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# Young voices in Europe

– Youth imagining belonging and citizenship

Master's thesis in Master of Science in Education and Upbringing

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## Abstract

This qualitative study investigated young Europeans' negotiations of belonging, their perceptions of Europe and the relationship of these perceptions with democratic participation. The study, as part of the Why Europe Matters (WEM) campaign and research project, gathers in-depth data to complement the previous WEM quantitative study. The research contributes to knowledge on how individuals experience globalisation and how societal structures interplay with agents, enabling ways of enacting democracy. In focus groups, 25 participants aged 16–25 years in Norway, Spain and Finland were interviewed, using photo elicitation and drawing as probes for discussion. Different analytic models and methods were employed, enabling a study of varied ways of expressing *belonging*. Phenomenological analysis focused on the thematic content in the accounts of belonging, pointing to the prominence of belonging as connected to agency and feelings. Discourse analysis showed that these experiences of belonging and notions of the nation-state and Europe are not passively received but enacted, drawing on different repertoires. The sociocultural perspective of multivoicedness was applied to analyse which voices are present in the utterances and from where these might have come from. The analysis found a relationship between voices/repertoires, imagination and mediated action, suggesting that the available discourses offer affordances for enacting democracy. The analysis identified several distinct voices that nurture democratic imaginary and hence enactment of citizenship. The most prominent voices found are the agentive, normative cosmopolitan and pro-European voices. These repertoires indicate public assumptions of anti-nationalism and enables solidarity but might constrain democratic enactment by advocating individualisation and universalism.



To Mamma and Bestemor. In a family knowledgeable of the natural sciences, I am proud to know that my passion for the social sciences came from you. I know you would be delighted.



## Preface

In your hands lies my thesis “Young voices in Europe – youth imagining belonging and citizenship”. It is written as a report of my master’s project to fulfil the requirements of the program “Master of Science in Education and Upbringing” at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. It also marks the end of my 6 years of educational studies, and a continuance of contemplating pedagogical questions.

Democracy has been a reoccurring theme throughout my studies, and the opportunity of further deepening my knowledge of this topic has motivated me to conduct this study. I hope that my thoughts can be of inspiration to educators, politicians and policy makers, and others who would like to wrestle with my ideas of democracy and belonging.

I am thankful for studying a topic that is not “all Greek” to people surrounding me. I’ve had numerous discussions with people I’ve met along the way whom have contributed with meaningful insights that has helped me move forward. For instance, I came to talk with a guy on the bus, who shared his thoughts on belonging with me: *“I feel Norwegian, but if I had moved to Spain I would maybe feel Spanish. Because the roots moves”*.

His idea of roots moving stuck with me. I have always thought of the metaphor of roots as something fixed, but he had an idea of roots ability to move. This encounter on the bus helped me free myself from preconceived ideas of my research topic.



## Acknowledgements

I feel incredibly fortunate to be a master's student at the Department for Education and Lifelong Learning (IPL) at NTNU. As this marks the end of my master's study, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my lecturers and professors; you have been of great inspiration. Thank you for listening to me - it makes me feel like I belong.

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# Table of contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Starting point.....	1
1.2	Context.....	2
1.2.1	Europe.....	2
1.2.2	Spain .....	3
1.2.3	Finland .....	4
1.3	Field of research .....	5
1.3.1	WEM survey .....	5
1.3.2	Youth participation in Europe .....	6
1.4	Research question .....	7
1.5	Outline of the thesis .....	8
<b>2</b>	<b>Theoretical framework and research.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1	The present age.....	9
2.1.1	Are nations relevant?.....	9
2.1.2	Duality between the global and the local .....	10
2.1.3	Reflexive modernity .....	11
2.2	Normative ideas of the west .....	11
2.2.1	Grand narratives of the west .....	11
2.2.2	Europeanisation.....	12
2.2.3	Imagination.....	13
2.2.4	Normative cosmopolitanism .....	13
2.2.5	Democratic citizenship.....	14
2.2.6	Models of democracy.....	14
2.2.7	Global civil society .....	15
2.3	Perspectives on belonging .....	15
2.3.1	To feel like home .....	15
2.3.2	Mediated belonging .....	16
2.3.3	Formal belonging .....	16
2.3.4	Agency–structure.....	16
<b>3</b>	<b>Methodology and research process .....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1	Objective .....	19
3.2	Research design .....	19
3.2.1	Selection of participants.....	20
3.2.2	Access and researcher–researched relationship .....	21

3.2.3	Language .....	21
3.2.4	Focus group interviews .....	22
3.2.5	Visual methods .....	23
3.2.6	Interview guide .....	25
3.3	Transcription .....	26
3.4	Analysis process .....	26
3.4.1	A phenomenological and discursive road .....	27
3.4.2	Merging multivoicedness and interpretive repertoires .....	28
3.5	Ethical considerations and research quality .....	29
3.5.1	Validity, reliability and generalisation .....	30
<b>4</b>	<b>Analysis of empirical data .....</b>	<b>33</b>
4.1	Notions of belonging .....	33
4.1.1	Emotional attachment .....	34
4.1.2	Doing belonging .....	38
4.1.3	Fixed belonging .....	42
4.2	Democratic imaginary .....	46
4.2.1	Imagination of Europe .....	47
4.2.2	Global citizenship .....	54
<b>5</b>	<b>Concluding reflections .....</b>	<b>65</b>
5.1	Agency .....	65
5.2	Doing European citizenship .....	66
5.3	In conclusion .....	67

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# 1 Introduction

The present study began in September 2017, when I was recruited to conduct my master's project as part of the 'Why Europe Matters' (WEM) campaign and research project. The main study objective, in line with WEM, is to learn more about young people's thoughts on Europe and democracy. Youth participation is high on the agenda of European public authorities due to diminished trust in traditional democratic processes and a presumed weakened and unsettled sense of belonging to national and local communities (Loncle, Cuconato, Muniglia, & Walther, 2012, p. 1). Accordingly, the study aim was to contribute knowledge on how globalisation affects young people in Europe and what their normative claims about the current state of affairs are. This study, therefore, explored the following research question:

*How are belonging and Europe negotiated by young people from different parts of Europe, and what affordances do their repertoires offer for enacting citizenship?*

Five group interviews with in total, 25 young Europeans were conducted in Norway, Spain and Finland. The interviews covered topics related to belonging and democracy and collected a wide range of data, including individual accounts, drawings and group discussions.

## 1.1 Starting point

The starting point for the present study was two-fold: I had an interest in the topic of democracy, and I joined a research project with certain frames involving participating in WEM workshops. The main project in WEM, running from May 2017 to April 2018, consisted of two parts: a survey and workshops. The aim of WEM was to learn about young people's views on Europe, the European Union (EU), employment and their future. The project was initiated by Junior Achievement Europe (JA) and the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT).

The present study was intended to gather in-depth data on one or more topics relevant to the survey and workshop topics. I decided to focus on young people's expressions of belonging and perceptions of Europe. Of the nine countries hosting workshops, Spain and Finland were especially relevant and chosen as locations for the interviews due to their geographical location (distance from Brussels) and current national consciousness.

Thinking about possible ways to collect data on young people's reflections on democracy, I reviewed studies on youth and democracy and conducted pilot interviews. When asked about democracy, the youth in both my pilot interviews and Marjavara's (2013) study express

relatively conventional perceptions of democracy. My participants, for instance, seem limited by an aggregative model, viewing democracy solely as an institution for voting (Andersen, 2012). Given my interest in exploring democracy from a wider perspective and studying young people's democratic practices in civil society, I sought ways to talk about democracy without using presumption-loaded constructs. This led me to study the participants' *sense of belonging* and thoughts on *democratic participation* using *drawing* and *photo elicitation* to complement language in meaning-making.

## 1.2 Context

The present study is part of a European research project, so the contemporary European socio-political situation is a crucial part of the study context. The data constructed in this study mostly centres on a transnational context and do not allow comparison between groups in different countries, so the European context emerges as the frame of reference for the analysis rather than the national contexts. However, most of the participants are from Finland and Spain, so some background information about these countries and their relationship with the EU is also shared. This section highlights the European and national study contexts and gives background information on the WEM research project and workshops.

### 1.2.1 Europe

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Europe has gone through a debt crisis, a refugee crisis and changes in the political climate. This 'political turmoil', according to the ERT and JA, has negatively affected young people, and these organisations want to engage them in 'forging a stronger Europe' (European Round Table of Industrialists, 2017a).

The Brexit development has become a symbol of political change central to the narrative of contemporary Europe. In June 2016, 51.9% of the British population voted to leave the EU (Fuchs, 2018). According to polls after the referendum, those in favour of Brexit are xenophobic and fear globalisation, multiculturalism and social liberalism (Fuchs, 2018). Cultural affinities and identity factors are key explanatory factors in Euroscepticism, or negative attitudes towards the EU. These are regarded as soft factors, which influence public Euroscepticism more than hard factors, such as economic reasoning (Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden, & De Vreese, 2013).

The ERT press release about the WEM-campaign and leaflet entitled 'Why Europe Matters' from 2016 proposes an agenda of building a stronger EU through helping people realise 'that Europe has a positive impact on their lives' (European Round Table of Industrialists, 2016). There seems to be an aim to enhance the sense of belonging to the EU by emphasising what it provides, including a high quality of life. These two documents reveal

economic motives as well as a wish to increase democratic participation in the EU. Youth are seen as human capital—a resource for economic growth not to be wasted (Loncle, Leahy, Muniglia, & Walther, 2012). Human capital contributes to making ‘a stronger Europe—one that is making the most of its youngest human capital’, according the WEM press release (European Round Table of Industrialists, 2017a).

### 1.2.2 Spain

In the weeks leading up to my fieldwork in Spain, the Catalanian referendum for independence took place. As the nation building of Europe happened in the nineteenth century, several ethnicities, Catalans one of them, were united as the nation Spain. The Franco dictatorship was trying to establish a “national spirit” which suppressed Catalanian government and language (Gaitán, 2012; Oskam, 2014). Thus, nationalism, both Spanish and other nationalist movements such as the Catalans, has been central in the history of Spain.

A new democratic era started in Spain after the dictatorship. As Franco’s nationalist discourse had been anti-European, attitudes in the new era equated a European identity with democracy and wanting to “bring an end to the Spanish isolation” (Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001, p. 763). Since Spain had become democratic the state was accepted as a member of the EU in 1986. In the process of being accepted a lot of claims about Spain’s strong European identity was made and a strong public discourse of European integration emerged. Europeanisation was not seen as opposed to or a threat to national identities and public discourse has continued to frame European identity as non-threatening to national identity (Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001).

Surveys have shown that a large percentage of Spaniards see themselves as Europeans, and that a strong European identity correlates positively with strong Spanish or regional identities (Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001). A “post-Brexit” survey done by Pew Research Centre in 2017 shows that 62 % of Spaniards are in favour of EU membership (Stokes, Wike, & Manevich, 2017).

#### 1.2.2.1 Workshop

The innovation workshops aimed at ‘shed[ding] light on what matters to European youth’ were held in nine countries from September 2017 to January 2018 (Why Europe Matters, 2017). The workshop I attended in Spain, held on the outskirts of Madrid, drew approximately 60 participants. The event was hosted by JA Spain, which promotes entrepreneurship and employment preparation for young people. The event was funded by ERT and its members Siemens, Vodafone, Nestle, Telefonica, SAP and Iberdrola.

Most participants were upper secondary school students, along with a few university students. The workshop objective (as presented to the participants) was for young people to interact with and propose ideas to politicians and businesspeople and to promote youth participation in European democratic life. The youths were divided into groups of three or four and assigned to develop innovative solutions to the energy crisis, security, migration or youth unemployment. They were surrounded by posters with the WEM logo and slogans such as ‘You are part of Europe’ and ‘Your voice matters’. Each group gave a three-minute pitch of its solution to a jury, which selected groups to go to the final WEM event in Brussels.

### 1.2.3 Finland

The interviews conducted in Finland were done in a small city in central Finland called Oulu. Due to last minute cancellations, the workshop I was going to attend in Oulu was postponed. Therefore, the interviews in Finland were conducted with young people that had not taken part of such a workshop yet. Consequently, the participants did not have the frame of reference provided by the workshop. The context of these interviews is therefore accounted for more broadly, as a Finnish context.

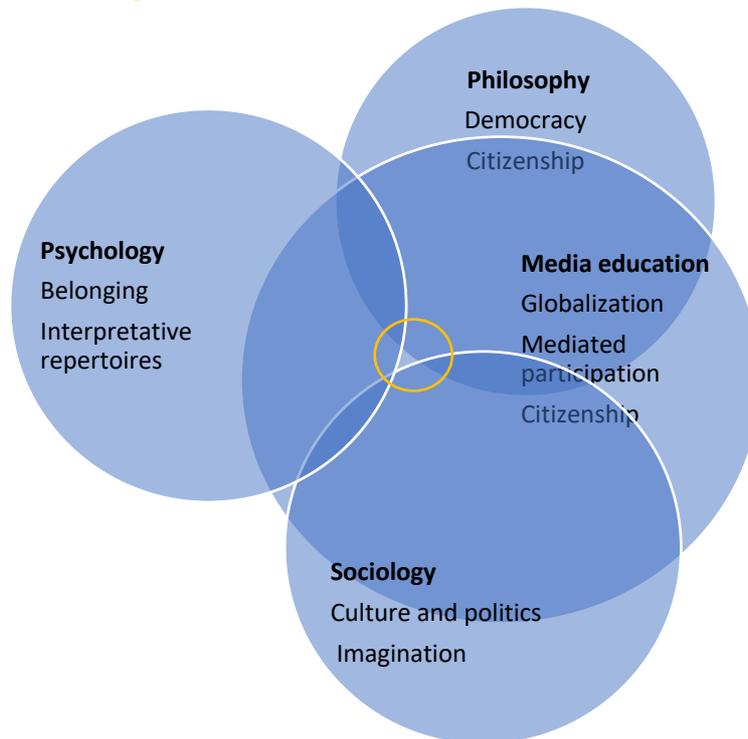
Finland is quite a young state as it gained independency from Russia in 1917. Gaining independency fuelled a nation building process to establish a national identity. This “Finlandization” discourse aimed at strengthening Finland’s geopolitical position as western (Paasi, 1997). Finland’s entry into the European Union in 1995 was “a symbolic expression of a return to Western Europe” (Paasi, 1997, p. 48) and a matter of economic and security questions. Many Finns felt that they belonged in Europe and Finland had a strong “West European identity” (Whitfield, 2015, p. 11). However, the consensus from the referendum was thin and Euro-scepticism was especially strong in rural and northern parts (Paasi, 1997). The entry into the EU raised a discussion in Finland of national identity and the future of Finnishness (Paasi, 1997).

According to Iskanius (2017) the majority of Finns see a value of being a member of the EU today, a view that has been stable the last decade. Euroscepticism has declined, and if a referendum were to be held on EU membership today 50 % would be in favour and 22 % opposed (Iskanius, 2017). However, the EU is evaluated critically; 72 % of the EVA value and attitudes survey in 2017 agree that Finland has to follow unnecessary regulations due to EU-membership. Still the majority thinks the membership is important and believes that the EU can be a needed stabilizer in the contemporary political climate (Iskanius, 2017).

### 1.3 Field of research

Globalisation and belonging are frequently discussed today. They can be studied from different theoretical angles, generating diverse knowledge. This interdisciplinary study used philosophical, psychological and sociological concepts and different methodological approaches to discuss the research question.

○ The present study's position in the field



**Figure 1.1 Position in the field of research**

The study of individuals' experiences of globalisation is well established in media education studies through concepts such as multiculturalism and global citizenship (Schofield & Frantzen, 2018). Media education research, with its interdisciplinary starting point, sheds light on the interactions between individuals' identity processes and global structures (Schofield & Frantzen, 2018). The different perspectives the present study makes use of to analyse the data are elaborated in chapter 2, along with research related to the theoretical concepts.

#### 1.3.1 WEM survey

The present study was intended to gather qualitative data related to the survey done through the greater WEM research project. The findings from the quantitative study done through the project is therefore part of the field of research.

The survey reveals trending attitudes among young Europeans. Conducted and analysed by the Eastern Norwegian Research Institute, the survey collected responses from more than 4500 European youths on their views on Europe and the EU (Johansen & Kvamme, 2018). The respondents came from 31 countries, and the nine countries that held Innovation Workshops had the most respondents. The participants were recruited based on self-selection, so the survey results are not representative of the entire population (Johansen & Kvamme, 2018). The findings, however, are considered to give some indications on how young people perceive the various challenges facing Europe.

As the present study explored how young Europeans negotiated Europe, a European collective identity is central in the analysis. 56 % of the survey participants reported that building a European identity was important (Johansen & Kvamme, 2018).

When it comes to a European democracy, less than half of the sample reported that they discussed European and EU challenges with family and friends. Less than 20% agreed with the statement 'I feel my voice is heard when I vote in EU elections' (Johansen & Kvamme, 2018, p. 13). These results inform that young Europeans tend to distrust traditional democratic processes, in line with Loncle, Cuconato, et al. (2012). When asked which provisions of the EU they most value, the participants cited the right to study and work abroad and peace between member states. The majority also saw the importance of the ability to travel within the EU. When asked if they wanted to move to another country for education or work, less than half of the participants wanted to stay in their country of residence (Johansen & Kvamme, 2018). These results suggest that the majority of the participants are oriented towards other countries and experience mobility.

### 1.3.2 Youth participation in Europe

Research on youth participation in Europe has explored how young people engage in shaping their own lives, schools and local communities in order to influence power structures (Spannring, 2012). Traditional democratic participation has declined, so some have claimed that young people do not participate in democracy. However, as Andersen (2012) pointed out, this narrow view of participation excludes new ways of practicing democracy. He suggested opening the field to new approaches to research on democratic participation, which the present study attempts to do.

Spannring (2012) describes contemporary European youth as well behaved, advocating values such as human rights, gender equality, pluralism and tolerance, replacing the economic materialist values of earlier generations.

Life politics has emerged as a new expression of democratic action among European youth. One form of life politics is ‘to take responsibility for one’s own actions and ethics without an external authority’ (Spannring, 2012, p. 46). Young people value self-determination and personal expression, which nurtures individualisation rather than structural constraints. Political participation then becomes the defence of lifestyle and values, such as ‘equality, fairness and sustainability’ (Spannring, 2012, p. 45). Based on in-depth interviews with 224 European youth in the EUYOUNG study, Spannring (2012) suggested that in politics, European young people value flat hierarchies, tolerance, discussion, pluralism and sharing of feelings. They believe that every member of a community should have a say and advocate universal values. This informs of attitudes and everyday discourses of young Europeans which the present study further investigates.

Social studies researchers have also looked at media practices and societal engagement. Contemporary media communication networks form the basis of the network society, or to this digital era with diverse media expressions (Castells, 2008). This development has nurtured the democratisation thesis of new digital media: the digital age and interactive media provide equal opportunities for participation for everyone (Enjolras, Karlsen, Steen-Johnsen, & Wollebæk, 2013; Fauskevåg, 2018). Enjolras, Steen-Johnsen, and Wollebæk (2013) pointed out that the digital public sphere enables a broader range of participatory practices but can also create echo chambers and new elites in the public debate.

#### 1.4 Research question

The processes of globalisation have unleashed in the world complex social and political problems that nation-states alone cannot solve (Spannring, 2012). This complexity causes an unsettled sense of belonging for young people as they engage in creating transnational youth cultures (Cuconato & Waechter, 2012; Loncle, Cuconato, et al., 2012). The study aim, therefore, was to gain insight into the interplay between youth and cultural constructs. As I set out to investigate topics related to democracy and globalisation, I was led by the following research question:

*How are belonging and Europe negotiated by young people from different parts of Europe, and what affordances do their repertoires offer for enacting citizenship?*

The theoretical concepts are further outlined in chapter 2, but to clarify the research objective, the key terminology is explained here. First, entering the field, I was unfamiliar with definitions

of belonging but was interested in the participants' meaning-making of the concept. Belonging has often been assumed to refer to national identity or attachment to geographical location (Antonsich, 2010); however, I set out to investigate the concept more broadly by looking at the meaning-making and experiences of young people. While conducting group interviews, I could examine young people's negotiation of the meanings on these topics. I thus studied social constructs rather than dug for objective truths. As stated, the analysis adopted a sociocultural perspective, primarily inspired by Wertsch (1998). Accordingly, enactment could be established as mediated action, not merely tied to the individual but mediated by social and cultural contexts. Hence, what this study investigated was how young Europeans talk about belonging and Europe and how these constructions of their cultural contexts offer affordances (opportunities and constraints) for enacting citizenship which is understood as a moral status of societal engagement and broad democratic participation.

For this cross-cultural studying on belonging and democracy in relation to global processes, an interdisciplinary research design was considered to be most fruitful. Multivoicedness and discourse analysis accentuated and made sense of ambiguities, while a phenomenological approach emphasised meaning-making, enabling a nuanced presentation of the findings. I believe seeing data through different lenses is a needed contribution in the field, providing a language for the younger generation's place in this world.

## 1.5 Outline of the thesis

In this introduction, I describe the project's background and context and present the study objective and the research question elucidated in the next four chapters. In chapter two, theories and research relevant to the study are discussed. The three subsections, 'The present age', 'Normative ideas of the west' and 'Perspectives on belonging', emphasise different perceptions of globalisation, belonging and Europe and related contemporary discourses.

The third chapter outlines the research process and the methodological choices, giving insight into what kind of data was collected and how it was done. The use of photos and drawings in data collection and the analysis methods are described. I have sought to be transparent and reflexive about the factors affecting qualitative data. The data are presented in chapter four and analysed with both phenomenological and discursive methods. The last chapter presents concluding reflections based on the analysis and the research question. This chapter also discusses the implications of the study and offers propositions for further research.

## 2 Theoretical framework and research

This chapter presents the theories and research considered to be a fruitful framework for exploring the research question. The first section is concerned with the characteristics of modernity, emphasising the global perspective. The next section elaborates different ideas advocated in the western world, providing a backdrop for seeing the participants' utterances in relation to society. Finally, the focus is brought to the individual perspective to account for different theoretical perspectives concerning belonging.

### 2.1 The present age

#### 2.1.1 Are nations relevant?

Different attempts to describe the contemporary socio-political setting use terms such as globalisation, cosmopolitanism and transnationalism. As political issues are increasingly dealt with far from where they arise (Castells, 2008), such concepts enable describing nation-transcending structures and discussing their implications for democracy. Such constructs also create notions of the diminishing relevance of the nation-state in the present age (Antonsich, 2009; Croucher, 2004; Skrbiš, 1999). The decline of the nation-state and optimism about modernisation ending ethnic nationalism is a strong contemporary discourse (Antonsich, 2009). This might seem paradoxical to studies showing a global revival of ethnicity and nationalism (Antonsich, 2009; Croucher, 2004; Skrbiš, 1999). Referring to Calhoun (2002), we can distinguish between *nationalism* and *ethnonationalism*. The latter, most often called nationalism, happens when ethnicity triumphs civility. The prime example of this is Nazi Germany, which in addition to other horrid examples has contributed to a public discourse rejecting all nationalism (Calhoun, 2002). Not all nationalism is 'bad' but can, in fact, be quite productive in nurturing democracy as it fosters subjectivity and provides a vocabulary for collective identities and participation (Calhoun, 2002).

Nationality remains one of the predominant ways people identify themselves and view their life worlds (Antonsich, 2009). Ideas of ethnicity and culture are closely linked to nationality. Indeed, there is a normative claim that 'culture should be the purview of state' (Croucher, 2004, p. 32). Similarly, a new discourse of ethnocultural purity has been found among young immigrants in Britain. These young Turks mean that the 'British identity in a wider ethnic or cultural meaning could only be claimed by white English people' (Aveling & Gillespie, 2008, p. 202). A strong emphasis on ethnicity invalidates citizenship as a condition for belonging and requires ethnic or racial sameness for inclusion (Antonsich, 2009). This raises

the question of whether national identity is linked to *ethnos* or *demos*, which both mean ‘the people’ (Andersen, 2012). A people with shared ethnicity, such as descent and affiliation, is called *ethnos*, whereas a community of people with shared government and political rights is called a *demos* (Nowotny, 2000; Soysal, 2002b). The development of supranational institutions, such as the EU, limits the nation-state’s sovereignty, disrupting the link between *ethnos* and *demos* (Andersen, 2012).

### 2.1.2 Duality between the global and the local

Globalisation, the process of forming a global social system (Castells, 2008), does not seem to dilute national identities. Antonsich (2009), studying national identities in Western Europe, found two distinct attitudes towards globalisation. One sees it as a *source of opportunities*. National identity then is awareness of ‘who I am’ rather than exclusion (Antonsich, 2009, p. 294). The other attitude sees globalisation as a *threat* using national identity to exclude the Other. Here, the state is seen as a protector against globalisation (Gaonkar, 2002). Globalisation is also a suggested explanatory factor of the increased violent radicalisation in Europe, due to weakened traditional communities. Some therefore seek belonging in ‘transnational brotherhood’ (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010, p. 810).

While commonly used to describe late modernity, *cosmopolitanism* is an ancient idea, with numerous interpretations. A common view is ‘appreciation of difference and alterity, and attempts to find democratic forms of political rule beyond the nation-state’ (Beck & Grande, 2007, p. 12). In section 2.2.4, I further describe cosmopolitanism as a normative discourse, as well as elaborate the concept of transnational democracy.

When Beck (2003), from a sociological perspective, uses the word *cosmopolitanisation*, he discusses an active process, a transformation of society becoming increasingly pluralised. *Methodological cosmopolitanism*, a social response to cultural diversity, helps overcome the duality of the global and the local (Beck & Grande, 2007). Rantanen (2003) suggested seeing globalisation as the interaction between the global and the local, shaped by historical and cultural traits. Hence, one can see the globalized society as “this-as-well-as-that” (Beck, 2002, p. 19). Another way of expressing the concept is being rooted with wings. Such constructs provide a basis for describing a sense of belonging to the global context and other contemporary social structures (Beck, 2002). Being a *methodological cosmopolitan* thus means recognising the dignity of others and acknowledging plurality, thus rejecting universalism. Hence, there is no dichotomy between the methodological cosmopolitan and the local (Beck, 2002; Rantanen, 2005). In this perspective, *cosmopolitan Europe* refers to a transnational structure that

simultaneously embraces nationality; therefore, it is a Europe of difference (Beck & Grande, 2007).

Methodological cosmopolitanism enables a sense of being both global and local simultaneously and is related to *place polygamy*, which describes people's sense of places. People can access several places and be here and there simultaneously through electronic media. Technology enables doing things independent of a given place, changing the relationship between people and places. Although situated geographically, actions are no longer determined by physical location. This can lead to a lack of attachment to any place but also a new sense of emotional attachment to places we have never been (Rantanen, 2003).

### 2.1.3 Reflexive modernity

The present age is commonly referred to as *post-traditional society* or *reflexive modernity* (Giddens, 1994). A consequence of reflexive modernity is that roles are negotiated, not given by tradition. Popular discourses of lifestyle and self-realization causes a raised reflexivity of choices and their consequences (Gauntlett, 2007). People are seen and see themselves as agents with the ability to actively engage in and influence their life circumstances and to make free choices (Schofield & Kupiainen, 2015). The potential of human agency is performance through an 'interplay of habit, imagination and judgement' (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 10) and both reproduces and transforms social structures by responding to the present (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998).

## 2.2 Normative ideas of the west

This section discusses discourses and normative claims constructed in the western world. These socially constructed value judgements do not enjoy consensus approval (Croucher, 2004) but are chosen for their relevance to the research topic.

### 2.2.1 Grand narratives of the west

A widespread assumption in the western world in the past several centuries has been general linear progress. Such optimism was especially prominent before World War I (Kjeldstadli, 1999). Related to it is the perception of globalisation as the westernisation of the world, associated with economic growth, world trade and technological advancement (Croucher, 2004). Thus, non-western countries are seen as immature versions of the west, rising towards a higher standard (Beck, 2002). The idea of modernisation as westernisation is a characteristic of what Giddens (1994) calls the traditional society. This western hegemony over other cultures is part of what Lyotard (1984 in Robertson, 2010) regards as grand narratives or

metadiscourses. Such stories of modernity and its development influence the western understanding of the past and present orders of the world, the colonial idea of Europe as the centre of the world. Thus, the present *global imagination*, the way we view our collective lives, does not emerge in isolation but is mediated by both past and contemporary forces, such as ‘global media, migration and capital’ (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 4).

### 2.2.2 Europeanisation

The history of the new Europe starts, according to Beck and Grande (2007), at the Nuremberg trials, which were a reaction to and rejection of the Holocaust and ethnic nationalism. The values and norms constructed in this process marked a break with the past and represented humanity and solidarity (Beck & Grande, 2007). The new Europe has enjoyed a post-hegemonic expansion, with the EU as its institutional core (Beck & Grande, 2007). In this changing conception, Europe is not a fixed entity but a negotiated construct: ‘Europe as such does not exist, only Europeanisation’ (Beck & Grande, 2007, p. 10). However, the Eurocentrism of the past persisted at the end of the 20th century, and Europe has an inward focus, seemingly building up a ‘Fortress Europe’ (Beck & Grande, 2007, p. 25).

The ‘official version of Europe’ can be found by looking at its presentation in education in EU member states. This contemporary public discourse enables a certain European performativity, a way of *doing* Europe (Beck & Grande, 2007). Education was Europeanised far later than other political matters, such as trade or agriculture (Beck & Grande, 2007). The process of making a European curriculum came from below, from educational practitioners and nongovernmental organisations (NGO), and has resulted in a common canon promoting a shared European worldview (Beck & Grande, 2007). This outlook promotes a positive collective past rather than a history of internal conflicts in Europe. This canon constructs Roman, Christian and Greek history as universal principles that are European achievements, not ethnic or religious narratives (Soysal, 2002a).

EU initiatives seem to be concerned with building a European collective identity: ‘Europeanness serves as a test of their [potential member states] compatibility’ to determine European belonging (Soysal, 2002b, p. 266). The Culture 2000 programme is an example of the project of European integration, providing common cultural references and discourse (Nowotny, 2000). Such programmes are commonly presented to the public as necessary due to globalisation (Calhoun, 2002) and build on the assumption that Europe needs a *demos*, a sense of peoplehood sharing the same government (Nowotny, 2000). Through building a European

cultural identity, people identify with the European demos, providing a basis for the enactment of citizenship and European governance (Soysal, 2002b).

Such political programmes are not the only source of European collective identities. European culture and collective identity are commercialised and provide an image of Europe (Calhoun, 2002). Universal values and economic rationale serve as what Calhoun (2002) regards as a *thin basis* for a collective identity. Democracy depends on a public sphere with *thicker* collective identities—based on solidarity and commitment, often constituted through ethnicity or national identity. Economic rationales and the market ideology do not provide a sense of ‘belonging, solidarity and identity’ and thus undermine democracy (Beck, 2002, p. 40). For collective identities to provide a firm basis for democracy, a democratic social imaginary must be nurtured, which can be achieved by developing a sense of collective responsibility and critical discourse (Calhoun, 2002).

### 2.2.3 Imagination

The different normative ideas of the west shape how Europe and the world are enacted. A concept that captures this notion, as well as the ways we make meaning of the world, is the *social imaginary*, referring to ‘the way a given people imagine their collective social life’ (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 10). Social imagination encompasses both the embodied, pre-rational and adopted understanding of the world and the agentive perspective of entertaining certain beliefs and engaging in certain practices (Gaonkar, 2002). The ‘social imaginary therefore occupies a fluid middle ground between practices and explicit doctrines’ (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 11). Following this one can say that imagination, discourses and action is in a dynamic relation influencing each other. Social imagination attributes meaning to societal practices, enabling collective practices (Taylor, 2002).

The ability to reflect on the relation of one’s individual experiences and societal influences gives an awareness conceptualised as sociological imagination (Schofield, 2015). Global imagination is closely related to sociological imagination as both understand one’s place in the greater societal context. In the contemporary context with social relations not limited by time and space, global imagination helps us make sense of the world and our place in it. Global imagination encompasses a sense of a common global space and an awareness of people across the globe and the relevance of different cultures to oneself (Orgad, 2012).

### 2.2.4 Normative cosmopolitanism

Another response to the wider world is *normative cosmopolitanism*, often described as world citizenship, or allegiance to the world as a community of people (Croucher, 2015). This

normative definition of cosmopolitanism was advocated by philosopher Martha Nussbaum (2002, in Croucher, 2015). Nussbaum presented cosmopolitanism as opposed to patriotism and argued that a cosmopolitan outlook is necessary in response to the risks associated with globalisation, such as ‘patriotic pride’ (Croucher, 2015, p. 4). Hence, cosmopolitanism is a political and moral standpoint representing the nobility of putting the well-being of all humankind ahead of personal, local and national interests (Beck & Sznaider, 2006; Nussbaum, 2010).

### 2.2.5 Democratic citizenship

The normative conception of democratic citizenship can be viewed as a status merely granting rights or also including individual duties (Gibson, Rimmington, & Landwehr-Brown, 2008). Furthermore, the notion can include the normative idea that active engagement in civil society demands the ability to choose the common good over one’s immediate needs. Active citizens are necessary for democracy, seen here as the capacity for sensible governance (Straume, 2011). Hence, citizenship demands solidarity (Calhoun, 2002). Democracy can also be defined as ‘the principle that members of a polity should have an equal capacity to shape the decisions that affect their lives’ (Croucher, 2004, p. 28). Thus, agency is central to democracy. The willingness and ability to participate are reflected in the 2001 European White Paper on Youth, which states there is ‘no democracy without participation’ (Loncle, Cuconato, et al., 2012, p. 1).

### 2.2.6 Models of democracy

Sensible government requires communication based on rationality, aligning with the *deliberative model of democracy* (Andersen, 2012). In contrast, *the aggregative model of democracy* uses vote counting and membership in political parties as the scale of democratic engagement. This understanding of democracy has led to an assumption of declining democratic participation (Andersen, 2012). Viewing democracy deliberatively or broadly, it can be enacted through rational communication. Institutions such as cafés, newspapers and NGOs create spaces where democracy can be enacted: civil society (Gaonkar, 2002). Communication in civil space potentially enable rational debates and discussions, mediating citizenship (Andersen, 2012). Habermas’ ideas of the public sphere and democratic movements globally, such as the fall of the Soviet Union, have fuelled an optimistic discourse of globalisation mediating democratisation, promoting optimism about global versions of civil society (Croucher, 2004; Gaonkar, 2002). Through new communication and transportation

technologies, global civil society would enable rational debates addressing global concerns (Castells, 2008; Croucher, 2004; Gaonkar, 2002).

### 2.2.7 Global civil society

However, according to Castells (2008), rationality is not the expression global civil society has taken. Most often referring to NGOs or businesses with global or international agenda, global civil society is not driven by the classical democratic ideal of rationalising decisions (Calhoun, 2002; Castells, 2008). Such NGOs are private and, although often partially funded and lobbied by governments, act independently of government and politics. These NGOs' aims is to improve human rights, and their means are concrete practical expressions of human solidarity in specific cases (Castells, 2008). Similarly, the capitalist orientation of businesses influences the idea of global civil society with the corporate logic of economy and marketing (Calhoun, 2002). Amid distrust of the logic of classic deliberational politics, the dimension of global civil society related to NGOs and businesses becomes more popular and seen as more trustworthy than political parties (Castells, 2008). Thus, the economic rationale remains strong, questioning the early hopes of global civil society promoting democratisation (Gaonkar, 2002), as capitalism and democracy do not seem to go hand in hand (Croucher, 2004).

## 2.3 Perspectives on belonging

Contemporary structures challenge people's sense of who they are. Some have argued that belonging is an irrelevant notion when mobility is as prevalent as it is today (Blamey, 2002). However, focusing on belonging in terms of mobility narrows the meaning to physical places. Croucher (2004, p. 40) argued that the notion of belonging comprises 'affective dimensions of attachment and identity'. As the present study opens up the notion of belonging, the framework of analysis, following Croucher (2004), is not limited by belonging to physical locations.

### 2.3.1 To feel like home

In this framework of analysis, I distinguish between *a sense of belonging* and *belonging as formal structure* (Fenster, 2005 in Antonsich, 2010). Recognising these as two separate notions avoids focusing on one, as scholars have tended to do (Antonsich, 2010). In an extensive interdisciplinary literature review on belonging, Antonsich (2010) found that the emotional aspect of belonging is about feeling attachment to a physical location, often described as 'feeling at home', symbolising a space of familiarity, security and comfort. Defined as a personal and emotional experience, belonging is commonly used in relation to identity processes; the sense of belonging 'narrates and is narrated by the self' (Antonsich, 2010, p.

647). People often identify themselves through a sense of place. The notion of home is frequently used as a synonym or closely linked to place, and constructing the notion of home enables distinguishing between the familiar and the unknown (Rantanen, 2003).

### 2.3.2 Mediated belonging

Another aspect of belonging, or any other construct, is performativity. Belonging thus is not something one has, but something one does, in other words, enacts (Antonsich, 2010; Skrbiš, Baldassar, & Poynting, 2007). One can *do* belonging through different cultural tools or mediational means, terms that I, like Wertsch (1998), use interchangeably. Belonging can be mediated through family, friends, politics, boundaries and physical artefacts. These tools have certain affordances, that is, possibilities and constraints for mediating action (Wertsch, 1998). Belonging, therefore, is negotiated and contextual, deeply influenced by the complexity of society (Croucher, 2004). This opens up a wider interpretation of the notion of belonging as individuals define what mediates belonging for them.

### 2.3.3 Formal belonging

The notions of belonging discussed are subjective in contrast to belonging as formal structure—often seen as an independent variable (Croucher, 2004). This viewpoint refers to the politics of belonging, in other words, the social and geographical belonging that divides people into included and excluded groups. It differs from a sense of belonging as it does not necessarily correlate with an experience of emotional attachment. This form of belonging is conditioned by power structures, which ultimately decide, for instance, whether a person officially is a citizen (Antonsich, 2010).

As elaborated in section 2.2.5, citizenship is a normative term traditionally based on political membership, including civil rights and the rights of political participation (Andersen, 2012). According to Croucher (2004), the nation-state is commonly viewed as a granter of rights, undermining personal responsibility to participate in the democratic processes. However, government rhetoric on citizenship in Europe has shifted from emphasising a structure providing universal rights to the responsibility citizenship entails (Jones, 2012). This points to a shift in public discourse from emphasising structure to focusing on agency.

### 2.3.4 Agency–structure

In the social sciences, theorists have typically emphasised either agency or structure as the basis for human action, creating a dichotomy between the two (Prout, 2004). Croucher (2004) pointed out that belonging cannot be isolated as a product of either agency or structure. It can be

externally assigned by states or social groups, for instance, but is not passively received by the individuals. This interplay helps overcome this dichotomy.

Conclusively, Wertsch (1998) provides a lens on the dichotomy between agency and structure. When looking at society socioculturally, both the mediational means and the agent mutually enable action. Power and authority are enabled (and changed) through these means, setting the ground for the performance of belonging by the actor. Consequently, 'living in the middle' of the dichotomy agent–structure is possible (Wertsch, 1998, p. 65).



### 3 Methodology and research process

#### 3.1 Objective

The study objective was to learn more about what it means to belong and to participate in society for young people in Europe by exploring the following question:

*How are belonging and Europe negotiated by young people from different parts of Europe, and what affordances do their repertoires offer for enacting citizenship?*

Furthermore, the study aim was to learn how young citizens of Europe construct the meaning of Europe as a continent and as a political union. Another aim was to gain more knowledge on personal experiences of globalisation. Exploring how youth in different European contexts construct belonging and what affordances it offers for democracy could increase knowledge on what belonging is and means to individuals. Thus, the overall study objective was to contribute to research on youth and globalisation by analysing young people's meaning-making in light of societal structures, with an emphasis on democracy.

#### 3.2 Research design

Through the WEM research project, I was able to meet young people from throughout Europe and conduct focus group interviews in Norway, Spain and Finland (Figure 3.1), providing in-depth information about how the participants constructed their life worlds (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Five focus group interviews were conducted using drawing and photo elicitation as stimuli and probing, structured accordingly:

- Introduction (approx. 5 min)
- Drawing task and conversation (approx. 20 min)
- Photo elicitation and discussion (approx. 30 min)
- Conclusion (approx. 5 min)

Group num.	Location	Num. of participants	Duration of interview	Age range
1	Norway	3	60 min	20–25
2	Spain	4	45 min	16–21
3	Spain	5	50 min	16–21
4	Finland	6	70 min	16–19
5	Finland	5	55 min	20–26

**Figure 3.1** Overview of the research design

The interviews were video recorded to keep track of who said what and to observe group dynamics, such as who was addressed. A digital audio recorder was also used to ensure good sound quality.

The semi-structured interviews encouraged conversation between the participants. As a research tool, these conversations with youth yielded knowledge, both narrative and discursive, by accessing their conceptions of the world (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The intersubjective nature of the interviews opened up negotiation of meaning between all the conversation partners (Kvale, 2007; Vähäsantanen & Saarinen, 2012). Using visual tools (see section 3.2.5) in the conversations also helped bring out the youth's perspective as they could choose their own words when presenting their narratives (Woodhead, 1998). The knowledge constructed thus was contextual and jointly produced while expressing individuals' experiences and feelings (Kvale, 2007).

### 3.2.1 Selection of participants

The study participants were recruited by local JA departments, so the selection was dependent on *gatekeepers* and can be characterised as a convenience sample (Patton, 1990; Thagaard, 2009). Gatekeepers refer to people on whom the researcher depends to access a field (Thagaard, 2009).

In Spain, the local JA department served as gate keepers and recruited the participants from among WEM workshop attendees based on their self-reported English proficiency or familiarity based on attendance on previous JA events. The workshop in Finland was postponed, but the participants were still recruited by the local JA representative. The participants in Finland consisted of two groups: upper secondary school students required to attend the event and international university students not linked to the WEM workshop. The latter participants came from Turkey, Ukraine, Germany, Spain and Finland and were studying together. In addition to the groups in Spain and Finland, a group of international university students in Norway from the Netherlands, Germany and France were recruited through a mutual acquaintance.

Accessing individuals' view of their life-worlds is the most central aspect of selecting participants, not obtaining a representative sample of a population (Ryen, 2002). This did not mean that one could simply draw a random sample; the participants selected had to provide rich data relevant to the topic researched. Strategically sampling can be done by choosing a sample that covers the heterogeneity of a group with a certain homogeneity (Troost, 1989). In this case,

the sample was homogeneous as it consisted of young European students (16–26 years old) and heterogeneous as they were from different countries.

The opportunity to interview international students, as well as Spanish and Finnish youth, captured a range of youth from different parts of Europe, including some from non-EU countries, creating quite a heterogenic sample. My objective was to say something about how young European citizens construct meaning about belonging and Europe, so the broader range of nationalities and backgrounds offered richer data material.

### 3.2.2 Access and researcher–researched relationship

Having gatekeepers was a strength, allowing me to access the field as an outsider and avoid several biases related to familiarity with both participants and fields. Speaking to an insider, the participants, in Berger’s (2015) experience, might leave out elements of explanations, assuming they are already known. I had not previously met any of the participants and even came from another country, so I could strategically use my outsider position. For example, when introducing the study, I said that I was from a non-EU country and did not know anything about being a young citizen of an EU member state. As an outsider, I could take a ‘naïve’ position and, in that way, get rich descriptions of the participants’ culture and perceptions of Europe. This made it easier to question tacit assumptions (Thagaard, 2009) in both the interviews and the analysis. The cultural differences, though, might also have made me miss subtle clues and nonverbal factors (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015), pointing to the greatest benefit of being an insider: sensitivity to implicit nuances (Berger, 2015).

Despite my clear outsider status, I was familiar with the experiences described by the participants of learning about cultures through travel and friends around the world. I was close in age to the university students, which gave me more of an insider status. The participants were unaware of these common traits (except perhaps age), which I believe helped me maintain the naïve position and encouraged the participants to be explicit and sensitive to dimensions of the data an outsider might miss (Berger, 2015).

### 3.2.3 Language

A crucial aspect in my research design was language. None of the participants spoke English as their first tongue, yet all the interviews were conducted in English. I considered the language barrier from the very start of planning and designing the study. Language is a key element in qualitative interviews as the medium used to construct meaning (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

I found several ways to reduce the possible language barriers without using a translator, which I thought would be a disturbing intervention. For instance, conducting group interviews

allowed the participants to help each other find ways to express themselves, which happened frequently. Visual methods (see section 3.2.5) was also one technique thought to help the participants express themselves and overcome the language barrier. Collier and Collier (1986) proposed that visual methods can work as a ‘communication bridge’ in cross-cultural research as they give the researcher and participant a shared point of reference.

In my experience, most of the participants could express themselves well and were active in group discussions. Three of the 25 participants seemed to be uncomfortable speaking English to an extent that limited their participation. Here, using visual methods was helpful to include those not comfortable speaking English. By expressing themselves through their drawings and using the other participants as translators, they were able to participate equally.

### 3.2.4 Focus group interviews

Given the study objective to explore youths’ perspective on issues related to globalisation and democracy, I was interested in finding out how youth constructed meaning on the topic. I chose to conduct focus group interviews to minimise my own role and enhance the interactions among the young people. This could shift the power asymmetry and give the participants more control over the situation (Raby, 2010).

In a group interview, multiple participants discuss a common theme while moderated by the researcher. The participants can build on each other’s responses, giving depth to the discussion (Thagaard, 2009). In this study, this was a fruitful approach as the participants’ different viewpoints revealed more nuances, and they had time to reflect while the other participants talked. However, group participants might be subject to conformity and change their opinions based on their perceptions of the other participants’ opinions (Aronson, 2012). Yet, my interest was not to understand what the participants “really meant” but to study meaning-making in the situation. Observing and engaging in a dialogue with a group of young people could simulate the construction of social knowledge through negotiation (Gauntlett, 2007; Raby, 2010). I would have missed this dimension if I conducted individual interviews. In sociocultural theory, all mental functions are seen as dialogic and socially situated. Even individual actions are regarded as social due to the cultural tools employed (Wertsch, 1998). In this light, the focus groups emphasised the sociocultural aspects already shaping our actions, including our utterances.

My interest was studying the version of reality constructed in the context of the interviews and what meaning we created together. Consequently, the *trueness* of the participants responses was irrelevant inasmuch as I believe that there is no such thing as a true

or neutral account of reality. Thus, the accounts given in this study were the context-bound and subcultural accounts of self-representation, not individual self-representations (Raby, 2010). I, therefore, position myself within the social constructivist epistemology. Contrary to the positivist view, I did not set out to collect pre-existing bundles of knowledge but saw myself as a traveller who, together with the participants, explored the research topic, enabling me to tell a story of the meaning we created together (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

The group members varied in whether they were familiar with each other. The two groups in Finland consisted of classmates, and the participants in Norway were on the same sports team, but only a couple of the Spanish participants knew each other. Conducting interviews with pre-existing groups, such as classmates, has both advantages and disadvantages. Members of established groups might be more inclined to challenge each other's views and talk freely about the topic but also have pre-existing hierarchies invisible to the researcher that might silence some participants (Raby, 2010). In my experience, the groups in which the participants were familiar with each other had more group discussion, and my role was reduced to a facilitator of the discussion, as intended. In the groups that did not talk as freely, I became more involved in a dialogue with the participants.

### 3.2.5 Visual methods

I was interested in finding a method that minimised my influence as the researcher and brought forth the youth's perspective, so I decided to employ visual methods in my interviews. In particular, I used *photo elicitation* as stimulation for group discussion and *drawing* as a method for the participants to represent their sense of belonging. After introducing the study and ethical implications, I started the interviews with a drawing task, followed by individual presentations of the drawings made. Next, photo elicitation served as a probe for a group discussion on the EU, nationality and belonging, with follow-up questions (see section 3.2.6).

Gauntlett (2007) recognised that expecting participants to immediately articulate answers to questions is not fruitful. Changing the cultural tools of research interviews from solely language, to a combination of language and visual aids expands the affordances of the interview, as it is mediated by several tools (Wertsch, 1998). Gauntlett (2007) used different techniques asking participants to make something, such as recording videos and building Lego metaphors, in order to gain insight into their self-representations and identities. He argued that this approach gives participants time to reflect on topics for which it is difficult to give on-the-spot answers. This also opens up non-linear representations, unlike speech, which limits one to presenting information linearly (Gauntlett, 2007; Literat, 2013).

In the present study, drawing was used as an icebreaker and conversation starter. The guiding questions for the drawing task were inspired by Rowsell and Burgess' (2017) use of a technique called 'body mapping' to explore immigrants' notions of home. My participants were given the guiding questions on a sheet of paper, instructed to use them as inspiration and thought stimuli and told that they did not need to answer all the questions. The questions were as follows: 'Where do you belong? What does it mean for you to belong? Is it a place, an object, an area or something we carry inside ourselves? Where are you from? What does belonging feel like? Is it a location, a person, an artefact or a feeling you carry within yourself?'

In photo elicitation interviews (PEI), photographs are introduced to stimulate thought as the participants give verbal accounts about their meanings (Gauntlett, 2007; Harper, 2002). In the present study, I used pictures as stimuli for groups discussions. The photos provided a common reference for the participants and were more open-ended than questions, giving the participants the freedom to choose in which direction they wanted the conversation to go. Further description of the photos used can be found in chapter 3.2.6.

Collier and Collier (1986) pioneered the use of PEI and were the first to describe it as a research method. They proposed that PEI is a good tool in cross-cultural research. When shown photos, the participants and the researcher have a mutual non-lingual reference that can help overcome language and cultural barriers. The pictures serve as a bridge between the researcher and participants (Gauntlett, 2007). PEI are commonly used in research with children or youths to capture their perspectives and give them the role of narrator (Leonard & McKnight, 2014; Rasmussen, 2017).

Visual research tools can be especially useful when the research topic touches on abstract concepts difficult to describe. Belonging is such a concept, which people might not have thought about previously. Drawing images as metaphors of belonging help explore and construct knowledge of identity (Gauntlett, 2007; Literat, 2013). Metaphors connect a new understanding to something known and give access to the meanings created by the participants (Thagaard, 2009). In this study, after the participants made drawings representing their belonging, they presented their work to the group and explained its meaning. This is a crucial part of using creative research tools as only when participants interpret their work can the researcher analyse the meaning they attach to their representations (Gauntlett, 2007).

Another advantage of using creative tools in research is to help people express subconscious ideas or feelings. Motor exercises express embodied experiences, generating richer data material (Gauntlett, 2007; Literat, 2013). Knowing is not merely intellectual; it is embodied and something we do (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

### 3.2.6 Interview guide

I developed a *semi-structured interview guide* (see appendix) adopting an *abductive* approach. I based the questions on theoretical perspectives on globalisation but kept them open ended and did not set out to test a hypothesis (Gauntlett, 2007). The guide was mostly built by the visual elements of drawing and photo elicitation but also included possible follow-up questions. I deliberately formulated the questions to ensure that I did not impose meanings and definitions of the world on them. Open-ended questions let participants define their world themselves (Ryen, 2002), which occurred in both the visual stimuli and the follow-up questions in the interview guide.

As discussed in section 3.2.5, the participants were instructed in the drawing task using several questions as inspiration. These questions and the photos used to elicit group discussion were given to the participants on sheets of paper. Two different pictures were used, one displaying various European symbols (Figure 3.3) and the other screenshots of a video of second-generation immigrants in Denmark being told they were not Danish (Figure 3.2). These photos were used to stimulate group reflections on topics involving belonging, democratic participation, social media, culture and attitudes towards Europe.



**Figure 3.2** Illustration used in photo elicitation (Gorilla Media, 2017).



**Figure 3.3** Illustration used in photo elicitation (European Round Table of Industrialists, 2017b; Free Vector Maps.com, 2017; Junior Achievement Europe, 2017).

### 3.3 Transcription

I chose to perform all the transcription of the video and audio files myself. What each participant said, and whom they addressed was written down. I also noted other major dynamics I observed in the video, such as emotional responses and pulling back. The transcription process started immediately after conducting the interviews and finished within two weeks. After the interview sessions in each country (Norway, Spain and Finland), I watched and transcribed the interview videos. This allowed me to reflect on my experiences before conducting the next interviews.

Transcription entails making a social meeting, with all the dimensions of human interactions, plain text (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). I did a verbatim transcription, including pauses, hesitation, laughter and like elements. During the analysis, this was important to remind me that the knowledge was co-constructed between the participants and me as a researcher and was not latent in us from before the interviews.

### 3.4 Analysis process

I, as the researcher, was the tool for both collecting and interpreting data, so the analysis was an ongoing process from the very beginning of the project (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). However, the systematic analysis started after transcribing the oral data to text. The first step was coding using QSR International’s software NVivo 11. This helped structure and systematise the data (Nilssen, 2012).

I kept the coding process open, steered by the material. Coding in NVivo gave an overview of the data material and the most frequently occurring topics. I started grouping the codes into categories, and began an interpretive phase asking questions to the text. Two main categories were generated (for details, see chapter 4): *notions of belonging* and *democratic imaginary*. The categories emerged from the recurring themes found to be suitable for exploring the research questions. The empirical quotes in chapter 4 were chosen as they were considered good examples of findings. Additionally, some quotes were used to reveal discrepancies (these quotes are noted as atypical).

### 3.4.1 A phenomenological and discursive road

The interviews yielded drawings, individual verbal accounts and group discussions. This diverse empirical data required an eclectic analysis. The data were scrutinised through two analytical lenses: *phenomenological* and *discursive*.

I appreciate that the sociocultural and constructivist theories help to see actions, knowledge and utterances as social and contextual. However constructed, the participants' accounts nevertheless described their experience (Gauntlett, 2007), and their content warranted attention. Like Halkier (2010), I chose to combine phenomenological and discursive approaches. The drawings and the presentations of them had a narrative character and gave insight into how young people make meaning of belonging. Their narratives reflected the participants' self-presentation (Thagaard, 2009) to the rest of the group and me as the researcher. These were analysed phenomenologically by looking at the subjective meaning found in the participants' experiences (Thagaard, 2009).

Both their narratives and group discussions gave insight into the negotiations of knowledge, which, in turn, allowed insight into normative consensus revealing public assumptions. Their utterances included tensions showing how construction of knowledge always use and reuse existing cultural ways to talk about life worlds (Halkier, 2010; Thagaard, 2009). The discursive approach helped point out these aspects and both analytical approaches were applied to all the data.

The two approaches helped make sense of contradictory utterances and bring out valuable nuances in the data. For example, I found a contradiction in the data between the participants' experience of being unable to participate in democracy and their expressions of themselves as 'agents for change'. The latter drew on an ideal of agency and discourses of autonomy and self-determination, but their *experience* showed that it was hard to make a difference.



Although I positioned my research within the constructivist epistemology, the two analytical approaches I chose represented different traditions. The phenomenological perspective views the meaning and content as valuable across contexts. The discursive approach looks at how the utterances derived from a greater context, drawing on public discourses (Halkier, 2010). I viewed this synthesis as a great strength as it enabled the content of the knowledge constructed to be taken seriously and emphasised its situational and contextual aspects. However, combining these traditions could be a challenge as they to some extent represent different epistemologies. Constructivist phenomenology views meaning as constructed but also assumes that human actors can provide valuable insight into the world (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The tradition of discursive psychology considers actors' utterances to say something about the structure the agent is within (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). Positioning my research as constructivist, I see these two approaches as complementary.

### 3.5 Ethical considerations and research quality

Qualitative research has ethical dimensions that must be considered throughout the process. From the very beginning when choosing a topic to the finalising the report, the potential damage on the participants and the groups they represent must be considered. To ensure this, researchers must follow formal ethical standards and be discreet when interacting with the participants (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The study was reported and accepted by The Norwegian Centre for Research Data (see appendix), which ensures that research meets formal ethical requirements. To meet these standards, I adhered to the formal requirements of informed consent (see appendix) and ensured anonymity by using fictive names and places in the report. The data were stored on a password-protected computer.

I did not make the initial contact with the participants, so I ensured that they understood the different aspects of the information letter they had signed. I emphasised that participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw their consent at any time and choose not to answer any question. The participants were also informed that their information would be anonymised, so it would not be possible to identify them in the final report.

Qualitative research ethics demand much more than following formal guidelines. One must be aware of one's role as a researcher and potential ethical conflicts when interacting with the participants. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) used the term *situated discretion* to emphasise that ethical considerations must be made as an interview plays out. 'Situated discretion' is their interpretation of Aristotle's (2013) concept of *phronesis*, or the ability to apply higher moral standards in a particular situation.

Following my belief that the interview itself is a construction site for knowledge (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015), the participants' reflections were contextual and co-constructed with me. This became clear to me when transcribing the interviews because the participants used time to think and rethink when stating their opinions indicating that they were created on the spot. This raised the question of how this potentially new knowledge affected them.

This became an important reflection as through the conversations, I realised that belonging could be a sensitive topic for some. For instance, one participant openly shared her story as an immigrant and her difficulties finding her place in her new country of residence. I deliberated skipping the part of the interview concerning immigrant children in Denmark. However, I considered it to be sensible to go through with the interview as planned as the group showed sympathy for her situation, and she seemed safe, which I interpreted as the establishment of good group rapport.

When discussing the case of the immigrants, this participant was deeply engaged and seemed eager to talk. As I watched the video after the interview, I noticed that she wiped what seemed to be tears from her eyes. At the time, I was having a dialogue with another participant and did not notice her emotional response. This was, as I had realised, a sensitive topic for her. I do not think the situation was harmful for her, as I listened sensitively, and the group responded sympathetically, but I cannot know how this potentially new narrative affected her life.

### 3.5.1 Validity, reliability and generalisation

Some scholars view *validity* as a measure of how identical the data are with objective reality, reflecting a positivistic viewpoint. This has led some qualitative researchers to avoid this terminology (Kleven, 2008). I choose to use it but on different terms. According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), validity refers to the quality of the craftsmanship. Here, this means all the phases of the research should be transparent and reflective.

To ensure quality, I deliberately made decisions based on methodological theory and in consultations with my supervisors. I sought to ensure that every phase of the research process was conducted properly and up to standard. I organised two pilot interviews to test how the different tools worked and gain practical knowledge of interviewing. I also kept a log throughout the research, reflecting on the decisions made and different aspects related to the interview situations.

Quality craftsmanship exceeds following methodological guidelines. As qualitative research, especially interviews, is subject to the many unpredictabilities of dealing with people,

one has to adapt to the situation. Aristoteles (2013) *phronesis* is useful here as it emphasises the importance of being present in a particular situation and making sound judgements, which requires practical wisdom (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Thus, ensuring quality in research entails not merely following protocol but also exhibiting integrity as a researcher. This is accomplished through being transparent (Thagaard (2009). I have done this throughout this chapter by explicit discussing my choices and experiences in the field.

Transparency strengthens the researcher's credibility and thus the *reliability* of the study. The reliability of the findings in this study was also strengthened by the use of pilot interviews, the use of both video and audio recordings, and the explicit interpretations of the chosen interview extracts (Silverman, 2014; Thagaard, 2009).

The study aim was not to uncover truths about being young Europeans nor to make generalisations about this population. Nevertheless, it is probable that the results have relevance beyond the sample. I have been transparent describing the context and the dynamics of the interviews, so the reader can consider whether the results can be transferred to other situations (Ryen, 2002). I've done an *analytical generalisation* through making the patterns found more general through theory (Halkier, 2011). The structural conditions highlighted in the analysis of repertoires/voices makes it easier to generalise them than the phenomenological findings. When looking at how structures influence actions, *generalisation* is possible. Identifying the structures influencing a group can offer implications for similar groups (Ryen, 2002).



## 4 Analysis of empirical data

This chapter presents the analysis of the empirical data. I identify two main categories in the data evident in all five interviews: *notions of belonging* and *democratic imaginary*. Figure 4.1 displays the two main categories and their subcategories (voices/repertoires in italics).

<b>Notions of belonging</b>	<b>Democratic imaginary</b>
1. <i>Emotional attachment</i>	Imagination of Europe
2. <i>Doing belonging</i>	4. <i>Pro-Europeanism</i>
3. <i>Fixed belonging</i>	5. <i>Euroscepticism</i>
	Global citizenship
	6. <i>Two cosmopolitan voices</i>
	7. <i>Agents for change</i>
	8. <i>Distant politics</i>

**Figure 4.1 Overview of categories and subcategories**

In addition to looking at the *meaning* constructed in these categories, I suggest nine different voices/repertoires echoed in all the interviews.



**Figure 4.2 Illustration of the eclectic analytical tool**

As explained in section 3.4, I analyse utterances and drawings to identify the voices and repertoires in play. Figure 4.2 illustrates the analytical tool used based on my interpretation of the concepts *multivoicedness* and *interpretive repertoires*. The arrows indicate echoes. Looking at the utterances and drawings, I point to possible echoes, which in turn, suggests which voices and discourses the subject is in dialogue with.

### 4.1 Notions of belonging

This category presents three ways I found belonging constructed as: emotional attachment, something enacted and something fixed. The data on belonging consist of drawings and verbal accounts, both analysed here.

### 4.1.1 Emotional attachment

When presenting drawings of belonging, most participants focus on the emotional aspect of belonging: their sense of belonging (Fenster, 2005 in Antonsich, 2010), expressed through the notions of home, relationships and places. The prominence of the expression *sense of belonging* in the drawings might be due to the nature of the task enabling the expression of emotions (Gauntlett, 2007). For instance, Marina (Finland) illustrates (Figure 4.3) and explains belonging as a feeling of comfort and harmony: ‘For me, it’s mostly about people. I realise that a feeling of belonging somewhere is more a feeling of a comfort or a harmony that you kind of reach’.

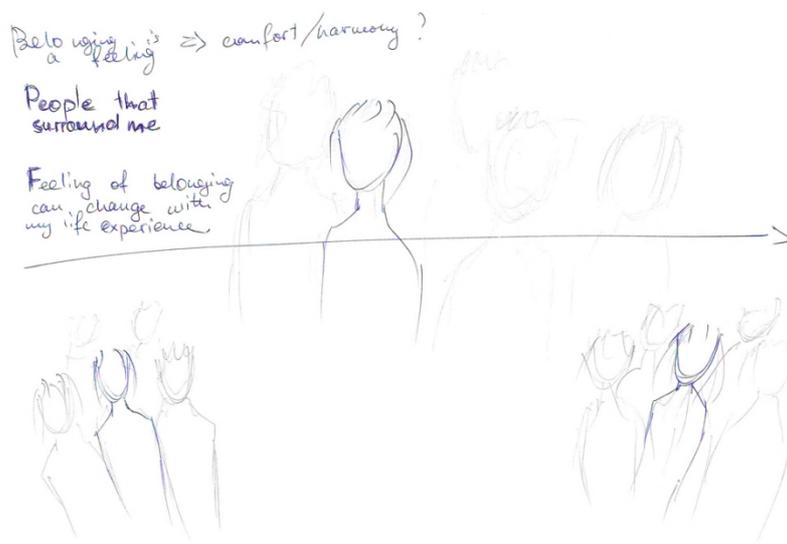


Figure 4.3 Marina’s drawing of belonging

In both her verbal account and her drawing (Figure 4.3), Marina expresses that belonging is related to emotions and relationships, not places, a recurrent theme throughout the data. Katrin emphasises that she experiences belonging as a warm feeling of love, acceptance and happiness. She also uses the metaphor of winning to describe belonging:

I feel like I’m accepted and loved, and I can be who I am, and that’s what belonging feels like. It feels warm, and I feel loved, and I feel happy and it feels like winning.  
KATRIN, FINLAND

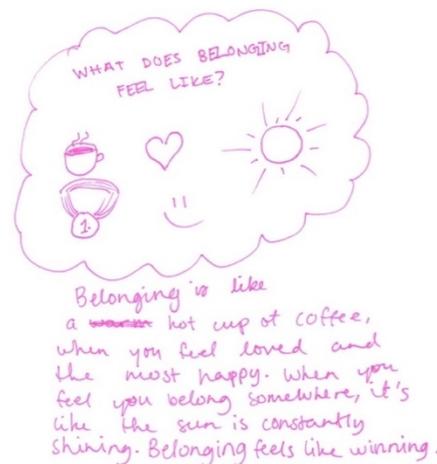


Figure 4.4 Katrin’s drawing of belonging

As this extract shows, the feeling Katrin experiences as belonging means she can be ‘who she is’. As her drawing shows, she uses several metaphors to describe this sense of belonging, indicating that it is not mediated by one of these alone and that belonging as emotional attachment can be experienced and expressed in a variety of ways.

#### 4.1.1.1 *Feels like home*

Another expression of the repertoire of belonging as emotional attachment is the phrase ‘feels like home’. This phrase, and other ways of drawing on the notion of home, enable expressions of belonging. The notion of home mediates a feeling of belonging, as further disclosed under the heading ‘Doing belonging’. The repertoire of home is used in a variety of ways. For instance, it expresses a feeling related to being around family, as Ada (Norway) reflects: ‘I lived in the same place about 18 years, and I just realised, like two days ago, that my home was not really this place, but just being with my family’. Similarly, Paula constructs home as an area shared with family characterised by happiness, love and respect. This is in line with Antonsich (2010), who contends out that the notion of home is used as a metaphor for the experience of familiarity. In this light, the repertoires drawing on home enable expressing the experience of belonging as positive feelings.

The use of the word *obviously* shows that Paula (Spain) draws on a public or popular discourse of belonging: ‘I belong to my family and obviously to a home, where they have taught me all the values’. Petri (Finland) makes the same assumption when presenting his drawing of belonging: ‘That’s the home where I belong to, of course’.

Many participants use the word *place* in relation to home and emotional attachment, which seems to represent something other than a physical location. Paula (Spain) states: ‘I belong to something or to someone. It means I’m happy, and I’m like in the right place for me’. She expresses an abstract place as more related to emotional experiences than physical location. Similarly, Adrian’s (Spain) utterance of ‘haven’t found my place’ talks about not experiencing belonging to a group or community, as further investigated in the following.

Although the sense of belonging is prominent in the participants’ reports of belonging, I interpret their reflections as nuanced, displaying wide views of the concept. Most groups reflect on the different levels of belonging, differentiating the immediate relational aspect from the political and geographical aspects of belonging. Adrian states that he does not know where he belongs, even though he recognises that he has a geographical belonging as Spanish and European:

I don't really know where I belong. I mean I feel Spanish because it's my country, or I feel European because it's my continent. But when belonging to a smaller group like the people that are around me and people that I want to call every day, I haven't really found my place. ADRIAN, SPAIN

Even though he uses the phrase 'found my place', Adrian is talking about a type of belonging connected to a community. This notion seems to be so strong that the lack of belonging to a small group makes him state that he does not know where he belongs, despite his recognition of his geographical belonging. For Adrian, the strongest notion of belonging seems to be the experience of being connected to people.

I drew a lot of people because I think that an important thing when belonging to somewhere or something is the people that belong to the same as you. You belong to that thing with people that have the same aim or interests. ADRIAN, SPAIN

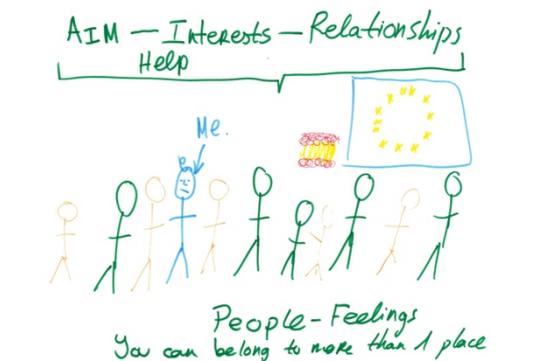


Figure 4.5 Adrian's drawing of belonging

As the quote and drawing (figure 4.5) indicate, Adrian thinks that belonging is related to people. He draws many people with himself in the middle in a different colour than the rest. I interpret this as an illustration of his lack of a feeling of belonging to a group of people. Thus, his social imaginary (Gaonkar, 2002) stresses community and relationships.

#### 4.1.1.2 *Belonging to people or places?*

Contrary to the participants communicating a strong link between people and places, several raise a dichotomy between them. They seem to experience the two as contradictory and indicate a need to choose one, leading to ambivalence. However, most groups reach a consensus that people are the most important to them, and if their family moved, they would too.

My family—that's where I belong. I can always come home so that's where I belong. I think that's where I belong because I've lived there my whole life. So it's also a little bit a location maybe but especially the people. Because if the people are not there anymore, then it's just a location. HELEN, NORWAY

The ambivalence is not as visible in the drawings, perhaps due to the nature of the drawing task in contrast to verbal accounts (Gauntlett, 2007). When talking, the participants try to express

logical arguments that force them to dichotomise. Such arguments are built by using and reusing familiar repertoires, and one repertoire commonly used to express belonging is place (Antonsich (2010).

The participants seem to find it difficult to talk about belonging without using the vocabularies of people, relationships and community while also talking about place. Thus, the feeling of belonging is mediated by both people and place which, for these participants, cannot be separated. One can say that the physical realm itself is a medium that enables different cultural practices, such as family, team sports and school (Wertsch, 1998). Jonna's (Finland) drawing (Figure 4.6) displays her in a physical place as she thinks about painting, family and dancing.



**Figure 4.6 Jonna's drawing of belonging**

The physical location is important for her due to what it mediates:

Belonging to me is mostly about the location which is home and Oulu, the place I have lived all my life. I think that everything that is important to me is here where I live, and I can do things that I like, like painting and dancing. And my family is here, so it's all I need, and I feel like I belong here. JONNA, FINLAND

I interpret the drawing and quote as indicating that Jonna can experience belonging through a constellation of humans and places. For example, the constellation of herself, the town Oulu and her easel and paint mediates belonging (Antonsich, 2010; Skrbiš et al., 2007; Wertsch,

1998). The combination of these cultural tools, such as recreational activities and family, fulfils her needs and mediates an experience of belonging.

As this section has explored, belonging is commonly referred to as *sense of belonging* opposed to *formal belonging* (Fenster, 2005 in Antonsich, 2010). People and relationships are reported as relevant to the emotional experience of attachment. However, the aspects that mediate a sense of belonging are varied; language, places and other cultural tools mediate this experience. Jonna's drawing and utterance point out that belonging is done through an interplay of various cultural tools. The participants can *do belonging* through such tools, as the next section explains (Antonsich, 2010; Skrbiš et al., 2007; Wertsch, 1998).

#### 4.1.2 Doing belonging

Belonging is frequently described as an emotional attachment, experienced through different cultural tools and, therefore, also constructed as active and dynamic. In this section, I focus on the construction of belonging as a matter of agency (e.g. Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), in which individuals can *choose* their belonging and *do* belonging through various tools, mediating an experience of belonging (Antonsich, 2010; Skrbiš et al., 2007).

##### 4.1.2.1 Mediated belonging

When presenting belonging, many participants use everyday objects and symbols. This suggests that the notion of belonging is done through mediational means, including language (Wertsch, 1998). The participants *experience* and *do* belonging through family, friends, sports, social media, arts, language and cultural codes.



Figure 4.7 Petri's drawing of belonging    Figure 4.8 Felipe's drawing of belonging

Doing belonging through cultural tools is expressed by Petri in his drawing (Figure 4.7) and verbal account:

I have Snapchat there because it's a social media community. PlayStation because I play with my friends, and we play same the game, and we belong to the same team. And I also drew my telephone because it has all the things I need to have a social life. PETRI, FINLAND

Petri constructs belonging as closely linked to friendship and community, both enabled through cultural tools. Similarly, Felipe draws cultural symbols linked to Spain and Europe, as well as family, beer, travelling and sports, to illustrate his belonging (Figure 4.8). He expresses what I interpret as doing belonging through team sports: 'When you are inside the team you feel comfortable, and you can rely on your teammates that you don't know apart from the sport' (Felipe, Spain). Felipe does not seem to have anything to do with his teammates except for playing sports together. If unable to practice the sport, he would not experience belonging this way. Similarly, Ada (Norway) experiences that winning a match mediates belonging: 'When we won a match, it was the moment in my life where I really belonged to a group. So I had this deep feeling of belonging'. The activity itself mediates belonging.

Another mediational mean is language (Wertsch, 1998), and the notion of home is used in various ways to construct belonging. For example, the phrase 'feels like home' commonly describes belonging. The term *home* also refers to the town where one grew up or the house in which the participants' parents lived in. Katrin expresses that several places feel like home.

I drew Tampere because that's where one of my brothers and one of my sister lives, and I'm going to go there to study when I finish school, and that's where I feel most home. And then I drew my home, which is Oulu, because, well it's home to me, and I have lived there all my life. And the British flag, representing London. Every time I go there, I just feel like home—like I belong there. I get the same feeling when I come home after school or when I go to town as when I go to London. It just feels like home. It feels like I belong there, like there's no place in the world that could be better. KATRIN, FINLAND

Katrin does belonging through the notion of home. A repertoire is a creative reuse of a discourse, which is how I interpret Katrin's use of *home*. Her creative use of this repertoire enables different expressions of belonging. Through the notion of home, she can experience belonging to the places where she resides, her siblings live and she has visited. Thus, the notion of home and Katrin's use of it enables attachment to several places, mediating *place polygamy* (Rantanen, 2003). Her use of the home repertoire suggests she is in dialogue with the idea of

belonging to a place. Using the notion of home, she can distinguish between the familiar and the unknown (Rantanen, 2003). Although this is connected to feelings, Katrin constructs it as being about places, suggesting that the voice of place-belongingness is privileged (Wertsch, 2009).

#### 4.1.2.2 *Make yourself belong*

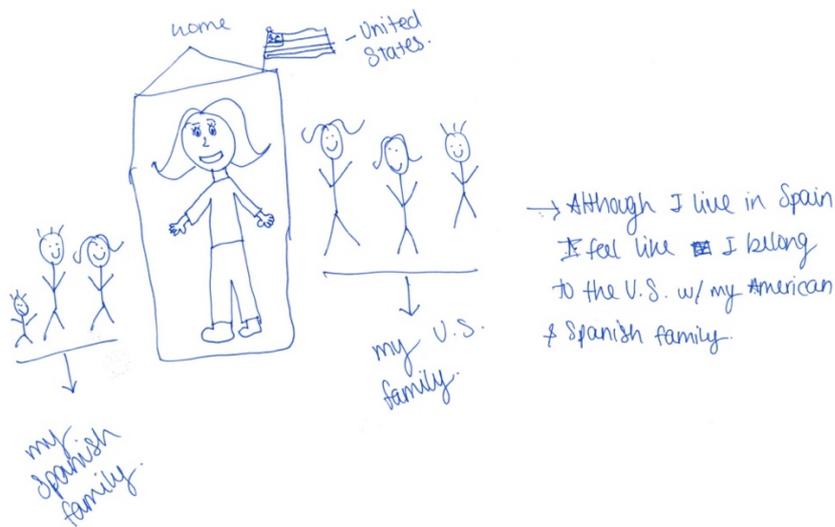
The construction of belonging as a matter of *choice* is related to the representation of belonging through cultural tools. Belonging in this way can be seen as a matter of agency (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) and rationality. It is an active approach, expressed through utterances such as ‘make yourself belong’ (Carlos, Finland). Clara and Helen create a consensus on belonging as constructed and individuals’ power to generate belonging through choices.

Clara: I feel like nationality is such an arbitrary thing to define yourself by. Because you have no influence that you’re born somewhere, and that’s why you’re a resident, local or national of that place. So I’d rather create belonging through something that is not about where you come from but what you like.

Helen: Yeah, what you choose.

These participants also present belonging as helping define oneself, suggesting a close relationship to identity. This consensus and the repertoire of making oneself belong imply a public discourse on the constructed nature of belonging. The participants seem to be influenced and in dialogue with the ideas of reflexive modernity, namely, self-realisation and individual responsibility (Gauntlett, 2007).

The construction of belonging as dynamic and changing emerges in all the interviews. Many express several belongings, and some claim to belong to places other than where they live or grew up. Angela travelled to the United States several times and was an exchange student there for one year. Her presentation of the drawing expresses her feeling of belonging in the United States:



**Figure 4.9** Angela's drawing of belonging

I think I belong to United States so that's what I drew. I mean, I'm from Spain, I live in Spain, and I love Spain, but I think it's because I'm used to living there [the United States] that I think I belong there. At the same time, if it was my choice, I would live with both my families, my American family and my Spanish family. ANGELA, SPAIN

Angela is torn between her experience of belonging to the United States and an assumption of belonging to the place she is from. *Tension* appears when she justifies her claim of belonging to the United States by balancing it with her formal belonging in Spain. The voice presenting the emotional attachment to the United States is emphasised, privileging the agentive voice.

Angela's attachment to the United States is also clear in her portrait (Figure 4.9), featuring her in a house with an American flag and the caption, 'Although I live in Spain, I feel like I belong to the US with my American and Spanish family'. She positions herself as an agent who chooses to belong in the US, despite her awareness of the assumption linking belonging to the place you live.

Petri lists Thailand, the United Kingdom, Malta and Finland when asked to add a location to his portrait of belonging:

My granny lives in Thailand, and my grandfather and uncle live in the United Kingdom, which is the best place I can go. Malta is there because I have many friends and good memories from there. And Finland, of course, because that is where all of my friends, except three or four, live. PETRI, FINLAND

The participants, as Angela and Petri show, have access to and experience emotional attachments to many different places. Thus, mobility opens multiple belongings, like Angela, who finds her belonging to the US meaningful. This suggests that mobility does not make the belonging concept irrelevant, as Blamey (2002) claims, but strengthens the experience of belonging and enables *place polygamy* (Rantanen, 2003). Quite a few participants construct belonging as something *not* related to place. Some even explicitly claim to be *global citizens*. This might be due to an experience of placelessness caused by cultural practices independent of place (Rantanen, 2003). Petri, for instance, mentions no places until asked to add a location. His portrait of belonging (figure 4.7) displays Snap Chat, a smartphone and the NHL (an American hockey league) among other things, which all represent cultural practices independent of place.

Utterances of belonging to a place one has merely vacationed or portraits of belonging with illustrations of the globe, characteristic in my data, recall a repertoire of normative cosmopolitanism, valorising global citizenship as noble (Croucher, 2015; Nussbaum, 2010). Use of this repertoire is further investigated section 4.2.2. Paula, who lived in the United States with her family for several years, reflects on why she could ‘make herself belong’. She says that she adapted to the culture as people accepted her. This reveals a tension in this agentic repertoire: belonging is not entirely up to the individual. A person is always at the mercy of others or a structural system (for this tension between agency and structure, see section 4.1.3.1).

In summary, we can say that belonging can be enacted by a wide range of tools, including language, and the notions of home, social media and sports. Cultural tools enable a sense of belonging and *place polygamy*. This conceptualisation of belonging as something you do enables attachment to several places, things and people. The agentic voice dominates this notion of ‘making yourself belong’. The recurring tension between the agentic voice and the structural voice is further elaborated as we explore the repertoire of fixed belonging in the next section.

#### 4.1.3 Fixed belonging

Opposed to the repertoires presented as different representations of doing belonging is the conception of belonging as a fixed entity. Fixed belonging as structurally determined rather than freely chosen is a voice that emerges in all the interviews in different ways. This voice emphasises culture, tradition and roots and is in play when belonging is described as independent of feelings. Ada, an exchange student in Norway, reflected on this before moving from France:

I was wondering: do I consider myself to belong to France? And my answer was no, not really. And then I realised I couldn't say that. Even if I don't really like France, I kind of belong there because I share the same culture. So I think that we belong to our country and the culture of our country. ADA, NORWAY

Ada had a clear conception of belonging connected to positive feelings but experienced tension when realising she did not like France. She concludes that belonging is about culture. Katrin offers a similar reflection constructing belonging as a matter of feeling at home (see section 4.1.2.1). She distinguishes between this emotional attachment and nationality: 'I belong to England, but the culture isn't mine, so I could never be English' (Katrin). Like Ada, she talks about belonging to a culture, regardless of whether one likes it, constructing fixed belonging as an independent variable and a formal structure (Antonsich, 2010). Their accounts of belonging emphasise ethnicity, connecting national identity to an ethnos (Andersen, 2012), not a demos, the political status of citizenship. An emphasis on ethnicity can invalidate citizenship as condition for belonging (Antonsich (2009). Sabina, for instance, reports not belonging in Spain although she has lived there much of her life. She expresses negative feelings towards Spain and feels stigmatised due to her Romanian ethnicity:

In school, everybody was laughing at me, saying: 'Oh, my God, you're from Romania. You're poor, You're a slut'. But that makes you feel very uncomfortable and makes you cry because I'm 19 years old, and my whole my life here was not good. And I always try to smile, but inside me, I'm very sad and disappointed with Spain. SABINA, SPAIN

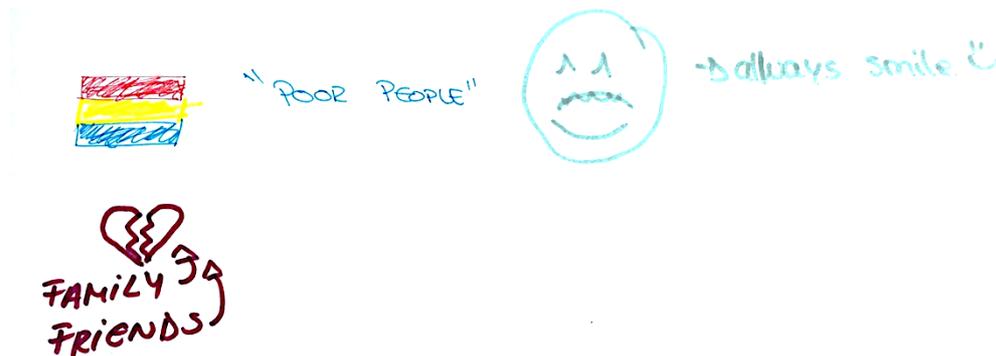


Figure 4.10 Sabina's drawing of belonging

As seen (Figure 4.10), Sabina has a negative emotional experience with belonging defined by ethnicity. The ethnocultural discourse makes her feel excluded.

As Sabina's and Katrin's experiences show, the repertoire of fixed belonging is commonly based on ethnicity and nationality. Felipe (Spain) states: 'Obviously, you cannot say that I'm English just because I like England because that's not how it works'. His use of 'obviously', and 'that's not how it works' as justification makes it clear that he is referring to a cultural assumption of fixed belonging (Halkier, 2010). When drawing on the fixed belonging repertoire, the participants enter a dialogue with the public discourse on ethnocultural purity, like the discourse Aveling and Gillespie (2008) found among young Turks in Britain. The participants echo the assumption that 'culture should be the purview of state' (Croucher, 2004, p. 32).

Ethnicity and culture are also emphasised in the concepts of traditions and roots. Talking about belonging, Joel stresses being Spanish and a global citizen, or methodological cosmopolitan, borrowing from Beck and Grande (2007). Joel further constructs the values, customs and traditions of Spain as identity markers he must embrace, not lose. He echoes the discourse of globalisation as a threat to the nation (Antonsich, 2009). The same voice is in play when Felipe advocates holding onto traditions:

I think the most important thing in globalisation is to hold onto your traditions and keep your roots where they are. I think that it doesn't have to be changed in a global world because I think that globalisation needs to allow different people to be close to each other and to respect each other. FELIPE, SPAIN

Felipe draws on the repertoire of globalisation as a threat (Antonsich, 2009), suggesting that there is an alternative to 'keeping your roots where they are'. This means roots can move, and one must be careful to not become truly globalised. Simultaneously, he draws on the repertoire of globalisation as a source of possibilities (Antonsich, 2009), disclosing his personal opinion that globalisation is something that embraces diversity. Presenting the latter as an alternative view on globalisation, he refers to the former as a public discourse.

The mandate to 'keep your roots where they are' can be interpreted as normative, stating that belonging should be fixed. This repertoire draws on the discourse of ethnocultural purity (Aveling & Gillespie, 2008), regarding culture and tradition as more desirable than formal belonging (Croucher, 2004). Although Felipe expresses this differently, his reflections, and Joel's, accord with Beck's (2002) metaphor of 'rooted with wings' and methodological cosmopolitanism. Felipe advocates being rooted and embracing diversity, privileging humanistic values and pluralism, as further elaborated in section 4.2.2.1 when exploring the voice 'we as humans' and normative cosmopolitanism.

#### 4.1.3.1 *Between fixed and chosen?*

Belonging is constructed as dynamic, negotiated and, to some extent, chosen. However, Clara experienced not belonging, despite being culturally assimilated, recalling Sabina's account of exclusion in Spain.

I lived in Malawi for a while. There I felt like no matter how well I speak the local language or no matter how assimilated I became, I would never really feel like I belonged there. For simple reasons, like the fact that people there would never see me as part of their community because I'm white, and I'm very different, and my life is very different than their life. CLARA, NORWAY

Here, belonging is constructed as related primarily to skin colour and ethnicity, a fixed entity, recalling the discourse of ethnocultural purity (Aveling & Gillespie, 2008; Croucher, 2004). Clara's construction of not belonging due to ethnicity is in dialogic tension with her ideal of belonging as a choice (section 4.1.2.2). Again, the dichotomy between agent and structure arises. The ambivalence between belonging as constructed and fixed is evident in all the groups and is especially prominent when discussing the Danish immigrant children during photo elicitation. When shown a photo of a boy stating that he feels Danish as he has fun in Denmark (Figure 3.2), all the groups agree that: 'If he feels Danish, he is Danish'.

The mediation of a feeling of nationality through phrases with positive connotations, such as 'having fun', is consistent with this study's findings as several participants express that being Spanish or European means feeling accepted or comfortable (see section 4.1.1). Thus, belonging is constructed as something within individuals, not determined by external structures. Clara laughs after stating: 'I guess whoever feels Danish should be Danish'. Her laughter can be interpreted as a dialogic tension, revealing her awareness of another 'truth'. Echoing an anti-nationalistic voice, she also says: 'Labels like nationality and citizenship exclude people'. The same tensions emerge in the following utterance:

I think that belonging is related to people but also to a place, so if you really like where you are living, and you think that you belong to that place, I can't understand why you can't be from that country. IMELDA, SPAIN

Imelda constructs belonging as both a matter of choice, emphasising what one likes, and as a matter of 'where you are from'. She draws on repertoires of belonging as emotional attachment and as a fixed entity. Her utterance expresses a tension between belonging as a matter of agency and structure.

Referring to Croucher (2004), one can overcome this dichotomy by viewing belonging as externally assigned but not passively received. This active reception of belonging is reflected in Imelda's utterance emphasising agency. Within sociocultural theory, the agent and the mediational means (e.g. public discourses) mutually enable belonging. Thus, Clara can express belonging as she is an agent who can creatively use discourses shaped by power structures (Wertsch, 1998).

Several participants seem to think of *fixed belonging* and *doing belonging* as ambiguous and balance their utterances of fixed belonging by using repertoires such as global citizenship, globalisation and belonging as emotional attachment and doing belonging. This points to an awareness and reflexivity of global society and suggests that the notion of global imagination can harmonise the tension between these constructions of belonging. The participants demonstrate global imagination when expressing awareness of global society, people around the world and the need to be considerate of those from other cultures (Gaonkar, 2002; Orgad, 2012). As social imagination is a 'fluid middleground' (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 11) between structure and agency, this global imagination permits expressing this ambiguity without dichotomising. Both Imelda and Clara seem to be aware of the ambiguity expressed and capable of reflecting on their individual experiences and societal influences, so one can also say that they have a developed sociological imagination.

These diverse expressions of belonging can be interpreted as the participants' broad, reflective perception of belonging. Concurrently, they can be interpreted as fear of expressing nationalism and self-presentation as normative cosmopolitans (see section 4.2.2.1) and agents who choose their belonging. There is an ambiguity between the fear of expressing nationalism and the strong echo of the ethnocultural voice. The emphasis on universalism and normative cosmopolitanism recalls the European integration project and the European vision, whereas the ethnocultural voice is more closely linked to their personal experience as, for instance, Katrin states 'I could never be British'.

## 4.2 Democratic imaginary

The previous section analysed the construction of notions of belonging. This section elaborates the discussants meaning-making of their place in Europe and the wider world. Referring to the social imaginary (Gaonkar, 2002), this category is called *democratic imaginary* as it comprises the ways the participants imagine their collective lives and democracy. The discussants offer several normative consensuses, analysed in relation to the ideas of democracy and other

normative contemporary beliefs while discussing enabling the enactment of democracy. This discussion is divided into two parts: *imagination of Europe* and *global citizenship*.

#### 4.2.1 Imagination of Europe

The group discussions demonstrate different attitudes towards Europe. All the discussants use the terms *Europe* and *the EU* interchangeably, suggesting that they see the two as one. Two distinct European repertoires are identified: pro-Europeanism and Euroscepticism. The following excerpt draws on both:

Clara: People have been arguing whether Europe is really such a beacon of hope in terms of human rights, but I still think it's a great project. Even though a lot of things are not going right, it's still maybe the best kind of community that exists in such a way in the world.

Helen: Yeah, it's kind of unique. But it's also caused a lot of problems. There's not really a connection between people and politicians. I also think that a lot of people don't recognize themselves as European. I wouldn't say that as the first thing that I am, that I'm a European. I would like to identify more as European.

Brit Kari: You feel more Dutch than European?

Helen: Yeah, and I think that all the countries are like, first country and then Europe. Or maybe not.

Ada: No, I think so too.

Helen: I hope not.

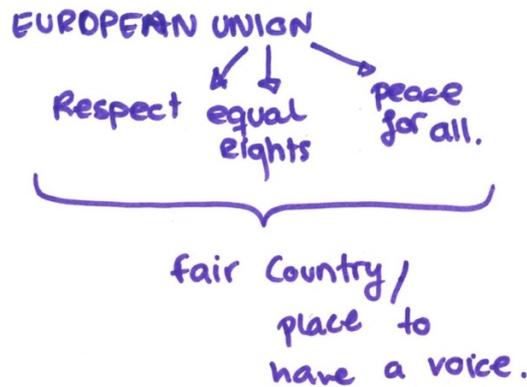
The participants' utterances display tensions between the Eurosceptic and the pro-European voices. The dichotomy of good/bad Europe emerges in all the interviews, supporting the view of the two as distinct public discourses. I further investigate these repertoires separately.

##### 4.2.1.1 Pro-Europeanism

This dialogue above creates a normative consensus of Europe as 'the best kind of community in such a way' and the importance of identifying as European. Clara has a strong sense of European identity:

Feeling European comes really close to what I feel the most. I've lived outside of Europe for a bit, and then I always thought, 'Oh yeah, I think I'm European'. But so many things could be European, but I think I just identify with European values and at home in a way. CLARA, NORWAY

Clara reflects on the grounds for her European identity and does not construct it as universal: ‘so many things could be European’. She grounds her European identity on European values: ‘democracy, personal freedom, and having justice states’. The discussants commonly make this connection between the EU and values. Paula (Spain), for instance, draws:



**Figure 4.11 Paula’s illustration of the EU**

Paula’s illustration (figure 4.11) constructs the EU as a place of respect and equality and a granter of rights and peace—in her view, a place where democracy can function. This equation between the EU and democracy echoes discourses of European identity that emerged after the dictatorship in Spain (Oskam, 2014). Paula’s reference to common values recalls the project of European integration, grounded in citizenship and governance (Nowotny, 2000; Soysal, 2002b). Paula emphasises the agency of European citizens:

Europe is not all done by the government, each of us have equal rights, and we all decide what we want our country to be and what we want our rights to be. We all have to be all equal for each other. As I said before, respect is one of the most important values our country, our union has. PAULA, SPAIN

Paula sees Europe as both ‘the government’ and ‘we’, which I interpret as the public sphere. She thus seems to have experience of a European public sphere. Paula participated in the WEM workshop, which might have provided her with the repertoire of a European public sphere, given the aim of the WEM project to ‘re-engage Europe’s youth in a multinational debate’ (European Round Table of Industrialists, 2017a). Paula’s repertoire of a public sphere nurtures an imagination of Europe as a deliberative democracy as the public can help shape its circumstances (Croucher, 2004) through, for instance, multinational debates.

The repertoires drawing on the values of Europe echo the European integration project’s emphasis on commonalities across the continent (Nowotny, 2000). Paula’s distinction between

the civil society and the government connects these values to agency, not structure. In light of the social imaginary, her imagination of Europe, here stressing values, is created in the interplay between government doctrines and a free choice of ‘what we want our rights to be’ (Gaonkar, 2002).

Eric also uses the pronoun ‘we’, expressing a European identity and worldview:

When you communicate and interact with different cultures, especially in our programme (university), we have people from Japan, from South America, and then you get more and more aware of what it means to be from Europe. We have a different kind of education; we have a different kind of worldview. So it’s more about like interacting with different people, being aware of where we actually come from and how our experience and our upbringing shape us. ERIC, FINLAND

Eric distinguishes between we (Europeans) and people from other cultures, constructing a common European worldview and culture. Carlos explains his imagination of Europe by contrasting it to older generations. He assumes that European countries are ‘the same’, whereas the older generations view them as ‘super different’:

The European Union has shaped quite a lot of our imagination of Europe or narrative of what Europe is. But I think it’s quite a recent phenomenon because I can see it in the older people in, for instance, my country [Spain], the relations they have to other countries—they see even France, which is super close to us in culture and everything; they see France as super different to Spain. While I think we’re pretty much the same, and even compared to European countries further away like Finland or even Germany, I think we’re quite the same. CARLOS, FINLAND

Paula, Eric and Carlos all express a European identity and a collective European worldview, promoted by common European curriculum (Beck & Grande, 2007). This suggests that they are in dialogue with the educational curriculum promoting a European collective identity (Beck & Grande, 2007; Soysal, 2002b). As pointed out, Paula also seems to be in dialogue with the WEM campaign. Eric and Carlos are studying education and globalisation, so their utterances likely reflect globalisation repertoires encountered in their studies.

#### 4.2.1.1.1 Eurocentrism

Adrian contrasts the EU to the power of the United States: ‘But the European Union is a lot of countries that are strong together’. This construction of Europe is in line with Eurocentrism and the idea of ‘Fortress Europe’ (Beck & Grande, 2007). By emphasising *strength*, he distinguishes the internal from the external, against which Europe must protect itself. This normative

Eurocentrism also appears in Imelda's utterance portraying the EU as in a powerful position to make change globally:

I think as the European Union, we have to do social acts to protect people in situations of exclusion. We have to take the first step so that other countries will do the same as us. Because I think that as European Union, we have the power to change all the wars. IMELDA, SPAIN

Imelda speaks of the EU from a we-position, saying 'other countries will do the same as us', which I interpret as Eurocentrism. This recalls the grand narratives of the western or European way as the golden standard (Gaonkar, 2002; Robertson, 2010).

The Spanish youth participated in the WEM workshop, so they might also be in dialogue with that project. Eva reflects on the campaign reinforcing the feeling of Europeanness:

This initiative (WEM) is an opportunity to be heard as you [Felipe] said. I think it's great that they value our thoughts and what we think. And I think it's great to build that European feeling. All these initiatives that Europe has, for example, this project we're doing (WEM), in order to make us feel more, feel part of the big European group, integrate every individual. EVA, SPAIN

Using the pro-European voice, the participants echo the WEM campaign. This indicates that attending the workshop gave them a vocabulary to express the pro-European repertoire, enabling a European identity. However, the WEM press release advocates Eurocentrism envisioning a 'stronger Europe'. The workshop vocabulary then might also nurture an imagination of Europe in line with the ideas of 'Fortress Europe' and universalism. Borrowing Calhoun's (2002) terminology, such an identity, or imagination, is thin, an insufficient basis for democracy.

#### 4.2.1.1.2 Cosmopolitan Europe

Another voice on Europe is more in line with *methodological cosmopolitanisation* (Beck & Grande, 2007) than Eurocentrism as it stresses diversity rather than universalism. Here, the participants emphasise the word *union*, referring to diversity. Joel, in contrast to the construction of a common European culture, values national cultures and diversity:

I think it's very important to not forget that I'm Spanish, you're French, but we can interact your culture with mine and enjoy the cultures. I think what makes Europe strong and beautiful is that we are a union, but we have differences that makes [for] a lot of diversity inside. I think it's important to keep that identity but [to] be social and let other people know your identity and the same with you to other countries. I think it's the point of Europe. JOEL, SPAIN

Joel does not seem to experience national culture and the EU as dichotomic echoing the Spanish discourse of Europeanisation not being opposed to national identity (Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001). His conception of Europe accords with the idea of Cosmopolitan Europe (Beck, 2002; Beck & Grande, 2007).

Joel describes the value of diversity and expresses that identifying with the nation is an important aspect of the EU. This conflicts with some groups' consensus constructing identifying with the nation as contrary to the European project. Despite the tension, these two voices both express a pro-European stand. I interpret the scepticism of identifying with the nation-state as fear of nationalism. This voice is especially prominent among the exchange students in Norway and Finland, who hold consensus views of borders as bad and ethnic nationalism as rising:

Carlos: Borders and nationalities are an invention, and before that, we didn't understand ...

Marina: Yeah

Carlos: ... We didn't care about borders; we cared about the land. And we've come to this situation where borders are so important that they define your identity for many people.

Eric: The rising popularity of the nation-state.

These discussants state their opinions as facts about contemporary society. Their consensus on these 'facts' implies that they draw on a public discourse on the rise of nationalism. Stating 'for many people' constructs it as an opinion of others distinct from their own viewpoint. Helen also draws on a repertoire of borders and is optimistic about borders becoming less important, making a normative stand of nationality as a bad identity marker:

I think in a couple of years the boundaries won't be that hard anymore, I hope. But you could just, I mean, people are moving all over all the time now, so I think nationality is going to be less important in a couple of years. I hope so. HELEN, NORWAY

This is also in line with her group's normative consensus negatively viewing identifying with the nation before Europe (see extract at page 46). This voice echoes a fear of nationalism and is also expressed by referring to the rise of right-wing politicians. The exchange students in Finland create a normative consensus about a similar concern:

Eric: There's a concerning trend that is happening in the whole western world. Like in Germany, you have the Republics party, you have the True Finns, same in Spain. So that's, it's in a way a global trend.

Marina: Yeah.

Eric: The US elections are kind of a showcase of what is happening worldwide, or like France with Le Pen.

Eric and Marina create a consensus of this 'global trend', presented as not their own personal standpoint. This expression of oneself justifies the normative claims of identifying with Europe, instead of nationality, as Clara states: 'So the future is European hopefully'.

The pro-Europeanism constructed here might reflect the initial vision of the EU as a response to ethnic nationalism during World War II (Beck & Grande, 2007). Referring to Soysal (2002b), the vision of Europe they mirror likely can be traced to the European educational project. Thus, the anti-nationalistic discourse on which the participants draw is part of a dialogue with the European integration project advocating universal principles and a European identity (Nowotny, 2000; Soysal, 2002b).

#### *4.2.1.2 Euroscepticism*

This section I have called 'Euroscepticism' presents an EU-critical voice emphasising the constraints and bureaucracy of EU membership. This repertoire is commonly used by the Finnish participants, who consistently refer to the EU as 'they', not 'we' like other participants. As the quotes in this section shows, the participants presents the EU as 'the other' Finland as we, suggesting a national affinity. Thus, the Eurosceptic voice echoes a Finnish cultural identity and the questions of what EU membership does to 'Finnishness' (Paasi, 1997), soft factors behind public Euroscepticism (Van Klingeren et al., 2013). The arguments are also political and economic, drawing on hard factors (Van Klingeren et al., 2013). These participants construct the EU as bureaucratic.

A recurring expression of Euroscepticism claims member states are not equal. Katrin, for instance, argues that Finland is one of the few countries that follow EU directives:

I don't feel like the countries that belong to European Union are equal because—well, this is just a small example; there are more—but there was a European Union directive saying cigarettes need to be covered in the store. And in Finland, you can't see cigarettes, but, for example, in Albania or Italy or wherever you go basically besides Finland, you can see them. So the countries don't follow the directives equally, and that's wrong. KATRIN, FINLAND

Katrin contends that her experience is one of many justifying her Euroscepticism. She states the example of Finland following the directives not as personal opinion but as facts suggesting an echo of Finnish public beliefs of the EU imposing unnecessary regulations (Iskanius, 2017).

Petri states that the EU allows him to travel freely and make it easier for him as a consumer. Several participants mention traveling as a positive aspect of the EU, likely reflecting their personal experiences of the opportunities EU membership affords. In contrast, Petri uses the EU-critical voice, which seems to be in dialogue with adopted perceptions, not his own experiences. As an example of the EU's negative impacts on Finland, he states that the Finnish 'baby box', a box of products for new mothers from the state, no longer contains Finnish products. Petri's group also reaches a consensus that the EU is not evident 'in their everyday lives' (Jonna) and is only a topic discussed in school. Thus, the EU-critical voice reuses public assumptions of the EU's influence on Finland as the participants do not experience the EU as directly influencing everyday life. The presence of EU membership in schools reflects the European integration project (Nowotny, 2000; Soysal, 2002b), but the participants do not use the vocabulary of European identity supposedly provided by their education, unlike the pro-European participants (see section 4.2.1.1).

The Finnish youth's imagination of Europe strongly emphasises the structural characteristic of the EU rather than its agentive aspects. Their vocabulary for the EU enables a critique of the structure, so their imagination of Europe enables expressions of Euroscepticism. They construct the EU as a bureaucratic system that limits Finland: 'The work they do is really great, but it isn't equal, so it doesn't really do much good for us anyways' (Katrin). Whereas the Spanish participants stress the EU's provision of opportunities, the Finnish participants do not draw on this repertoire. This might be due to the public discourses in the nations when joining the EU. In Finland the EU was seen as a step towards recognition as western (Paasi, 1997), whereas in Spain the EU-membership played a part in becoming democratic (Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001). This might have shaped perceptions in the two countries of whether the EU increases opportunities or not. The Eurosceptic and pro-European voices both view equality as central, but the participants differ in whether they think the EU provides equality.

#### 4.2.1.2.1 Distant politics

The Eurosceptic voice also manifests in the view on politics as distant. Advocating pro-Europeanism, Helen contrasts it to presumed public opinions about the EU: 'The politics are really distant from people. A lot of people don't really know what's going on in the high level of politics. There's not really a connection between people and politicians'. This public

discourse is in line with Castells' (2008) characteristics of the present age and emerges in the Eurosceptic voice of the Finnish participants:

I think that the people making the decisions, some of them may not even know about the situation, like in the east, and that's why they can't make the best decisions to come through with human rights.  
JONNA, FINLAND

Jonna doubts that decision-makers know about local situations. Thus, her imagination of Europe is of distant politics and a top-down democratic model. This can be interpreted as an aggregative view of democracy as solely an institution for voting, which limits the enactment of democratic citizenship through engaging in the public sphere (Andersen, 2012).

The discussants draw on two distinct repertoires in their construction of Europe: *the pro-European voice* and *the Eurosceptic voice*. The pro-European repertoire emphasises universal values, commonalities, normative cosmopolitanism and fear of nationalism. The participants express a European identity, in which the WEM project and ERT's objective are seen as strengthening the European project. The Eurosceptic repertoire constructs the EU as a distant political bureaucracy. The discussants echoing this voice do not identify as European, use an EU-critical vocabulary, emphasise structure and do not experience personal links to the EU. They perceive the EU as a demos, a form of government and a granter of rights but do not experience a common European culture. Grounds for Euroscepticism, on the other hand, puts an emphasis on ethnicity. The discussants express a national affinity through we-presentations of the nation, constructing the nation as an ethnos.

These two repertoires of Europe nurture two imaginations of Europe. The pro-European voice expresses anti-nationalism and a collective European identity, and the Eurosceptic voice exclusive belonging to the nation. Thus, the two imaginations of Europe differ as they emphasise an ethnos or a demos, fostering different democratic imaginaries and affordances for enacting citizenship.

#### 4.2.2 Global citizenship

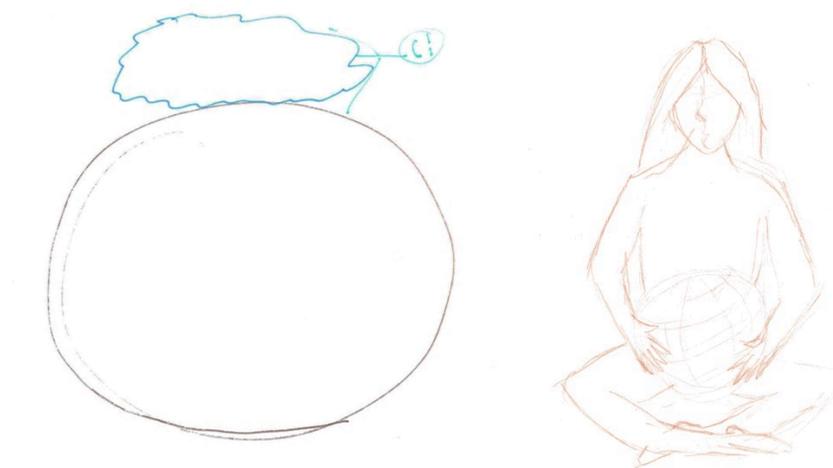
Referring to social imaginary (Gaonkar, 2002), I define democratic imaginary as the way the participants imagine their collective life and democracy. Global citizenship fits in this notion as, like global imagination, it concerns awareness of one's place in the wider world (Orgad, 2012) and the enactment of democracy through the position of citizenship. This section further explores the participants' expressions of global imagination and their value-based claims about their place in the world. Technology enables action independent of place (Rantanen, 2003) and

mediates an increased number of public places (Enjolras, Karlsen, et al., 2013; Fauskevåg, 2018), so this section also explores the affordances of digital media in democratic participation.

#### 4.2.2.1 *Two cosmopolitan voices*

Characteristic of the participants' representations is the use of the term *global citizen*. They draw on this notion in two ways I interpret as methodological cosmopolitanism and normative cosmopolitanism (Beck & Grande, 2007; Croucher, 2015; Nussbaum, 2010). Normative cosmopolitanism is found in utterances constructing global citizenship in opposition to national or local belonging and emphasising that 'we are all humans'. Constructions of global citizenship as complementing local attachment are regarded as methodological cosmopolitanism.

The exchange students in Finland all report experiencing belonging to the world, of which Aslan's and Carlos's drawings (figures 4.12 and 4.13) are examples.



**Figure 4.12 Aslan's drawing of belonging Figure 4.13 Carlos' drawing of belonging**

Aslan draws 'the earth as his bed and the sky as his blanket' (Figure 4.12), inspired by a Turkish poem, which I interpret as a sense of his place in a wider world—a global imagination (Orgad, 2012). His explanation of the drawing emphasises diversity and respect for all humans:

You can, for example, go anywhere in the world, and you can interact with people in different settings. And even if there are some prejudices that people have, you can still find a way to communicate with people. You can try to understand their values and their thoughts so that you can act respectfully. ASLAN, FINLAND

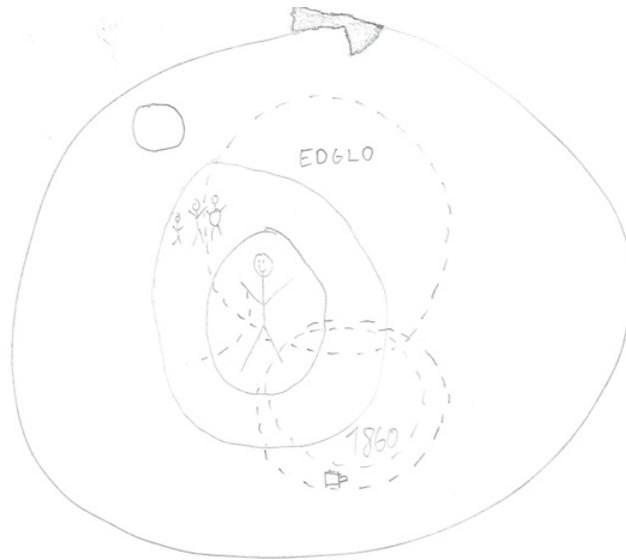
This value of tolerance and respect for other cultures supports the view of Aslan as having a sophisticated global imagination (Orgad, 2012). He does not further share his thinking behind his portrait, but seen in relation to Carlos, their drawings seem to have different emphases. In Aslan's drawing and utterance, the world is big and diverse, and he claims we have to find ways to live in the tensions of plurality, reflecting methodological cosmopolitanism (Beck & Grande, 2007). Carlos, in contrast, depicts himself holding the globe, suggesting an experience of agency. His account stresses sameness and shared experiences with people around the world:

I drew this person holding the world, and I think it represents humanity and the world, obviously. I've lived in a few different places around the world, and I never felt that I didn't belong because I've always shared experiences with someone, and I've always met someone that I could get along with. So I think that's what belonging means: you make yourself belong somewhere. CARLOS, SPAIN

Carlos constructs belonging as a matter of choice (as pointed out in section 4.1.2.2), and experiences himself as a global citizen. His emphasis on sameness draws on a repertoire of 'we are all humans'. Carlos thus connects global citizenship and humanity, like Aslan, who advocates respect for diversity. This voice positioning one as a human first appears throughout all the interviews and different topics of discussion. It echoes normative cosmopolitanism advocating common human dignity and interests (Croucher, 2015; Nussbaum, 2010). The participants often privilege this voice as they cite equality and human dignity when discussing various topics. The prevalence of this voice suggests that it draws on normative public assumptions. This prevalence is seen in the use of *obviously* when discussing Danish immigrants: 'Obviously, you can't say that a child is not Danish because if you say that there will be no globalisation' (Felipe, Spain). Paula states: 'I think Spanish is the same as being Danish or being American'. These claims oppose ethnic nationalism and see globalisation as a homogenisation of cultures and a positive development, echoing the grand narratives of the western world (Robertson, 2010). These claims also align with Nussbaum's (2010) normative cosmopolitanism in contrast to patriotism. Sabina expresses: 'I don't really think that we belong to a country or state or anything. We are all the same'.

Drawing on this 'humanness repertoire', the participants enter dialogue with public discourses on anti-nationalism. They use the same repertoire as the participants advocating the pro-European voice (section 4.2.1.1) and seem to express the European vision of breaking from ethnic nationalism and advocating humanitarian values (Beck & Grande, 2007). This constructs global citizenship as opposed to national identity or local attachment. I will go on to present

accounts of global citizenship as not dichotomous to local attachment. Eric sees global citizenship as the outermost level of belonging in his drawing (Figure 4.14).



**Figure 4.14 Eric's drawing of belonging**

This is me, and my family is around me, and then the feeling of belonging to this EDGO programme that I'm studying. But it's also the smaller stuff, like being a fan of a football club, and a small bubble would be like Bavarian. The outer one is that we're all global citizens, and I definitely feel like a global citizen. I travel a lot. I have friends all over the world. I think there's so much more that connects us than divides us. And I've always liked international people and being German or Bavarian has never been part of my identity. ERIC, FINLAND

Eric's metaphor of belonging as bubbles (Figure 4.14) illustrates the different spheres where he is a member and feels like he belongs. The outermost bubble represents global citizenship. Eric, like many other participants, voices the position of being a human being. This is evident in his statement that everyone is a global citizen, and 'so much more connects us than divides us'.

However, Eric's conception of global citizenship as one of several levels of belonging seems more nuanced than the other participants. His utterance has a tension over whether global citizenship includes local attachment—between methodological and normative cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2002; Croucher, 2015). In Eric's drawing, the smaller bubble representing his belonging to Bavaria fits inside the bigger global bubble, but in his account of the drawing, he uses not feeling German or Bavarian as justification for his identity as a global citizen. This shows that he draws on both methodological cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2002) and normative cosmopolitanism (Croucher, 2015) simultaneously. Eric recognises his local attachments and fits them into his drawing according to methodological cosmopolitanism.

However, responding to the strong anti-nationalistic voice, he stresses that he is a global citizen, not German. I interpret this as privileging normative cosmopolitanism.

Joel, though, does not dichotomise his national identity and global citizenship:

I drew how I feel that my context is being a Spanish citizen, and I think that I'm also a global citizen. We are very connected, so for me, it's important to not forget that I'm Spanish. I love my country, my family, all the things that are the context of Spain, but I really love the possibility to travel and all that is provided to us. JOEL, SPAIN

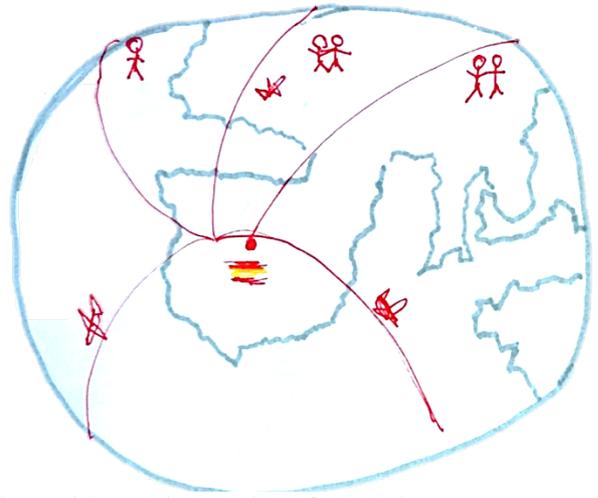


Figure 4.15 Joel's drawing of belonging

Joel's conception of global citizenship does not conflict with his national identity. His drawing of belonging (Figure 4.15) contains the globe, showing Europe with Spain in the middle and the

Spanish flag, which I interpret as an experience of belonging in both Spain and Europe. I understand this as an experience of the European context mediating his repertoire of global citizenship, enabling methodological cosmopolitanism. Joel's imagination of Europe accords with Beck and Grande's (2007) conception of cosmopolitan Europe, not as universalistic, as the European integration programme advocates, but as diverse (Beck, 2002; Beck & Grande, 2007; Soysal, 2002a). This further underlines that Joel is in dialogue with the Spanish discourse of nationalism and European identity going hand in hand (see section 4.2.1.1.2).

#### 4.2.2.2 Agents for change or subjects to politics?

Several participants constructing the nation-state and the EU as granters of rights emphasis citizens' rights and opportunities (Croucher, 2004). Citizenship is seen as the status of a receiver and does not include duties (e.g. Gibson et al., 2008). When the participants present themselves as global citizens, the voice of human rights is prevalent, suggesting allegiance to the global community. The participants, though, do not emphasise citizens' duties here either.

The agentic repertoire is commonly drawn on to discuss belonging but does not appear when explicitly asked about *democracy*. This suggests that *democracy* limits the 'democratic imaginary':

Brit Kari: Are there other ways that you feel like you can participate and that your voice can be heard in democracy?

Felipe: No, not so much.

Eva: You have to try hard, but you can be heard. You have to try; it's not that easy.

In this extract, when asked specifically about democracy, the participants express that it is hard to be heard. This suggests that their democratic imagination include a narrow view of democracy and is even limited by the term *democracy*. However, in discussing 'influencing society', Eva sees the possibility to make a difference:

Brit Kari: Have you had an experience of influencing society?

Adrian: No.

Felipe: No, at least not me.

Eva: Well, being myself, I am an example for everybody surrounding me but not society as a whole.

Eva uses the agentive repertoire, which, in addition to humanistic values, presents a strong discourse of doing good and equality. However, as discussed in section 4.2.1.2.1, politics are constructed as distant:

Jonna: But the problem is that politicians are much older. Like the percentage of young politicians, for example, in Finland is so small, so in that way, it's really difficult to really influence things.

Katrin: We have a lot of organisations that do a lot of good things, and there are young people, and they make an impact.

Jonna describes politics as dominated by the older generation, and Katrin claims that their generation makes impacts through engaging in NGOs instead. The participants emphasise other ways of making influence than traditional politics, which seem distant and something they are merely subject to. In contrast, the agentive voice is strong and emphasises the ability to make a difference elsewhere. The WEM workshop is cited as an example:

I think that our opinion is treated well here [WEM] because this is organised by the European Union, so what happens here, they will know it. I think that it is a good way to show your opinion and to get there in an effective way. FELIPE, SPAIN

Felipe's utterance echoes the WEM workshop's engagement in economic and political issues facing Europe. The workshop participants, like Felipe and Eva, were surrounded by banners declaring 'You are part of Europe' and 'Your voice matters'. These participants see a strong relation between identifying with Europe and engaging in these matters. This accords with the idea behind the European integration programme advocating identification with a European demos as the basis for democratic participation and European governance (Soysal, 2002b). The participants positioning themselves as agents for change (e.g. Eva's view of herself as an example for people) deliberately construct democracy and do not limit democratic participation to political institutions (Andersen, 2012). It seems the WEM workshop provided a vocabulary that influenced Felipe's and Eva's democratic imaginary, allowing them to see themselves as agents for change.

When using the word *democracy*, the participants construct it based on an aggregative model (Andersen, 2012), but when freed from the use of the notion democracy, they are able to present a broader view. Thus, it seems that the notion democracy mediates a democratic imaginary that sees citizens as the subject of politics and has a narrow conception of enacting citizenship. This democratic imagination might echo the expression of life politics found among European youth where defence of values and flat hierarchies are advocated (Spannring, 2012).

#### 4.2.2.3 *Enacting citizenship on a global scale?*

Felipe and Katrin uses organisations as examples of ways to making an impact, reflecting the conception of global civil society as NGOs (Castells, 2008). Such NGOs have international agenda using concrete means and do not focus on rational political debates (Castells, 2008). In Felipe's case, the NGO's JA and ERT constructed the WEM workshop as part of the public sphere. The workshop objectives were for the attendants to interact with politicians and businesspeople and to promote youth participation in European democratic life, which Felipe's utterance reflects. From this viewpoint, WEM created a meeting point for debate and deliberation and mediated a public sphere according to the deliberate model of democracy (Andersen, 2012). Thus, WEM enabled transnational enactment of citizenship by nurturing a democratic imagination based on the deliberative model of democracy, as well as providing a cross-border public space for communication. Thus, the campaign offers two mediational means for enacting citizenship (Wertsch, 1998): first, a vocabulary enabling European identity and participation in a deliberative democracy and, second, a physical location and meeting place for deliberation.

However, WEM's agenda includes making use of the human capital young people represent (European Round Table of Industrialists, 2017a). The collective identity it nurtures seems based on an economic logic, which I interpret as a thin basis for collective identity (Calhoun, 2002).

As JA and ERT promote human capital and economic growth, they nurture an imagination of the global public sphere based on capitalist and economic logic. NGOs and businesses are more trusted than political parties, legitimising a public sphere based on principles other than rational debates (Castells, 2008). A global public sphere thus has not led to democratisation as its main objective is not deliberative debate but capitalistic growth.

Katrin's reference to making an impact by doing 'a lot of good things' through NGOs can be understood through Castells' (2008) description of NGOs as the public sphere. Their agenda, he says, is to enhance human rights through concrete expressions of human solidarity. In contrast to deliberation, Katrin highlights this as democratic participation:

Social media brings up discussion, but, for example, when you put your Facebook profile picture with the French colours or post on twitter #jesuischarlie, it doesn't make a difference. The difference is being made outside social media where people are helping people. It doesn't happen in social media, where you just post something and then you feel like a saint because you did something, because that's not doing something. KATRIN, FINLAND

Katrin views discussion as secondary to 'helping people'. Making a difference happens when people 'do something', equating democratic participation with humanitarian work. Such a defence of values is a characteristic of life politics (Spannring, 2012) which it seems Katrin is echoing. Her democratic imagination limits the public sphere to concrete actions helping people, excluding discussion and political deliberation, hence the deliberative model of democracy (Andersen, 2012). Katrin constructs participation through social media as 'not doing something' that 'doesn't make a difference'. The disbelief that social media enables democratic participation is characteristic for my data:

Marina: And that's how I feel about social media, that it's not really—at some point, it influences us like just as part of information. But the other point, [is that] it stays really like on a level of virtuality; it's not really happening; it's not really changing a thing.

Eric: How do you feel about the Arab Spring? The Arab Spring was like due to social media.

Again, democratic participation is constructed as concrete actions in opposition to discussions and putting things on the agenda. Marina says that what happens in social media does not really happen, and she constructs a strict division between the virtual world and ‘the real world’. Eric challenges Marina’s view, citing the Arab Spring. In this public revolt in the Middle East, social media were central and led to changes in the region’s political conditions (e.g. Schofield, 2018). Eric thus constructs social media as a catalyst mediating action in ‘the real world’.

Eric and Marina differ on whether their democratic imaginary includes social media in the public sphere mediating change in ‘the real world’. Eric draws on a repertoire of social media as part the public sphere and having an influential role in society as ‘a catalyst’. This conflicts with the preceding examples of views on ‘unreal’ social media. Although a strong voice in all the groups, the latter is nuanced by utterances constructing digital media as a platform mediating a public sphere that can enable democratic participation (Enjolras, Karlsen, et al., 2013; Fauskevåg, 2018).

Clara expresses an ambiguity about social media’s potential as a democratic tool. She thinks that sharing inspiring articles and liking posts are ‘political participation’ and reflect the deliberative model of democracy (Andersen, 2012). Social media thus mediate democracy by enabling this participation (Wertsch, 1998). However, Clara does not think that social media are a good platform for political discussions or deliberate debate: ‘I just think that the discussion culture on social media is a very difficult thing and that certain discussions should be held in real life’. All the groups describe the discussion culture on social media as problematic. Social media can put things on the agenda but have too many opinions to be an effective tool for debate. Clara is the only participant to articulate a personal experience of making a difference through social media:

I used to write a blog, and sometimes it would strike me when people, old friends or even just acquaintances would come up and say, ‘I read the article you wrote’. And then I would be like, ‘Oh really?’ Like I didn’t expect to go that far. Sometimes there are these moments where I feel like I’m making a difference. CLARA, NORWAY

Clara experiences making a difference through her blog, though she is surprised to have reached people. Her disbelief that she could make a difference, shared by the participants, emphasises structure over agency.

These findings suggest that the discussants draw on the repertoire of global citizenship in two main ways. The voice echoing normative cosmopolitanism constructs global citizenship

as an alternative to national belonging. The second repertoire constructs global citizenship as an experience complementing local attachment. Regarding enacting democratic citizenship, the public sphere is constructed as NGOs and social media, although the participants express ambivalence about social media's ability to mediate deliberate debates. With a strong agentive voice, they express a belief in their ability to change social structures (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) but experience the structure of social media as a constraint on democratic discussions.

This section points to different aspects influential in the democratic imagination. These different voices nurture certain democratic imaginations offering certain affordances for enacting citizenship. Conflicting voices enable different expressions of democratic imagination. For example, thick collective identities provide a firm basis for democracy, whereas thinner collective identities enable expressing universal values and human dignity, often articulated as normative cosmopolitanism. The participants express enactment of citizenship in different ways depending on the topic of discussion. The word *democracy* seems to limit their expressions of democratic enactment, whereas the agentive voice and vocabularies provided by WEM and other NGOs mediate their expressions of themselves as 'agents for change'.



## 5 Concluding reflections

Chapter four points out the participants' multivoicedness (Wertsch, 2009) as they wrestle with the notions of belonging and democracy. The repertoires nurture certain ways of imagining collective life, which offer certain affordances for democratic enactment (Figure 5.1).



**Figure 5.1 Interplay among voices, imagination and mediated action**

In this chapter, I move beyond the data analysis and further discuss the affordances for enacting citizenship offered by the repertoires of belonging and democratic imaginary. The most prominent voices are identified as a starting point to further discuss the imagination and affordances.

### 5.1 Agency

According to the findings, agency is a strong voice expressed in a variety of ways. When presenting belonging, most participants construct it as something the individual *feels*, *chooses* or *does*, emphasising the subjectiveness of belonging. However, the utterances are nuanced, and the agentic voice is frequently challenged by repertoires of structure, such as formal belonging.

The dichotomy between agency and structure reoccurs throughout the research topics. I understand the agentic voice as an echo of the public discourse of being an agent: a person capable of self-determination. This is in line with Spanring (2012), who, in studying the political attitudes of young Europeans, found the dominance of lifestyle politics, which emphasise the individual and opportunities, echoing contemporary discourses on lifestyle and self-realisation (Castells, 2008; Gauntlett, 2007). The vocabulary of agency enables imagining oneself as autonomous and capable of transforming social structures (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). The latter is not seen as possible through traditional politics, in line with the narrow view on democratic participation (Andersen, 2012). When viewing democracy broadly, one imagines oneself as an agent for change rather than the subject to politics in the narrower conception of democracy. The latter excludes participation through NGOs and social media, which some of the young Europeans in this study see as influential.

However, isolating the agent can overlook the collective duties of citizenship and lead to individualisation, leaving it up to individuals to tackle collective challenges. An imagination

merely focused on agency might limit the enactment of citizenship as the individual might fail to show collective solidarity and make sound judgments based on the common good. Dichotomising agency and structure fails to recognise the interplay between them. For instance, seeing the state merely as a provider of rights constrains democracy, making the agent passive. A democratic imagination solely focusing on agency, however, can constrain democracy by failing to recognise collectiveness.

Seeing the dichotomy in light of sociocultural theories reveals that citizenship is acted out through both agency and structure (Wertsch, 1998). The agent uses several mediational means to enact citizenship; language, for instance, provides certain vocabularies. The available discourses are related to structure, which also supports other mediational means. Action is enabled in the interplay between the agent and the mediational means; therefore, neither structure nor agent can do citizenship in isolation. Social media, for example, can mediate debate but has structural limits constraining the agent. Similarly, a sociological imagination encompasses awareness of both agency and structure, which can mediate democratic citizenship. Nurturing such an imagination, therefore, requires a vocabulary of both agency and structure.

## 5.2 Doing European citizenship

Democratic imaginary, an imagination of collective lives and democracy, is, according to the study findings, shaped by repertoires of the EU and the perceptions of citizenship and democratic practices. The voices drawn upon when discussing the EU primarily construct a common European identity. According to the WEM survey, building a common European identity is an important goal of the EU for young people (Johansen & Kvamme, 2018). Such an identity is also important for the EU public authorities, NGOs and businesses (e.g. the WEM campaign) to strengthen the European project.

The European integration project encourages identifying with Europe as a *demos*, or the notion of the people under the same government. Many participants express such a collective identity seeing the EU as the granter of rights. Following Croucher (2004), such an imagination can undermine citizens' responsibility. The collective identity nurtured by vocabularies in the common European curriculum and campaigns such as WEM seems to be thin, emphasising universal values and human rights. Without fostering solidarity and commitment, such an imagination is insufficient to mediate deliberative democracy (Beck, 2002; Calhoun, 2002).

As the construct Europe is negotiated, not fixed, the discourses on youth participation in Europe can, nevertheless, mediate other ways of doing Europe. The WEM campaign

encourages youth involvement, providing vocabularies for democratic participation. Public authorities can shape the affordances for democratic imaginary by providing a vocabulary. However, imagination is shaped by many other influences, including embodied and pre-rational perceptions and active choices of beliefs (Gaonkar, 2002). Thus, imagination is complex and not directly produced by discourses.

*Cosmopolitanisation*, following Beck and Grande (2007), is a concept that overcomes the dualism between local and global. Cosmopolitan Europe is not universal but diverse, permitting simultaneous national and transnational belongings. Nationalism is productive in nurturing democracy by fostering subjectivity rather than universalism, so a discourse on methodological cosmopolitanism can allow thick identities.

As the findings suggest, many young people are reluctant to expressing belonging based on nationality, seeing it as ethnonationalism. Ethnicity and culture are found to be strong voices that help expressing ‘who I am’ opposed to others but not commitment and responsibility. Thus, the participants use of ethnicity and culture has limited potential for thick identities enabling enactment of citizenship. However, seeing oneself as a methodological cosmopolitan enables expressing both ethnicity and nationalism and being a global citizen and thus a committed citizen at all levels of community (Osler, 2011). Repertoires of enacting citizenship on multiple levels can nurture a democratic imaginary that allows for multiple belongings and commitments.

Transnational enactment of citizenship requires a public sphere exceeding borders. This is exactly what WEM was intended to create by arranging a meeting point for communication about European issues (European Round Table of Industrialists, 2017a). However, the agenda of businesses and NGOs seems to limit their ability to constitute a rational debate, questioning the ability of campaigns such as WEM to mediate a deliberative democracy.

### 5.3 In conclusion

This study has not looked at the agent's experiences in isolation, but in relation to *mediational means* through a socio-cultural lens. Overall, my analysis suggests that the available discourses are important factors in shaping *imagination*, which lays the foundation for mediated action. Young people's vocabularies nurture certain ways of imagining the world and hence doing democracy. The eclectic methodology unveiled a variety of socio-cultural ways of expressing *belonging*, challenging taken for granted assumptions on the topic. By looking at both experiences and discursive repertoires this study has pointed to an analytical relevance of combining phenomenology and discourse analysis. The concept imagination was found useful

as it encompasses both *agency* and *making meaning* of practices, as well as perceptions shaped by structural discourses. The discursive approach aided the analysis of the dialogical self which helped seeing beyond contradictions about the topics. The tensions found point to a greater complexity than “taken for granted truths” about belonging and democratic participation.

These insights provided contribute to knowledge on the social construction of imagination and the affordances for enactment of citizenship discourses offer. These findings can contribute to existing discussions of globalisation and belonging, and be valuable for educators, politicians and policy makers to reflect on and increase their knowledge on young people’s place in society today.

My study supports a focus on nurturing a sociological imagination by providing vocabularies of agency, structure, and their interplay. Such an imagination could help overcome the agent/structure dichotomy with which the participants struggle. The study also appears to support the argument for changing how ethnicity and nationalism are understood and to develop a vocabulary of methodological cosmopolitanism. Initiatives to build a collective European identity might benefit from attempting to nurture an imagination of a cosmopolitan, not universal, Europe to foster a sense of commitment and responsibility.

The present study, with its explorative and broad approach, has a limited ability to construct a detailed image of young Europeans’ perspectives and conceptions. Given that globalisation is complex, operationalising is difficult and investigations can become quite comprehensive. This study could have become less wide-ranging by for instance narrowing the focus to solely belonging. Future studies following the same discourse analytical approach can provide further depth in the knowledge of the discourses that young people echo.

I should make it clear that I have intentionally only briefly considered national or local contexts. The findings are primarily seen in a global and European context; therefore future research with a more narrow perspective is welcome. The present study was made possible by being part of the WEM-project, however having gate keepers provided a convenience sample. Thus, future research done with strategic sampling is needed.

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Daniel Schofield

7491 TRONDHEIM

Vår dato: 19.10.2017

Vår ref: 56249 / 3 / BGH

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

## Forenklet vurdering fra NSD Personvernombudet for forskning

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 28.09.2017.

Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

<i>56249</i>	<i>Ungdomsperspektiv på utfordringer knyttet til demokrati og globalisering</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>NTNU, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Daniel Schofield</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Brit Kari Drejer Stead</i>

### Vurdering

Etter gjennomgang av opplysningene i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg, vurderer vi at prosjektet er omfattet av personopplysningsloven § 31. Personopplysningene som blir samlet inn er ikke sensitive, prosjektet er samtykkebasert og har lav personvernulempe. Prosjektet har derfor fått en forenklet vurdering. Du kan gå i gang med prosjektet. Du har selvstendig ansvar for å følge vilkårene under og sette deg inn i veiledningen i dette brevet.

### Vilkår for vår vurdering

Vår anbefaling forutsetter at du gjennomfører prosjektet i tråd med:

- opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet
- krav til informert samtykke
- at du ikke innhenter [sensitive opplysninger](#)
- veiledning i dette brevet
- NTNU sine retningslinjer for datasikkerhet

### Veiledning

#### Krav til informert samtykke

Utvalget skal få skriftlig og/eller muntlig informasjon om prosjektet og samtykke til deltakelse.

Informasjon må minst omfatte:

- at NTNU er behandlingsansvarlig institusjon for prosjektet
- daglig ansvarlig (eventuelt student og veileder) sine kontaktopplysninger
- prosjektets formål og hva opplysningene skal brukes til

*Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.*

- hvilke opplysninger som skal innhentes og hvordan opplysningene innhentes
- når prosjektet skal avsluttes og når personopplysningene skal anonymiseres/slettes

På nettsidene våre finner du mer informasjon og en veiledende mal for [informasjonsskriv](#).

### **Forskningsetiske retningslinjer**

Sett deg inn i [forskningsetiske retningslinjer](#).

### **Meld fra hvis du gjør vesentlige endringer i prosjektet**

Dersom prosjektet endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å sende inn endringsmelding. På våre nettsider finner du svar på hvilke [endringer](#) du må melde, samt endrings skjema.

### **Opplysninger om prosjektet blir lagt ut på våre nettsider og i Meldingsarkivet**

Vi har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet på nettsidene våre. Alle våre institusjoner har også tilgang til egne prosjekter i [Meldingsarkivet](#).

### **Vi tar kontakt om status for behandling av personopplysninger ved prosjektslutt**

Ved prosjektslutt 31.05.2018 vil vi ta kontakt for å avklare status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

## **Gjelder dette ditt prosjekt?**

### **Dersom du skal bruke databehandler**

Dersom du skal bruke databehandler (ekstern transkriberingsassistent/spørreskjemaleverandør) må du inngå en databehandleravtale med vedkommende. For råd om hva databehandleravtalen bør inneholde, se [Datatilsynets veileder](#).

### **Hvis utvalget har taushetsplikt**

Vi minner om at noen grupper (f.eks. opplærings- og helsepersonell/forvaltningsansatte) har [taushetsplikt](#). De kan derfor ikke gi deg identifiserende opplysninger om andre, med mindre de får samtykke fra den det gjelder.

### **Dersom du forsker på egen arbeidsplass**

Vi minner om at når du [forsker på egen arbeidsplass](#) må du være bevisst din dobbeltrolle som både forsker og ansatt. Ved rekruttering er det spesielt viktig at forespørsel rettes på en slik måte at frivilligheten ved deltakelse ivaretas.

Se våre nettsider eller ta kontakt med oss dersom du har spørsmål. Vi ønsker lykke til med prosjektet!

Vennlig hilsen

Marianne Høgetveit Myhren

Belinda Gloppen Helle

Kontaktperson: Belinda Gloppen Helle tlf: 55 58 28 74 / [belinda.helle@nsd.no](mailto:belinda.helle@nsd.no)

## Appendix B: Information letter and consent form

### Request for participation in research project

#### "Youth perspectives on challenges regarding democracy and globalization"

##### Background and Purpose

As a student of the programme *Master of Science in Education and Upbringing* I am currently working on my master's thesis. The topic of my thesis is democracy, and I am interested in finding out more about what it means to belong and to participate for young people in Europe. My project is a part of the campaign *Why Europe Matters*, which seeks to learn more about young people's views on Europe, EU, employment and their future.

To find out more about what it means to be a young citizen of Europe, I am conducting interviews with groups of youth participating in the workshops arranged by "Why Europe matters". The interviews will be held in English, so the participants must be comfortable speaking English.

##### What does participation in the project imply?

Participation in the study requires active participation in a group interview. The data will be collected using video recording. The group will be talking about different topics related to belonging and participation, such as nationality, citizenship, global challenges and media practice. The duration of the interview will be approximately one hour.

##### What will happen to the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially. The data access will be limited to me and two project supervisors. To ensure confidentiality the data will be stored on a password protected computer. The project is scheduled for completion by May 31<sup>st</sup> 2018. The data will be anonymized in the project publication to guarantee that the participants can't be identified by readers of the report. The data files will be deleted by the project's completion.

##### Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be made anonymous. The study has been notified to the Data Protection Official for Research, NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data.

If you have any questions concerning the project, please send me an email [redacted] My supervisor at NTNU, Daniel Schofield, can also be by email, [redacted]

Best regards,

Brit Kari Drejer Stead

## **Consent for participation in the study**

I have received information about the project and am willing to participate

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(Signed by participant, date)

## Appendix C: Interview guide

### Interview guide

#### “Youth perspectives on challenges regarding democracy and globalization”

<p>Introduction 5 min</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Introduce myself and the study: <i>What characterizes youth from different European countries reflections on belonging and participation in a globalized society?</i></li><li>▪ Purpose of the interview: information about how it is to be a young European, your perspective interesting</li><li>▪ Recording, so I can listen to you and not take notes</li><li>▪ Confidentiality: recording deleted, you can leave or say you don't want to answer</li><li>▪ Photo Elicitation Interview -&gt; Discuss meaning with each other.</li><li>▪ Drawing: skills are of no concern.</li><li>▪ Your experiences/opinions are central; answer what you associate with the topic. There's no "right" answer. Discussion.</li><li>▪ Presentation of your name and age</li></ul>
<p>Draw self-portrait 15 min</p>	<p>1. Draw a <b>self-portrait</b> that represents your belonging. <b>You have to be in the picture.</b> Use colours and symbols that represents belonging to you.</p> <p>Questions to stimulate ideas: Where do you belong? What does it mean for you to belong? Is it a place, an object, an area or something we carry inside ourselves? Where are you from? What does belonging feel like? Is it a location, a person, an artefact, a feeling you carry within yourself? Share what your drawing means.</p>
<p>Conceptions of Europe 10 min</p>	<p>2. <b>What is Europe to you?</b> A location, a feeling, something distant, something in you? Do you feel like a part of the European community? <b>Add Europe to your portrait.</b></p> <p>3. What do you see? <b>(Picture 1)</b> What associations do you get? <b>Write down 3 thoughts.</b> Share and discuss. How do these pictures fit into your understanding of the EU?</p>

	<p>4. Have you been to other places where you felt like you belonged or didn't belong? What makes you feel that way? Do you experience that you are a global citizen? European? National?</p> <p>5. <i>When you hear about events around the world, do you feel more local or global? For example terror attacks, or presidential elections in USA.</i></p>
<p>Sense of belonging 15 min</p>	<p>6. "You're not Danish" (<b>Picture 2</b>) – What do you see here? What do you think about when you see these pictures? <b>Write down 3 thoughts. Share.</b> What does it mean for you to be a member of national state/Europe?</p> <p>7. <i>What makes it important for some people in different regions to become independent? (Catalonia, Brexit)</i></p>
<p>Democracy and participation 15 min</p>	<p>8. Comments from the video "You're not Danish" are examples of how people use social media in response to things happening in the world. What is your experience with that kind of social media use? <b>Are there other ways that you participate to influence society?</b> How is social media linked with participation in society?</p> <p>9. Have you had an experience where you felt like you had an influence in society? <b>Do you experience that young voices can be heard? (Global/local/EU)</b> What is essential to you when you decide to engage/or not engage in a social challenge?</p>
<p>General questions 10 min</p>	<p>10. Tell me about how you were recruited to the WEM workshop. What was your motivation to join?</p> <p>11. Is the WEM workshop a kind of democratic participation? If so how come?</p> <p>12. What was your experience participating in the workshop?</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>13. Is there anything else you would like to say or share?</p>

Picture 1 EU:



Picture 2:

“You’re not Danish”

