

# Sport and community: European perspective

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# What is an European identity?

- Eurobarometer: Majority feels to be local/national AND European
- EU constitution: European complementary citizenship, 'United in diversity'
- Wessels: Thin vs. thick identity – Getting to know 'the other' through daily (routine) contacts
- 'Do you feel European?' Recent negative backlash against the background of globalisation and crisis

# European identity and sport

- Ryder cup feeling, a chimera boosted by rival and sporting success
- Getting to know each other through competitions
  - Where is Celje? Have you ever heard of Utrecht?
- Sport-identity topics
  - Football is a game of 11 vs. 11 and Germany always win
  - Italians are proud athletes, confident people, slightly cheeky
  - Argentinians are well versed sports people, with a tendency to play hard or gamesmanship
- Transnational benchmarking and europeanisation
  - Direct impact on identity: Sense of competitive failure (e.g. Spain)
  - Structure transformation: Serie A, La Liga, Polish League
  - Transnational networks facilitate exchange: EHF, ECA, Eurathletes

# Sport, identity and globalisation

- Almost natural reaction to close to the outside
  - Neo medievalism
- Sport and social capital
  - Bridging and building trust (Putnam)
  - Bonding and building power (Bourdieu)
- Sport is a reflection of society, no more no less
  - Tendency to use sport to protect identity
  - London Titans: Why a gay football team is necessary?
- Both ways: Global vs. local / local vs. global
- Inclusion through sport? We first need inclusion in sport to respect 'the other' and learn from them

# Thanks!



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