
WHERE'S DEMOCRACY?

WHOSE IS THE CULTURE?:

**SPATIAL DIMENSIONING OF CIVIC AND CULTURAL
EUROPEAN IDENTITY FRAMES
IN ITALIAN ONLINE PUBLIC DISCOURSES**

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states»



Research project description

The project aims to:

- explore the actors (both domestic and international) involved in the process of European identity construction in Italy and actions they take to achieve that purpose;
 - single out a variety of European identity frames these actors offer to the Italian general public.
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Method and Data (1st stage)

- Principal methodological tool: Political claims analysis (Della Porta, Caiani 2006; Della Porta, Caiani 2007; Koopmans, Statham 1999)
- A scheme describing the act of claim-making included seven elements, i.e. five types of actors: a “mediator”, a “donor”, a “claimant”, an “addressee” and an object actor; a “form of action”, and the “claim”/“statement” (frame)
- Data sources: online media and Internet resources
- At the first stage of the project 250 relevant entries were retrieved from the results of a search via standard Web search engine and used for qualitative (frame) analysis

Theoretical background

European identity classifications:

- a civic and a cultural components of European identity (Bruter 2004),
 - “modern” and “nationalist”/“ethnic” narratives of European identity (Risse 2010, Schlenker 2011),
 - positive or negative models of collective identities (Mummendey and Waldzus 2004),
 - “weak” and “strong” identification with Europe (Scalise 2013).
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Theoretical background

Multidimensional operationalization of identifications:

- bi-dimensional model that combines cognitive, evaluative and affective types of identification with political and cultural identity variations (EUCROSS project: Favell et al., 2011),
 - strong or weak European identification correlated to civic or cultural national identities (IntUne project: Bellucci, Sanders, Serricchio 2012)
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European identity Frames /1

Qualitative Analysis

- The basic division between civic and cultural/ethnic collective identity frames was used,

BUT

- several subgroups were introduced both within and outside of two major categories to avoid incompatibility of elements within broad groups
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Broad European civic identity frame

It contains references to European citizenship, democracy/democratic participation, freedom and human rights; the culture of legality as the key element of democracy, non-discrimination, dissemination of values, solidarity.

Modifications of broad European civic identity frame

- European identity via local civic values (descending civic identity-1)
 - European identity as an extension of (or a supplement to) national identity (descending civic identity-2)
 - European identity as a step to the universal one (ascending civic identity)
 - European civic identity as an identity on its own
 - European civic identity as a combination of different levels of democratic governance
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Specific European civic identity frames

- **European civic identity as a historical identity**

In this case European history is seen as “the Other” or the basis for “civil religion” construction

- **European civic identity as a secular identity**

- **European civic identity as a religious identity**

Broad European cultural identity frame

- culture and art are the basic principles of European identity
 - the emphasis is placed on cultural diversity that makes up Europe
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Modifications of Broad European cultural identity frame

- National cultural diversity in conservative/exclusive European identity
 - National cultural diversity in “open”/inclusive European identity
 - Local/Regional cultural diversity in “open”/inclusive European identity
 - European cultural identity as an identity on its own
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Specific European cultural identity frames

- **European cultural identity as a historical identity/”common roots” dimension**
 - **Cultural roots frame** - connected to the common values of dialog and “openness”
 - **Religious roots frame** - refers to traditional values and “moral” identity
 - **Ethnic identity frame** - refers to Europeans as to ethnic and racial category
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Specific European identity frames

- **European identity as Plurality/Diversity**
 - **Plural European identities**
 - E.g. “**Two Europes**” model: Catholic, Latin, and Mediterranean Europe vs. Protestant and Germanic Europe, extended towards the North sea and Eastern Europe (Mitteleuropa).
 - **European external identity**
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Denying/Bounding European identity

- “Too diverse to be united” model
 - European identity as having no identity/Denying common European cultural identity
 - Denying identification with the EU
 - “The Decline of Europe” frame
 - Bounding Europe to the cultural elite
 - Bounding European identity to the identification with the EU
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European identity as negative identity

- America as the European Other
 - “Europe of money” as the European Other
 - European political elites as the European Other
 - Islam as the European Other
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Dimensions of European identity discourse

European identity frames can be placed within six binary categories :

- (1) cultural vs. civic,
- (2) positive vs. negative,
- (3) exclusive vs. inclusive,
- (4) “domestic use” vs. external,
- (5) plural vs. singular,
- (6) religious vs. secular,

and two more complex ones:

- (7) historical vs. “visions of the future” (desirable) vs. existing,
- (8) various forms of geographical identity (global vs. European vs. national vs. regional vs. local).

Almost all of them are not closed and have numerous intersections.

European Identity Construction Set

Local Regional National European (self-sufficient) Universal	Civic Cultural	Exclusive Inclusive	Religious Secular
Positive Negative	Plural Singular	Internal ("domestic use") External (International)	Existing Desired Historical
Denied Limited	Pluralist	Ethnic	Fluid

Method and Data (2nd stage)

- A second sample of 200 relevant entries was taken during the period of September 2016 – December 2017
 - The primary aim was to check a validity of European identity categories singled out at the first stage of analysis, and to try to find some stable interconnections between different elements of discourses on EI
 - Every integral statement (claim) on European identity made by every single actor, not a single mentioning of it nor a document as a whole (only two documents, though, contain more than one clear statements on the sense of common European belonging), was coded using all the 25 categories indicated above. The total number of claims is 209
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Method and Data (2nd stage)

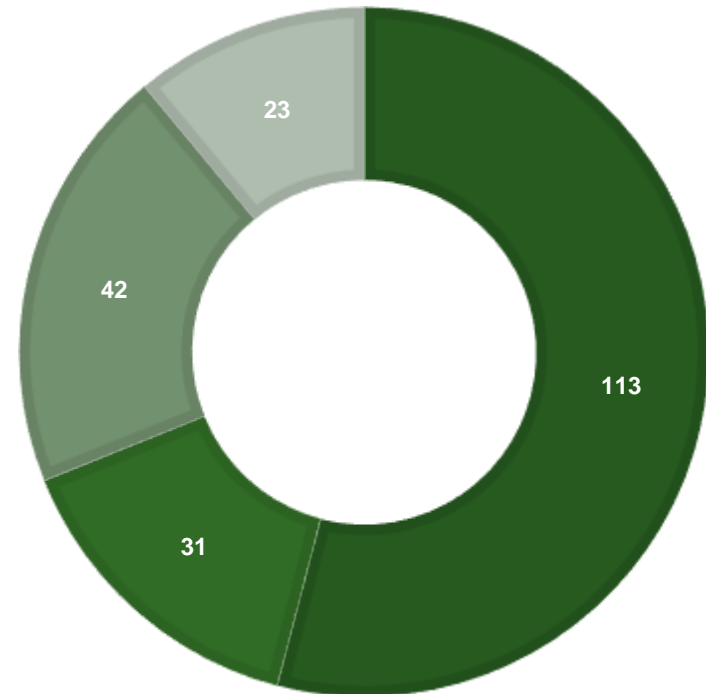
- A code containing 25 symbols corresponds to each of 209 statements, our data matrix is 209×25 .
 - Four of these 25 dimensions, i.e. local, regional, national and universal spatial dimensions, were coded with ternary symbols (-1,0,1). This choice is justified by the need to find out how different forms of geographical identifications are related to the European identity.
 - For other 21 categories binary symbols were used (0, 1), where 0 means that dimension was not mentioned by the claimant and 1 has the opposite meaning.
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Method and Data (2nd stage)

- The quantity of claims coded so far is insufficient to make any conclusions regarding the frequency of claims containing all 25 categories - all 209 combinations of these elements has turned to be unique and have no repetitions;
 - It is still possible to validate stable combinations of some categories, e.g. of civic/cultural and different spatial dimensions detected at the first stage of this research, and to make some preliminary conclusions.
 - This method can be also used to test (with some limitations) how combinable or incompatible all these categories are.
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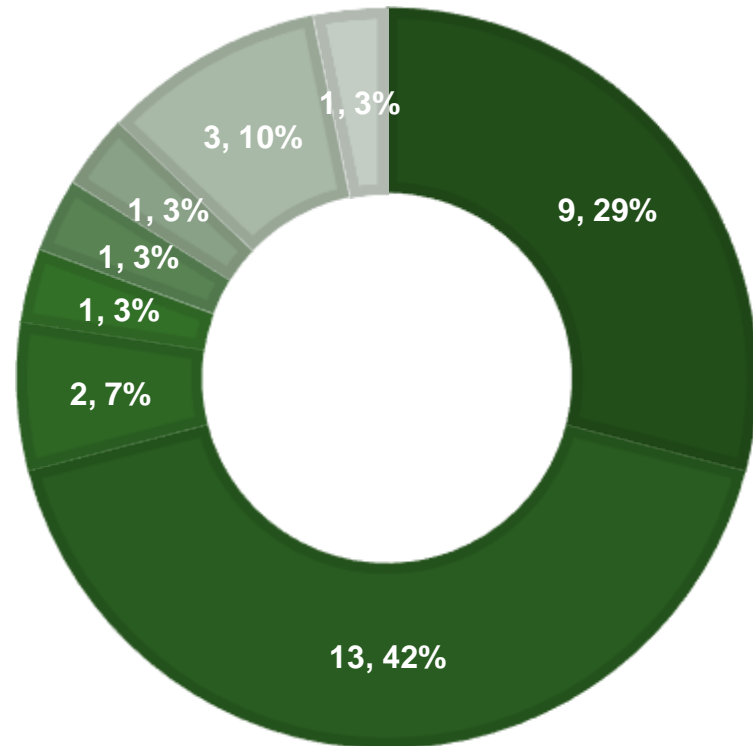
European identity vs other spatial identifications

- Self-sufficient with no other spacial dimension mentioned
- Self-sufficient compatible with other spacial dimensions
- Based on other spatial identifications
- No clear spatial dimension



European Self-sufficient identity compatible with other spacial dimensions

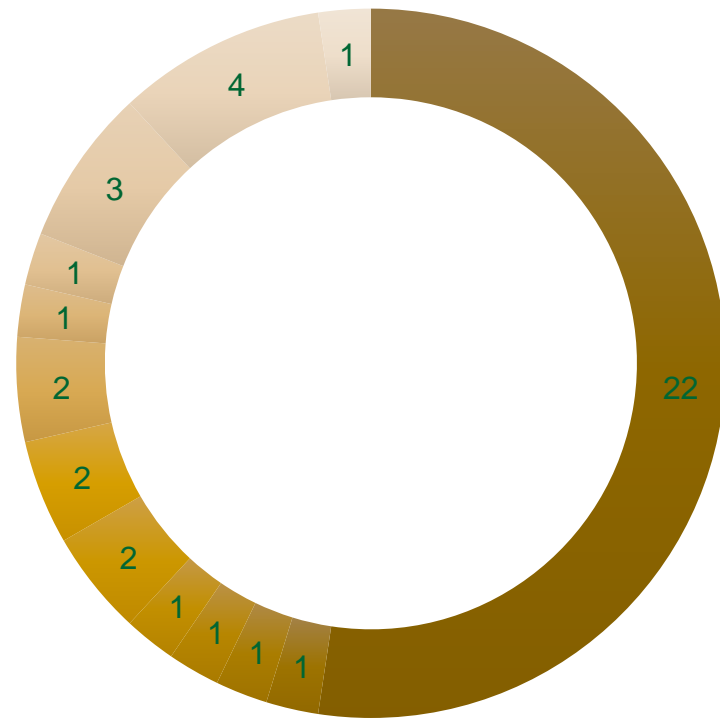
- National positive only
- National negative only
- Regional only
- National+Regional+Local positive
- National negative+Universal negative
- National positive+Universal positive
- Local positive only
- Local+Regional positive



5 cultural, 13 civic, 9 both civic and cultural, 4 nor civic nor cultural

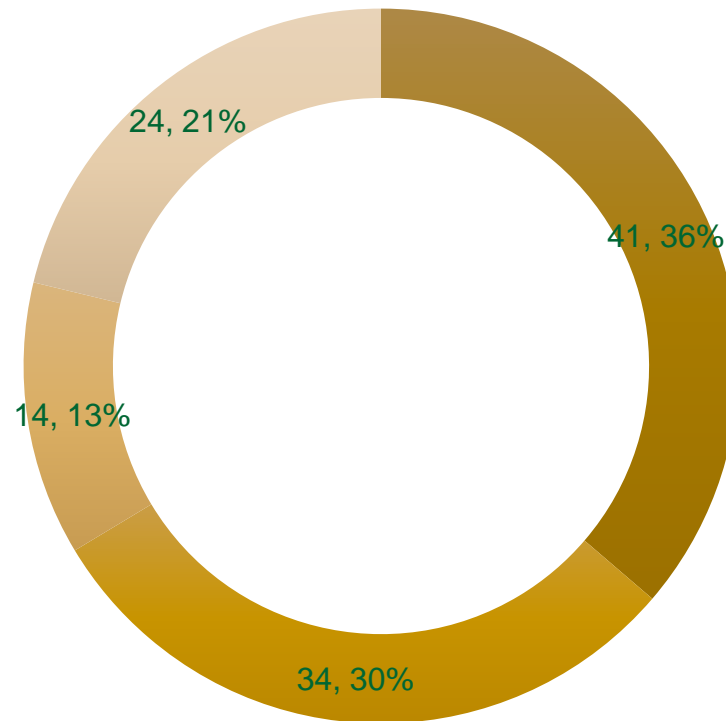
European identity based on other levels of geographical identification

- National positive only
- National positive+Universal negative
- National positive+Universal positive
- National positive+Local positive
- National positive+Universal positive+Local positive
- National positive+local negative+Regional negative
- National positive+Local positive+Regional positive
- National positive+Local positive+Regional positive+Universal positive
- National negative only
- National negative+Local positive+Regional positive
- Universal positive only
- Local positive only
- Regional positive only



12 cultural, 10 civic, 12 both civic and cultural, 8 nor civic nor cultural

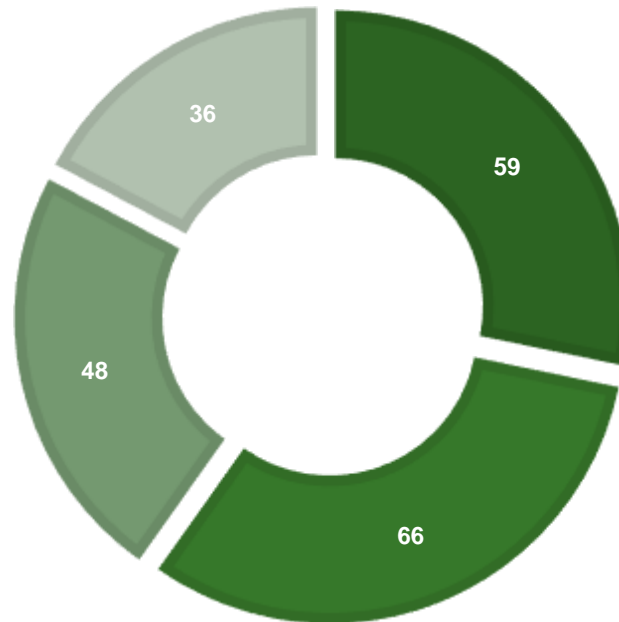
Self-sufficient European identity (with no other spatial dimensions mentioned)



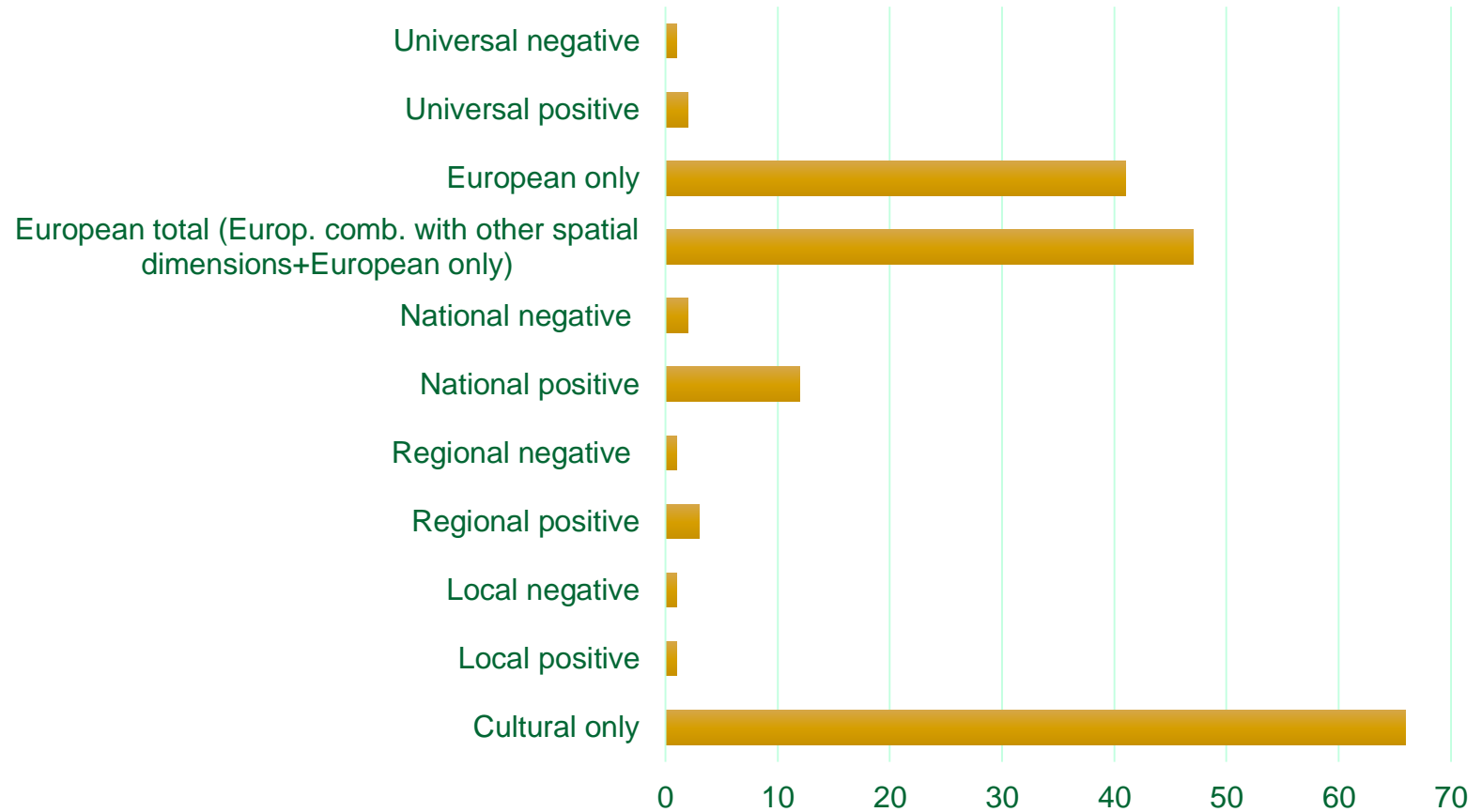
■ Cultural only ■ Civic ■ Both civic and cultural ■ Nor civic nor cultural

Civic and cultural frames within 2nd dataset

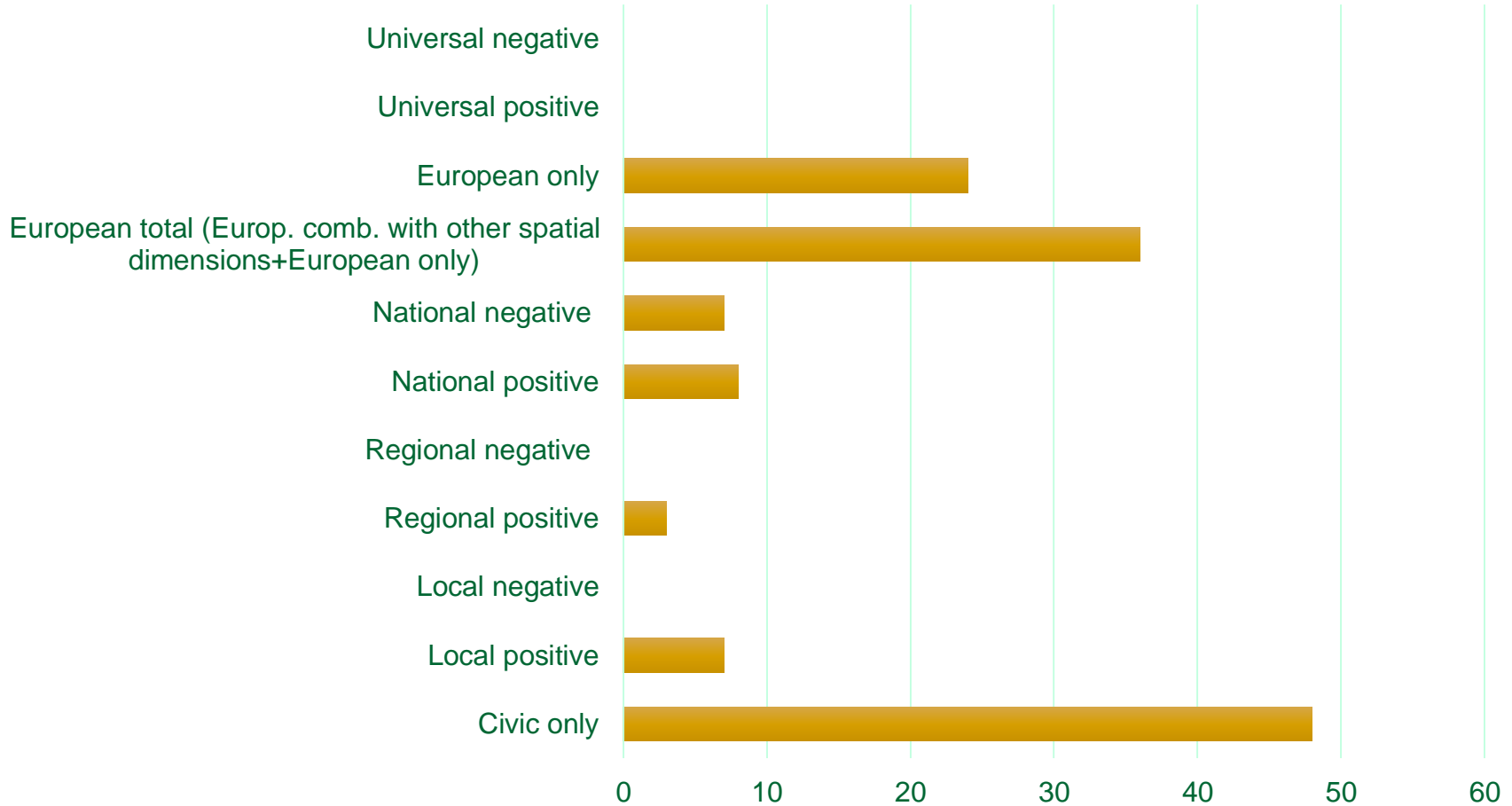
■ Nor civic nor cultural ■ Cultural only ■ Civic only ■ Both cultural and civic



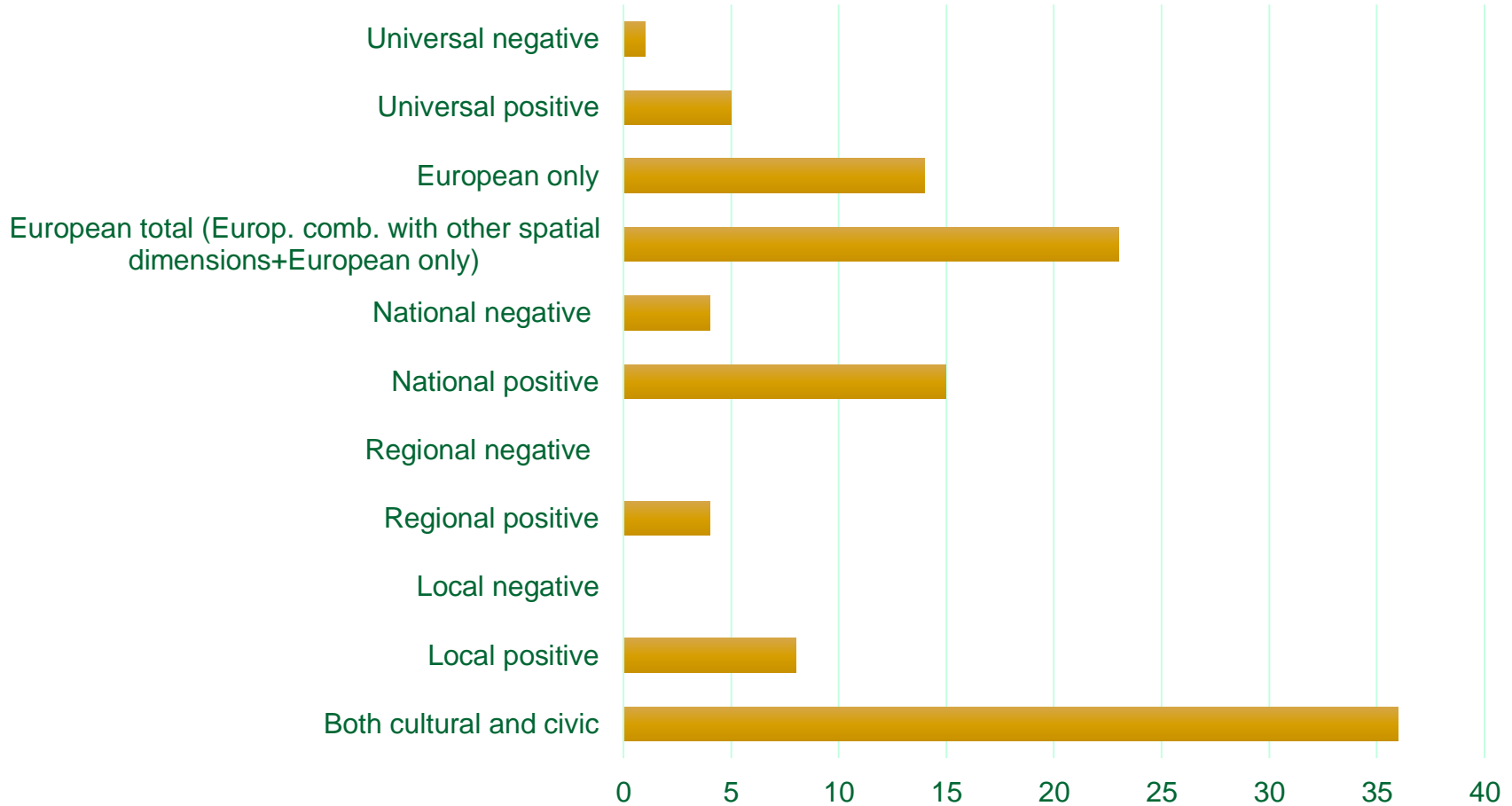
Cultural identity with spatial dimensions added



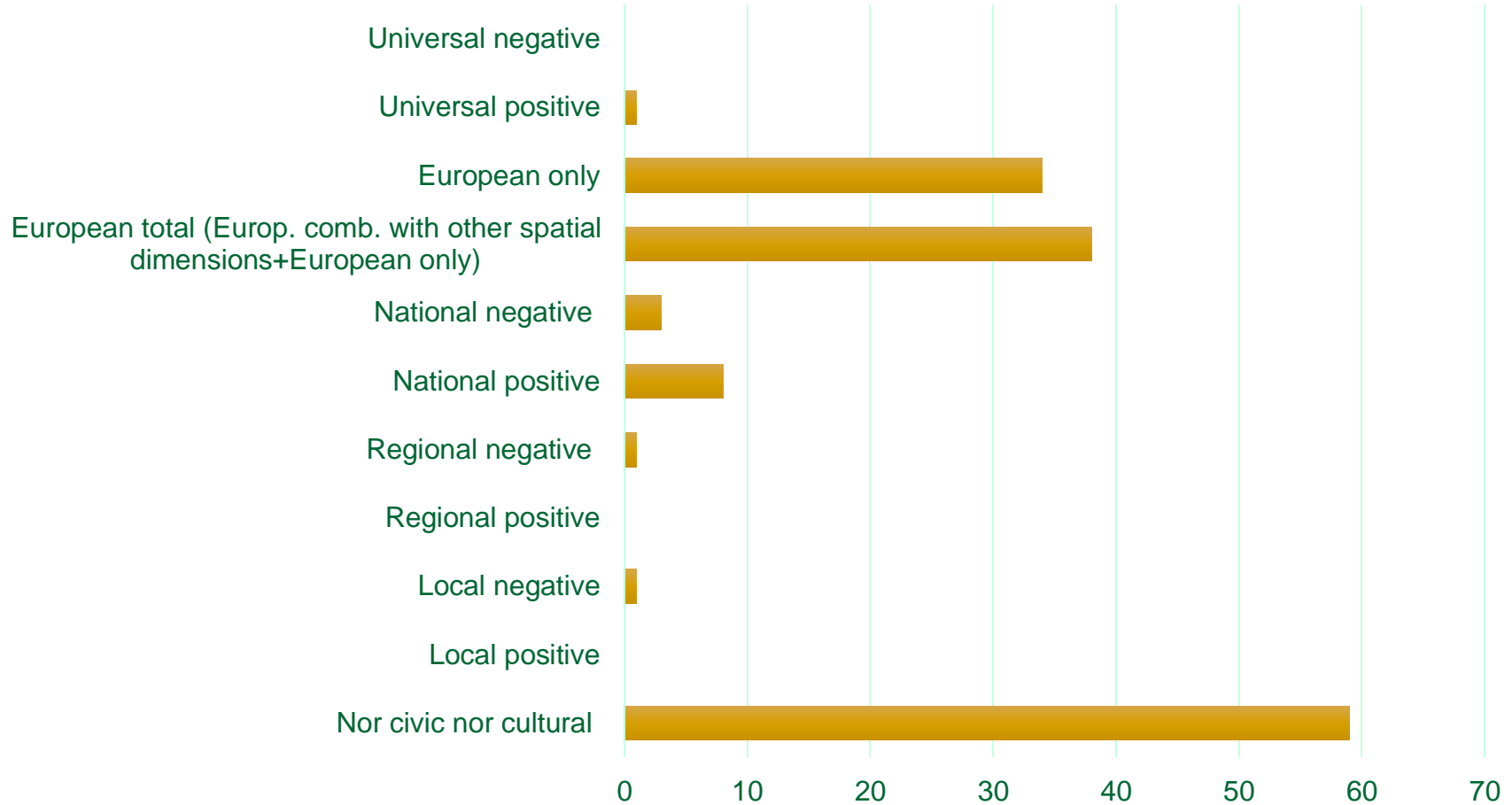
Civic identity with spatial dimensions added



Both cultural and civic identity with spatial dimensions



Geographical dimensions with nor civic nor cultural identifications mentioned



Conclusions so far

- Cultural identity frames are prevalent within the dataset created to examine the process of European identity construction.
 - In the majority of cases European identity, both civic and cultural, is represented as self-sufficient.
 - But a number of entries where European level of spatial identification is positively or negatively correlated with national one is rather high and cannot be regarded as irrelevant.
 - References to the local, regional and global dimensions, in turn, are quite rare within the dataset.
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Thank You for Your attention!
