The Relationship Between National Identification and Immigrant Threat:

The Mediating Role of Citizenship Representations

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Abstract

The present study investigated the role of citizenship representations as potential mediators or moderators of the relationship between national identification and perceived threat posed by immigrants among high school students in academic tracks (N = 1,734) in seven countries of the European Union (i.e., Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden). Due to the use of improved equivalent measures, it was the first study to conduct a reliable cross-national test of mediation and moderation effects of citizenship representations at the individual level. Results supported mediation rather than moderation. Overall, stronger national identification was associated with a more cultural citizenship representation, which was, in turn, associated with higher perceived threat. Stronger national identification was also associated with a less civic citizenship representation, which was, in turn, associated with lower perceived threat. Results suggest that, in order to positively affect the relations between national majority groups and immigrants, a civic representation of citizenship could be promoted. Further implications of our findings are discussed.

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It has been argued that the way citizenship is represented can be seen as an important part of the content of national identity (Brubaker, 1996). The content of national identity and, more specifically, the criteria people use to decide who they regard as fellow citizens, has been found to affect the relationship between national identification and attitudes towards immigrants (e.g., Meeus, Duriez, Vanbeselaere, & Boen, 2010; Pehrson, Brown, & Zagefka, 2009; Pehrson, Vignoles, & Brown, 2009). The present study examined the role of ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship representations in the relationship between national identification and immigrant threat (i.e., perceptions of threat posed by immigrants). These three citizenship representations are based on the theoretical ethnic, civic, and cultural conceptualizations of citizenship identified in the political science literature (Brubaker, 1990; Kohn, 1944; Kymlicka, 2001; Nielsen, 1999; Smith, 1991). The study explores whether the citizenship representations mediate or moderate the relationship between national identification and immigrant threat among majority group high school students in academic tracks in seven European Union (EU) countries (i.e., Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden). The EU context is very relevant for studying the different ways in which citizenship can be represented and how these representations relate to national identification and perceptions of immigrants, because, due to migration, EU countries have grown increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse over the past decades (Castles & Miller, 2009). Among national majority group members this increased diversity may invoke questions regarding national identity and citizenship (e.g., how to define national identity in a context of increased diversity and which criteria of citizenship to apply).

The Importance of the Ingroup Prototype

According to the ethnocentrism hypothesis there is an intrinsic relationship between national identification and anti-immigrant attitudes. Stronger national identification will always go together with

more negative attitudes towards immigrants (Sumner, 1906). From a social identity theory perspective (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), it has been argued that, because people strive for a positive sense of social identity, they will try to positively distinguish their ingroup from outgroups. This search for positive distinctiveness makes social groups negatively interdependent, which can lead to negative outgroup attitudes. Given that positive distinctiveness is probably more important for those who identify more strongly with the ingroup, stronger ingroup identification could be expected to result in more negative outgroup attitudes. However, SIT never proposed an intrinsic relationship between ingroup identification and outgroup attitudes (Turner, 1999). Instead, SIT emphasizes the role of the intergroup context (e.g., differences in group status and the legitimacy of those differences) and the salience of group identities. In line with this, it has been difficult to find a straightforward relationship between national identification and outgroup attitudes (e.g., Billiet, Maddens, & Beerten, 2003; Mummendey, Klink, & Brown, 2001). Specifically, the relationship was found to range from weakly negative to moderately positive (Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Pehrson, Vignoles et al., 2009). Thus, studying the role of citizenship representations as potential mediators or moderators of the national identification-perceived threat relationship is important, because, depending on their exact role, stronger national identification might not always have to lead to more negative attitudes towards immigrants as proposed by the ethnocentrism hypothesis.

Self categorization theory (SCT; Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) states that members of social groups go through a process of self-stereotyping, which involves the creation of an ingroup prototype. This ingroup prototype is a normative representation of the ingroup and its members (i.e., the norms, values, and traditions that characterize the ingroup and its members). The characteristics that describe the prototypical ingroup member, can also function as a set of criteria on the basis of which potential new members are included or excluded. Most importantly, the ingroup prototype incorporates norms for appropriate intergroup behavior, which makes it one of the determinants of the relationship between ingroup identification and outgroup attitudes. This is because members who identify more strongly with the group have a stronger tendency to think and act in

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accordance with the norms for appropriate intergroup behavior contained in the ingroup prototype and these norms also dictate appropriate attitudes towards outgroup members.

Citizenship Representations

From a social psychological perspective, citizenship representations can be defined as subjective definitions of the national ingroup prototype by individual members of national majority groups (anonymous, in press). Like other ingroup prototypes, citizenship representations incorporate characteristics that describe the prototypical ingroup member and these are used as criteria for group membership (i.e., they serve to decide whether someone can be regarded as a fellow citizen or not). Among national majority group members, different citizenship representations may co-exist (Brubaker, 2004; Hjerm, 1998; Kuzio, 2002). Given that the citizenship criteria that national majority group members apply are subjective, it should be kept in mind that these do not necessarily reflect the official citizenship criteria applied by the state (Rothì, Lyons, & Chryssochoou, 2005).

In the present study, we consider ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship representations. These correspond to the theoretical conceptualizations of ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship in the political science literature (Brubaker, 1990; Kohn, 1944; Kymlicka, 2001; Nielsen, 1999; Smith, 1991). When citizenship is represented ethnically, the national ingroup is defined as a community of people of common descent. Only people who descend from the ethnic majority group are regarded as citizens. Ethnic citizenship has been described as illiberal, particularistic, ascriptive, and exclusionist (Brubaker, 2004; Kohn, 1944), because most immigrants are unable to fulfill ethnic criteria of citizenship (i.e., they can never change their ethnicity or ancestry). Accordingly, an ethnic citizenship representation was found to be associated with anti-immigrant attitudes (e.g., Meeus et al., 2010; Pehrson, Brown et al., 2009). When citizenship is represented civically, the national ingroup is defined as a community of people who adhere to a social contract, which contains a set of basic principles that facilitate life as a community (e.g., respect for societal rules and laws, endorsement of equal political rights, and active participation in society). Fulfilling the (relatively basic) obligations contained in the social contract is enough to be regarded as a

citizen (i.e., someone's ethnic or cultural background is not important). Given that a civic citizenship representation includes the endorsement of equal rights for immigrants and encourages immigrants' participation in society, most studies have found a civic representation to be associated with positive attitudes towards immigrants (e.g., Vanbeselaere, Boen, & Meeus, 2006; Meeus et al., 2010). When citizenship is represented culturally, the national ingroup is defined as a community of people with a common culture and the main aim of the community is to ensure the survival of this culture. Sharing the national culture and showing a willingness to preserve it and pass it on to the next generations are essential conditions to be regarded as a citizen. The cultural conceptualization of citizenship (Kymlicka, 2001) is relatively new and little is known about its relation to attitudes towards immigrants. According to Kymlicka (2001), when people endorse a cultural representation they are open towards immigrants who are prepared to assimilate. However, in a recent study, it was found that people with a more cultural citizenship representation have a stronger general tendency to exclude immigrants (anonymous, in press). Hence, people who endorse a cultural representation appear to prefer a culturally homogeneous national ingroup and it has been found that a preference for cultural homogeneity enhances anti-immigrant attitudes and opposition to immigration (Citrin & Sides, 2008; Sides & Citrin, 2007). So, in contrast to Kymlicka's (2001) theoretical conceptualization of cultural citizenship, recent empirical findings suggest that a cultural citizenship representation is associated with anti-immigrant attitudes.

Anonymous (in press) argued that, while an ethnic citizenship representation is in line with blatant racism, because both focus directly on race and ethnicity, a cultural citizenship representation is in line with symbolic racism, because both focus on protecting ingroup culture and maintaining cultural dominance. Due to a historical shift in the sociopolitical climate, which took place as a result of the horrors of World War II, blatant racism became socially unacceptable, while symbolic forms of racism became more prominent (Dovidio, 2000; Kleinpenning & Hagendoorn, 1993; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). If the way in which people represent citizenship is affected by this historical shift, then it could be expected that a cultural citizenship representation is now more prominent and influential than an ethnic representation.

Several other authors also suggested that a shift has taken place from ethnic towards more cultural citizenship representations (e.g., Koopmans, Stathm, Giugni, & Passy, 2005; Pehrson, Vignoles et al., 2009). In line with this, Bail (2008) showed that, across 21 European countries, culture is a far more important symbolic boundary between national majority group members and immigrants than race. In addition, Citrin and Sides (2008) found that a preference for cultural homogeneity is a much more important determinant of anti-immigrant attitudes than race. Finally, anonymous (in press) showed that an ethnic citizenship representation was only associated with lower support for multiculturalism and a higher tendency to exclude immigrants when it was analyzed separately. When civic and cultural citizenship representations were added to the analysis, the ethnic representation was no longer significantly related to either of these variables. Taken together, these studies indicate that an ethnic citizenship representation has become less relevant in explaining attitudes towards immigrants than civic and cultural representations.

The Present Study

The present study investigated the role of ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship representations as potential mediators or moderators of the relationship between national identification and perceived threat (i.e., posed by immigrants) among high school students in academic tracks in seven EU countries (i.e., Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden). If the relationship between national identification and perceived threat is mediated by citizenship representations, then national identification would be positively related either to citizenship representations that are associated with higher perceived threat or to representations that are associated with lower perceived threat. In other words, stronger national identification would always have the same outcome (i.e., *either* higher *or* lower perceived threat, depending on the type of citizenship representations that is positively related to national identification). In contrast, if the relationship is moderated by citizenship representations, then national identification can be positively related both to citizenship representations that are associated with higher perceived threat and to representations that are associated with lower perceived threat. In other words,

when citizenship representations function as moderators, stronger national identification can have different outcomes for people with different citizenship representations. For example, stronger national identification could be associated with lower perceived threat for participants who endorse a more civic citizenship representation and with higher perceived threat for participants who endorse a more ethnic or cultural citizenship representation.

Few studies have examined this mediation versus moderation issue and those that did have shown mixed results. In a multi-level analysis across 31 countries, Pehrson, Vignoles et al. (2009) found moderation effects of civic and cultural citizenship representations at the national level, but no effects of an ethnic representation. It was found that the relation between national identification and anti-immigrant prejudice was significantly more positive in countries where citizenship was predominantly represented in a cultural way than in countries where it was predominantly represented in a civic way. At the individual level, an analysis of the pooled data of the 31 national samples provided no evidence for moderation. Pehrson, Brown et al. (2009) investigated individual level effects in England and found that an ethnic citizenship representation moderated the relationship between national identification and attitudes towards asylum seekers. Stronger national identification was associated with more negative attitudes towards asylum seekers, but only for participants who scored high on the ethnic citizenship representation. In contrast, Meeus et al. (2010) found mediation effects of a relative preference for either an ethnic or a civic citizenship representation. In a first study, based on cross-sectional data obtained in Flanders (i.e., the Dutch speaking part of Belgium), stronger Flemish identification was associated with a relative preference for an ethnic citizenship representation, which was, in turn, associated with increased ethnic prejudice. Evidence for such a mediation effect was also found in a second, longitudinal, study. Over time, stronger Flemish identification led to a growing preference for an ethnic citizenship representation, which, in turn, accounted for increases in ethnic prejudice.

Perhaps these mixed findings can be attributed to genuine differences between the national contexts that were studied (e.g., moderation could be specific to England and/or mediation could be

specific to Flanders). However, they could also be attributed to measurement differences. Pehrson, Brown et al. (2009) and Meeus et al. (2010) used different citizenship representation scales and Pehrson, Vignoles et al. (2009) used single-item measures of citizenship representations. It may be questioned whether the measures that were used in these studies are reliable and whether they adequately reflect the different citizenship representations across countries (i.e., whether they exhibited cross-national measurement equivalence; Meuleman & Billiet, 2006). Because the equivalence of the measures that were applied was not tested, it is possible that differences in results across the studies are artifacts of the way in which citizenship representations were measured. Recently, anonymous (in press) developed scales for ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship representations that proved partially metrically invariant across six EU countries. This level of measurement equivalence is required for a direct comparison of relations between latent variables across countries and makes it possible to determine whether differences in results across countries are caused by genuine country differences rather than measurement differences (Meuleman & Billiet, 2006). The present study used the partially metrically invariant citizenship representation scales from anonymous (in press) in order to examine the mediation versus moderation question in a variety of national contexts. Because these scales are sufficiently equivalent to allow a direct comparison of relationships between variables across countries, this is the first study to conduct a reliable cross-national test of mediation and moderation effects of citizenship representations at the individual level.

In addition to its theoretical relevance, the mediation versus moderation issue is also important from a societal perspective. It could be argued that, in order to ensure a socially cohesive society and foster a sense of nationhood, a certain degree of national identification is essential. After all, a social group with which its members do not identify offers no sense of togetherness and is likely to disintegrate. In the case of a national group, a lack of identification could mean a lack of loyalty to the nation and a lack of commitment to furthering the national cause. As discussed earlier, if citizenship representations moderate the relation between national identification and perceptions of immigrants, then stronger

national identification could have different outcomes depending on someone's citizenship representation. This means that the benefits of national identification (e.g., social cohesion, loyalty, and commitment) are not necessarily accompanied by the negative aspects associated with national identification (e.g., anti-immigrant attitudes and ethnocentrism). For example, suppose we would find that the relation between national identification and perceived threat posed by immigrants is moderated in such a way that stronger national identification is associated with lower perceived threat, but only for participants with a civic representation (i.e., the representation which is associated with positive attitudes towards immigrants). In that case, stronger national identification, which is likely to increase social cohesion, loyalty and commitment (i.e., the benefits of national identification) would not go together with more negative perceptions of immigrants (i.e., a potential cost of national identification). In contrast, if citizenship representations function as mediators, then stronger national identification would always have the same outcome. If national identification relates positively to citizenship representations that are associated with higher perceived threat, then stronger identification would be inherently detrimental to intergroup relations (i.e., social cohesion, loyalty, and commitment among national ingroup members would come at a cost of increased tensions with immigrants).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 1,734 majority group high school students from seven EU countries (i.e., Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden). These countries were selected to geographically represent the enlarged EU. They had different citizenship policies and varied in public attitudes towards immigrants. They also varied in their percentages of foreign born individuals within their total populations (i.e., Belgium 13.9%, France 11.4%, Germany 12.9%, Hungary 4.1%, Italy 8.0%, the Netherlands 11.1%, and Sweden 14.4%; OECD, 2009). Although high school students are clearly not representative of the respective national populations, high school student samples facilitate cross-country comparisons. Selected high schools were located in medium sized to large cities with a substantial

immigrant population. Participants were studying at a level that prepares for a university education, a level which contains mainly middle class students from the majority group. The average ages and percentages of male and female participants in the national samples were quite similar (see Table 1). Finally, parental education (i.e., a proxy for socio-economic status) was also comparable across national samples. On average parents received vocational or higher vocational training. Data were collected in 2009-2010, by conducting a comparative cross-national survey study. Research partners at universities in each country organized the data collection in participating high schools. Participation was on a voluntary basis and participants filled out a questionnaire in class in their national language and in the presence of a researcher (usually the first author and/or a local researcher).

Measures

An English-language root version of our questionnaire was translated into six national languages (i.e., Dutch, French, German, Swedish, Italian and Hungarian), using a translation/back-translation procedure to ensure linguistic equivalence (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Responses to all questions were recorded on 7-point Likert scales, ranging either from *1 = very unimportant* to *7 = very important* or from *1 = strongly disagree* to *7 = strongly agree.*

National identification. National identification was measured with 4 items adapted from the affective ingroup identification scale which had previously been validated in Belgium (Meeus, Duriez, Vanbeselaere, Phalet, & Kuppens, 2009). The items assessed how strongly participants identified with their national ingroup (e.g., "I feel like a true (e.g., Belgian) person" and "I consider being a (e.g., German) person as something important"). Higher scores meant stronger identification.

Citizenship representations. Ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship representations were measured with 3, 5, and 6 items, respectively. These were adopted from anonymous (in press) and asked about characteristics that are important to consider someone a citizen. The ethnic items referred to a common ethnic descent as grounds for citizenship and stressed essentialist citizenship criteria (e.g., "To what extent do you consider it important that that person has (e.g., Hungarian) ancestors?"). The civic items

referred to a shared social contract as grounds for citizenship and stressed equal political rights, active participation in society, respect for rules and laws, and the irrelevance of origin and culture (e.g., "To what extent do you consider it important that a (e.g., French) person agrees that origin or cultural background cannot be reasons to deny someone French citizenship?"). The cultural items referred to a common national culture as grounds for citizenship and stressed cherishing and passing on that culture (e.g., "To what extent do you consider it important that a (e.g., Swedish) person passes on the Swedish culture to the next generations?"). Higher scores meant stronger endorsement of a given citizenship representation.

Perceived threat. Perceived threat posed by immigrants was measured with 4 items. An adaptation of the cross-nationally externally validated European Social Survey (2002) threat question D28 ("(e.g., Dutch) cultural life is generally undermined by Moroccans") was supplemented with 3 self-constructed indicators in order to construct a reliable composite index (e.g., "Turks threaten my own way of life"). In each country, the items were worded with reference to the most devalued non-EU immigrant group in the country (see Table 2). Focusing our questions on a single group helped to keep the questionnaire at a reasonable length. We considered asking questions about immigrants in general, but we expected that a focus on a specific group would increase the cross-national comparability of our data. We assumed that the relations between our variables would be most pronounced when focusing on the most devalued non-EU immigrant groups. These groups differed in terms of their percentage of the total population within their respective host countries (i.e., Moroccans: in Belgium 1.7%, in France 1.4%, in Italy 0.6%, and in the Netherlands 1.0%; Turks in Germany 1.8%; Chinese in Hungary 0.1%; and Iraqis in Sweden 1.3%). Our international research partners decided which immigrant group would be considered. Higher scores indicated higher levels of perceived threat.

Analysis

First, we assessed the cross-national measurement equivalence of the complete measurement model, using multiple group confirmatory factor analysis (MGCFA). The informal ΔCFI (i.e., the differential comparative fit index; Cheung & Rensvold, 2002) was used to assess metric invariance (i.e., invariant

factor loadings) as a requisite for measurement equivalence (Meuleman & Billiet, 2006). Unlike the $\Delta\chi^2$ test, ΔCFI is not sensitive to large sample sizes, which made it more appropriate for our study. When ΔCFI ≤ .01 and the fit of the invariant model is acceptable, the more parsimonious invariant model is supported (i.e., together a CFI ≥ .90, a Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) ≤ .06, and a Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual (SRMR) ≤ .08 are regarded to indicate good model fit; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004).

Second, because anonymous (in press) found that an ethnic citizenship representation was no longer significantly related to attitudes towards immigrants when civic and cultural representations were included in the analysis, we tested a MGSEM model in which the relations of the ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship representations with perceived threat were analyzed simultaneously. In this model, the civic representation related negatively and the cultural representation positively to perceived threat. However, despite significant positive correlations between the latent ethnic citizenship representation and perceived threat variables,[1] the ethnic representation was not significantly related to perceived threat (i.e., the effect of the ethnic representation on perceived threat could be set equal to zero across countries without a loss of model fit).[2] This suggests that the ethnic citizenship representation only relates to perceived threat because of its relations with the civic and cultural representations. Theoretically, this is a very important finding, because traditionally citizenship has mostly been described in ethnic and civic terms. Now we also find a cultural citizenship representation, as Kymlicka (2001) proposed, but in contrast to his claims this representation is associated with perceiving immigrants as a threat. Moreover, an ethnic citizenship representation plays no role in explaining perceived threat when analyzed simultaneously with civic and cultural representations. Based on this initial MGSEM analysis, the ethnic representation was no longer retained in further analyses. After all, when it is not significantly related to perceived threat, it cannot function as mediator or moderator.

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[1] Correlations ranged from .25 to .52, ps < .001.
[2] Analyses available from the first author upon request.

Third, to test for mediation of the relationship between national identification and perceived threat by civic and cultural citizenship representations, the measurement model was incorporated in stepwise MGSEM. In a first step, we specified only direct effects of national identification on perceived threat. In a second step, we added indirect effects through the civic and cultural citizenship representations as hypothetical mediators. For mediation to be supported, direct effects should be significantly reduced or become non-significant in the complete model, in which national identification was both directly and indirectly related to perceived threat through the civic and cultural representations. A model with reverse causal relations was also tested.

Fourth, to test the alternative moderation hypothesis, moderation of the relationship between national identification and perceived threat by civic and cultural citizenship representations was tested, in each country separately, using the Latent Moderated Structural Equations (LMS) approach (Klein & Moosbrugger, 2000).

Finally, both the percentage of the most devalued non-EU immigrant group within the total population and the percentage of foreign born individuals within the total population were added to our analyses as control variables. However, they were found to have no significant effects and were, therefore, excluded from further consideration.[3] Under the assumption of multivariate normality, maximum likelihood estimation was used for all MGCFA and MGSEM models. The models contained only continuous latent variables and we used Mplus 6 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010) to fit them. The LMS approach for the moderation analysis was also implemented in Mplus 6.

<div align="center">Results</div>

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The complete measurement model specified latent variables for national identification, civic and cultural citizenship representations, and perceived threat posed by immigrants. To assess cross-national measurement equivalence, we compared a restrictive metrically invariant model, which imposed equality

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[3] Analyses available from the first author upon request.

constraints on loadings across countries, to a less restrictive model where loadings were freely estimated in each country. Full metric invariance yielded a slightly worse fit relative to the unconstrained model (ΔCFI = .018). A modified partially metrically invariant model (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998), in which five loadings were released (i.e., for 2 cultural and 1 civic item in Hungary and for 1 civic and 1 perceived threat item in Italy), had a good fit [χ^2(1107, 1734) = 1931.544, p < .001, CFI = .936, RMSEA = .055, SRMR = .075]. Moreover, the fit of this final measurement model was not worse than that of the unconstrained model (ΔCFI = .010). Partial metric equivalence is necessary and sufficient for the direct comparison of relationships between latent variables across countries (Meuleman & Billiet, 2006).

Correlation Analysis

Latent inter-factor correlations, means, and standard deviations are presented by country in Table 2.[4] Inter-factor correlations revealed strong positive associations between national identification and the cultural citizenship representation in all countries. National identification was related negatively to the civic representation, except in Belgium and France, where there was no significant relation. In all countries, national identification also related positively to perceived threat. Finally, the civic citizenship representation related negatively, and the cultural representation positively to perceived threat in all countries. To test for multicollinearity, we examined whether the variance inflation factors (VIFs) stayed < 10 (Myers, 1990). The largest VIF in our data was 1.90, so multicolinearity was not an issue.

Mediation Analysis

As a first step in testing the mediation hypothesis, we created a model in which only the direct effect of national identification on perceived threat was specified. This model had a good fit [χ^2(164, 1734) = 306.001, p < .001, CFI = .980, RMSEA = .059, SRMR = .058]. It revealed a significant positive relation between national identification and perceived threat in all countries (see effect coefficients in parentheses in Figure 1). In a second step, the civic and cultural citizenship representations were added as mediators,

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[4] The ethnic representation was excluded from analysis, but its mean scores may be of interest to the reader: $M_{Belgium}$ = 3.06, SD = 1.50, M_{France} = 2.39, SD = 1.36, $M_{Germany}$ = 2.39, SD = 1.33, $M_{Hungary}$ = 3.84, SD = 1.58, M_{Italy} = 3.85, SD = 1.73, $M_{the\ Netherlands}$ = 2.61, SD = 1.44, and M_{Sweden} = 2.69, SD = 1.80.

to see whether this would significantly reduce the direct effects of national identification on perceived threat. This mediation model had a good fit as well [χ^2(1107, 1734) = 1931.544, p < .001, CFI = .936, RMSEA = .055, SRMR = .075]. Standardized path-coefficients within countries can be found in Figure 1 and direct, indirect, and total effect sizes are shown in Table 3. Stronger national identification was associated with a more cultural citizenship representation, which was, in turn, associated with higher perceived threat. Stronger national identification was also associated with a less civic citizenship representation, which was, in turn, associated with lower perceived threat. However, this indirect effect via the civic representation was not significant in Belgium and France (see Table 3). Jointly, the civic and cultural citizenship representations fully mediated the relationship between national identification and perceived threat in Sweden, Hungary, and the Netherlands. In Belgium and France, this relationship was fully mediated by the cultural representation. In Germany and Italy, the relationship was partially mediated by both the civic and cultural representation. Although the direct effects were significantly and substantively reduced by more than half in these two countries, they remained significant (see Figure 1). A reverse causal model, in which perceived threat affected national identification via civic and cultural citizenship representations, did not produce a better fit and showed fewer significant mediation effects.

Moderation Analysis

To test the moderation hypothesis, additional analyses were conducted by country. These provided no support for moderation, except for one rather weak interaction effect of national identification and the cultural citizenship representation on perceived threat in Sweden (β = .14, p < .05). Only in Sweden, national identification was somewhat more strongly positively related to perceived threat for those with a more cultural representation. At the same time, however, the main effects of national identification and the cultural representation on perceived threat were strongly significant (β = .32, p < .01 and β = .52, p < .001, respectively). So, although these results suggest that citizenship representations can moderate the relationship between national identification and perceived threat, the case for mediation appears to be much stronger, even in Sweden.

Discussion

This study investigated the role of ethnic, civic, and cultural citizenship representations as potential mediators or moderators of the relationship between national identification and perceived threat posed by immigrants. It did so at the individual level of analysis among national majority group high school students in academic tracks in seven EU countries (i.e., Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden). The first step of a mediation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between national identification and perceived threat in all countries. This relationship was significantly reduced when civic and cultural citizenship representations were added as mediators. Together, the civic and cultural representations fully mediated the relationship between national identification and perceived threat in Sweden, Hungary, and the Netherlands. In Belgium and France, national identification and the civic citizenship representation were not significantly related, but the relationship between national identification and perceived threat was fully mediated by the cultural representation. Finally, in Germany and Italy, the relationship between national identification and perceived threat was partially mediated by both the civic and cultural representation (i.e., the direct effects remained significant, but were reduced by more than half). Overall, stronger national identification went together with a more cultural citizenship representation, which was, in turn, associated with higher perceived threat. Stronger national identification also went together with a less civic representation, which was, in turn, associated with lower perceived threat. Moderation analyses only revealed a weak interaction effect of national identification and the cultural citizenship representation on perceived threat in Sweden. There, national identification was somewhat more strongly positively related to perceived threat for those with a more cultural citizenship representation. Overall, however, results overwhelmingly support mediation rather than moderation (even in Sweden).

What is rather disturbing about our mediation model is that it suggests that stronger national identification invariably results in more negative perceptions of immigrants, because it invariably strengthens a cultural citizenship representation. However, we should keep in mind that citizenship

representations are probably not the only determinants of the relationship between national identification and perceptions of immigrants, so there may be specific circumstances in which stronger identification goes together with more positive perceptions. This should be investigated in further research.

In line with studies which suggested that a shift has taken place away from ethnic citizenship representations (Koopmans et al., 2005; Pehrson, Vignoles et al., 2009; anonymous, in press), our initial MGSEM analysis showed that the ethnic representation was not significantly related to perceived threat when civic and cultural representations were also taken into account. That the ethnic representation, which is based on one of the traditional conceptualizations of citizenship from the political science literature, plays no significant role in this MGSEM analysis is a remarkable finding and although we must be cautious with the interpretation of this null result, it certainly warrants discussion for its theoretical significance. It may be seen as encouraging that a purely ethnic citizenship representation appears to have become less relevant in explaining perceptions of immigrants, but our results suggest that the cultural representation, which seems to have taken its place, is also associated with negative perceptions of immigrants. This is in sharp contrast with the portrayal of a cultural conceptualization of citizenship as fair, liberal, and open towards immigrants by political scientists (e.g., Kymlicka, 2001; Nielsen, 1999), but also by politicians in public debates on immigration and citizenship.

Self categorization theory (SCT; Turner et al., 1987) may explain why the civic and cultural citizenship representations mediate the relationship between national identification and perceived threat. According to SCT, the cognitive function of social categorization is to structure our social world into clearly discernible social groups through emphasizing *intragroup* homogeneity and *intergroup* differentiation. It could be argued that a national ingroup based on cultural citizenship criteria is likely to be experienced as more internally homogeneous and externally differentiated than one based on civic citizenship criteria. After all, in the former, everyone shares a common culture, which creates ingroup homogeneity and, at the same time, differentiates the national ingroup from outgroups. In the latter, people are only required to share a commitment to basic civic principles, which leaves much more room for heterogeneity.

Compared to cultural practices, civic principles are also less likely to differentiate the national ingroup from outgroups (principles like 'respect for basic societal rules' and 'active participation in society' are not unique to any particular national group). If we assume that a national ingroup based on cultural citizenship criteria is indeed experienced as more internally homogeneous and externally differentiated and that stronger national identification goes together with more rigorous social categorization (i.e., a stronger emphasis on ingroup homogeneity and intergroup differentiation), then stronger national identification can also be expected to go together with a preference for a more cultural and less civic citizenship representation, which is in line with a mediation model.

Intuitively, it may seem logical that the citizenship representation which is most strongly positively related to national identification would be a country's dominant representation, leaving people with other ways of representing citizenship at the margins of the nation (which is where we would expect to find those who tend to identify less strongly with the national ingroup). However, the results of our study suggest that this is not necessarily the case. Although it is the cultural citizenship representation which relates positively to national identification in all countries, it is only in Hungary and Italy that the cultural representation has a higher average acceptance score than the civic representation (which relates negatively to national identification!). Hungary and Italy are also the two countries where we find the highest average scores on national identification (see Table 2). The other five countries seem to illustrate that, when levels of national identification are sufficiently low, the civic citizenship representation can be the dominant representation as well. So, instead of national identification strengthening some shared dominant citizenship representation, our results suggest that stronger national identification simply goes together with a stronger endorsement of citizenship representations that are associated with negative perceptions of immigrants (i.e., irrespective of whether these representations are dominant in a country or not). This, in turn, might suggest that the way in which citizenship is represented could be, at least in part, the outcome of an individual rather than a collective process. Another interesting avenue for further research. As we have argued from the SCT-perspective, perhaps stronger national identification is

associated with more rigorous social categorization and more emphasis on ingroup homogeneity and intergroup differentiation. This may go along with an individual preference for a citizenship representation that results in more ingroup homogeneity and intergroup differentiation (e.g., a cultural representation).

The main strength of the present study is that it used partially metrically invariant measurement scales, not only for the citizenship representations, but also for national identification and perceived threat. This allowed us to make direct comparisons of relationships between latent variables across countries (Meuleman & Billiet, 2006) and thus to conduct the first reliable cross-national test of the role of citizenship representations in the relationship between national identification and perceptions of immigrants. This test produced a mediation model which is cross-nationally robust, despite national differences in citizenship policies, public attitudes towards immigrants, and most devalued non-EU immigrant groups. Furthermore, our results were not affected by differences in the percentage of foreign born individuals within the total population or the percentage of the most devalued non-EU immigrant group within the total population. In spite of these great strengths, the present study also had some limitations that need to be taken into account when reflecting on the implications of our findings or when planning new research. First, due to its cross-sectional design, our study does not allow us to make inferences about causality. Although a reverse causal model (in which the effects of perceived threat on national identification were mediated by civic and cultural citizenship representations) did not produce a better fit and showed fewer significant mediation effects, a cross-national longitudinal study of the role of citizenship representations in the relationship between national identification and perceived threat would be a more convincing assessment of causality. Meeus et al. (2010) found a longitudinal mediation model in which over-time increases in national identification resulted in a growing preference for an ethnic citizenship representation, which, in turn, accounted for over-time increases in ethnic prejudice. However, this model was not tested cross-nationally (i.e., only the Flemish context was considered) and, given the focus on mediation versus moderation, a Time 2 measure of national identification was not taken into account either. When re-analyzing the data of Meeus et al. (2010) using a fully cross-lagged design, Duriez, Reijerse, Luyckx,

Vanbeselaere, and Meeus (in press) found that national identification and citizenship representations are reciprocally related and mutually reinforce each other over time, suggesting that the causal relations between national identification, citizenship representations, and perceptions of immigrants may be rather complex. Second, our study did not include a sufficient number of countries for a multi-level analysis, which would have allowed us to test for mediation and moderation effects of citizenship representations at different levels of analysis. A study considering a wider range of national contexts, while applying the highly equivalent citizenship representation scales developed by anonymous (in press), would contribute substantially to the citizenship literature. Finally, we should be cautious with generalizing the individual level results obtained with our high school samples to national majority group populations at large. Related to this, is that the present study only considered the most devalued non-EU immigrant group as target group and only perceived threat as outcome variable. Due to the nature of our data, drawing broad conclusions about differences between countries and interpreting such differences in terms of national characteristics is beyond the scope of this study. Further research with representative national samples and a variety of target groups and outcome variables seems warranted.

Two additional directions for future research should be mentioned. The first is to supplement quantitative studies with more qualitative ones. In our study, we departed from the theoretical ethnic, civic, and cultural conceptualizations of citizenship that are identified in the political science literature and that were developed in North America and Western Europe. These conceptualizations may not apply in all parts of the world. Perhaps additional conceptualizations can be identified, both within and outside North America and Western Europe. Instead of asking opinions about a set of predetermined citizenship criteria, we could ask participants to provide an open-ended description of their representation of citizenship. By looking for patterns in the type of citizenship criteria that are used in such descriptions, alternative ways of representing citizenship could be revealed. The second is to investigate whether there are circumstances in which relatively high levels of national identification can go together with a relatively strong civic citizenship representation. This might be the case, for example, in a context where a civic

immigration policy, that allows immigrants to maintain their own cultural identity, is perceived as morally correct and therefore regarded as a source of national pride. Given that national identification is important for social cohesion and that a civic citizenship representation is associated with positive perceptions of immigrants, this seems worthwhile to explore.

Conclusion

In the present study, civic and cultural citizenship representations were found to mediate the relationship between national identification and perceived threat posed by immigrants. Across countries, stronger national identification went together with a more cultural citizenship representation, which was, in turn, associated with higher perceived threat. Overall, stronger national identification also went together with a less civic representation, which was, in turn, associated with lower perceived threat. In order to experience a sense of nationhood and create social cohesion in society, a certain degree of national identification is essential. However, our results suggest that when national identification reaches beyond a certain point, it may create tensions in intergroup relations. Although the rather extreme ethnic representation of citizenship may have lost its relevance in explaining perceptions of immigrants (which is in itself encouraging), people who strongly identify with their national ingroup now appear to negatively perceive and exclude immigrants on the basis of cultural differences instead. To lower perceptions of threat from immigrants and to positively affect the relations between national majority groups and immigrants, perhaps a vision of citizenship that is based on civic principles should be promoted. However, because such a vision appears to be associated with lower levels of national identification, policy makers and socialization agents may also need to guard against putting *too much* emphasis on a civic representation, as this might endanger a sense of nationhood and social cohesion in society. Whether or not these concerns are warranted deserves further research attention. A pressing issue to explore in relation to these concerns is whether it is possible to combine a relatively high level of national identification with a civic citizenship representation. For example, by promoting a civic nation as a progressive, open, and tolerant nation, of which both old and new inhabitants can be proud.

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Table 1. *Statistics on Majority Group Participants by Country*

Country	N	Male	M_{Age}	SD_{Age}
Belgium	236	44.1 %	17.38	0.67
France	186	39.8 %	17.74	1.30
Germany	207	47.8 %	17.61	0.94
Hungary	272	36.8 %	16.87	1.24
Italy	258	42.6 %	17.34	0.75
The Netherlands	305	46.9 %	16.58	0.83
Sweden	270	38.1 %	17.18	0.63

Table 2. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Latent Inter-Factor Correlations by Country*

Belgium	M	SD	1	2	3
1. National identification	4.71_{b3}	1.16	-		
2. Cultural representation	4.54_{a2}	0.88	.49***	-	
3. Civic representation	4.83_{b3}	0.93	.07	.11	-
4. Perceived threat (Moroccans)	3.64_{d1}	1.19	.21**	.30***	-.56***

France	M	SD	1	2	3
1. National identification	4.90_{b3}	1.20	-		
2. Cultural representation	4.63_{a2}	1.02	.50***	-	
3. Civic representation	5.50_{de4}	0.90	-.16	.15	-
4. Perceived threat (Moroccans)	2.61_{a1}	1.28	.20*	.40***	-.25**

Germany	M	SD	1	2	3
1. National identification	4.47_{a2}	1.34	-		
2. Cultural representation	4.45_{a2}	1.07	.63***	-	
3. Civic representation	5.51_{e3}	1.01	-.38***	-.29***	-
4. Perceived threat (Turks)	3.10_{bc1}	1.43	.59***	.55***	-.63***

Hungary	M	SD	1	2	3
1. National identification	5.39_{d4}	1.31	-		
2. Cultural representation	5.23_{b3}	1.07	.67***	-	
3. Civic representation	4.55_{a2}	1.02	-.16*	-.10	-
4. Perceived threat (Chinese)	3.19_{bc1}	1.43	.24***	.28***	-.49***

Italy	M	SD	1	2	3
1. National identification	5.41_{d3}	1.15	-		
2. Cultural representation	5.51_{c3}	0.91	.57***	-	
3. Civic representation	5.00_{b2}	1.39	-.34***	-.16*	-
4. Perceived threat (Moroccans)	4.05_{e1}	1.79	.48***	.37***	-.63***

The Netherlands	M	SD	1	2	3
1. National identification	4.86_{b3}	1.27	-		
2. Cultural representation	4.50_{a2}	1.00	.61***	-	
3. Civic representation	5.20_{c4}	0.94	-.27***	-.30***	-
4. Perceived threat (Moroccans)	3.32_{c1}	1.29	.41***	.65***	-.65***

Sweden	M	SD	1	2	3
1. National identification	5.16_{c3}	1.29	-		
2. Cultural representation	4.55_{a2}	1.27	.57***	-	
3. Civic representation	5.30_{cd3}	1.18	-.37***	-.20**	-
4. Perceived threat (Iraqis)	3.00_{b1}	1.59	.45***	.51***	-.46***

Note. Letters following means indicate whether mean differences between countries (i.e., on the same variable) are significant. Numbers following means indicate whether mean differences within one country (i.e., between the different variables) are significant. Means with no letters or numbers in common differ significantly from each other. Country's most devalued non-EU immigrant group mentioned behind perceived threat variable. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 3. *Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of National Identification on Perceived Threat*

	Belgium	France	Germany	Hungary	Italy	Netherlands	Sweden
Direct effect	.10	-.11	.25**	.02	.20*	-.05	.11
Indirect effects:							
Via cultural representation	.15***	.25***	.16**	.15*	.09*	.32***	.22***
Via civic representation	-.04	.06	.18***	.07*	.18***	.14***	.13***
Total effect	.21**	.20*	.59***	.24***	.48***	.41***	.45***

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Figure 1. Multiple group structural equation model of the relationship between national identification and perceived threat mediated by civic and cultural citizenship representations. Path-coefficients are standardized estimates. The direct effect coefficients of the main-effect model are given in parentheses. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.