



# COHESIFY

The impact of EU Cohesion Policy  
on European Identification

## Understanding the impact of Cohesion Policy funding on European identity: The COHESIFY Project

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Interact Communication Network seminar, Valencia,  
15 February 2017



The COHESIFY project (February 2016-April 2018) has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 693127



# WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

## OVERALL AIM

*to analyse the impact of Cohesion policy on citizens and in how far they support and identify with the EU ... and...*

*.... As a second step assess the efficiency of communication strategies dealing with EU Cohesion Policy*



FUNDING

**2,498,787 €**

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DURATION

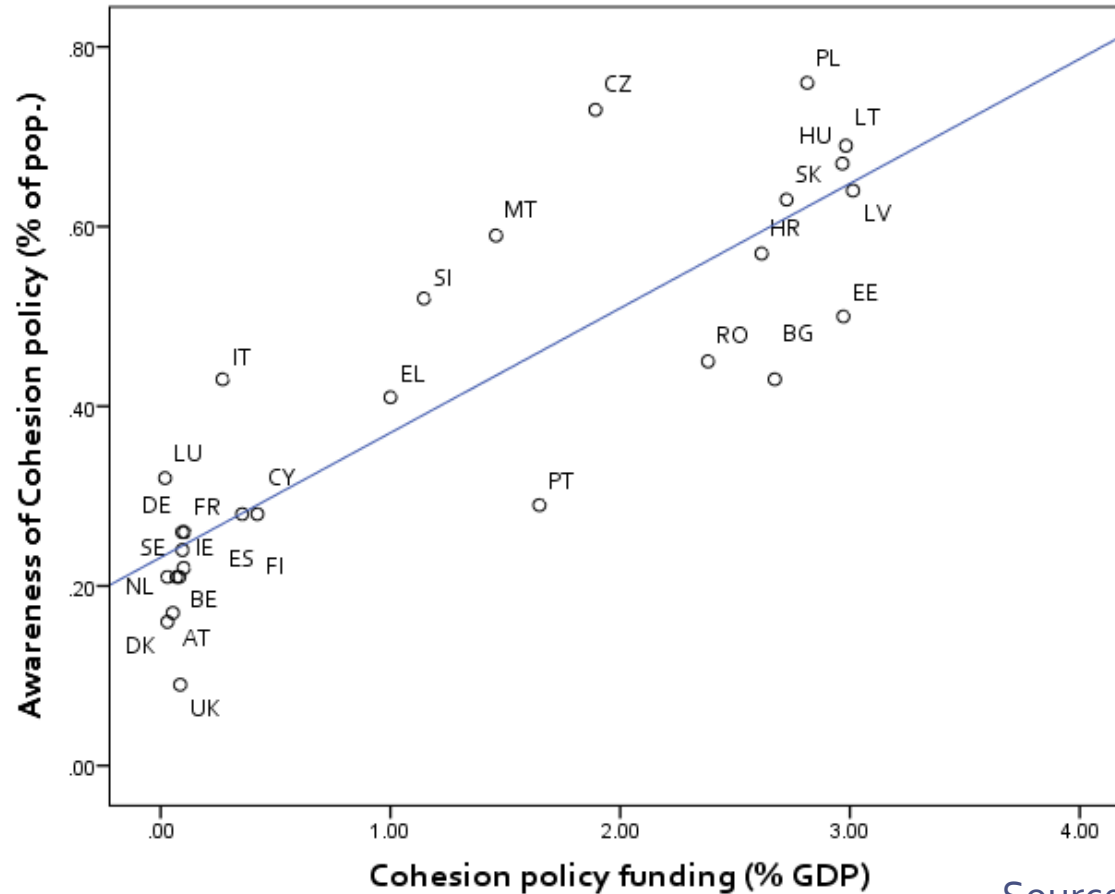
**27 MONTHS**

# THE COHESIFY TEAM



1. University of Strathclyde (UK)
2. Politecnico di Milano (IT)
3. University of Warsaw (PL)
4. Central European University (HU)
5. Cyprus University of Technology (CY)
6. Delft University of Technology (NL)
7. University of Mannheim (DE)
8. Trinity College Dublin (IE)
9. Regio Plus Consulting (ES)
10. Old Continent (BE)

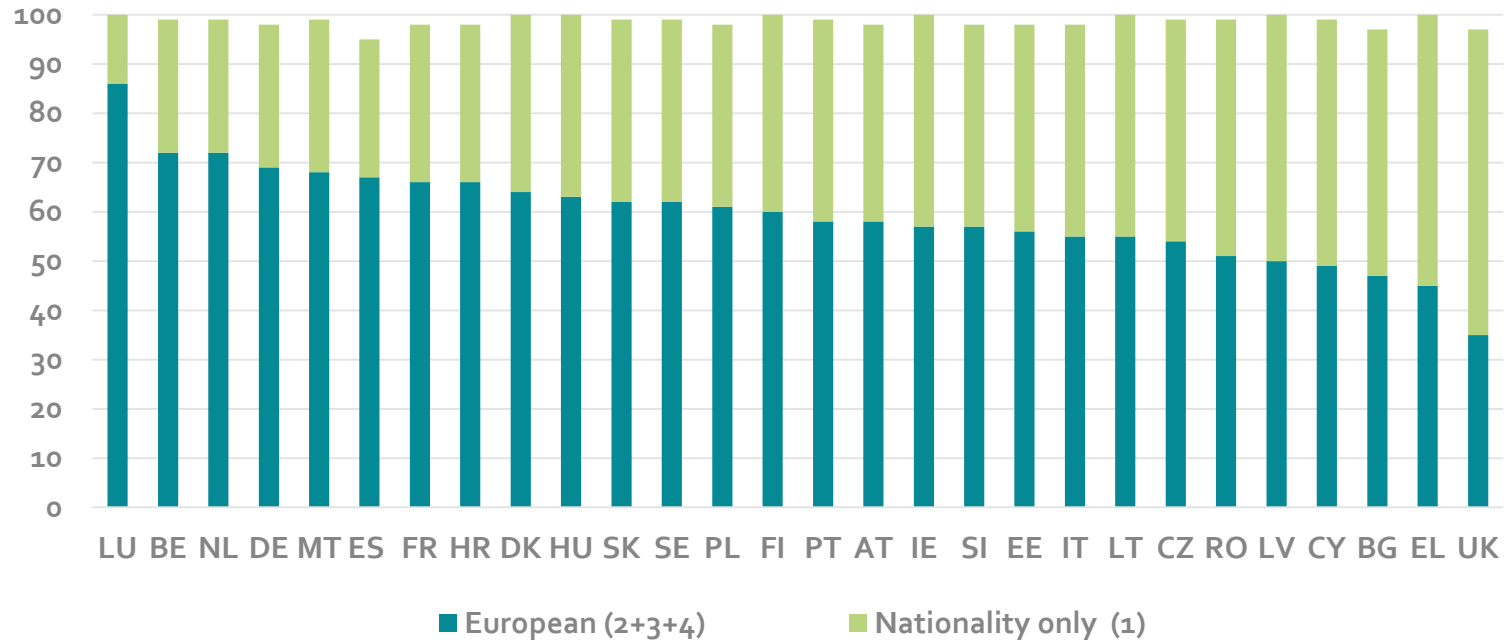
# Citizens awareness of Cohesion policy



Source: Eurobarometer 2015

# European Identity

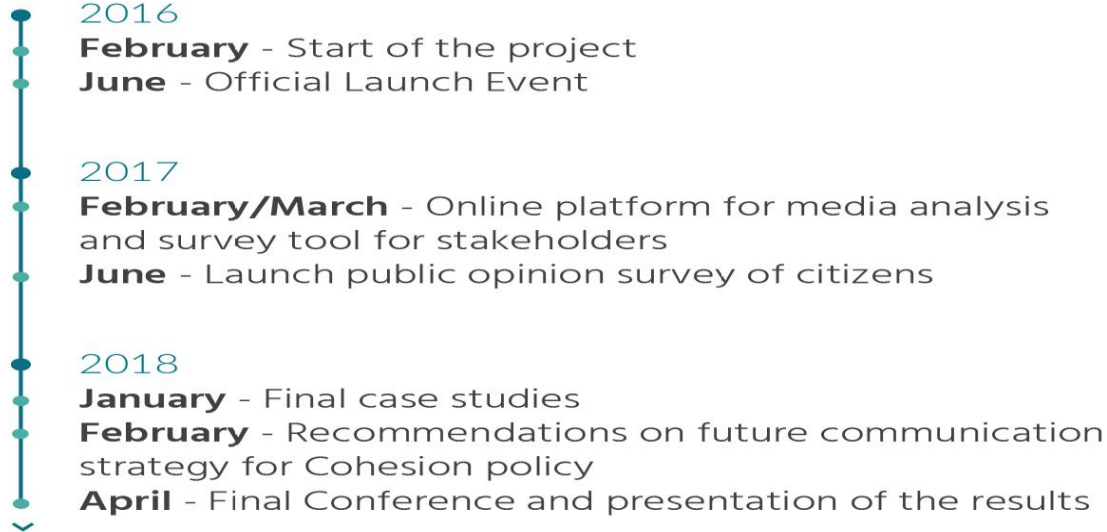
Do you see yourself as (1) Nationality only (2) Nationality & European (3) European & Nationality (4) European only?



Source: Eurobarometer 2016

# Milestones

## TIMELINE




Our objective:

Contributing to the discussions on the future of Cohesion Policy 2020 – 2027!



# Results so far: Working papers

The cover of the first research paper features a large, modern cable-stayed bridge with multiple white pylons and blue cables, spanning a body of water. The background is a clear blue sky. The title and authors' names are printed in a bold, sans-serif font, with the authors' names in a smaller font size below the title. The text is white and green, matching the bridge's color scheme.

## European Identity and Citizen Attitudes to Cohesion Policy: What do we know?

By Carlos Mendez and John Bachtler

### COHESIFY RESEARCH PAPER 1

## Regional Implementation Settings for Cohesion Policy:

A Definition and a Measurement

By Roberta Capello and Giovanni Perucca

### COHESIFY RESEARCH PAPER 2



## The Impact of Media Representations of the EU and its Policies on European Identity

By Vasiliki Triga and Konstantinos Vadratsikas



# Current challenge: Online platform for media framing analysis and surveys

- <http://eventregistry.org/>
- [www.gdeltproject.org](http://www.gdeltproject.org)

One of the next outputs on communication:  
Working paper on Framing of Cohesion Policy to be  
published in September 2017

Important output for EU Communicators:  
Final handbook on EU communication (Feb. 2018)

# Science Communication



IF  
EUROPEANS  
WERE **100**



**50** never left  
their country



**35** have  
higher education



**30** travel  
abroad yearly



**25** speak  
a foreign language



**10** consider they benefitted  
from EU projects

HOW  
MANY

would benefit from the EU  
would feel European  
would vote to leave the EU



COHESIFY is here to answer  
these questions. **Stay in touch**

[www.cohesify.eu](http://www.cohesify.eu)  
@cohesify

# Science Communication

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE EUROPEAN?

AM I EUROPEAN? or FR DE UK IT PL ... or MIXED

We all have multiple identities – the relations between them can be different:

**CROSS-CUTTING** -some overlaps  
(not all members of an ethnic group may identify with their nation and/or Europe)



**NESTED** 'Russian doll' – smaller collective identities (e.g. local) are part of larger ones (e.g. regional, national & European identities)



**SEPARATE** if there is no overlap between the members of different identities



**BLENDED** 'Marble cake'  
Intertwined identities



Interested in the topic? Follow  
us on Twitter

@cohesify

[www.cohesify.eu](http://www.cohesify.eu)

# First observations: Communications

## Importance of communication is growing

- From “information” in 1989 to “strategic communication”
- Greater centralisation in the governance of communication (national websites...)
- To communicate impact and results to the “general public”
- More requirements for project beneficiaries (poster, communication plans...)
- Growing transparency

# First observations: Trends

## Trends

- Less publications, more social media, infographics and audiovisual communication
- TV and radio important drivers of public awareness, but question of cost-efficiency
- Different attempts to joint branding (Interreg, Greece, Czech Republic...)
- More local events including projects (le *Joli Mois de l'Europe*; Europe in my Region, regional Regiostars...), but often not coordinated among each other and question of "labels/logos"

# First observations: Room for improvements

So why are we still not reaching the citizens about Cohesion Policy?

*"Communication paradox" in Cohesion Policy: There is more evidence than ever before on the achievements and added value of the policy, but few people seem to be listening."*

Prof. John Bachtler and Carlos Mendez

- In some Managing Authorities, communication is still not a priority: staff and time management; limited financial resources in some cases
- Some difficulties with public procurement for external service providers
- Sometimes regional media and politicians do not highlight the EU dimension of co-funded projects
- More efficient and strategic use of social media needed (editorial and thematic planning; advertisements...)



# First observations: Room for improvements

So why are we still not reaching the citizens about Cohesion Policy?

- Making the information public is not enough when you want to reach out to the “general public”!
- Get inspired by **participatory methodologies**: URBACT; Europe for Citizens Programme!
- We are in the “**post-truth**” age: emotions are more important than facts! The European Union does not evoke feelings, people do!
- We are all “**Ambassadors**” of Europe: let’s plant the seeds of Europe and our enthusiasm in our local contexts, including schools etc....! Or identify **multipliers/spokespersons** that can support you!

# How can you get involved in COHESIFY?

- If contacted by our researchers, facilitate them all the information they need
- Follow us on Twitter and Linked-in
- Spread the word on our research results
- Contribute to the current discussions around communication, European identity and Cohesion Policy (through the social media or by direct feedback)
- Become a guest author in our COHESIFY blog



    
La création du  
Centre Culturel de l'Entente Cordiale - Château d'Hardelot  
a été réalisée avec le soutien de l'Europe (FEDER).

**THANKS FOR  
YOUR ATTENTION**

# WWW.COHESIFY.EU



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