

Becoming European?

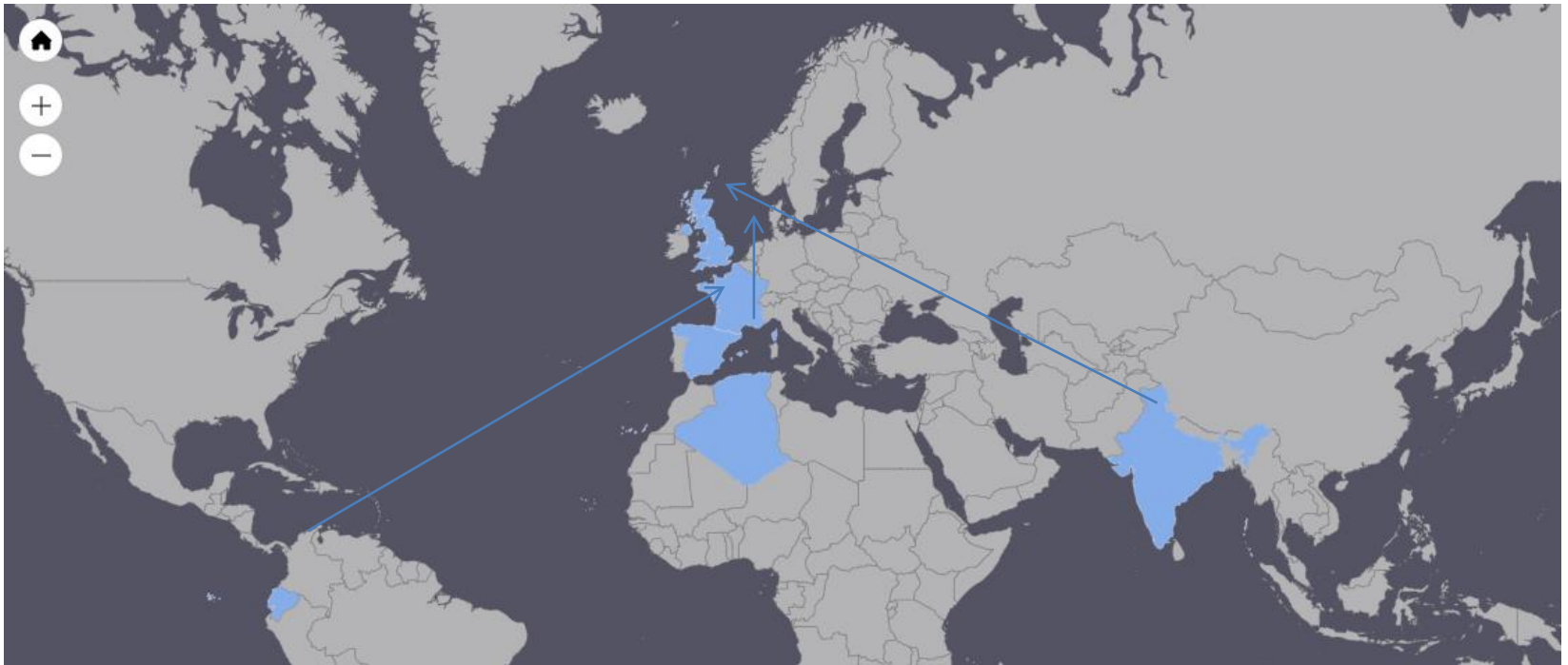
Non-EU Migrants Negotiate European Identities in France, Great Britain and Spain

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Methodological Approach



Research Design

100+ in-depth interviews with first generation migrants in three EU contexts between 2014 and 2016

	Algerians	Ecuadorians	Indians
Spain	8	17	-
France	37	-	10
Great Britain	-	10	21

Interview themes:

Motivations for migration

COR arrival and settlement experiences

Ethnic, national and supranational identities

Spatial scales and everyday life

Evaluations of country of origin (COO), country of residence (COR) and EU societies and politics

1. 'Europe' as a salient category

19/103 respondents made spontaneous references = just under 1/5

Principle themes/meanings of spontaneous references to Europe:

Integration and Institutions
Space-sets
Comparative
Lifestyle and values
Mobility
Citizenship status

Europe: *I did it all for my daughters*

...I came to France for my daughters. The idea was that they would study...Nothing will come in their way. **They can travel.** I think my eldest daughter has visited thirteen European countries since we are in France. Me, I've only visited the Czech Republic outside of France (*Laughter*).

...**She is also European, being French. She is free. ...** My daughters are 18 and 22 years old. And they have French nationality. They are Europeans. **They are citizens of this world.** I took them from [Algeria] with a broken heart...[in the midst of civil war violence].

- Nabil, COO Algeria, 54, Paris suburbs

2. Non-salience of 'Europe'

21/103 respondents offer 'blank' reactions to forced questions on Europe = 1/5

Confusion

Silence

Laughter

Irritation

Irony

Confusion

Q: As a British citizen you also have EU citizenship. Do you feel European to some degree?

A: ...I have British citizenship, not the EU one.

**1.5 year before Brexit Referendum!*

Q: If I say the word 'Europe', what is the first thing that comes to mind?

A: ... (Blank facial expression)...

Q: Does the idea of Europe mean anything to you?

A: (Silence)... I don't understand the question.

Emotional reactions

Q: *Do you feel Spanish or European in any way?*

A: (Laughter)...No!

“C’est quoi ce truc? Moi je sais pas ce que c’est moi, l’Europe !”

Q: Do you feel European?

A: What is European?!

Q: What does it mean to you?

A: What is it? What is this thing? ... I don’t know what Europe is!

3. Justifications for Identification/Non-Identification with Europe

‘Individual’ orientations/perceptions

‘Structural’ influences

Primary socialization:

COO-level (Algeria/Ecuador/India)

Secondary socialization:

COR-level (France/Spain/UK)

Justifications: Individual-level

- Self-assessed acculturation /time in Europe
- Experiences of international travel/EU mobility
- Essentialist self-concept/ethnic identity
- Perceived relation to ‘white’/ ‘European’ ethnicities
- Cultural affinities and interests
- Cosmopolitan values

Justifications: **Primary Socialization**

- Perceived COO-COR Cultural Proximity/Distance
- Perception of COO/ethnic 'status' internationally
- Dynamics of post-colonial state/nation-building
- Regional integration processes and 'cognitive maps'
- Pan-ethnic identities (e.g. Latin American/Berber/North African)

Justifications: **Secondary Socialization**

- Frames and national discourses on European integration (Spain/France/UK)
 - Europe as ‘other’
 - Cultural diversity an obstacle
 - Political vs. economic integration vs. European values
- Citizenship status
- Perceived mis-recognition/racism in COR
- COR national and local attachments

Conclusion

‘Ways of seeing’ Europe from the perspective of ‘strangers’ shaped by:

Different contexts!

Acculturation experiences!

Individual characteristics!

Thank you!

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