 European States, (EU Members and Non) took into consideration the subjects' nationality and the polarity indexes as attitudinal measures derived from the Associative Networks with regard to nation, Europe and world.

Key words: Social Representations, Europe, European Nations, Associative Network.

1.1 Theoretical introduction

The last decade of a century which was defined as the “short century” by Hobsbawn (1995) and as the “tragic century” by Todorov (2000), saw a definite will to completely change a violent and rude world into one of magnificent cooperation and an aggregation dynamics engine (with exponentially growing power cycles). It is mainly in “Old Europe” that such dynamics are in opposition to ancestral divisions and strife between states and regions.

With an integration process that began in 1951ⁱ and accelerated in the last decade, Europeans are seeing the achievement of a politico-economic project that unites and compares aspects and fragments that are "dispersed" in European culture via working-out codes shared on different levels between political subjects and various communities.



The 2004 enlargement that saw the European Union (EU) grow by 10 new member countries, jumping from the Europe of the 15 to 25, constitutes another step in this direction.ⁱⁱ

What we need to understand is what brought about this evolution in terms of belonging, identification and national feeling for the citizens of a Europe that seems to be continuously trying to bridge the gap of a post-modern social reality that does not correspond to the idea of the “Old Continent”.

The results of the research described in this article were designed to reconstruct the representations that students from 8 European states (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Portugal, Spain) and one from the Mediterranean (Tunisia)ⁱⁱⁱ, had concerning Europe, the EU, European countries and the dynamics that imminently would be involving them. This took place in 2003, a particular time as it was the preparatory period for the enlargement of 2004 as well as a period following some events that profoundly marked the perception of the European and world politico-economic order.

These results were extrapolated from a larger body of data collected via a multi-method questionnaire within the scope of a cross-national research project known by the acronym EuroSkyCompass^{iv}. On the theoretical level, the research was inspired by the Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, S., 1961, 1976, 2000) with wider paradigmatic links to the Social Identity Theories (Tajfel, 1978, Tajfel and Turner, 1979, Breakwell, 1993), Social Memory (Halbwachs, 1925, 1950, Bartlett, 1932) and the Multidimensional Identity Model (de Rosa, 1996).

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According to this last model, numerous levels of identity (place, regional, national and supranational identity) intersect in a dynamic manner and not necessarily with vertically inclusive modalities. Therefore, this approach permits at different times, highlighting various facets of the representations of geo-political objects that are interconnected and anchored to subjects' systems of identification and attitudes towards their own nations, the European Union and its member states.

The EuroSkyCompass project proposes to study the representations of the objects cited above, and, in particular, to show their transformation by comparing them with those that emerged in 1996 during a previous cross-national study on the topic conducted by de Rosa on a sample of 3454 young Europeans. (de Rosa, 1996, 2000, de Rosa and Mormino, 1997, 2000).

In the 1996 results, it is particularly interesting to recall that the geographic parameters North-South-East-West were anchored to the politico-economic dimension of the representations of the European Union. A clear opposition was noted between a rich and developed North-West and the East, poor and backward (sometimes associated with the South, in turn essentially defined on the basis of climatic and naturalistic dimensions.) As we will see in presenting some of the research results that follow, that opposition results as only partially in continuity with the results of the previous study.



The first study was conducted in 1993 and in 1994 was extended to include an Austrian sample group just prior to Austria's entry into the EU. By the time the successive study was completed in 2003, a decade had passed that was filled with events that introduced profound changes to Europeans' social reality (objective and perceived) such as the Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union Citizens (2000) and the introduction of a common currency, the Euro in 2001. In addition, there were also profound repercussions on a global scale, both on the level of geopolitical relationships and citizens' sense of security following the dramatic events of the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the war in Iraq (2002) and the chain of terrorist attacks that later occurred within (Madrid, 2004).

In a psychosocial optic, changes in the representations systems are actually happening day by day, and the decision makers involved are not the only ones to play a major role. On the contrary, they receive input from changes in everyday life and societal value systems that, with different targets and through different groupings (more or less integrated, majorities and minorities, nomic or anomic) are expressed in different ways.

Such dynamics are essential to the processes of genesis and transformation of representations concerning objects with strong geopolitical weight (such as the European Union, nation, North, South, East, West) that different social groups in different countries work through. Media discourse provides continuous opportunities for comparison and negotiation of different positions according to opinion leaders, institutional contexts of reference, and the different knowledge bases, cultures and ideological orientation that characterize political identity.^v

In this paper we are offering some empirical results concerning cultural "belonging". value systems and the representations that they rest upon and attitudes towards Europe and European states.

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At this level we assume that the diverse national and cultural contexts, the various levels of subjects' identification with the own nation, Europe and the modern world and the systems of social categorization associated with those identifications will synthesize and be translated into attitudes towards other European states. In fact "the relationship of reciprocal dependence between culture and individuals emerges if you interpret the problems being studied via the identification of 'social values' and 'attitudes'." (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918)

Although traditionally linked to research on attitudes, using Facet Theory to study relationships between national "belonging" and attitudes towards other European countries, EU members or non-members, is crucial for understanding the dynamics of the social representations (SRs) of Europe, the EU and European states.

According to Moscovici, from the social representations angle, the orientation of behaviors is organized around attitude conceived as the most primitive component of the social representation. In effect, they manifest the population's latent tendencies and can generate others by providing the subjects with behavioral models. "In their dimension of attitude, SRs allow orienting behavior via the diversity of stimulations of the environment itself" (Moscovici, 1961), generating schema or models representative of classes of objects that orient intra- and inter-group relations.

Methodology

Data collection tools

For data collection we designed a multi-lingual (Italian, English, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Finnish, French, Hungarian) questionnaire of a projective nature (textual and graphic) integrating structured tools. More specifically:

- **Associative networks** (de Rosa, 1995, 2002), a tool that assigns to the subjects expressing the representation the task of identifying ramifications and links between words that they themselves write around a stimulus word that appears at the centre of the page. Additional information requested: the elicitation order for the words, which is indicative of their salience and the valence attributed to them in terms of positive/negative/neutral. Because of their projective nature, Associative Networks with the three word-stimuli nation, Europe and world were at the beginning of the questionnaire. To evaluate psychological anchoring, or rather, the attitudinal component implicit in the representational fields, de Rosa (1995, 2002) suggests the *polarity index* (P) that is determined from the subjects' positive, negative or neutral evaluations of the stimuli evoked by the key words (nation, Europe, world). The index is calculated using the formula: $(N^{\circ} \text{ positive words} - N^{\circ} \text{ negative words}) / \text{total } N^{\circ} \text{ of words}$.

Results vary from -1 to +1 and according to the value assumed, is recodified:

- *negative polarity index*, for P between -1 and -0.05 (recodified as 1), indicates that the majority of words were connotated as negative;
 - *neutral polarity index*, for P between -0.04 and + 0.04 (recodified as 2), indicates that the number of positive and negative words tend to balance out;
 - *positive polarity index*, for P between + 0.05 and + 1 (recodified as 2), indicates that most words were connotated positively.
- **European Sky Compass**, a projective relational tool that, aside from indicating the cardinal points as anchors, asks subjects to represent the relationships between themselves, their own country, their own favorite foreign country, Italy and Europe as they actually imagine them in terms of inclusion,

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exclusion and proximity. (For example, in the case of the North African sample, France). This tool allows superimposing the verbal projective dimension (evocation for the cardinal points) on the graphical one.

- **Silent Map of Europe**, we asked subjects to draw North-South and East-West axes on a map of Europe in order to express, in their perception, Europe's center of gravity and which countries are included in the four quadrants formed by the cardinal axes.
- **Questionnaire**, in three sections: 1. questions on social and demographic features and on experience and knowledge of European countries; 2. a set of questions on how those countries represent Europe and its different regions and 3. an Attitude Scale referring to the different European countries. Via an Attitude Scale respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they like each of 38 European countries on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

For the purpose of this paper, only results about socio-demographic variables, the associative networks for the three stimuli (nation, Europe, world) in terms of polarity indexes and the Attitude Scale will be discussed.

Data Analysis Techniques

In order to better understand the complex inter-relationships of such a large data set, a multi-dimensional tool known as Smallest Space Analysis was used. This technique, developed by Louis Guttman, presents the data graphically, portraying the structure of the data. First, a correlation matrix is calculated using the non-linear, regression-free Monotonicity Coefficient.



Points are plotted according to a principle that can be intuitively understood: the higher the correlation between two items, the closer they are on the map and, conversely, the lower the correlation, the further apart they are (Guttman 1968; Levy 1985, 1994). The map helps in perceiving the various relationships between items by revealing distinct regions of correlated data (Canter, 1985; Guttman 1968, 1982; Levy 1994; Shye 1978). By definition, a structure can be found for any data in $n-1$ dimensions, where n equals the number of items in the correlation table. Therefore, the smaller the number of dimensions necessary to discern a structure, the stronger the significance and credibility of the findings will be. The SSA map is then interpreted based on content. The plotting of the points is objective, but the division of the map into regions is subjective, guided by the theoretical basis of the study. A typology of the symbols is developed based on the results of the analysis.

After the basic map is generated, other variables, such as sub-populations, may be introduced as "external variables" (Cohen and Amar 2002). In order to integrate external variables while preserving the structure of the original components, the original map is first "fixed." The external variables are then plotted, one by one, in such a way that the original structure is not affected. Every external variable is plotted in the space in correspondence to its correlation with the original fixed items. In this way we see the relationship of each of the sub-groups to the primary variables, but not their relationship to one another. The external variables tool permits comparison of many different sub-populations within the context of the original structure.

Aims and Hypothesis

Consistent with the formulation of the theoretical question put forward above, in this paper we assume that the different cultural "belongings" of the subjects have an influence on the attitudes they express

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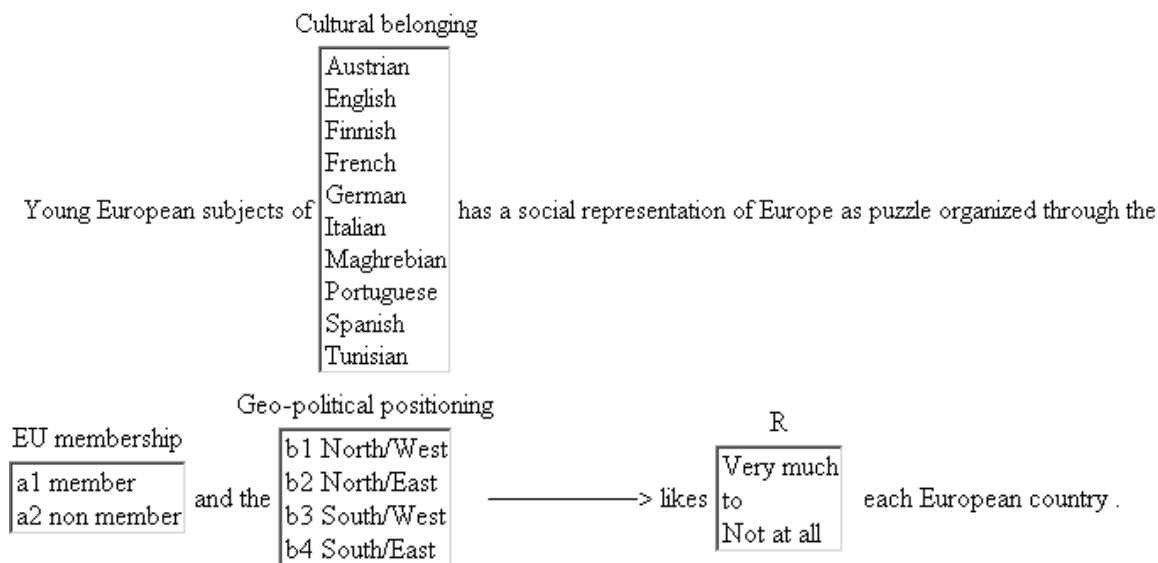
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towards different European countries, EU members and non-members, measured on a seven point Attitude Scale.

In addition, we also assume that the attitude associated to the system of representations nation-Europe-world is particularly sensitive to the shared system of values in a given cultural context. We assume, therefore, that the positioning of subjects of different nationalities vis-à-vis the concepts of nation, Europe and world, measured in terms of a polarity index, is also in a significant relationship with the system of attitudes that the same subjects express towards European countries.

These hypotheses are verified via WSSA1, with analyses in which the variables nationality and polarity index per nation, Europe and world are projected as variables external to the structure of data relative to attitudes towards European countries.

Finally, in function of the supposed relationship between the cultural "belonging" of the subjects interviewed (all citizens of EU-15 countries, except for the Tunisians) and attitudes towards European states, we decided to conduct a Facet Analysis taking into consideration the status at the time of data collection in 2003 as *EU Member* or *Non-EU Member* of each of the European countries inserted in the Attitude Scale assuming that this status would bring about differences in the attitudes expressed by the subjects towards the 38 European countries.



The sample: social and demographic features and students' knowledge

The results presented in this section refer to answers from university students (18 to 27 years old), of which 60% were women from the following European and non-European countries: Austria (142), Spain (413), Finland (200), France (359), Germany (162), Italy (90), Portugal (344), United Kingdom (168), as well as a sample of students from the University of Tunis (50) and a sample of students of Magherbian origin resident in France (302), for a total of 2228 subjects^{vi}.

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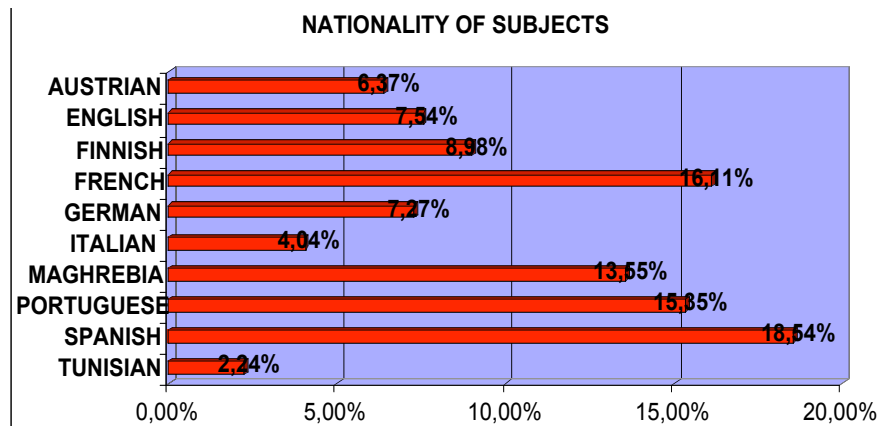




Chart 1- Frequency Distribution relative the variable Nationality of subjects

Among the numerous population variables inserted in the research plan of a cognitive (informational and experiential), ideo-political and linguistic-cultural nature, we will limit ourselves to describing some of the profiles that emerged from the subjects' ideological positioning and their historical, geographical and political knowledge.

On the ideological plane, on the basis of the average values selected by the subjects on a scale from 1 to 7 to indicate their political position, Austrian, German, Italian, and Moroccan students resident in France are located in a center-left position with values between 3.1 and 3.37. Their English, Finnish, Portuguese and Spanish colleagues move somewhat towards the center-right, oscillating between 3.55 and 3.92. The French students were located exactly in the center presenting an average of 3.5.

On the cultural plane, these subjects rated their knowledge of History, geography and politics on a seven-point scale. In all 10 sub samples, the average values oscillated between 3.38 and 4.14, with a few exceptions that indicate a perception of a better knowledge of politics for the English (4.48) and Italians (4.23), of History for the Italians (4.51), of geography for the Finns (4.49), and a perception of less knowledge about politics for the French (3.27) and about geography for the French (3.17) and Tunisians (3.25).

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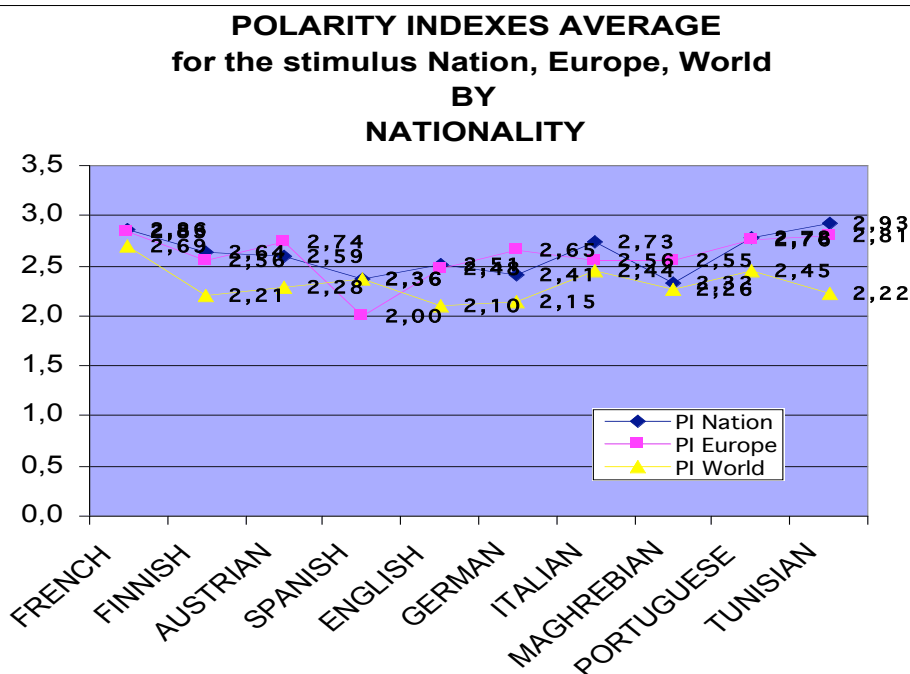




Chart 2- Distribution of Polarity Index averages for representation objects nation, Europe and world in 10 sub-samples under analysis.

Chart 2 represents for the 10 sub-samples the distribution of the average values calculated relative to the Polarity Indices, as synthetic measurements of the attitude towards the representational objects nation, Europe, world, which we recodified with values between 1 (negative attitude) and 3 (positive attitude). Independent of cultural "belongings", the results show that attitudes towards the stimulus "world" are significantly more negative than those towards the stimuli "nation" and "Europe" (oscillating between values from 2.00 and 2.46 with the exception of the French who showed an average of 2.60). On the other hand, the attitudes towards Nation and Europe show average values respectively between 2.32 and 2.93, and 2.48 and 2.83 (with the exception of the average for the Spanish subjects, 2.00), revealing intersecting patterns, sometimes with overlaps as in the case of the French (respectively 2.86 for nation and 2.83 for Europe), the English (respectively 2.51 for nation and 2.48 for Europe) and the Portuguese (respectively 2.78 for nation and 2.76 for Europe).

HIGHEST-RATED		MID-RATED		LOWEST-RATED	
Country	Average rating	Country	Average rating	Country	Average rating
Italy	5.34	Germany	4.35	Lithuania	3.42
Spain	4.98	Iceland	4.27	Romania	3.39
France	4.90	Belgium	4.00	Slovenia	3.38
Greece	4.84	Hungary	4.00	Bulgaria	3.36
Portugal	4.75	Austria	3.95	Slovakia	3.33
Netherlands	4.74	Luxembourg	3.91	Macedonia	3.27
Sweden	4.74	Czech Republic	3.89	Ukraine	3.22
Ireland	4.64	Poland	3.82	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	3.18
Great Britain	4.60	Turkey	3.68	Moldova	3.15
Norway	4.60	Russia	3.58	Bosnia	3.05
Switzerland	4.54	Estonia	3.50	Belarus	2.97

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Finland	4.46	Latvia	3.47		Albania	2.69
Denmark	4.44	Croatia	3.45			

Table I: Average of responses to question: “To what extent do you like each of the following countries (1 = not at all, 7 = very much)”.

Table I shows the average rating received by each of the 38 countries. The table is arranged so that the highest-rated third is in the first column on the left, the mid-rated third in the center, and the lowest-rated third in the column to the right. The highest rating was given to Italy, the lowest to Albania. More generally, we find countries from the European Mediterranean, Scandinavia and Northern Europe among the countries about which there were explicitly positive attitudes while all countries about which there were negative attitudes were all Eastern European.

In conformity with the results obtained in the 1993-1994 study, the best-liked countries did not correspond to the perception of the economically more powerful countries, which even among themselves did not have homogenous results. In fact, in the results from 1993-1994 and 2003, Germany is the least liked among those defined as Big Bosses (United Kingdom, France, Germany), while for the cultural dimension France has average results more in line with those of Mediterranean countries.

Results via WSSA1

The SSA map of data concerning the Attitude Scale towards European countries is shown in Figure 1.

In a very interesting way, this “cognitive map” reproduces the geo-political representation of Europe from the perspective of university students, mainly EU citizens. In this respect, it is at the same time an “attitudinal map” of respondents towards the various countries (EU members and Non-members). In this subjective map of attitudes we can easily recognize four regions that correspond to the geopolitical structural configuration of Europe: North-West, South-West, North-East and South-East.

The western half of the map shows more distinction between the countries, while many of those in the North-East are grouped closely together, indicating a lack of distinction between them in the minds of the respondents.

Russia is set somewhat apart from other Eastern European countries, even those that were once part of the Soviet Union.

The Mediterranean countries (France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece) are together in one region, but with significant space between them.

Turkey is isolated in the South-East region; also reflecting the special role played by this country in the construction of political discourse in media agenda setting.

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Figure 1: SSA of the results of rating 38 European countries

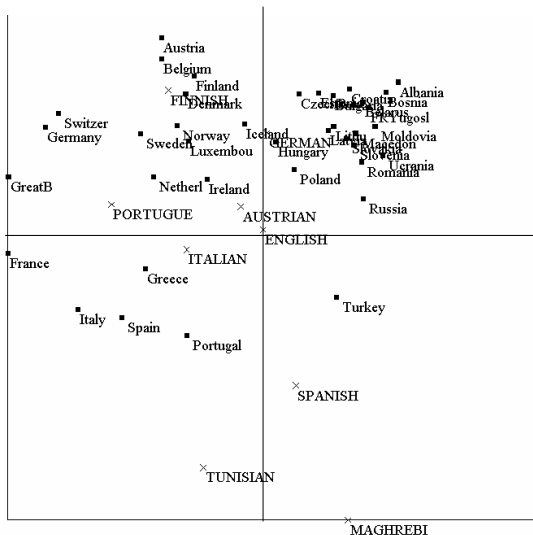


Figure 2: SSA of the results of rating 38 European countries with respondents' nationality as external variables

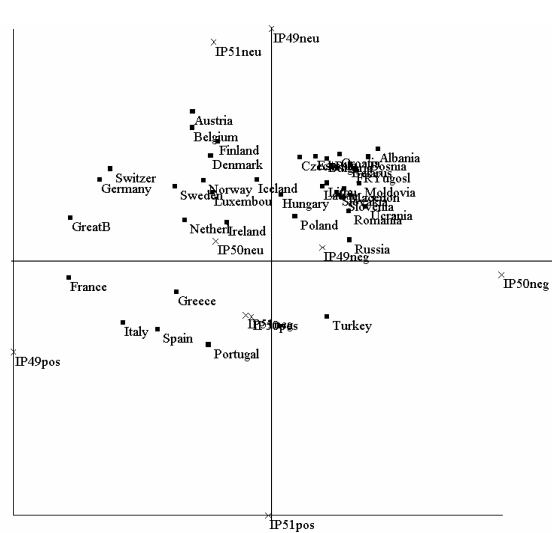


Figure 3: SSA of the results of rating 38 European countries with respondents' polarity indices as external variables

Figure 2 shows the same map with the respondents' nationalities added as external variables, enabling us to see the connection between nationality and attitudes towards Europe as a whole.

We can recognize three basic attitude types: those who are located in the same region as their home country (English, Austrians, Finns and Italians), those located in a different region from their home country (Spanish, French, and Germans) and North African immigrants, located at the periphery of the map. The French and Spanish respondents are located in the South-East section of the map, along with Turkey. Portuguese respondents are located in the northern half of the map. The German respondents

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are located with the Eastern European countries. The meaning and consequences of this result would require extensive comment and theoretical discussion.

Figure 3 shows the basic map again, this time with sub-populations of respondents according to three Polarity Indices (negative, neutral and positive) related to their nation, Europe and the world introduced as external variables.



It is interesting to note that the positive polarity indices for nation, Europe and world are associated with the West and South on the chart, where the group of European Mediterranean countries is located.

At the edge of the South-East quadrant, where we find only Turkey, only the negative polarity index for Europe is shown. Despite that, the relatively central position that Turkey occupies in the chart places it in an area between the positive polarity index for Europe and world and the negative polarity index for nation, a position that reflects the ambivalent attitude expressed by the subjects towards this country, whose relationship with Europe and the EU is long-standing and historically rather difficult. The countries usually defined as Eastern European are, instead, in a quadrant in which are shown the negative polarity index for nation, inside the cloud of internal variables, and the neutral polarity index for nation outside that structure.

The other European countries, clearly identifiable with those of North Central Europe, are located in the North-West quadrant, where the neutral polarity indices are shown for world and Europe and on the border with the North-East quadrant, the neutral polarity index for nation..

It is also interesting that the almost overlapping positions of the positive polarity index for Europe and the negative polarity index for world in the South-West quadrant. This could be interpreted as a contrast between ideological systems that are shared or rejected by the subjects: the European ideology system and the system in force on a global scale.

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Facet Analysis

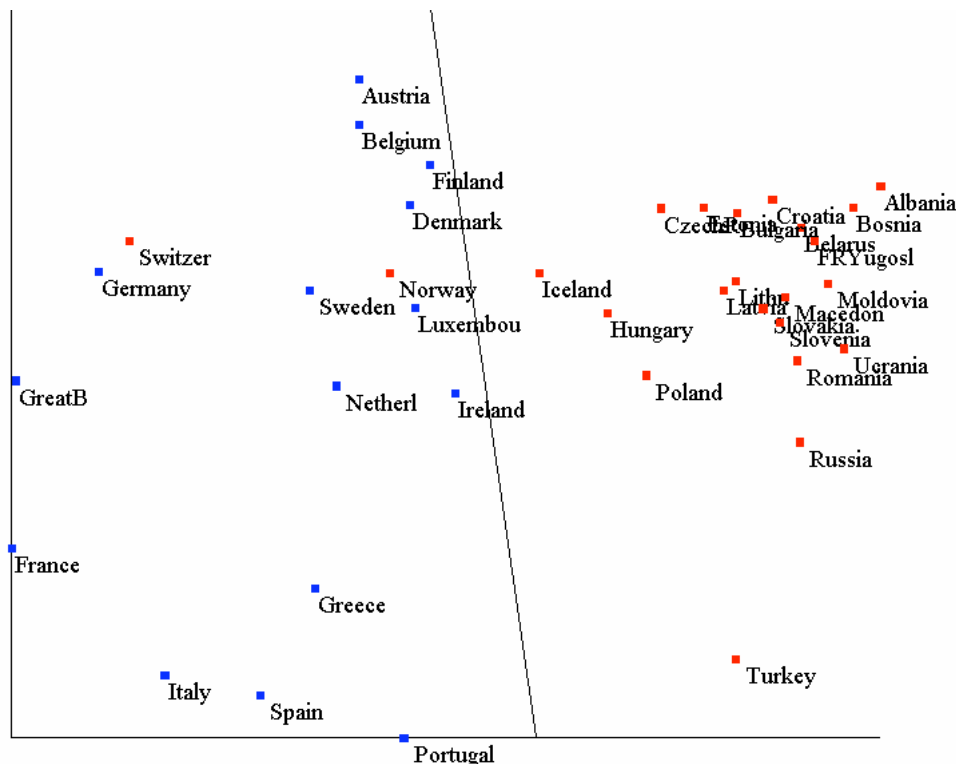


Figure 3 - SSA of states with EU membership as Facet

Figure 3 presents the results of the Facet Analysis, in which, consistent with the Mapping Sentence offered, 2 facets were identified concerning attitudes expressed towards European countries. One for the countries that when the data was collected in 2003 were already members of the EU and one for those countries that in 2003 were not yet EU members. One year later in 2004, 10 of the latter became part of the enlarged EU.

In figure 3 we offer a polar model to interpret the results (coefficient of regionality = .90), that seems to confirm that membership in the EU constitutes a discriminating factor in respect to the attitude expressed towards European countries. The exceptions are Switzerland and Norway, which are found in the area of EU members even though they are not EU members. These positions can be explained by the effect of the cultural "belonging" of the subjects interviewed. As has already been highlighted, all of the subjects interviewed were EU citizens, with the exception of the Tunisians, and were from countries that geographically bordered and had strong cultural ties to these two Non-EU states. In the case of Norway in particular, we note in figure 2 how Norway is found in an area in which all the Northern European and Scandinavian countries are closely grouped together. The sub-sample of Finns is shown in the same area based on the external variable of "subjects' nationality".

Finally, if we break down the attitudinal dimension expressed by the averages and the structural aspect of the social representation (figures 1, 2, 3), it clearly emerges that the lowest average values are attributed to countries that make up the Non EU member facet, toning down attitudes towards Iceland, Poland, Hungary and the Czech republic towards a more neutral zone. It is not by chance that these countries

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 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
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occupy borderline positions in the WSSA1 results.

Conclusions

Concerning attitudes towards European countries of subjects from 10 different cultural "belongings", the results discussed in this paper seem to confirm the complexity of that system of attitudes and its sensitivity to various influence factors.

In the theoretical inspiration for this research, cultural "belonging" was conceived as being sustained by a value system and shared social representations. Therefore, as necessarily being related to the attitudes expressed towards objects considered socially relevant such as nation, Europe, world, the EU and its member states.

On the basis of the results discussed, cultural "belonging" seems to be expressed more via identification of citizens with the block of EU member countries (even if differentiating among themselves via the North-South line of demarcation) than via identification with their own country, with a few exceptions.

On one hand, the WSSA1 results in which subjects' nationality is shown as an external variable on the structure of data concerning attitudes expressed towards European countries (figure 2) in only some cases show a significant relationship between the attitude expressed and the subject's nationality.



On the other, the results of the Facet Analysis show a significant effect of EU membership on the attitude of subjects who are mainly EU citizens towards the EU. This result has even more value if you take into consideration the spontaneous character of that pattern of responses since the research tools did not distinguish between EU members and Non-EU members.

In addition to the structure of the data concerning attitudes expressed towards European countries, it would be useful to refer to the direction of those attitudes (thanks to using synthesis measures such as averages) that seem to be tendentially positive towards countries belonging to the Non-EU member facet. This result highlights the relevance that the idea of the EU is assuming in the Nation-Europe-world system of representations and could be seen as an indicator of the new sense of belonging that is being constructed in younger generations of Europeans. Such interpretations merit further study in terms of convergence with other results concerning other tools used in the questionnaire for which there is no room in this paper (See de Rosa, d'Ambrosio, Bocci, forthcoming).

Although we are unable to deal with the content of the representation evoked by the stimulus words nation, Europe and world in this paper, the results discussed relative only to the polarity indices are an interesting indicator of attitudes expressed by those interviewed towards these different objects of a system that is interrelated and made subject to recent historical events by an elaboration of political discourse marked by a component of an intense conceptual relational nature. In turn, the polarity indices connected to the three above mentioned conceptual entities constitute an interface of meanings with the system of attitudes towards European countries.

To that end we note that showing the various modalities of the polarity indices for all three objects as external variables on the structure of data concerning the system of attitudes towards European countries and applying a double axial model, three areas are clearly distinguished with clusters defined by internal

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variables (the 38 European countries) and coherent contextualizations in terms of value systems and representations concerning the nation, Europe and the world. To these three zones we add a quadrant in which Turkey is isolated.

In particular, we want to highlight the results concerning the region of European Mediterranean countries, delineated by the triangulation of the three positive polarity indices (for nation, Europe and world) and the negative polarity index for world.

The quasi overlapping observed between the positive polarity index for Europe and the negative polarity index for world could serve to indicate a conflict of values among those associated to a positive representation of Europe (and the politico-economic dynamics that it is experiencing in recent decades) and those associated to a negative representation of the world and the global scenario.

Further analysis concerning the contents of representational fields evoked in response to the stimuli Europe and world suggests new levels of interpretation of the results discussed here that anchor the representation of Europe, in transversal measure concerning the diverse cultural contexts of the subjects, the categories of *change* and *time* essentially with reference to the *future* and *culture*, to the prevalence of references to the *multi-cultural* character of the EU's experience and the representation of the world as confrontation between natural (positive) and human (tragic) elements.

Faced with this idealized representation of Europe in contrast with that of the world, one cannot say that the WSSA1 results support the representation of a strongly integrated Europe. In contrast with the areas occupied by the European Mediterranean countries in the WSSA1 results, those areas occupied respectively by the countries generally considered part of Eastern Europe, delineated by the negative and neutral polarity indexes for nation and the negative polarity index for Europe are in contraposition with those occupied by all the other European countries marked by the position of neutral polarity indices (for nation and Europe).

It would be interesting to do follow-up research to understand if, and to what measure and how much time, the achievement of the 2004 enlargement at the institutional level and the increase in real exchanges with the populations of new EU member states has influenced or will influence the dynamics of social categorization and consequent representations and attitudes. (de Rosa, d'Ambrosio, forthcoming).



ⁱ April 18, 1951 signing of the Treaty of Paris establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

ⁱⁱ with the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957 the European Economic Community (EEC) was established including: Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Italy, The Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany. In 1973 Denmark, the United Kingdom and Ireland join, bringing the total number of CEE members to 9. In 1981, the 10th member, Greece joins. In 1986 with the addition of Spain and Portugal, the number of CEE members rises to 12. Austria, Finland and Sweden joined in 1995 making the total number of members 15, which was modified only in 2004 with the enlargement of the EU to 10 new countries: Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Hungary. The entry of Bulgaria and Romania is expected in 2007.

ⁱⁱⁱ the data was collected in 9 European countries by students of the Faculty of Psychology 2 at the University of Rome "La Sapienza" during periods they spent abroad as Erasmus fellows. They received appropriate training in research methodology under the supervision of Prof. Annamaria de Rosa, with the assistance of Dr. Marialibera d'Ambrosio for logistical and methodological coordination.

We would like to thank the following Italian students who, sustained by their strong interest in research, collaborated in this project. The countries in which they collected the data are indicated in parentheses: S. Monetta (Austria), E. Panzironi (Finland), I. Botti and M. Chessari (France), S. Vanni (Germany), I. Bordini (England), E. Poli and V. Rossi (Italy), N. Bova,

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G. Fiocco and V. Rossi (Portugal), C. Cavarra, S. Raffaele, and M. Urgeghe (Spain). The data from Tunisia was collected by our colleague Dorra Ben Alaya of the University of Tunis, to whom we are most grateful.

Concerning the EuroSkyCompass tool, designed by de Rosa, a pilot application had previously been done in research conducted by P. Kiss (Hungary) as part of her dissertation for her European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication under the supervision of de Rosa, Doise and Jesuino.

^{iv} See website <http://www.europhd.psi.uniroma1.it>. The website of the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. was used not only as a tool to offer information on the research project but also for the entry of data into an integrated data base on-line via the Web from the various countries.

^v In 1981 Tajfel had already written: "*We live in a world where unification and diversification processes take place quickly, faster than ever. Somehow, large groups of humans communicate between each other more than ever, they know more than ever about each other and they are increasingly more interdependent. At the same time, there is a strong tendency, virtually present throughout the world, towards the preservation and successful diversity of their particular characteristics and identity*" (Tajfel, 1981)

^{vi} The total subject population of the study was XXX : for this article we excluded those that did not respond to the items under consideration in this paper.

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