Narratives for Europe

– The Making of European Identity

Eurooppalainen Suomi ry

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12 (2/2014) "V niinku Vaikuttaminen!". Ajatuksia nuorten yhteiskunnallisesta vaikuttamisesta.

Contents

Marleena Holmberg

Marleena Holmberg holds a Master's degree in Social Sciences from the University of Turku. She is coordinating 'Campaign Europe! – Active European Citizenship in the 21st Century' project at the European Movement in Finland. The project is carried out in cooperation with European Movements in Albania, Ireland and Slovenia. 'Narratives for Europe – the Making of European Identity' is published as a part of 'Campaign Europe!', and distributed in all four partner countries.

Louis Clerc

Louis Clerc holds a PhD in History of International Relations from the University of Strasbourg. His area of research is the History of International Relations, and he coordinates a teaching programme related to the History and Politics of European Integration. In 2014, he published with Kimmo Elo a textbook on the history and institutions of the European Union, 'Aatteesta instituutioksi. Euroopan unionin historia ja rakenteet' (Avain, 2014).

Pekka Palmgren

PPekka Palmgren holds a Master's degree in Social Sciences. He works as a reporter for the Finnish National Broadcasting Company, YLE. His areas of special interest are economic bubbles and financial crisis.

Emilia Palonen

Emilia Palonen holds a PhD in Ideology and Discourse Analysis from the University of Essex. She engaged during her post-doc years with the European Capitals of Culture, taking part in the programmes of Sibiu and Luxembourg 2007 as part of Bauhaus Kolleg Dessau, and lecturing on Cultural Policy. Palonen is currently a researcher at an Academy of Finland project on Asymmetries in European Intellectual Space, based at the University of Helsinki, Department of Political and Economic Studies. Her participatory design for an alternative EU flag has been recognized on the European level (euflagmemorial.wordpress.com).

Laura Parkkinen

Laura Parkkinen holds a Master's degree in Arts (Contemporary History and languages) and is preparing her PhD thesis on discourse strategies of populism in France and Finland. She has previously worked as a journalist and in an NGO.

Sari Artjoki

Sari Artjoki is the Acting Head of the European Commission Representation in Finland. She holds a Master's degree in Philosophy and has worked in the European Commission since 1997.

Marleena Holmberg

Creating a European Identity – Mission Impossible?

Defining identity is not an easy task. Defining European identity is even harder. Identity is not something solid given to us the moment we are born, but instead it evolves over time and is shaped by our experiences. Identity is a way of self-understanding and narratives are the tools, the stories, we use to express ourselves to others. Identity is, therefore, always a construction, like a puzzle made out of multiple different pieces.

A person can have multiple identities. One can be a lesbian, a Liverpool fan, a card-bearer of the Green party, and Dutch at the same time, as Louis Clerc points out in his text. European identity might just as well come up for Europeans, he suggests. A collective identity is not necessarily a result of personal identities, but instead it needs a social group, a set of persons, who share a collective project or idea. European identity is a broad cultural category, which includes other more concrete collective identities – as do most national identities, too.

The EU, and the European Community before it, has aimed at defining European identity through its cultural policy, as Emilia Palonen brings out in her text. One of the tools used is the concept of European Capitals of Culture (ECC). Palonen notes, however, that the resources given to the ECCs are limited, and the definition of 'Europe' is thrust in the hands of the local organisers. This is one of the defining features of what being European means, it's this openness that has allowed the multiple definitions of 'European' to emerge, Palonen argues.

But do the citizens feel European? According to the Eurobarometer survey released in September 2014, European identity is secondary to national ones, but is seen by many as something characteristic to future generations. Being European is not something people feel in their everyday lives. Instead, it becomes evident when travelling to other countries or meeting people from other continents. I recognise this feature also in myself; when I was living in North America, I felt more European than ever before. Who knows, if we ever meet civilisations outside of the planet Earth, maybe we then introduce ourselves primarily as 'Earthlings'.

As a part of *Campaign Europe!* -project, carried out in cooperation with European Movements in Finland, Albania, Ireland and Slovenia, we conducted a mini-survey asking citizens of these four countires how European they feel. A staggering 93 percent of the total 443 respondents said they feel European. We also asked how the respondents feel about the EU in general; whether or not they feel like their

own countries are well presented in the EU; and how do they feel about citizens' possibilities to impact the EU's decision-making.

In all of the countries, the vast majority of the respondents felt either positive or neutral towards the EU. Most critical towards their own country's representation were Slovenians; over half of the respondents say that Slovenia is only sometimes well represented in the EU, while over 30 percent think their country is never well represented. In contrast, most of the respondents in other countries felt their interests are usually well represented in the Union.

In all of the countries, the respondents feel very similarly towards citizens' possibilities – or lack of them – to impact the EU's decision-making: the majority feels this is only possible sometimes. Most critical are again Slovenian respondents, with almost half saying the citizens can have no impact at all. In a way, this is hardly surprising if you look at voter turnout in Slovenia, which was only 24.55 percent in the 2014 European Parliament elections.

During the last few months, we have witnessed separatist movements expressing their desires for greater independence around Europe. The majority of Scots rejected independence from the UK in a referendum, whereas the Catalans were demonstrating for the right to organise one, as journalist Pekka Palmgren reminds us in his text. Palmgren also challenges the idea of a status quo in Europe. Instead, everything is in constant change, even the idea of a European identity.

An ever more globalised, multicultural world order has led to the creation of increasingly pluralised societies, which is changing the essence of national identities as well. Populism in Europe has risen to fight this with nationalist agendas, as can be read in Laura Parkkinen's text on populism in Finland and France. Still even populist movements do not contest the idea of 'Europe' as such. Like Marine Le Pen says, she wants 'to destroy the European Union, not Europe'. But how can we clearly define what is 'Europe'?

One could as well ask, is there a need for a European identity? Since the end of the Cold War, the significance of the EU has been growing, which has created a European public sphere, as sociologists have pointed out. These changes have created space for a European identity to emerge. Traditional values, such as Christianity, are no longer the only defining factors of what is European. Instead, decades of cultural mixing has led to the lack of a clear 'Us' as Europeans against 'Them'.

In late 2014, the European Movement in Finland organised four regional events as a part of the Commission's 'New Narrative for Europe' project. The main objective was to dive deeper into the ideas and narratives behind European identity. Sari Artjoki reminds us in her text that inviting citizens from different sectors of society to join the debate brings diversity and new perspectives to the table.

Unity in diversity, the EU's motto and one of the symbols of Europe, is something we Europeans can easily relate to. But is it enough to keep the idea of 'Europe' alive? In order for a common European identity to form, Europe needs new narratives, stories, on which citizens could identify with. This task should not be left to the political decision-makers alone, but it needs commitment from all of us, from civil society actors to individual citizens. ■

Louis Clerc

European Identity: The Past and the Present

Between that zone where endless winter reigns
And that where flaming heat consumes the plains
Array'd in green, beneath indulgent skies,
The queen of arts and arms, fair Europe lies.

Luis de Camões, Tableau of Europe, 1553

Commenting on the debate surrounding the creation of the first European Communities, the German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung couldn't refrain in January 1952 from bringing lofty rhetorics down a notch. Behind ritual invocations of European solidarity and identity, the paper saw national interests fighting around a series of hard deals: as its editorial summed up, 'Man sagt Europa und man meint nur Koks' – securing sources of coal and iron for everybody came way before any leader's commitment to European identity. Small wonder, as European identity and the very idea of 'Europe' have always been disputed. Today, even after 70 years of European integration, European iden-

For a 2014 citizen of any country of the European Union, another answer might be that Europe is the EU.

tity doesn´t seem feature in the preoccupations of Europeans. 'Europe' remains a fuzzy concept. So is there a 'European identity', and if so how has it evolved in time?

Any averagely educated person would use the word 'Europe' to designate first a roughly defined landmass: Portugal to the Baltic Sea, the plains of Ukraine to the Atlantic Ocean, Greece to the Faroe Islands... But there is no scientific basis in this delimitation: as Martin Wayne Lewis and Kären Wigen have shown in The Myth of Continents, geographical boundaries have been arbitrarily designed, and are remodelled at will to fit different contexts of time and space. For a 2014 citizen of any country of the European Union, another answer might be that Europe is the EU. But here again, no hard definition can be achieved. Eventually the conversation will spiral down into debates over 'European culture' or 'European identity', terms vague enough to be tailored to fit one's worldview. Finally, the conclusion cannot be anything other than a reiteration of the fact that European identity is as difficult to define as it is widely debated.

By questioning the definitions of Europe and European identity, one penetrates right into one of the most important debates related to European integration. When considering the development of the European Union, we tend to look for familiar features, the features of the nation-states we are used to seeing as the organisational principles of international relations: a political demos, a sense of common achievements and features, an administrative apparatus, myths and facts reinterpreted as a shared 'national history', etc. These features, while not entirely absent and for some of them even nascent, remain hard to discern at the European level: the nation-states still remain, more or less, the main political, social, economic and cultural horizon of most Europeans.

European integration has had, in fact, little visible effect in creating the kind of European identity we might comprehend in the terms used to define national identities. Expanding the European Parliament's competences has had little effect on rising voter turnout. Transnational merging of national political forces outside the European Parliament has been minimal, and even the debates around European elections have remained far from genuinely European debates – campaigns still remain oriented on national questions, nationally interpreted by the voters. Attempts to propound a European identity with the help of a European flag, a European anthem, or through the activities of the Commission's PR organisation haven't reached significant results, with less than 10% of the EU population feeling itself primarily 'European'.

The 1973 Copenhagen declaration, meant as the blueprint for European identity, has merely stood as a prescriptive, simplistic definition of a normative 'identity'. The declaration is almost a caricature, which manages to couch important and deeply-felt principles in unmistakably bureaucratic accents, down from the corporate drone of its first sentence: "The Nine member countries of the European Communities have decided that the time

has come to draw up a document on the European identity." The lack of tangible effects in terms of identity creation of such an initiative is not for fault of trying: as Lise Rye has shown in a recent article on the communication unit of the European Commission, European institutions have for several decades worked to develop a sense of European identity. But for most people, the EU is a complex series of compromises and treaties, not the incubator of a cultural and political collective sentiment. Its main cultural root – the will to absolve Europe from the horrors perpetrated by Europeans during the first half of the 20th century – is so diffuse nowadays as to be almost inefficient as a device of mass mobilisation. One could even argue that this cultural core of conflict prevention and atonement for past sins does not work in each and every national context inside the EU.

This fuzziness of Europe's definition is not particular to our times. In most European languages, the term 'Europe' evokes the image of the princess Europa, daughter to king Agenor, kidnapped by Zeus. The word however is older than that: it is based on a variant of the Greek Phoenician term ereb, sunset; sailors would use this term to designate the Western coast of the Aegean Sea, while the Eastern coast was assou, sunrise. The term has a rich and long cultural history. Around the year 500 BC, the Greeks used it while speaking of continental areas on the Northern side of Greece. The rise of Islam in the Middle East and Northern Africa, however, pushed Christianity to the North and conflated it with 'Europe': the Roman Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity, the christening in 496 of the Frankish king Clovis and the Arab expeditions to the North of the Mediterranean Sea in

the 700's were then all part of a chain of events that pushed into existence a 'Christendom' corresponding to what we would call most instinctively 'Europe'.

Charlemagne's reign brought these territories under a common aegis, mixing territories and populations under the imperial heritage and the Christian faith; in Isidore of Beja's 753 depiction of the battle of Poitiers, the words 'men of the North',

'Christians', and 'Europeans' are used synonymously as those fighting against the 'Arabs', 'Saracens', or 'Ishmaelites'. This entity Isidore called 'Europe' was always internally split, difficult to define in absolute terms, and its necessary cultural and political unity was very early a concern for thinkers and politicians: already in 1306, jurist Pierre Dubois looked after the old unity of Christianity and empire to compensate the divisions of Europe into ever strengthening monarchical states with their borders, taxations, armies, and administrative apparatus. This process accelerated after the 1500s, when Europe became the term of choice to designate the group of monarchies stating themselves as the heirs to Greece, Rome and the Christian faith. The European-wide turmoil of the late 1700s brought Europe into the era of nationalism, when it became mostly the assemblage of various nation-states claiming parts of this heritage to themselves.

While geographically ill-defined and politically subject to the compromises and alliances of the states, can Europe be defined culturally? The French writer Paul Valéry, for example, defined Europe as the convolution of Renaissance arts, Roman law and administration, the Christian faith, and Greek democracy – a culturist vision reinterpreting as specifically 'European' certain artistic, legal, and political features. But for others, Europe can be the land of nation-states, the territories populated by fair-haired white Christians, or the cradle of Enlightenment philosophy; for Victor Hugo or Immanuel Kant, Europe was before anything else the land of liberties and progress, a Promethean entity able to lighten the world's way towards emancipation, a universalist project of rights, progress, reason, liberties, and the

rule of law. One can see clearly how disputed European heritage is, how easily it can become a project, the focus of political and social ideals. Europe, often conflated with 'civilisation', can signify more a direction than a place.

While the 19th century saw Europe's structuring around nation-states, a united Europe also became a goal for a number of thinkers. Both Jean-Jacques Rousseau in 1782 and Immanuel Kant in 1795 wrapped their ideas for peace and progress in the language of classical European federalism: the problem being warmongering and despotic states, a liberalisation of European nations would bring them to make peace and, eventually, merge. This equation – reasonable mode of government, liberalisation, peace, federation of states – became quickly the staple of Enlightenment writings on European organisation, crystallised in 1849 by Hugo's term, the 'United States of Europe'.

Classical federalism is thus based on the idea of Europe not only as a shared cultural identity, a set of common features mixing Christianity and Rome to the Enlightenment, but also as a political project. 'Europe' became more salient as a political project after the massacres of 1914–1918. At the turn of the century, in the last throes of the Concert of Nations, Hugo's federalism had seemed a distant, academic pursuit in a world dominated by the harsh rules of the nation-states. But after the Somme and Verdun, the idea of a future of inter-state cooperation and peace seemed worthy of political efforts: as Sylvain Schirmann wrote, World War I gave birth to both fascism and Europeanism. Lobby groups, the most famous of them being the Austrian journalist Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-Europe, started to work towards the creation of an

undefined European organisation. Hopes were high, and in 1923 the German writer Heinrich Mann could write that "the European idea has now come to a time when its concrete realization is tested." But concretely the idea gained little traction, and after a few symbolic but ill-fated attempts, the logic of nationalism won over: in 1939, war Europe once more engulfed, with even wider consequences than in 1914–1918.

On these new ruins, post-war leaders and nations were still not quite inclined to build any European federation, but the rhetoric of European cooperation took a central role in the reconstruction of the Western part of the continent. The debate about federalism and a European identity moved to centre stage as an important part of the post-war political rhetoric. Federalist ideas did come to mix with discussions over the nature and role of the first post-war European organisations, and eventually with the debates on the creation of the European communities. But the communities were not identity based – even if the debate on European identity gave to leaders and populations alike a vocabulary, a set of ideas and cultural references for a political project. The 1950s creation of the first European Communities, however, remains as Alan Milward described it: a profoundly ad hoc, political project taking into account new post-war realities, the populations' demand for state-coordinated welfare, economic and political interdependence, European weakness, liberalisation of trade and the Cold War.

The creation of the European Communities, thus, did not solve the question of European identity, and was not for the main part a consequence of European

identity. The debate remained, and still remains, about the existence or not of a European identity able to serve as the cultural basis for a political federation European federalists have long tried to discern – and have often tried to wish into existence. The main problem still remains: after this historical process and at the time being, the very existence of a European identity able to work as grit to a federalist pearl is highly doubtful. The 'cultural commonalities', such as a common language, ethnicity, or religion, around which a movement of European 'coming-together-nationalism' could revolve are sadly underdeveloped – Europe is still, to quote Umberto Eco's pun, a place where translation is the mother-tongue...

Of course, no such homogeneity is necessary: none was present in Switzerland, nor for that matter in a number of European nation-states which emerged in the 1800s. Federalists could justly say that heterogeneity of ethnic, religious, and linguistic origins hasn't been an obstacle to the creation of a national identity in France, for example. Could it be the same for Europe, which could crystallise as a demos around a knot of institutions? The problem is the nature of this process: France's coming of age was a messy and highly contested process, which could hardly be reproduced in the frame of a democratic community of sovereign nations. Another problem is time: the creation of most nation-states were matters for decades and centuries, not for the electoral cycles of most contemporary European countries.

Concretely, the treaty innovations of the last 20 years have brought the EU closer to a federal form through ushering in a number of supranational instruments, and have thus brought further the idea of cultural creation through the weight of institutions. But even though Europe's heterogeneity has not prevented the formation of common governance tools, one can argue that it hasn't advanced the formation of an aware and active political demos. Consequently, the political impetus remains very small in Europe to assume a federalist leap: no party, no politician in Europe can hope to get a majority on a platform of European federalism – on the contrary, most politicians these days would consider euro-bashing as a bona fide political platform. Not that they would be always wrong: like all institutions, the EU is far from perfect, the defaults of its hybrid mode of governance showing up especially clearly in times of economic and political crises.

In this context, the debate is largely left to ideologies. On the one hand are naysayers, who actively combat the perspective of a refocusing of identities at a European level, and see collective identities as primarily and solely linked to the nation-states. Those would consider only the national level of politics as genuine or democratic. Paradoxically those are also often more inclined to use the vocabulary of 'European identity' to define a clearly delimited heritage of civilisation. For the most extreme far-right populists, the paranoid atmosphere of today's culture-wars is also propitious to the redefinition of Europe as a white, Christian, well-defined civilisation, seemingly under threat. Others would argue that by foraying forward on institutional matters, maybe by a bold leap towards a European federation, a European identity defining a new political bond would eventually come in: the European state would create the European nation.

To cut this knot of contradictions is not

easy, also because the notion of collective identity has moved away from the model of collective identification inside nation-states, and European identity will move with this general ebb and flow in political identification in Europe. While still strong as an anchor, the nation-state is not anymore the sole coordinate, and it has left considerable terrain to both global and local, even individualised political identities. European identity is also a part of this context, and one could consider that European identity might come up for Europeans as just one of their multiple identities: someone could be a lesbian, a Liverpool fan, a card-bearer of the Green party, Dutch, and European. Eurobarometer data can be used to argue that nearly half of all inhabitants of the EU feel at least attached to Europe or think of themselves as 'European' on top of their own nationality. If these numbers have not significantly changed since 1988, they point to a multiplication of collective identities.

Some, like James Sheehan or Tony Judt, have suggested that European identity is now essentially characterised by pacification, the welfare state, specific ways of life and values linked with living together in relative harmony on a divided and diverse continent. The patterns of choices, debates, reactions (for example in the policies towards migrants, or in relation to physical violence) produced by this evolution, constantly under threat and debated but still standing at the centre of political discourses, would be what one could call 'European' as opposed to 'American'. The vast process of peace making enshrined in the European Communities would thus, according to Judt and Sheehan, be the very essence of European identity: "As things now stand, boundary breaking and community making are something that Europeans are doing better than anyone else", to quote Judt.

Others have suggested that, perhaps, identity is not the problem after all: David Michael Green for example has drawn the contours of a 'postmodern', instrumentally 'European' identity, not based on culture and the great identifying cultural features of federalists, but on the reflected and reasonable attachment to a system that, despite its faults, is better than the alternative of purely national decision-making. European institutions should work before everything to make themselves useful, Green argues, and consider with less pathos the lack of a European identity. The existence of a networked political organisation and integrated economies on a continental scale, without a sense of collective identity, might eventually prove unsustainable – for example in times of prolonged economic and political crisis. But the future of a European identity might also be, Green suggests, to dissolve in a nexus where citizens would, on the one hand relate to several identities at once, and on the other hand experience 'Europe' as simply useful. Instead of relying on one shared and somewhat institutionalized collective identity, such a functional system would allow for a vast array of identities.

It seems impossible to conclude this short presentation without giving one's own definition of European identity – we all have one, after all, don't we? The author's favourite is to be found in the writings of the Spanish writer, politician and diplomat Salvador de Madariaga: "Europe believes in freedom; it is attached to quality, and it recognises the supreme necessity of what is unnecessary." Now that is something one can stand for. ∎

Pekka Palmgren

Regional Identities and Separatist Movements in Europe

Exactly how European are you? On a scale from one to ten? If someone wakes you up in the middle of the night and asks you? The question might seem a bit absurd, but it is however a question that our times pose. So, how European are we?

I was asked to write about my impressions after watching a television documentary series on Europe. The project was a collaboration between the Norwegian, Danish, Swedish and Finnish Television (Yle Fem) and I was one of the reporters chosen for the task. I could not wait to dive into the European mindset and reveal everything about the innermost essence of the European soul. However, after the first planning session we settled for a more realistic goal: to cover at least some of the stories that form the essence of what our continent is today, and even what it might be in the future. Off we went to look for stories.

We live in a world where economy rules. For some incomprehensible reason economists are held in the highest regard, even though everybody knows they are unable to predict practically any developments. Economists are asked questions about how we should organise society, how to deal with health care, the care

of our elderly, public spending, etc. All these things we used to call politics. Suddenly economists are experts on everything.

In a world where economy rules, the quest for identity could look like a useless hobby. Who cares about identity when the markets (the speculative financial sector) are raging and the central banks are desperately trying to avoid a meltdown of the financial system. Who has time for an identity crisis when people are being fired en masse?

In these days of economic dominance over values, talk of identity might seem superfluous and yet it is the most important building block of our lives. I bet that if woken up in the middle of the night, we wouldn't think about fighting inflation or deflation, and we wouldn't worry about the optimal amount of Euros in circulation. I bet we dream about a safe environment, our family and friends, homes and plans for the future. Who we really are is connected to where we live, who

we spend our time with, who we see as enemies. We define ourselves by how we dream about the future. A wise historian once wrote: There is no such thing as the future – only multiple futures. The future is what we make of it.

One of the stories I covered for our documentary series is about the future of the Catalans. They have a history, now their future is at stake. The identity of the Catalans is certainly composed of many components and one of the most significant is

the independent state of Catalonia. The one that is in the future.

Another story is the gold rush to the north. The High North is a strategic priority for Norway. The Norwegians have big plans for the fossil fuel business and have wisely incorporated some environmental thinking from the beginning. During my visit to the town of Harstad, I met with oil company representatives and fishermen, but also youngsters who were able to study in their region and hoped for a job in their hometown. Instead of leaving their home to go study in Oslo or London, they chose the small world.

I met with Catalans in the old industrial city of Sabadell, who told me they feel a bit off when they travel to Madrid. Yes, they speak fluent Spanish alongside their mother tongue. No, they have nothing against Spain. But their Catalan identity is so strong that it is what really defines them.

I met with teenagers in Edinburgh who could easily discuss the 1707 merger of the two kingdoms into the Kingdom of Great Britain and why the year 1714 was so important for them (that year started the succession of the British monarchs).

What I want to show with these examples is that identity is – although complex – something very concrete, tangible, comprehensible, and very important for most of us. It is more important than bankers think. It is far more delicate than the bureaucrats of the EU hope and just as dangerous as politicians think. Identity is also in the making; it is incomplete. A part of our identity is always in the future.

Is there a European identity? Is there a Nordic identity? Is there even a Spanish identity that is common for most Spaniards?

The European Union is marketed as a peace project and much more. After decades of hard work by those responsible for the project, strong and fierce movements against everything the EU represents are now gaining power in many, if not all, member states. Is it a paradox or is it the simple rule of causality? The more we centralise, the more we feel the urge to decentralise. The harder we build an empire with structures and directives, the harder we fight against it. At the moment so-called populist movements renounce the whole idea of a common European identity. Directives are not enough if the strongest and deepest sentiments are against a European identity.

This autumn has been a turbulent one in Spanish politics. The Catalonian separatist movement has demonstrated its force. Where it will lead to is still unclear. But something will happen, of that I am certain. Europe (and of course the rest of the world) is changing. A quick look at the map is enough to convince the most conservative observer. If you buy a world atlas in the old paper book format, you´ll have to invest in a new one every year. Sometimes the transition is slower. The Finnish separatist movement was born in the 19th century and led to independence in 1917. "Swedes we are no-longer, Russians we do not want to become, let us therefore be Finns", was the popular credo among those in favour of a Finnish nation. Sometimes the change is faster. The Catalans know they don´t want to be Spaniards. What will happen, for instance, in Ukraine?

As a reporter visiting both Barcelona and smaller towns in Catalonia, it became very clear that a vast part of the population is on a journey with no turning back. The government in Madrid can

The government in Madrid can and will delay the obvious, but can they really deny the Catalans their will? How would they do it? With military force?

and will delay the obvious, but can they really deny the Catalans their will? How would they do it? With military force? In a democratic state in the 21st century it´s hard to visualise armed forces pointing guns at peaceful, respectable members of society. It is not unheard of, but still. One has to ask if the government in Madrid really has not understood the power of the identity. Or if it has, why not give the region more freedom, more autonomy, more anything to stop them from pursuing their own state. Or is it all a game where the government fears uprisings in other regions as well? To the Catalans it is not a game. As many as 1.8 million people participated in the demonstrations this year on the 11th of September. That shows the power of the movement.

The cynical observer tends to point out that there are separatist movements all over the world and most of them are unrealistic. Yes, except that it is not true in the case of Catalonia. The Catalan state could be among the richest in the world with a GDP exceeding that of Portugal, Hong Kong or Egypt. The cynical observer now points out that this is the real reason behind the drive for independence. It is money, not identity that makes the world go around. But the drive for wealth and well-being is not separate from a peoples identity. Entrepreneurship and hard work is an essential part of the Catalan identity. Catalans consider themselves hardworking and it is not by chance that the region was among the first industrialized on the continent. Opponents stress that Catalans would have a hard time convincing the EU, NATO and other international bodies to accept the country's membership if Spain worked against the new state. But the Catalans have their own history, language and seem ready to make sacrifices if needed. Hardship only makes the separatist movement stronger.

In Scotland, the majority voted in favour of remaining in the UK. After discussing the matter with people both in Aberdeen and Edinburgh, I realised that the choice was not so much between different identities – the government in London has accepted Scottish autonomy as a fact. It was more of a practical choice with political undertones. There is a group of Scots that feel a kinship with the Nordic countries both historically, geographically and politically. They feel a togetherness with Norwegians rather than with Englishmen. This group promoted the independence for these reasons. But the majority felt at ease with their Scottish identity in the British regime. I´m also pretty sure many in Scotland voted for a status quo. The truth is, however, that there is no such thing. Everything is in constant transition: history, identity and the political map of Europe. ∎

Emilia Palonen

European Identity in the EU's Cultural Policy

What makes Europe and how is 'Europe' maintained? 'Europe' is a contested concept, defined in numerous ways and still open for contestation. The meanings of 'Europe' evolve over time, space and context. One field of its articulation is cultural policy, which has been an important instrument for the nation-states for cultural reproduction.

In postwar Europe, there was no space for cultural dimension – cooperation was purely economic. The need for a European

identity was articulated very carefully in the European Community in the 1970s, but it was made clear that it was not engaging in cultural policy. Explicit European cultural policy was in the hands of the Council of Europe and often Unesco.

Still, cultural policy has been implicitly present in other policies, particularly the distribution of structural funds which enhance economically deprived areas. Regional funds have been the main source of European Community/Union funding for culture – and thus to raise the profile of the EU in the regions. Although regional policies defined Europe as an economic area, regional funds arguably contributed to cultural policy, as cities and art institutes managed to apply successfully for non-culture earmarked funds highlighting the economic dimension. The policy links employment and culture, an aim of the Commission, while the Committee of the Regions has enhanced regional cultures. Cultural policy in Europe, besides ensuring the market and society, institutes and reproduces symbolic representation. While traditionally regional funds have had larger material effects, cultural policies such as European Capital of Culture, EU Culture Prize, European Heritage Days and Label have had symbolic effects.

At first the European Capitals of Culture, a policy born in 1985, was 'implicit' rather than 'explicit' cultural policy. It also reveals the overlapping policies. For example, Unesco has been influential in the ECC process as many monumental sites have been awarded or applied for a World Heritage status during the ECC year, for example in the cities discussed here Luxembourg 1995 and Sibiu 2007.

Cultural policy was formalized with the Maastricht Treaty, and especially with article 151, and Europe-wide programmes for cultural heritage (Raphael 1997–2000), literature (Ariane 1997–1998), and cultural creation (Kaleidoscope 1996–1998), Culture2000. The recent Culture Programme promotes cross-border mobility, encourages transnational circulation and fosters intercultural dialogue – all of which assume the existence of borders, nations and cultures in Europe, rather than emphasising a unitary Europe. Nevertheless, according to the Cultural programme guide 2009–2013, *"the Programme has been established to enhance the cultural area shared by Europeans, which is based on a common cultural heritage, through the development of cooperation activities among cultural operators from countries taking part in the Programme, with a view to encouraging the emergence of European citizenship."* This tension and those of the development of European integration are visible throughout the European Capitals of Culture (ECC) programme.

European Capitals of Cultures

The idea of nominating a European City of Culture was voiced in 1983 by the Greek Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri, and Athens became the first ECC in 1985. Cities became emblems of Europe as a 'family of cultures', to follow Anthony D. Smith, giving content to the 'Europe'. Each year the programme adds another city to the symbolic landscape of Europe. The ECC policy has shifted over time. Indeed, at first the programme was renamed during the German presidency in 1999 to nominate *Capitals* of Culture.

The roots of the ECCs lay in Jean Monnet's 'myth' of cultural basis of the European Community. The European Commission decreed: *"The 'European City of Culture' event should be the expression of a*

culture which, in its historical emergence and contemporary development, is characterized by having both common elements and a richness born of diversity." The first cities like Athens and Florence embodied this idea.

From the 1990s the ECCs actually highlighted 'second cities' and regions – with Glasgow as the trend-setting example of a successful ECC. The Committee of the Regions emphasised the "regional and local diversity in European culture" and the non-capital cities ability *"of* flying the flag of European culture". The debate was on who would be able to represent Europe and European culture.

Originally, the city responsible for organising the ECC was chosen by each member state in turn, but in 1997, it was pointed out that due to the project´s econimic benefits they should be part of the Community's action. The practice is that the power to choose the city is, in practice, delegated to the member states by the European Union, which officially nominates the cities. For 2010, Germany sent two candidates. As the Union later expanded, more countries wished to host the event, and from 2000 multiple cities have held it simultaneously. Recently it has been one from the older member states and one newly joined, articulating a bipolar Europe: traditional and new, usually Western and Eastern.

But what was European culture? *"The nomination must include a cultural project of European dimension, based principally on cultural cooperation in accordance with the objectives and action provided for by Article 151 of the Treaty"*. According to the decision, the European dimension should be found through cooperation with another city, redefining cities as European and also creating a network of European cities. The applicant cities should among

other things: *"highlight artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution;[…] promote dialogue between European cultures and those from other parts of the world".* There existed something 'European' and things 'shared by Europeans'. Defining them would be part of the negotiation process, in the application phase between the applicant (the prospective ECC city) and the nominating body (national and/or European). It was also recognised that people engaged in culture should meet and form long term cooperation. European cultures are mentioned in plural – and so is their interaction with cultures outside of Europe. It assumed assumption of shared movements and styles. The policy focuses not only on symbolising Europe, but also on making a cultural sphere in Europe and thereby making Europe.

Yet, from 2006, the criteria for the cul-

tural programme were divided into two sub-categories: 'the European Dimension' and 'City and Citizens'. Europe and Citizens were divorced from each other as complimentary but distinct categories. The ECC website still states the two-fold aim: it *"is designed to: Highlight the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe; Celebrate the cultural features Europeans share; Increase European citizens"* sense of belonging to a common cultural area; Foster the contribution of culture to the development of cities.' Elaborating the last point, it adds a 'carrot': "experience has shown [it] is an excellent opportunity for" city-regeneration and marketing. The Decision 1622/2006/EC emphasised 'European added value', for example through involving networks of former official European Capitals of Culture.

Thus, the ECC programme is a cultural policy of economics and cohesion, seeking to enhance creative industries in Europe while offering a platform for articulation of 'Europe'. For the ECC programme, Europe is an economic community, and a common space articulated through cultural programmes and the ECC network, and cultural elites. But how does it work?

How to be European?

From the local perspective, space and time of the particular ECC city are influential in choosing and naming what is Europe and European. To highlight what is 'European', for example in terms of heritage, in the local context has been an important part of the process of 'making Europe' and giving meanings to Europe. The policy is about realising oneself as European, belonging to Europe, and associating this with particular contents. Interesting, in each context is, what is praised as European – or

not mentioned at all.

The ECC brand being just a title, with little funding attached, the programmes are subject to political and economic transformations, as I have shown elsewhere for example through the case of Vilnius. This contributed to a new policy of awarding the 'Melina Mercouri Prize'. The cities are officially chosen four years prior to the actual ECC year. For this period the cities are monitored and only afterwards, they may be awarded the Mercouri Prize of €1.5m currently funded from the EU Creative Europe programme. In fact, considering how little the European Union actually invests in these programmes on a yearly basis, the spread of PR on 'Europe' is massive. The lack of investment also means that there is no possibility of controlling what 'Europe' means, and the programmes are subject not only to political but also economic interests, through the need of finding sponsorships.

In the application phase, particularly, each ECC also seeks to adopt a 'European' brand. Each ECC brands itself as 'more European' than others. For example, Turku ECC 2011, a Hanseatic town, presented itself as more European than the national capital city, Helsinki. Strategies of articulating the 'European' vary between multiculturalism as in Tallinn and transnationalism.

For example, Luxembourg, the ECC in 2007, highlighted itself as a trans-border region: French, German, Belgian and Luxembourgish. Its partner city, Sibiu, highlighted its Saxon roots as European heritage: the Hungarian king had invited Saxon settlers to Transylvania, where they established seven cities – *Siebenbürgen* in German, which would make Sibiu more European than the Romanian towns and villages around it, and Transylvania more

European than Romania. Yet, the Roma population were not really present in the local programme, whereas they featured in Luxembourg.

Evaluation plays a crucial role in precisely creating European added value through learning from the other cities. This includes calculating hotel nights spent in the location and other economic and city marketing related aims. The evaluation report *Ex-post Evaluation of 2007 & 2008 European Capitals of Culture, Final Report,* states that while the cities *"were effective in implementing a wide range of activities with a European dimension, the nature of that dimension and the extent of effectiveness varied in sum"* and all *"gave only modest attention to the development of European themes and issues"*. Co-productions and exchanges across Europe existed in the three other cities, but in Sibiu collaboration with other Europeans "was peripheral to the main cultural programme and primarily took place only with the other title holder". In contrast, Luxembourg was the only one out of the four for whom attracting artists of European significance was not a prominent objective.

Cities are not easy to compare and policy-effects are not easy to recognise – particularly, as the aims of the ECC years may differ. Luxembourg needed no added value in bringing in international artists, and Sibiu's year was about showcasing 'Europe' to the locals and, in particular, the European as new member state. The Sibiu ECC year sought to have tangible effects of renovating and creating infrastructure for citizens and visitors, and the Luxembourg ECC year was about building a region. As part of the international German group from the Bauhaus Kolleg Dessau, I took part in both ECC 2007 cities. Through our urban interventions, such as my EU Flag Memorial, we could notice how the attitude to the ECC, its spread in the city/region differed markedly.

Conclusion

Ideas transform and policy aims are debated and evolve over time. Above I have argued that building 'Europe' through cultural policy is a contingent process, where stated aims of the European Union are one factor and the actual funding process another. European cultural policy existed before the Maastricht treaty, mainly through the regional funds, and through the ECCs. There has always been a connection between culture and economics.

The ECC years is one of the most prominent or tangible cultural programmes for ordinary Europeans, yet the investment in promoting 'Europe' is mainly done through other funding than the designated Melina Mercouri Prize. Definition of the ECC programme or indeed 'Europe' is on the shoulders of local organisers, and their pan-European support network of former ECCs and the ECC cultural professionals.

Although ECC policy has transformed since the mid-1980s, the programme always offered a chance to represent 'European identity' – as something imported, produced, rediscovered or inherent. Individual projects promote different understandings of Europe, but also have each their particular ideals and aims in being European. Yet, precisely this openness in the definitions of 'Europe' and the 'European' guarantees the democratic ethos of European identity. ∎

Laura Parkkinen

"I Want to Destroy the European Union, not Europe"

– European Identity and Populism in Finland and France

Timo Soini, leader of the Finns Party (formerly True Finns), argued in the 2009 European Parliament elections, "[no matter] where the EU is, there is a problem". Soini, who was an MEP during 2009–2011, is a typical populist, using colourful, often humorous one-liners or biblical and other religious anecdotes. His media skills make him a person that Gianpietro Mazzoleni calls telepopulist. Soini sees populism as a positive value: "I speak clearly to People, so yes, I am a populist". The key rhetoric theme is relationship between defenders of 'traditional' values against the enemy, the elite, which is often the EU. The core of the populist narrative is emphasising that current politicians, the leaders, are out-of-touch with everyday needs and concerns of citizens.

The Finns Party has criticized the European Union, but the party is in favour of staying in the EU. The Finns Party is against teaching Swedish at Finnish schools and critical of multiculturalism and immigration. In a way they defend 'Europe and its Christian values', but at the same time are Eurosceptic.

Specific in Soini's speeches is that the EU and European integration are paralleled with the Soviet Union and its undemocratic decision-making and authoritarian politics. In his blog, the EU is repeatedly referred to as 'the EU Kolkhoz', 'Kolkhoz of money' and Eurostoliitto (combining the Finnish words for Europe and the Soviet Union, Neuvostoliitto). "Eurostoliitto is not eternal", according to Soini. The pro-European politics of the current Finnish government is described as contemporary Finlandisation.

These statements should be seen from the perspective of the party's early history. In the 1970's, the former Finnish Agriculture Party (SMP), which was a populist protest party and predecessor of the Finns Party, criticized Finland's relations with the Soviet Union. The party was "against [the Finnish] President Kekkonen and Russkie": SMP was critical of President Kekkonen, who was Finland's president during 1956–1982. Finland had a special Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (YYA Treaty) with the Soviet Union from 1948 to 1992. In 1995, Finland joined the European Union.

However, in 1988 the party's leader and founder, lawyer Veikko Vennamo was one of the first persons in Finland to see that the country's only possibility was to join the European Union. At the same time when using metaphors of the Soviet Union to describe the EU, Soini is telling stories about veterans of the Winter War (war between Finland and the Soviet Union 1939–1940).

According to Andres Hellström, identity formations are often produced by distinguishing oneself and one's 'own' group from 'others' and by articulating a presupposed 'constitutive outside'. Soini sees Southern Europe, particularly Greece, as lazy people compared to "hardworking brave Finnish people, who shouldn't pay for the [mistakes of] others". Finnish people are seen to have higher moral than 'others'.

The Finns Party is also using similar vocabulary describing the European Union and a divorce: "the EU took, betrayed and left", as a cheating, betraying spouse. Biblical metaphors are also used: "the EU will collapse like Tower of Babel". Brussels is the heart of darkness. Actually for Soini, Finnish identity is a narrative of the Winter War and he is presenting himself as preserver of 'core values', such as marriage between a man and a woman.

"Against the European Union, Not Europe"

Marine Le Pen has softened the French far-right Front National's (FN) image since she

became leader of the party in 2011. She has been well presented in media, for example in several talk shows. In the French media, Le Pen is described as Batave, blonde and she often presents herself as a mother of three children. She is often referred to as 'fille de' (daughter of) Jean-Marie Le Pen and usually casually called Marine among journalists. Le Pen also wears tricolours and her voice is husky. Above all, she will "protect the French people from immigration", which matches her mother-like presentation. Le Pen´s 'care-populism' attracts voters from the traditional left and the middle class. FN has long been the strongest party among blue-collar workers in France, and now it desires to capture the middle class.

In the 2012 French presidential elections, Le Pen got 24% of the votes and in the European Parliament elections in May 2014, Front National received almost 25% of the vote, giving the party 24 out of France's 74 seats. An impressive increase compared to the 3 seats they won in 2009. Why did the Front National do so well in France?

While the Finns Party sees Europe as 'Kolkhoz of money', France´s Front National goes much further and will close the borders. Shortly after her election as the leader of the FN, Marine Le Pen said she fights "with all her strength" against the EU, which she sees as "a structure that I consider totalitarian, it is the European Soviet Union".

In a speech presenting her electoral program in November 2011, Le Pen compared the EU to a "rootless … impotent empire" which deprives the French of their identity and has 'pillaged' national sovereignty "for the benefit of a techno-structure feudalised by the markets".

While Le Pen has called herself 'Eu-ropean' in opposition to the rest of the world, she considers the French political class' dedication to the deepening European integration as a proof of its lack of patriotism. Le Pen recently confirmed on the French radio that she wants to introduce a 'patriotism test' at the National School of Administration (ENA). She has also suggested banning the flying of EU flags from public buildings.

Marine Le Pen says that she is not against Europe, but the European Union. Here she is again using the metaphor of the Soviet Union: "I want to destroy the EU, not Europe! I believe in a Europe of nation-states. I believe in Airbus and Ariane, in a Europe based on cooperation. But I don't want this European Soviet Union", she said to Der Spiegel magazine 2014. Le Pen is not seen as a feminist, but she is using feminism against 'Muslim women'. For example, she claimed that Muslim women "are not supporting our values" if they are wearing a veil. There is clearly 'us' and 'them'.

Why Do Populist Parties Do So Well?

Populist parties can identify the problem, whether it is the EU or Islamization. They play the nationalism card and often use xenophobic tools. Populism is here seen as mainly a rhetorical style, a discourse, which is against something and appears together with a charismatic leader. Populism puts its 'own' people above 'the others', and it fights against the corrupted 'elites'. Elite is usually based in Brussels (Pyrsseli) and the EU is compared to the Soviet Union. Populist parties present the best national values. They defend good, hard-working,   value-driven   citizens,

whereas the EU is out of touch with the needs of people.

As Soini said in 2011, "Prefer Finnish. Vote for a True Finn", which is an advertising slogan for Finnish goodies. Another one-liner used by Soini is "Euro kills in house and garden", which also comes from an advertisement for insecticide Raid.

A populist talks clearly and uses 'proximity'. For example, Marine Le Pen often visits fruit markets and talks to people. Populists can bring a message "I am with you, I feel you". At the national level, populism has brought discussion of moral values to politics and changed attitudes towards immigration. The political climate has changed and language used has become harsher. For example in France the use of burka was forbidden in 2010. People who don´t represent the values of the Republic are not welcome in France, as president Sarkozy said.

Politicians usually create their image as the father of the nation, a saviour, a man from nowhere, a man from outside the establishment, or a populist ruler. Soini uses his masculinity telling "I am a man, a heterosexual man" and quoting Finnish writer Arto Paasilinna, whose books portray stories of the Finnish man, who comes from the outside and is against technocrats.

Populism – a Threat to European Identity?

Through the history of populist movements, the image of the 'people' has been used alongside strong elements of Christianity. Michael Lee notes that "populism is not a political language of negotiation and compromise". It alludes an 'end of days' trope if changes are not made. The Christian element of populist rhetoric helps to inform this narrative. Populism defines 'others' as non-Christians.

Is populism still always a threat to the European Union? Populism is a part of democracy and is not always a bad one. As one French journalist says, populism is like cholesterol – there is always a bad and a good one. However, populism will present a clear identity, 'joy to be French' or to be a 'brave Finnish' or a 'True Finn' opposed to the rather unclear 'European identity'. Could the European Union do more to define 'European identity'?

According to Belgian social scientist Chantal Mouffe in the European Magazine, the European Union has lost something. "Not so long ago, the European Union was something that people could identify with. But over the last ten years things have changed: we've seen a growing movement of Euroscepticism and Euro-rejection. For me the reason for that is clear: people today can't identify with this neoliberal Europe." Is Mouffe right, does Europe need new values or something else?

From Berlusconi to Beppe Grillo to Marine Le Pen, the populist is always a good storyteller, with a unique voice and metaphoric language that is highly visual and emotional, often biblical.

Actually populism is not against Europe, but the European Union, which is seen as a synonym for bureaucracy and elitism, and comparable to the Soviet Union. It stresses the pathos of the 'common man', which is seen as opposed to the European Union. Could it be that Europe needs more proximity and a story? A simple narrative that would make identification and identity more visible? ∎

Sari Artjoki

A New Narrative for Europe:

Fundamental Rights and the Rule of Law?

For the past few years the European Commission has committed itself to discussions and debates involving citizens, civil society and cultural circles in multiple new ways. The Commission wants to listen and engage in order to have a better understanding of what people want and expect from the institutions and the EU as a whole. Only by doing so can we better meet peoples' legitimate expectations and address their concerns. What is more, Europe is us and we all should have a say and a role in its future. The New Narrative project has been one of the new initiatives to this end.

The founding narrative of the European Union is to make war impossible among its Member States by coming together through an ever closer union. Today´s *raison d´être* of the EU is the same as it was 60 years ago: to share security, stability and prosperity. These broad objectives have stood the test of time. Indeed, the quite recent political, economic and social developments in Europe have clearly shown that these objectives are as valid as ever. They should not be taken for granted. Quite on the contrary, they require our constant attention and our conviction every day.

Based on the debates we have had so far, such as the Citizens' Dialogue in 2013 and the ongoing New Narrative initiative in 2014, it seems that the list of security, stability and prosperity should include a fourth ground objective. That is freedom and fundamental rights. After meeting around 300 people from 26 Member States in early November in Tampere 15th Anniversary Conference of the first Finnish Presidency and the Tampere process of security, freedom and justice, I am even more convinced. Let us incorporate fundamental rights and the rule of law. As Finland's Minister of Justice, Ms. Anna-Maja Henriksson said in her speech, European integration is firmly rooted in a shared commitment to human rights, democratic institutions and the rule of law. The rule of law is the backbone of any modern constitutional democracy and a prerequisite for the protection of all fundamental values. How right she was.

Indeed, the sense of community is born from shared values and the fundamental rights of citizens. The fundamental rights laid down in the Treaties must be implemented both at national and EU level. We apply the Copenhagen Criteria to evaluate a candidate country's ability to become a Member State, but can we really credibly demand reforms in the Rule of Law and fundamental rights in the Candidate Countries unless we strin-

Can we really credibly demand reforms in the Rule of Law and fundamental rights in the Candidate Countries unless we stringently respect them inside the Community every day?

gently respect them inside the Community every day?

The justice scoreboard adopted by the Commission in 2013 and 2014 is a new tool that will help individual Member States and the Community as a whole to keep track of these issues. As a part of the European promise, citizens expect their Governments to provide justice, protection and fairness with full respect for fundamental rights. We need to deliver on that promise, collectively and as individual Member States. A borderless and seamless European justice will en-

sure that citizens can rely on their rights – all across the continent.
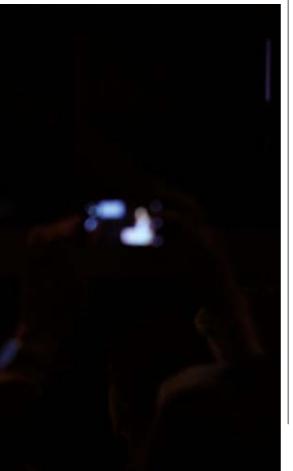
Another thing I brought home with me from the Tampere Conference was the freedom of movement. Yes, we face urgency to continue EU level cooperation in handling migration, but at the same time let us remember that internal migration is a basic right of our citizens. If we limit that, we go against the basic principles of freedom of movement.

Safeguarding fundamental rights takes a new step forward in the Jean-Claude Juncker Commission. The portfolio of Vice-President Frans Timmermans

includes the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Rule of Law and their horizontal implementation in all Commission's policies. He underlined in his answers to the European Parliament that all EU actions must comply with the Charter of Fundamental Rights. According to him, it is also vital to listen to the ideas of citizens in the process of bringing the EU closer to them.

The European Union is built on shared values: peace, justice, democracy, respect of human dignity and tolerance. We already discussed peace and justice. Peace and justice can never be taken for granted. But neither is the narrative of tolerance a thing of the past. There are a lot of xenophobic discourses, Euroscepticcism and nationalism that promote disintegration. Tolerance can never be considered as a foregone conclusion. In my thinking, Europeanism rises when these shared values are violated. I hear people wonder "how can things like these happen in 21st century Europe?" It tells me that the core values and objectives live inside us all.

Without questioning the validity of the founding narrative, we should ask: is that enough? The former European Commission President, Mr. José Manuel Barroso answered his own question so that it remains necessary but it is not sufficient. In his State of the Union address in 2012, President Barroso stated that Europe needs a new direction that cannot be based on old ideas alone. Europe needs a new thinking. He appealed to European thinkers to join the debate from a European standpoint, not only in national discussions.

As a result a Cultural Committee was founded and the members were artists, intellectuals, scientists, academics.

Bringing people from the cultural and sports sectors to join the debate, which is often seen as politicians' monopoly, made the discussion more diverse and took it to new levels.

They presented their work in the form of a declaration 'The Mind and Body of Europe' in March, 2014. The Committee said that Europe is a state of mind in many senses. It has a shared history, shared institutions, freely moving active and brave citizens, and shared values of peace, freedom and the Rule of Law. In its Declaration, the Cultural Committee said that the EU's core values and principles need to be reactivated and made relevant for the European citizens. They pass the responsibility on to the citizens to actively raise their voices and to take part in the debate by sharing stories and concerns. These narratives will tell the story of what it means to be European in the 21st century.

The 'New Narrative for Europe' project is one of the three sides of the triangle around the debate on the future of Europe. The second side is political discussions with public authorities at the EU and national levels. The third vital element is Citizens' Dialogues. Over one and a half years, the Commission held 51 debates with citizens all around Europe in order to create a European public space where people could express their concerns and expectations as well as ideas for the future of Europe. This work will continue in some format in 2015.

The discussion about the New Narrative is continuing in the Member States. We at the European Commission Representation in Finland are happy to put this in practice in excellent cooperation with the European Movement in Finland. Regional debates are organised across the country, engaging people to reform the story of Europe.

The narrative of Europe will continue to evolve, built on the basics that should not be forgotten, but adding elements that the new generation holds precious. We were delighted by the opportunity to cooperate with European Movement Finland in the summer of 2014 SuomiAreena, and receive the manifesto made in a true European cooperation on the New Deal for Europe. Bringing people from the cultural and sports sectors to join the debate, which is often seen as politicians' monopoly, made the discussion more diverse and took it to new levels. The manifesto highlighted four fundamental issues: sustainable economic growth through young and innovative entrepreneurship, youth mobility, migration and the question of universal human rights, and European culture and identity.

I think I can undersign this already. I think we have a deal. ∎

Learn more about the New Narrative for Europe project online at http://ec.europa.eu/ debate-future-europe/ new-narrative/index_en.htm and join the debate!