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When Europeans Travel: Creation Of A Post-National Identity Through Tourism*

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Abstract

By deriving from the case of the European Union, this study aims to understand how tourism contributes to the post-national identity making process. The European Union is selected as a case of this study because European integration represents an unprecedentedly institutionalised form of inter-state collaboration in the European continent which establishes a post-national identity. As integration evolved, attachment to a common European identity became important in ensuring support for the future of the integration. Tourism due to its relation to culture, heritage and identity making, relates to political objective of the European Union for promoting European identity. The study adopts a qualitative research approach with a case study to reach an extensive and in-depth description of the social phenomenon of post-national identity making. The study finds out two major roles of tourism: tourism as a fertile ground to seeding the ideas of integration, tourism as a context for experiencing European identity.

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INTRODUCTION

“If Europe is a Nymph,
Then Naples is her bright-blue eye
And Warsaw is her heart.
Sebastopol and Azoff,
Petersburg, Mitau, Odessa:
These are the thorns in her feet.
Paris is the head,
London the starched collar,
And Rome—the scapulary.”

(Słowacki 1836, translated and quoted in Davies 1997: 1)

The above-mentioned lines belong to the nineteenth century Polish poet Juliusz Słowacki who portrays Europe as an attractive nymph who carries the characteristics of the various cultures together (Davies, 1997: 1). In the poem mentioned above, a nymph is a symbol of female divinity related to nature. Nature (natural assets and values) can be seen as a distinguishing feature of Europe. In a similar vein, Natura 2000 programme was initiated to create a network of nature conservation areas in the European Union. The network involves “18% of the EU’s land area and more than 8% of its marine territory, Natura 2000 is the largest coordinated network of protected areas in the world” (European Commission, 2008). Such personalisation created by Słowacki points to the complex, rich and diverse nature of Europe’s heritage including “natural, built and archaeological sites, museums, monuments, artworks, historic cities, literary, musical and audiovisual works, and the knowledge, practices and traditions of European citizens” (European Commission, 2023).

Heritage is “*a version of the past*” according to Waterton and Watson (2015: 1) which implies that heritage is recreated for consumption. According to these authors, the versions of the past are re-created via artefacts, exhibitions, performances, spectacular sites and events, memories and commemorations. By definition heritage involves tangible, intangible cultural heritage and natural heritage which carry the valuable resources inherited from previous generations which are created and recreated in the present and transmitted as a legacy for the next generations. Cultural heritage is a product of culture and it is a process of culture at the same time (UNESCO n.d.). The conceptualization of heritage as a form of reproduced past brings to the fore the issues of creating heritage and utilizing heritage, for example in the processes of identity making. Such notion of process thinking is in line with the approach of the present study to the concept of purposefully heritage making.

Europe has been a territory of peace and war throughout the ages. Two World Wars took place in the European continent. Devastating impact of World War II urged European countries to look for solutions that would bring peace and economic restructuring at the same time. The idea of European cooperation on the continent was not new, but the way in which inter-state cooperation was institutionalised was new (Cini & Borragán 2013: 2). A phenomenal step towards unity, peace and wealth in the European continent was the decision to establish the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951. Upon the success of the European Coal and Steel Community, the Treaties of Rome were signed in 1957 and the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community were created. The founding members of these Communities were Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. These are the founding countries of the European Union (the EU) today which has 27-member countries.

Sui-generis as it is, European integration is going on by adding new areas into European sphere of policy making. Tourism is one of them. Institutionalisation of tourism in the EU policy field took time and it followed an uneasy path with ups and downs according to the economic, political, and international context with which the EU is facing (Gürsoy, 2017). Tourism, regarding its impact on feelings of belonging, citizenship, social solidarity has been a medium through which nation-states have fostered construction of nationhood and national identities (Franklin, 2003: 25). Identity theory assumes that “an identity is a set of meanings attached to the self, this set of meanings serves as a standard or reference for a person” (Burke & Stets 2009: 50) and “the meanings of the self are shared and form the basis of language communication, symbolic interaction and, ultimately, social structure” (Burke & Stets 200: 10). Accordingly, this study questions how tourism, as an instrument of national identity creation, has become a tool for post-national or supranational identity making. The unit of analysis of the present study is the European Union. The study adopts case study research as a tool of data collection and analysis regarding its potential for understanding a contemporary phenomenon in the real-world context (Yin, 2014).

European heritage is an indispensable part of European identity. This study aims to provide insight into how the European Union brings tourism into play to create a post-national identity, namely a European identity. The first

part discusses the nature of European identity. The second part describes the research methodology; the case study research. The third part is dedicated to the in-depth analysis of the case of the European Union regarding its tourism policy. In this regard, the EU's involvement in tourism and the changing parameters of identity from the national to the post-national forms are explained. Then, the last part is dedicated to the evaluation of how tourism contributes to creating post-national identity in the case of the European Union.

2. EUROPEAN IDENTITY: SKIN OR SWEATER?

The above-mentioned analogy of skin and sweater with the European identity is borrowed from Marsh and Furlong (2002). Identity, whether national, post-national, supra-national or subnational, is a construct and a powerful one according to Vignoles et al. (2011: 2). As explained by Burke and Stets (2009: 129), the basis of personal identity is the self-concept and the basis of social identity is the social group. The personal identity is defined on the basis of meanings which render someone unique while the social identity is defined on the grounds of the "meanings tied to a social group". Social identity is activated via "accessibility and fit". Stets and Burke (2000: 230) define the accessibility as "*the readiness of a given category to become activated in the person*" and the fitness is related to "*the congruence between the stored category specifications and perceptions of the situation.*"

While questioning the position of European identity, as a sweater or skin, looking at the feelings of belongingness might provide some insight. According to a Eurobarometer Survey in 2017, the Europeans who feel "very" attached to Europe is 17.22 % and feel "fairly" attached to Europe is 45.68 %. On the other side, the Europeans who feel "not very" attached to Europe is 25.63 % and who do "not" feel attached "at all" is 9.70%. So, overall, the feeling of belongingness to Europe stands at 62.9% while the feeling of not belongingness mounts to 35.33%. The remaining, 1.77% of the participants in the survey do not know or do not care what to feel as their response is "don't know". When asked about the attachment to their country, the overall level of attachment increases to 92.28 percent (56.31 % of the respondents feel very attached and 35.97 % of the respondents feel fairly attached) and overall feeling of "not attached" decreases to 7.45% (Eurobarometer, 2017). As of 2023, it is seen that the ratio of trust in the EU is higher than (47% of the Europeans) the ratio of trust in national governments (32% of the Europeans). Besides, regarding the image of the EU, it is explained by Eurobarometer survey that the Europeans tend to have a positive image of the EU (45 % of the Europeans). 36% of the participants in the survey hold a neutral image and 18% of the participants hold a negative image of the EU (Eurobarometer, 2023).

For an individual to adopt the European Union as an identity, the identity of Europeanness should be accessible to him/her. That is to say, requirements and characteristics of being European should be embedded and ready to be activated in the individual. By adapting the definition of Stets and Burke about "fit"ness (2000: 230) to European identity, one can observe that if a person perceives being European as a group identity and thinks that within group differences are less than the differences to other groups, then comparative fit is ensured. If the content of being European is defined "along stereotypical, normative lines as held in the culture", then one can assume that being European, as a social category, carries normative fitness. Accessibility and fitness activate European identity of European citizens and the EU has a major role in it. The aim of developing closer relations among its member states is already mentioned in the 2nd article of the founding Treaty of Rome. As put by Wendt (2014: 2), "the European identity that is present today is a creation partially by European history, but also by the EU who brought the concept forth as something to work towards." European identity does not happen in vacuum.

According to the identity theory (Burke and Stets 2009: 134, 135), a person can have multiple identities and these multiple identities together impact on the social behaviour of that person by influencing self-relevant meanings. So, a person might feel both attached to his country and to Europe. As long as these two types of identities have shared meanings for the individual, both national identity and European identity can verify and strengthen each other. Concerning the analogy of skin and sweater, one can argue that European identity seems to be more like a sweater to put on when one feels like. However national identity tends to be more like skin. Besides, considering that European identity is the one that does not replace national identities, however complements them, European identity can be likened to a sweater that can be put on the national identities. The level of attachment to Europe is at a significant degree as mentioned above regarding the Eurobarometer survey in 2017. What is more important is the trend of increase it portrays as it was 56.24 % in 1999 (Eurobarometer 2017). This is an indication of attachment to a post-national identity and it is in line with the rationale of the European integration as it aims going beyond the national by creating transnational and cross-border links among member states and by creating a political area composed of multiple and multi-level identities involving supra-national, national, and subnational levels (Ivic, 2016: 133).

3. THE CASE STUDY AS A METHODOLOGY

The study acknowledges the importance of “the relations between knowledge and the context of its production and relations between facts and values” (Ejnavarzala, 2019: 94). Accordingly, in ontological terms, the study considers “world as socially constructed”. That’s to say, the study adopts an anti-foundationalist ontology with “interpretivist theory of knowledge” which argues that there is not a “real world, which exists independently of the meaning which actors attach to their action” (Furlong & March, 2010: 185). In line with its ontological and epistemological positions, the study follows a qualitative research design by applying the case study as the selected methodology.

The case study research is selected as the tool of data collection and analysis because the study aims to explore a single social phenomenon in depth. The social phenomena inquired by the study, namely the European integration, is unique in that it is a sui-generis form of international cooperation. Gerring (2004: 342) defines the case study “*as an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units*”. By the term “unit”, Gerring (2004: 342) refers to “a spatially bounded phenomenon”. The present study selects the European Union as the unit of analysis and it is in line with the conceptualization cited above.

For tourism studies, case study research is increasingly recognized as a valuable research strategy according to Dredge and Hales (2012). Case studies are used to understand “a contemporary phenomenon within its real- life context” (Yin, 2009: 13). Vromen (2010: 256) notes that case study research also enables finding out “the multitude of qualitative-interpretive, within-case observations” and shows “the patterns of interaction, organisational practices, social relations, routines, actions, and so on.” Case study research is appropriate for the purposes of the study as it enables natural inquiry with in depth evaluation of a phenomenon in a bounded context and it enables a new process of learning about the case and produces knowledge about the case (Crowe et al. 2011).

4. THE CASE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

4.1. The EU’s Involvement in Tourism

European integration which started in the forms of European Communities (European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 and European Economic Community and European Atom Energy Community in 1958) evolved into a more unified institutional structure, took the name of the Union by the Maastricht Treaty, namely Treaty on the European Union (1993) and the last Treaty, the Lisbon Treaty (2009) has provided its current institutional shape. These treaties are important for the purposes of this study because they are the responses to both external and internal challenges facing the EU. The difficulties, crises and the confrontations during the integration process urge new institutional adaptations and the treaties are one of the ways to meet this need. In fact, every treaty is an incomplete contract as explained by Pollack (2003: 157): “Like a domestic constitution, The EC treaty is a broad relational contract providing only the guiding principles of EC policies as well as procedures for subsequent adoption of legislation by the various institutions”. So, EU institutions acting in line with the EU treaties which are incomplete contracts legislate, execute and monitor the implementation of EU policies. Incompleteness here, denotes the ever-evolving structure of the EU.

The institutional operating framework of the EU works for “continuous and balanced expansion, an increase in stability, an accelerated raising of the standard of living and closer relations between the States belonging to it” according to the Article 2 of the Treaty of Rome (one of the founding treaties of the EU). So, it is aimed to achieve economic growth, social progress, closer political ties and even individual well-being as the European integration unfolds. Tourism has a role to play in each of these goals and its potential is explored, emphasized and used by the European Commission.

In the beginning, there was no tourism policy at the European level. From the Treaty Establishing European Economic Community (1957) to the Treaty on European Union (1993), it took thirty-six years for tourism to gain a treaty base. In fact, the contribution of tourism to other EU policies was acknowledged in 1984, in a Council Resolution on a Community Policy on Tourism. However, member states were reluctant to accept EU intervention due to the importance of tourism for national economic, cultural, social and environmental matters (Williams & Shaw 1998). With the Treaty on European Union, tourism was included among the areas where European Union, then European Community would pursue activities “for the purposes set out in Article 2”. Thus, inclusion of tourism into EU level policy making was legitimised on the basis of its contribution to the founding goals of the Union. Article 2 of the Treaty was mentioning the goals of economic integration (customs union, monetary union), environmentally and economically sustainable growth, high levels of employment, social protection, social cohesion, the standard of living and quality of life, and solidarity among Member States (Treaty on the European Union, 92/C 191 /01).

With the Treaty of Lisbon (signed in 2007 entered into force in 2009), tourism has gained a treaty base on its own. Tourism is included in the Treaty of Lisbon with a dedicated article (Treaty of Lisbon, OJ C 306). Given the fact that, treaties are the contracts of the integration, it can be argued that tourism has been included in the contract with a more powerful base which expands the EU’s field activity to cover tourism. So, expecting more EU competence in tourism and more tourism in EU policies and activities has become appropriate and legitimate.

The Treaty of Lisbon draws the outline of the EU tourism policy, by stating that EU action aims at:

- a) encouraging the creation of a favourable environment for the development of undertakings in this sector;
- b) promoting cooperation between the Member States, particularly by the exchange of good practice.

The Treaty does not provide a Europe-wide common tourism policy however tourism is related to many other policies of the EU such as agriculture, environment, free movement of people, services etc. So, the EU's tourism policy is framed by directly tourism related measures besides the EU legislation on issues which affect tourism indirectly (European Parliament, 2015).

The historical process behind tourism policy making can be likened to a process of tug-of-war between national institutionalism and supranational institutionalism in the field of tourism. Tourism has been an area of national policy-making (Williams & Shaw 1998: 377, Franklin, 2003). Accepting the presence of supranational institutions in a historically domestic policy domain requires being persuaded. Persuasion in this case, is generated by the meticulous efforts of supranational actors, especially the European Commission. The supranational actors, by acting directly and indirectly created issue linkages between tourism and other policies of the EU, such as the linking internal market with tourism or linking tourism with environment. The EU's role is a complementary role not replacing but coordinating national governments' activities in the field of tourism. Through policy networks and via issue linkages, the supranational institutions persuaded national governments to accept the increasing role of the EU in the tourism governance (Gürsoy, 2017). The act of persuasion did not happen all at once. It followed a step by step process and it included discursive as well as non-discursive aspects.

4.2. From National to Post-National: Changing Parameters of Identity

The extent to which Europeans identify themselves with the EU, in other words, with the institutionalised form of the inter-state cooperation can provide an insight into the extent to which the EU has been successful in persuading European people. The common policies and the European single market have been delivering results for all the member states. According to Delmotte (2002: 6), three events impact on the emergence of a post-national identity: (i) the end of Cold war and the bipolar international relations, (ii) the launch of European integration based on the creation of an internal market without national borders and finally, (iii) expansion the communication network among individuals and among countries across the globe. Increasing connectivity beyond national borders is a characteristic of post-national order. Post-nationality points to a situation of interdependency among sovereign nation-states, like in the case of European integration.

Shaw (2001: 74) points to a change in the institutionalisation of power in post-nationalism as nation states are "not the only loci and foci of political activity and processes". Focus of political processes has expanded to cover actors other than nation-states and the locus has expanded to cover other levels of policy making. The EU's multi-level institutional framework involves not only national actors but also supranational and sub-national actors and the network like inter-relatedness among these actors. For example, the EU supports non-governmental organisations because non-governmental organisations are better in implementing EU measures across the Europe through their continuous dialog with civic and public actors (European Commission 2018a). Some of these non-governmental organisations are regional or national but some of them are transnational, namely, umbrella organisations by overarching national borders such as European Federation for Farm and Village Tourism EuroGites.

Shaw (2001) identifies a second dimension of post-nationalism apart from institutionalisation that is the change in the way of identity, attribution, affinity and political community is described. According to Shaw (2001: 74), post-nationalism favours pluralist conceptualisation of identity "with the increasing emergence or re-emergence of local, linguistic or cultural, regional, national and even supra-state identities, in each case outside the formal framework of the state". The third dimension of post-nationalism identified by Shaw (2001: 74) is the change in geographical dimension. In post-nationalism, "space needs to be described in terms of shifting non-state territorialities". The term post-national does not refer to disappearance of the national rather it denotes a change in the articulation of the above-mentioned components. In sum, post-national identity is not a fixed identity. It is characterized by multi-level mobilisation.

5. CREATION OF POST-NATIONAL IDENTITY THROUGH TOURISM

5.1. Tourism: A Fertile Soil to Plant the Seeds of Integration

The EU faces a legitimisation problem due to its weak identity compared to the identities of nation states (Ceretta & Curli 2017: 3). “The purpose, even existence, of our Union is being questioned” says Federica Mogherini, the then Vice-President of the European Commission in her foreword speech in the EU’s Global Strategy Paper (European Commission 2016). Then, Mogherini adds “Yet, our citizens and the world need a strong European Union like never before”. Thus, the discourse on the “strong EU” is linked to the discourse on the future “existence of the EU”. Strong EU is legitimised on the grounds that citizens need it and the world needs it. The strengthening of European identity becomes a requisite for the EU as it expands its jurisdiction to new policy areas and as it aims to become a stronger global power. This seems simple but it is not easy.

José Manuel Durão Barroso, former President of the European Commission, in his speech on “a new narrative for Europe”, says that “European unity cannot be taken for granted. European unity, democracy and respect for human dignity have to be fought for every day” (Barroso 2013). His remark highlights the importance of persistency (working every day) and the importance of everyday politics as a venue for gaining support for European unity. Eylemer and Söylemez (2020) point out that national states are rational actors pursuing their interest. Everyday politics is the place where seeds of European integration can be planted because in politically sensitive areas, namely in high politics, nation states would be unwilling to give up their power on control (Rosamond, 2000). Tourism is part of the everyday politics. As Franklin (2003: 2) says “*tourism is infused into the everyday and has become one of the ways in which our lives are ordered*”. According to Franklin (2003) tourism is also a reference point for consumers of globalised culture.

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) highlights the global economic significance of tourism as being the third-largest export category in the world following the sectors of fuels and chemicals. Before global Covid-19 pandemic, tourism generated 7% of global trade in 2019. Regarding the contribution of tourism to employment, tourism is highly significant as it creates one in every ten jobs and it creates income for millions not only in developing but also in developed countries. The global Covid-19 pandemic caused the risk of losing 100 million directly tourism related jobs (UNWTO, 2021) by impacting everyday life of people who are directly and indirectly involved in tourism. As of the first quarter of 2023, UNWTO draws attention to the recovery in the number of international tourists, as it reached 80% of pre-pandemic levels. It is estimated 235 million tourists travelled internationally in the first three months of 2023 (UNWTO, 2023a). Europe is the world’s number one tourist destination in terms of international tourist arrivals and it is the region (together with the Middle East) which showed the fastest recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. Europe recorded 585 million arrivals in 2022 and it amounted nearly 80% of pre-pandemic levels in Europe (UNWTO, 2023b).

Network like structure of tourism involving various businesses in various geographical areas enables the interaction and co-functioning of the inter-related parts. The tourism geographical system (Cooper & Hall, 2008) involves four components: destination (facilities and attractions), transit region (transport between the source region and the destination), tourist generating region (distribution and promotion channels for the destination in the source region) and the environment encompassing these components. When the volume intra-EU travel is considered, the level of interaction is at a considerable degree. 58.3% of the Europeans stayed within the EU when travelling in 2015. Europeans, on average, stayed one week, spent EUR 596 and used airplane at most when visiting other EU countries in 2015 (Eurostat, 2018a). In 2019, European travellers spent 84% of their vacation nights in the EU and 81% of the visitors to the EU were the EU citizens. They spent approximately 75 Euros per night (Eurostat, 2021a). Europeans spent almost 1 week when visiting other EU countries and car was the dominant way of travelling (Eurostat, 2021b).

Tourism plays an important role on the economic and socio-cultural life of the European citizens. The EU member countries have close ties of tourism mobility as can be observed from the intra-EU tourist mobility explained above. The European countries become the tourist generating region, destination, transit region or the environment for each other. Besides, tourism is a service which is subject to the rules of the free movement of goods, people, services and capital in the European single market. Furthermore, tourism is indirectly related to many European policy areas such as transportation, competition, agriculture and taxation. This inter-relatedness creates issue linkages such as the case of tourism related taxes across the EU. These issue linkages make tourism a suitable policy area for developing Europe-wide cooperation. For example, in 2006, a European strategy was developed for tourism by the European Commission: “A renewed EU Tourism Policy: Towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism” (European Commission, 2006). The strategy started by linking tourism policy to the EU’s Lisbon Agenda for growth and jobs. Competitiveness, sustainable growth, employment were the key issues which were on the political agenda of the EU at that time.

Barroso (2013) argues that “we must, therefore, abandon the illusion that we can respond to European problems only with national solutions. Yet at the same time we must never give up any of our values, our culture or our way of life, our European way of life”. So, Europe needs to go beyond national ways of thinking and needs to maintain its “European ways” of doing things. Being able to create “European” solutions to “European” problems is the legitimate basis for developing European wide tourism policies coordinated, sometimes originated by the EU institutions.

Throughout the integration process, the EU wide challenges have required action by the EU either by coordinating or pioneering the policies implemented by the member states. The decisions triggered by the crises/challenges (internal conflicts or external pressures) created more space for the supranational authority of the EU by enlarging the scope and depth of the EU competences. In other words, Europe wide problems have facilitated nation states to delegate the supranational authority more policy areas to coordinate or more power in implementation (Kühnhardt, 2009).

Tourism defines and represents cultural identity (Palmer, 1999) and makes cultural identity visible not only to international audience, to the very citizens of a nation-state. Citizenship, as discussed above, has been characterized by rights, obligations and attachment related to a nation-state and it is bounded by territory of that nation-state. However, the EU provides citizenship, namely European citizenship as well. Citizenship of the EU was established by the Maastricht Treaty. Union citizenship does not replace national citizenship; it creates an additional citizenship for the nationals (Wiener, 2004: 400) which goes beyond national territorial borders. Tourism helps the EU to define and represent European identity for the consumption of the European citizens. For example, the European Commission states that “cultural tourism represents a great opportunity to showcase European heritage and shared values, and promote Europe as a unique tourism destination” (European Commission, 2018b).

Discourses on crisis and challenges have created a context for the discursive action on solidarity and they have enabled institutionalisation of Europe-wide solutions with the help of supranational institutions. Tourism, due to its role in the national economies and European economy, has been a foul-weather friend to the EU through the hardships it passed. For example, tourism was one of the few sectors that continued to grow and create jobs, despite the 2011 crisis (European Commission, 2013). Connecting tourism to discourses on economic challenges (competitiveness, unemployment, and crisis) proliferated action in tourism. Tourism has been a fertile ground for planting seeds of integration.

5.2. Tourism: Creating Context for Experiencing European Identity

Mobility is an intrinsic aspect of tourism. Mobility is an intrinsic aspect of European integration too as it was founded on gradually removing the barriers to trade among its member states. European internal market which is a keystone of the integration is based on free movement of people, goods, capital and services across national borders within the borders of the EU. Enabling functioning of the internal market within the territory of the EU is more than allowing free trade. Internal market is a highly regulated economic area with implications on many policies and sectors. Tourism is one of these sectors and policy areas. According to Eurostat (2018b), there are 2.3 million tourism enterprises which provide employment to 12.3 million people. Working conditions of these enterprises and people are under the influence of the EU regulations such as the regulations on the working hours or on the infrastructure requirements. Another aspect of mobility is about the mobility of people as tourists. In 2014, the European Commission proposed important changes to the Schengen Area visa rules in order to facilitate the lives of tourists visiting the EU. The European Commission started an international campaign titled “Europe-Whenever you’re ready” to promote tourist flow to Europe (Welcomeurope, 2013). Besides, in order to foster Europeaness in the identity of tourism destination of Europe, the EU supports “European Cultural Routes” and “European Destination of Excellence Projects”.

In social identity, cognitive representation of identity is a “prototype” (Burke & Stets, 2009: 129). So does a person or things exist that serves as an example of the European? While trying to find out a prototype for the European, the imaginaries of the European could be of help. In this regard, the souvenir shops in Brussels can provide a milieu rich in cultural representations. Brussels can be named as the capital city of the European Union due to location of EU institutions there. The postcards sold in the souvenir shops in Brussels provide representations of European identity. One of the postcards is titled as the “ideal European would be...” (Reddit, 2018; Seidel, 2018). The postcard shows how diverse each European national is and how fun it would be to live in a group where all these diverse attitudes get together. The postcard about the Perfect European argues that Perfect European should be driving like a French, be controlled as an Italian, be cooking like a Brit etc. These are the stereotypes and cultural representations of how European is seen. European identity is multi-dimensional, even in tourism imaginaries. There is no one prototype that represents the ideal European because it is a post-national identity. The motto of the EU is “united in diversity”. Hooghe and Marks (2005: 436-437) asserts that European nationals’ perception of foreigners

and foreign culture is important in shaping their attitude to European integration. Therefore, diversity is promoted and seen as a basis of unity for the aim of continuing European integration.

Tourism can be seen as a way of escaping from mundanity of the daily life. Besides it is deeply embedded in politics and in turn, the politics is embedded in tourism (Hall, 2017: 3). Politics of unification in diversity relate to tourism due to its role in creation of feeling of belongingness (Franklin, 2003: 41). Besides, Şemsit (2014) emphasizes that the majority of tourist flows in Europe are taking place across European countries. Intra-regional tourist mobility is high in European Union. In this regard, Şemsit (2014: 326) believes that supra-national cooperation at the EU level in the field of tourism is clearly beneficial for the EU citizens.

As European integration progressed, it created symbols of European identity. A common European flag, money, anthem, EU day and EU motto, these symbols of European identity act in a similar manner that of a nation state. They are the ideals embodied in the symbols (Palmer, 1999). For example, to promoting tourism in the region, the 5th of May is celebrated as European Tourism Day annually. Symbols facilitate the communication of common ideals between nation states and they help to make Europe distinguishable and visible to its citizens. Tourists, who take these symbols with them, carry the sign values of these symbols to home. A souvenir carrying an EU flag or souvenir money of Euro are the examples showing the touristification of the symbols of European identity. Tourism creates the context for experiencing the European through the travels of people and travels of objects, meanings and values.

CONCLUSION

Tourism is a type of globalised trade in services and a source of national income. Tourism and heritage industries support each other as they create the reason of being for each other. Such interdependence is not only economic but also political and cultural. Because of its role on the national economy and its contribution to the national policies of culture and identity making, tourism has been a policy field organized at national level. Although tourism has been a policy matter of nation-state which is regulated by national rules in the national sphere, as the European integration progresses it has become a topic for the EU as well.

Expansion of European integration to include tourism as a European policy was an uneasy path and it required persuading nation-states that this was better for all, not only the member states but also whole Europe would benefit from such supranationalisation. The EU citizens provide support to European integration as long as the integration provides support for fulfilling their needs and expectations and provides value for their own countries. The European Commission used the rationale of instrumentality while integrating tourism into the European policy.

Tourism is an important economic sector and an important way of consuming and producing culture and heritage. Tourism has become a means of creating post-national European identity, by creating opportunity to implant, diffuse ideas and norms related to European identity. Tourism enables experiencing European identity as part of the image of a particular place, for example the nomination of places as the European Capitals of Culture. The European tourism characterized by the intensity of cross-border mobility of citizens. This shows the established habit of travelling intra-EU region. This study is limited with its focus on European integration. Further research can shed light on the policy making process for touristic product creation in relation to identity making both on national and supranational spheres in the EU in a comparative way.

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Ethical Approval

This study is among the studies that do not require ethics committee approval since it is not within the scope of research that requires one-to-one data collection from the participants.

Conflict of interest

There is no potential conflict of interest or gain in the article.

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