

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION IN NORWAY AND FINLAND:

A QUESTION OF IDENTITY, SECURITY, ECONOMICS,  
OR ALL OF THE ABOVE?

By  
Madeline Elizabeth Goodwin

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Approved by

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Advisor: Dr. Michael Metcalf

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Reader: Dr. Kees Gispen

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Reader: Dr. Robert Albritton

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*[T]he struggle for Europe begins with a struggle inside each nation.*

*-Etienne Tassin<sup>1</sup>*

Norden is often classified as a homogenous and social-democratic ‘group’ or ‘bloc’ of countries. While the Nordic nations do share culture, history, and indeed many policies, they vary greatly in regard to the nature of their relationships with the European Union (EU). Denmark, for example, became a full member of the EU in 1973, while Sweden and Finland joined only in 1995, taking into account post-Cold War considerations and a series of intense national debates and referenda. Finland participates in the European Monetary Union (EMU), while Sweden and Denmark have opted to retain their national currencies. Norway and Iceland remain linked to the EU only through the European Economic Area (EEA), which allows them access to the Common Market. Clearly, the differences are manifold. Still, the five nations are linked by a generally low popular approval of the EU relative to their continental neighbors, and for this reason Norden is often referred to as the most integration-reluctant region in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to research the basis of varying Nordic attitudes toward European integration because such a study provides us with the ability to overcome homogenizing stereotypes and to understand Norden as a truly diverse region. In light of the “legitimacy debate” that has arisen alongside the EU growth of recent years, it is particularly useful to

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<sup>1</sup>Pertti Joenniemi, “Finland in the New Europe: A Herderian or Hegelian Project?” *European Integration and National Identity*. Ed. Lene Hansen & Ole Wæver (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 2002) 190.

<sup>2</sup>Lene Hansen, “Introduction.” *European Integration and National Identity*. Ed. Lene Hansen & Ole Wæver (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 2002) 1-3, 11-14.

examine the “crisis perceptions” of the reluctant Scandinavians in an effort to understand the European “democratic deficit,” or the widening gap between the European political elites and the electorate.<sup>3</sup> While Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland are all “reluctant Europeans,” it is interesting to compare Norway and Finland because both are *twentieth-century nations*, in the sense that both were long dominated by other states and national identity has emerged as a matter of concern fairly recently. This indicates that, while the European integration issue is unlikely to strain the comparatively well-established national identities of Denmark and Sweden, national identity could reveal itself as an important factor in understanding attitudes toward the EU in the younger nations of Norway and Finland. It is especially pertinent to compare Norway and Finland with regard to European integration because, while Norway is one of the most reluctant nations in Europe toward the idea of integration, Finland is characterized by a lack of reluctance that is surprising when compared to the other Nordic countries and, instead, a rather easy transition to EU membership. Indeed, Finland – despite demonstrating low popular approval ratings of the EU relative to Europe as a whole – has experienced the highest EU popular approval ratings of the Scandinavian countries. Additionally, each nation represents a special phenomenon – Norway is the only country that, when presented with the option of EU membership, has said ‘no,’<sup>4</sup> and Finland is the only Nordic EU member that does not widely perceive European integration as a threat to national identity.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, so long as the reasons for the varying Norwegian and Finnish attitudes toward European integration remain unclear, the issue continues to be a pertinent and interesting question for research and discussion.

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<sup>3</sup>Hansen 2002: 3-4.

<sup>4</sup>Iver B. Neumann, “This Little Piggy Stayed at Home: Why Norway is Not a Member of the EU.” *European Integration and National Identity*. Ed. Lene Hansen & Ole Wæver (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 2002) 88-89.

<sup>5</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 182-183.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION(S)**

Considering the striking differences between the Norwegian and Finnish attitudes toward Europe, several research questions arise. What are the major factors that have shaped the nature of Norwegian and Finnish relationships with the European Union (EU)? Why has Norway remained resistant to full EU membership when three geographically, historically, politically, and economically close neighbors – Denmark, Sweden and Finland – have joined the Union over the past four decades? Why has Finland experienced a comparatively easy transition to full European membership, and why has European integration received a fairly broad measure of popular support from Finnish citizens? How might one account for the different attitudes of Norway and Finland toward European integration in an increasingly interconnected world?

## **HYPOTHESIS**

Some scholars, such as Eric S. Einhorn (2002), have argued that rational self-interest and preference ordering are the primary elements behind the different Nordic attitudes toward European integration.<sup>6</sup> Other scholars, such as Lene Hansen (2002), have argued that the compatibility (or lack thereof) of Scandinavian national identities with a broader European identity is the foremost element behind the various attitudes of Scandinavians toward European integration.<sup>7</sup> I will argue instead that the answer is a combination of these two schools of thought. I will test the hypothesis that neither identity nor interests alone can account for reluctance or acceptance of European integration. In attempting to seek out linkages between factors of identity and interests – factors that have typically been considered mutually exclusive – I will test the hypothesis that only together can these various elements play a significant role in explaining how Norwegians and Finns view themselves in relation to Europe. I have chosen to

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<sup>6</sup>Eric S. Einhorn, “Just Enough (“Lagom”) Europeanization: The Nordic States and Europe.” *Scandinavian Studies* 74(3) 2002: 268-9.

<sup>7</sup>Hansen 2002: 1-2.



examine European integration with regard to identity and interests – the latter being divided into the areas of economics and security - not only because scholars have previously forged a path of research in these areas, but also because these issues present themselves as the clearest and most pertinent factors in analyzing modern European relations.

Two rival political theories, constructivism and rationalism, also relate to my hypothesis. Constructivism suggests the idea that identity is not predetermined, but is instead socially constructed by “historically contingent interactions.”<sup>8</sup> To be more specific, the theory is commonly used in looking at how identity is formed and constructed in relation to social factors and shared norms. My interest in constructivism lies in examining the compatibility of the Norwegian and Finnish national identities with a greater European identity. I am also interested in constructivism as it applies to the idea that Norwegians and Finns have respectively resisted or joined the EU based on how they have constructed images of Europe as relating to their national identities. Rationalism suggests that people make rational decisions by ordering preferences and deciding on the best choice with regard to self-interest; interests are seen as material in nature, and governments are said to pursue foreign policy based on an analysis of costs and benefits.<sup>9</sup> I am interested in rational choice as it applies to the way in which the governments and citizens of Norway and Finland have made choices about EU relationships based on economic and security interests.

At this point, it becomes important to define several inherently ambiguous terms that will be used throughout this paper. *National identity*, for my purposes, refers both to a set of “shared norms...about political and social order” by which citizens relate to their nation and to the “self-

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<sup>8</sup>Alexander Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State.” *American Political Science Review* 88(2) June 1994: 384-5.

<sup>9</sup>Ben Rosamond, “New Theories of European Integration.” *European Union Politics*. Ed. Michelle Cini (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2003) 121-122.

placement” of the state in global situations, as in “foreign policy traditions and experience of foreign rule.”<sup>10</sup> The term *security* will be used to refer to national feelings of safety, protection, and defense in relation to other nations and to national and international conflicts, such as the occurrence and eventual end of the Cold War. The term *European integration* here is defined as the “formation of community” at a European level;<sup>11</sup> it will be used synonymously with the term *Europeanization* to refer to the growth of a polity and identity at the European level that reaches above and beyond the polity and identity at the national level. Finally, the terms *Norden* and *Scandinavia* will be used interchangeably. In a note of explanation, ‘Norden’ is the term used *within* the Nordic countries to refer to the five nations of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland – in other words, to refer to what most Nordic outsiders call ‘Scandinavia.’ The term ‘Scandinavia’ *within* the Nordic countries, however, typically leaves Finland out of the equation, as the Finnish language has almost nothing in common with the rather similar ‘Scandinavian’ languages of Finland’s Nordic neighbors. To prevent confusion, the two terms in this paper both refer to all five of the Nordic nations mentioned above.

## METHODOLOGY

Drawing primarily upon secondary sources, I used the theoretical framework presented above to build on prior research that I carried out in Stockholm, Sweden, in the winter of 2005-2006. This prior research provided a solid basis for my thesis: a comparative study of Norway and Finland with regard to European integration.

The secondary sources valuable to my study consist of numerous journal articles and books, which offer a variety of viewpoints on topics ranging from complex identity theory to the nature of European governance; surveys and polls found within these sources have also proven

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<sup>10</sup>Sieglinde Gstöhl, “Scandinavia and Switzerland: Small, Successful and Stubborn Towards the EU.” *Journal of European Public Policy* 9(4) August 2002: 537.

<sup>11</sup>Wendt 1994: 384.

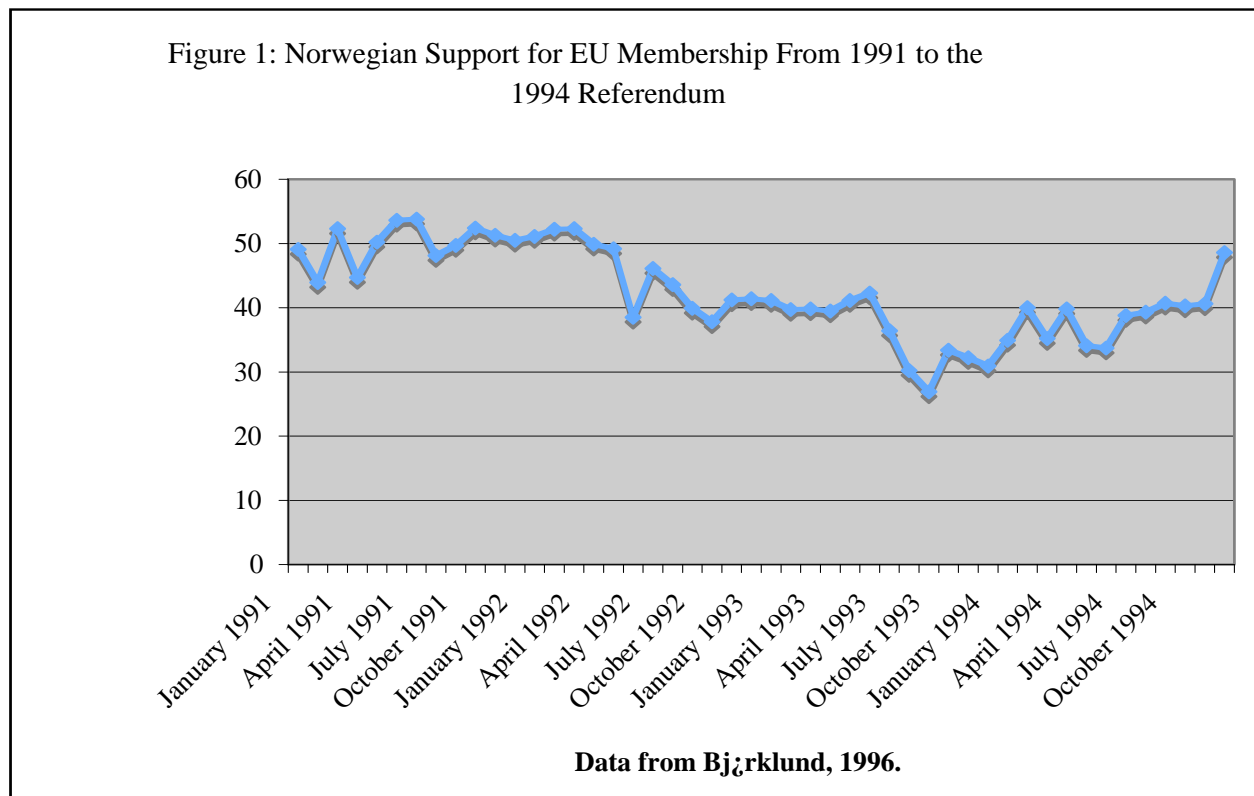
useful. Primary sources helpful in my research consist entirely of polling and survey data, found mostly in the World Values Survey (WVS) and its related publications.

The thesis will proceed with a discussion of pertinent background information about Norwegian and Finnish identity formation, economics, security history, and relationships with the EU, followed by a review of the secondary literature used in my research. I will then present my analysis of Norway - first addressing national identity issues enveloped by constructivist theory, and then addressing economic- and security-related issues of self-interest that can be connected with rational choice theory. Next, I will analyze Finland using the same method, relating ideas of national identity and then ideas of economic- and security-related interests to European integration attitudes. Finally, I will conclude with a summary of my findings.

## CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

### NORWAY

The Norwegian government has submitted applications for membership to the EU four times; curiously, Norway remains a non-member. Applications in 1962 and 1967 were “put on ice” as a result of French President de Gaulle’s veto and Norway’s habit of following Great Britain’s lead in international matters. The next two applications for membership, however, were accompanied by referenda, and thus held much greater significance for Norway’s future in Europe. Referenda in Norway, although voluntary and consultative in nature, have represented a key political element in society – through them, public opinion is gauged, decisions are made, and the spirit of ‘people’s government’ is kept alive. The story of failed referenda in Norway began in September 1972, when 53.5 percent of the electorate voted ‘no’ to European Community (EC) membership.



The story continued in November 1994, when 52.2 percent of the electorate voted ‘no’ to EU membership. Figure 1 picks up with Norwegian support for EU membership in 1991 for good reason; after the divisive and agonizing experience of the 1972 referendum, EU membership faded into a virtual non-issue in Norwegian politics – and it remained so through the late 1980s. Only in 1990 did EU membership again appear as a possibility. The spikes and dips in the chart above demonstrate the continued divisiveness of the EU issue for the Norwegian populace up until the 1994 referendum.<sup>12</sup>

It is important to note that Norway became a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960, establishing a basis for future economic relations with Europe, and then – through EFTA – joined the EEA in 1994. For Norwegians, the EEA has symbolized a ‘middle way’ to Europe in the sense that it falls somewhere between full and associative membership. It has given Norwegian ‘big industry’ access to the European Market, while leaving room for national protection of politically and economically important sectors like agriculture and fisheries.<sup>13</sup>

Identity has always played an important role in Scandinavia – in the form of both regional and national identities. The Nordic identity is said to display “dual nationalisms” – that is, a “cultural nationalism” based on the sacred value of national identity, and a “state nationalism” based on the guardianship of the Scandinavian welfare state model.<sup>14</sup> Norwegian national identity developed partly as a demonstration of what Norwegians were not – Danish or Swedish. This seems logical; having been historically linked with the Danish crown from 1387 until 1814 and then with the Swedish crown until peaceful constitutional secession in 1905,

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<sup>12</sup>Tor Bjørklund, “The Three Nordic 1994 Referenda Concerning Membership in the EU.” *Cooperation and Conflict* 31(1) 1996: 11-12, 16, 19-20.

<sup>13</sup>Lars Svåsand, “The Re-Emergence of the EU Issue in Norwegian Politics.” *Scandinavian Studies* 74(3) 2002: 329-332.

<sup>14</sup>Hansen 2002: 2.

Norwegians were eager to define their nation as something new, sovereign, and different.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, Norwegian identity has always revolved around the concept of “*Folket*,” or “the people,” and the fact that the “true Norwegians” share many things – for example, feelings of anti-elitism; peasant culture as the traditional Norwegian way of life; a historical struggle for independence; and a unique experience of war-time resistance.<sup>16</sup>

The Nordic countries provide apt examples of “small, open economies.” However, Norway is the only Scandinavian country to survive the various economic crises of the last quarter-century without accumulating a significant amount of foreign debt.<sup>17</sup> High petroleum revenues have helped make possible the Norwegian government’s continued commitment to the Scandinavian “cradle-to-grave” welfare model, which has played a key role in dictating economic policy. A large public sector has allowed the liberal provision of social services and transfer payments;<sup>18</sup> additionally, market income redistribution has contributed to high living standards and a feeling of being generally “better off” in Norden than in continental Europe.<sup>19</sup> One might also note that Norwegian development aid in the early 1990s was the highest in the world per capita. Thus, the economic situation in Norway at the time of the 1994 referendum on EU membership could be classified as rather healthy.<sup>20</sup> All of these facts underline the idea that, from an economic standpoint, Norway can function quite well without full EU membership.

Much because of geographical location, security concerns in Norway have changed with

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<sup>15</sup>Øyvind Østerud, “Introduction: The Peculiarities of Norway.” *West European Politics* 28(4) 2005: 710.

<sup>16</sup>Lene Hansen, “Conclusion.” *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic States*. Ed. Lene Hansen & Ole Wæver (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 2002) 216.

<sup>17</sup>Eric S. Einhorn and John Logue, “Can the Scandinavian Model Adapt to Globalization?” *Scandinavian Studies* 76(4) 2004: 508-509.

<sup>18</sup>John Logue, “Of Maastricht, Social Democratic Dilemmas, and Linear Cucumbers.” *Scandinavian Studies* 64(4) 1992: 632-3.

<sup>19</sup>Ole Wæver, “Nordic Nostalgia: Northern Europe After The Cold War.” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 68(1) January 1992: 85-87.

<sup>20</sup>Neumann 2002: 89, 121.

historical context. Dominated until independence in 1905, Norway entered the foreign policy arena with a position of neutrality, but joined NATO in 1949 after the experience of World War II. Norway also became an enthusiastic charter member of the United Nations, thus beginning its now-established role of “watchful eye” over the small, developing, and impoverished countries of the world.<sup>21</sup> During the Cold War, Norwegian security policy fell in line with the “Nordic balance,” described as a mixture of policies intended to maintain a balance between the East-West polarization of the United States and the Soviet Union.<sup>22</sup> However, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War have reinforced Norway’s approach of “Atlanticism” – indeed, the Norwegian government’s foreign and security policies have continuously leaned west toward Britain and the United States.<sup>23</sup>

## FINLAND

The 1994 referendum on EU membership in Finland, which politicians promised to follow despite the vote’s consultative nature, served – as in Norway – to reassure citizens that their voices counted in finding an answer to the European question. Finland, though, had quite different results – 57 percent of the electorate voted ‘yes’ to EU membership. In comparing Figure 2 below with Figure 1 (see p. 7), one can see the relative stability of Finnish public opinion on EU membership from 1991 to the 1994 referendum and, in contrast, the relative instability of Norwegian public opinion.<sup>24</sup> It is important to note that Finnish popular sentiment about the EU has remained relatively stable since accession as well; while Finland remains below the European average in number of citizens who support the EU, Finnish supporters have

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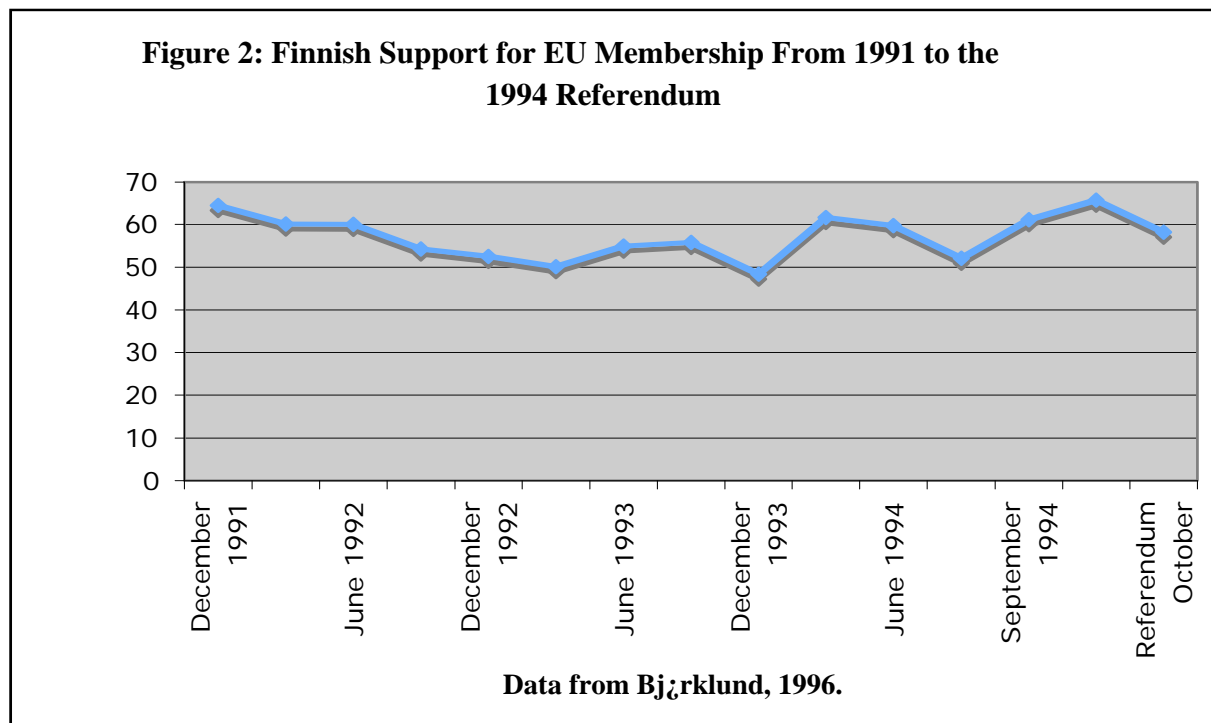
<sup>21</sup>Kaare Strøm, “Norway, Sweden, and the New Europe.” *Scandinavian Studies* 64(4) 1992: 500-503.

<sup>22</sup>Pernille Rieker, “Europeanization of Nordic Security: The European Union and the Changing Security Identities of the Nordic States.” *Cooperation and Conflict* 39(4) 2004: 369-371.

<sup>23</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 540-541.

<sup>24</sup>Bjørklund 1996: 16-18.

eclipsed critics throughout the time of membership.<sup>25</sup>



With regard to identity, Finland – like Norway and the rest of Scandinavia - displays “dual nationalisms.” But unlike Norway, which enjoyed unfettered home rule from 1814 on, Finland was not yet independent of Russia when ideas of “the national” began to form. While the Finns could not assert themselves as a sovereign state under Tsarist Russia, they could assert themselves as an independent cultural entity; it follows that the Finnish people developed a “cultural nationalism” before and without a “state nationalism.” Therefore, when Finland gained independence in 1917 and the concept of “state nationalism” finally emerged, Finns possessed the unique ability to separate culture from politics.<sup>26</sup>

The economic situation in Finland differed greatly from that in Norway at the time of the 1994 Nordic referenda on EU membership. Without the windfall oil profits that helped to keep

<sup>25</sup>Ann-Cathrine Jungar, “Integration by Different Means: Finland and Sweden in the EU.” *Scandinavian Studies* 74(3) 2002: 399-402.

<sup>26</sup>Hansen 2002: 214-217.



the Norwegian economy afloat, Finland suffered an intense economic crisis at the beginning of the 1990s. This crisis is largely attributed to the end of the Cold War and the associated fall of a primary Finnish trading partner: the Soviet Union. Finnish currency had not totally re-stabilized even by 1994.<sup>27</sup>

<b>Figure 3: Key Economic Indicators in Finland and Norway, 1992-1994</b>						
	<b>Finland</b> (billions of U.S. Dollars unless otherwise noted)			<b>Norway</b> (billions of U.S. Dollars unless otherwise noted)		
	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>
<b>Real GDP</b> Finland: 1990 prices Norway: 1991 prices	102.9	79.1	85.0	109.5	112.1	117.2
<b>Real GDP Growth (%)</b>	-3.6	-2.0	3.5	3.4	2.3	4.6
<b>GDP (at current prices)</b>	92.7	73.0	81.2	113.2	103.5	109.3
<b>Labor Force (000s)</b>	2,502	2,484	2,485	2,130	2,131	2,145
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	13.1	17.9	18.5	5.9	6.0	5.5
<b>Total Exports (FOB)</b>	24.0	23.5	28.0	35.4	32.1	33.9
<b>Total Imports (CIF)</b>	21.2	18.0	20.0	26.8	24.9	27.8
Data Source: 1994 Country Reports on Economic Practice and Trade Reports Finland: <a href="http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/economics/trade_reports/1994/Finland.html">http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/economics/trade_reports/1994/Finland.html</a> Norway: <a href="http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/economics/trade_reports/1994/Norway.html">http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/economics/trade_reports/1994/Norway.html</a>						

Figure 3 shows that in 1994 Finland began to recover from the preceding three-year recession, with real GDP growth increasing dramatically from -3.6 percent in 1992 to +3.5 percent in 1994. Still, real GDP growth in Finland remained more than a percentage point lower than real GDP growth in Norway in 1994, and the 1994 unemployment rate was thirteen percentage points higher in Finland than in Norway. These facts, along with the other statistics in Figure 3, support

<sup>27</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 188.

the idea that the Finnish economy in 1994 needed a fair degree of external assistance in order to complete economic recovery; EU membership offered just such a solution.

Finally, security concerns in Finland – as in Norway – have been largely dictated by simple geography. While Norway does share a northeastern border with Russia, Finland shares a much longer border with Russia – 800 miles – so Finland’s security and foreign policy concerns have always involved Russia.

**Figure 4: Map of the Nordic Region and Russian Border**

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

Map Source: <http://www.atlapedia.com/online/maps/political/Scandinavia.htm>

Following independence from Russia in 1917, Finland fought bitterly with the Soviet Union during World War II. The invasion of Finland by Soviet troops in November of 1939 – just three months after the start of WWII – led to decisive Finnish resistance in the Winter War. The Finns, although heavily outnumbered by the Soviets, were able to rally around collective resistance to Soviet pressure, defend their national sovereignty, and assert their independence. Still, Finland suffered heavy casualties during the war years; after WWII, the government adopted a staunch security position of “neutrality” or “non-alignment” and based its foreign policy toward the Soviet Union on “mutual trust.” Since the end of the Cold War, Finnish political leaders have tried to use their nation’s geographical and historical position as the ‘middle ground between East and West’ in positive ways, such as “bridge-building” between Russia and Europe.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 185, 199-200.

## **CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF THE SECONDARY LITERATURE**

There exists a substantial literature from a variety of academic disciplines on the subject of Norwegian and Finnish relationships with the European Union. A discussion of this material and its implications is necessary for a thorough analysis of Norwegian and Finnish attitudes toward Europeanization. The literature can most effectively be grouped into four categories: first, works that speculate on general theory; second, literature that pertains primarily to Norway; third, studies that pertain primarily to Finland; and fourth, material that pertains to both countries. Within the latter three categories, literature focusing on issues of self-interest will be addressed first, followed by that on issues of identity.

### **THEORY**

Knud S. Larsen *et al.* (1995) posit that national identity arises from the combination of a collective memory with a nation's cultural symbols and myths; it is viewed as ever changing, shaped by past and present history and cultural affairs. The authors go on to argue that national identity, bolstered by a "pervading sense of loyalty to perceived legitimate social structures and the national territory," becomes most important when the survival of a national culture or way of life is perceived as threatened. In this way, national identity provides a framework for the behavior of both individuals and governments. We can infer that the Norwegian and Finnish national identities should gain special emphasis in determining the nature of EU relationships in contexts where the European integration project is perceived as a threat to national culture and/or sovereignty. Additionally, Larsen *et al.* conducted a survey of 745 social science students – 358 of whom were Norwegian – in which the students were asked to rate 60 "national outlook traits" on a scale ranging from completely meaningful to completely meaningless. The survey found that Norwegian students gave exceptionally high ratings for "socialism" and social values, "trade

union,” and “community”; other traits meaningful to the Norwegians included “democracy,” “homeland,” “standard of living,” “justice,” and “culture.”<sup>29</sup> These results demonstrate not only that national identity in Norway is far from fading into antiquity, but also that Norwegian students – a relatively young generation – still place a great deal of importance on ideals of “the nation” that their parents and grandparents began to construct decades ago.

Alexander Wendt (1994) discusses identity theory on a larger scale, expressing the idea that “cooperation” between states can become “community” only when identity is transformed in such a way as to unite the states collectively. Any individual or national identification with an “other” runs on a continuum from viewing the other as “anathema to the self” to viewing it as an “extension of the self.” Indeed, in engaging collectively, a government and its citizens must reconcile the preservation of a self-identity with the internalization of a larger collective identity. In this way, Wendt says, the existence of “multiple loyalties” can create role confusion and contributes to debates about the existence of a “European identity.”<sup>30</sup> It is logical to conclude that individual European nation-states – such as Norway and Finland – may only see themselves as part of, or as possessing the capacity to *be* a part of, the EU ‘community’ to the extent that they perceive European values and identity as an extension of their own.

## NORWAY

Lars Svåsand (2002) asserts that Norwegians represent an “anomaly” in Europe because of their decisive rejection of EU membership in two instances: the referenda in 1972 and 1994. He takes a rationalist approach as he goes on to discuss the economic and foreign policy implications of Norway’s position as a “non-member inside the EU,” addressing the nature of the European Economic Area (EEA) Treaty, the Schengen Treaty, and the West European Union

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<sup>29</sup>Knud S. Larsen *et al.*, “Ideology and Identity: A National Outlook.” *Journal of Peace Research* 32(2) 1995: 166-69, 172-3.

<sup>30</sup>Wendt 1994: 384-90.

and EU Defense Cooperation. Svåsand concludes by surmising that Norway has no inherent *need* for EU membership: low unemployment and sizeable oil revenues dictate a healthy economy, while EEA cooperation provides enough of a link to Europe to quash any feelings of peripheral isolation.<sup>31</sup> All of this suggests that, in terms of a cost-benefit analysis of interests, Norwegians receive all the economic benefits they need from the EEA, while the costs of full EU membership are perceived as being not only high but unnecessary. It is also plausible that, somewhere between Norway's EEA linkages and NATO membership, fear of isolation from Europe has become a non-issue for Norwegians.

Einhorn and Logue (2004) point out that Norway is the only Scandinavian country to survive the various economic crises of the last quarter-century without accumulating a significant amount of foreign debt. We can assume that this has helped make possible the Norwegian government's continued commitment to their extensive model of social welfare, which could be perceived as threatened by European policy. The scholars further emphasize the perceived problem of the European "democratic deficit" in Norway, citing the common Norwegian complaint that "too many EU decisions are not ratified by the citizens and parties in the member states."<sup>32</sup> This complaint expresses the sentiment that the Union's elitist bureaucracy is out of touch with the 'true Europeans,' the Union's citizens. In sparsely populated Norway – where the capital of Oslo seems far away to many people – Europe's capital of Brussels seems even farther away. All of these observations point Norway away from full EU membership.

Christine Ingebritsen (1992) argues that economic threats have replaced security threats in post-Cold War Europe, and points out that the Nordics have historically preferred "autonomy to integration" in the international scene. She describes a Norwegian social movement that was

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<sup>31</sup>Svåsand 2002: 329-332, 346.

<sup>32</sup>Einhorn & Logue 2004: 508-9, 525-6.

so powerful in spreading its characterization of EC Europe as “the three C’s – Capitalism, Conservatism, and Catholicism” – in other words, as fundamentally different from Norway – that it was able to unite rural economic interest groups with opposing urban nationalist groups to vote against EC membership in 1972. This means that, to some degree, Norwegians have constructed their own identity as fundamentally different from that of the EU’s Europe, and that certain groups in Norway have used this as a rallying point against EU membership. Ingebritsen goes on to say that the European question remained as controversial in Norway in 1992 as it was in 1972, explaining that Norwegians wanted to protect policies unique to their welfare state, such as the use of oil and gas revenues to heavily subsidize sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and rural industry. Ingebritsen contends that, while key Nordic welfare policies conflict with European deregulation initiatives, a changing Europe dictates a Scandinavia that must learn how to merge economic growth with the preservation of the welfare state.<sup>33</sup>

In a later article, Ingebritsen (2004) discusses the economic openness and the established foreign policy traditions of small states in light of EU expansion. She says that “globalization” – which she defines as new forms of “economic, political, and social embeddedness” – has influenced small states to reevaluate their relationship to Europe, while European integration itself has provided a regional framework in which small states can coordinate policy and deal with issues of global dependency. Concerns about “political marginalization” on the part of small states has led to different visions of European integration, but Ingebritsen defends the Union’s growing appeal as a source of stability and prosperity for peripheral Europeans. Still, she does leave room for exceptions, as when she explains the aloof Norwegian attitude toward the EU as a product of security and market preferences and identity considerations. Ingebritsen seems to

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<sup>33</sup>Christine Ingebritsen, “As Europe Changes, Will Scandinavia Remain the Same?” *Scandinavian Studies* 64(4) Fall 1992: 642-50.

believe in the possibility of a collective European identity; for example, she says that the European currency unit, the Euro, can be seen as symbolic of a greater “European notion of self.” It is logical to conclude that, as Finland is both a “small state” and the only Nordic nation to adopt the Euro, the Finnish people have found a way to merge their national identity with that of Europe. Finally, Ingebritsen posits that small states such as Norway can play a positive role in Europe as “norm entrepreneurs,” thereby raising the bar for EU social policy.<sup>34</sup> This implies that Norwegians could view EU membership as more beneficial to the EU than to Norway.

Kjeld Vibe (1992) draws attention to the fact that Norwegian policymakers must divide and balance national interests among three foreign policy dimensions – the European, the Atlantic, and the global – and that Norway’s security situation has drastically improved since the end of the Cold War. This suggests that security in regard to EU membership is becoming a relatively dead issue for Norwegians. Vibe goes on to note that, since the 1970s, offshore petroleum reserves have been responsible for a sizeable portion of the GNP in Norway. This has had important implications for the Norwegian economy and for foreign policy; for example, petroleum revenues have helped to give Norway a favorable economic position that need not be buttressed by *full* EU membership. Finally, Vibe contends that the 1972 referendum on EC membership proved so divisive, even among traditionally allied socio-political strata, that Norwegians have yet to move past the trauma associated with the European question. This makes a case for the idea that Norwegians cannot reconcile European integration today with the costs it has entailed in the past.<sup>35</sup>

Eliassen and Sitter (2003) observe that Norwegian opposition to European integration is

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<sup>34</sup>Christine Ingebritsen, “Learning from Lilliput: Small States and EU Expansion.” *Scandinavian Studies* 76(3) 2004: 369-72, 374-381.

<sup>35</sup>Kjeld Vibe, “Norway in a Changing Europe.” *Scandinavian Studies* 64(4) Fall 1992: 582, 584-585, 589.



typically discussed in terms of a “dichotomy between interests and values” – that is, the economic interests in protecting Norway’s agriculture and fisheries, as well as its public sector, from European influence, and the moral-political values of transparent democracy, well-earned sovereignty, concern for the environment, and concern for developing nations. The EEA satisfies the objectives of this dichotomy by supplying access to the Single Market, while simultaneously protecting Norway’s key economic sectors from EU interference and keeping Norwegian values free from the implications of full EU membership. Still, the scholars go on to point out that Norway faces a “double democratic deficit” in the EEA. The first “deficit,” the credibility gap referenced above (see Einhorn and Logue, p. 17), is doubled by the fact that the government must implement EU economic and public policy directives without any official say in the decision-making process.<sup>36</sup> This information allows us to see that the decision to abstain from full EU membership has had both costs and benefits for Norwegians.

Øyvind Østerud (2005) puts forth the idea that, upon independence, Norwegian national identity developed in the shadow of anti-elitism directed at foreign officials. Østerud illustrates the lasting importance of this old anti-elitist sentiment by saying that, even today, Oslo is viewed as the least Norwegian place in Norway, as it still echoes the influence of “dominant foreign elites” from the colonial past. It follows that this anti-elitist sentiment has important implications for negative Norwegian feelings about laws being dictated from a faraway EU capital. Still, Østerud shies away from national identity as the sole reason for Norwegian reluctance to European integration when he notes that Norway has been wealthier than most nation-states since the 1970s, largely due to its development of “successful strategies for acquiring, exploiting and controlling offshore oil and gas deposits.” This leads him to assume that “prosperity and

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<sup>36</sup>Kjell A. Eliassen & Nick Sitter, “Ever Closer Cooperation? The Limits of the ‘Norwegian Method’ of European Integration.” *Scandinavian Political Studies* 26(2) 2003: 128-9, 138.

economic structure” were the two factors that swayed Norwegians to vote “no” to the EU in 1994.<sup>37</sup> Thus, we may conclude that strategies for exploiting oil revenue have played some role in freeing Norway from dependence on Europe, at least for economic reasons.

## FINLAND

Ann-Cathrine Jungar (2002) observes that Finnish leaders have taken a “small state” approach to European integration in their preference for supranational solutions to EU issues; indeed, the Finnish government has supported a strong Commission and majority voting in hopes of increasing Europe’s ability to ensure successful policy implementation and to promote equality among member states. She goes on to discuss the 1994 EU referendum in Finland, noting that typical no-voters were women and people with rural backgrounds or less education, while typical yes-voters were well-educated, urban-oriented males. The primary issues of contention for both yes- and no-voters were democracy and economy, she says, but it is especially noteworthy that Finnish EU supporters discussed “culture” or “belonging to Western Europe” as a positive aspect of EU membership. Jungar stresses that, after decades of perceived association with “Finlandization” or “Soviet subordination,” some Finns viewed EU membership as a way to manifest and achieve outside recognition of a distinctly Western-oriented Finnish identity. Finland has also been able to redefine its traditional neutrality policy with relative ease in light of its role as “mediator” between East and West. The Finnish government has, in the long run, demonstrated willingness to sacrifice some sovereignty in an effort to gain a louder voice in Europe. Nevertheless, while EU supporters in the country have steadily outweighed the critics, Finland’s popular approval of the EU remains low when compared with the EU average.<sup>38</sup>

Robert Rinehart (2002) argues that the primary consideration for Finns with regard to EU

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<sup>37</sup>Østerud 2005: 706-10.

<sup>38</sup>Jungar 2002: 398, 400-408.

membership has been one of security, quoting Max Jacobson's observation that "Norway has NATO and Sweden has Finland, but Finland faces a land border of 800 miles with Russia." Upon joining the EU, Rinehart says, Finland's Russian border became Europe's border. Further, Rinehart supports the idea of 'dual nationalisms' when he articulates that Finland became a cultural entity under Russia in 1809, with the creation of the Grand Duchy of Finland, but only became a nation-state upon independence in 1917. He emphasizes that the greatest goal of the Finns has always been to ensure national survival, no matter what the cost – that is, unless the cost involves a loss of "sovereignty, essential institutions, democracy, social welfare, and a free economy."<sup>39</sup> This suggests that, if Finns perceive the EU as their best method of "survival" after the Cold War and do not view the institution as a threat to their economic and democratic traditions, they should have relatively positive attitudes toward European integration.

Anne Ollila (1998) contends that the concept of 'identity' began to arouse widespread interest among Finns in the 1960s due to a number of social changes, such as intense urbanization. She says that during the rise of the nineteenth-century Finnish nationalist movement, educated Finns – often Swedish speakers – created an idealized picture of the "common folk" as symbolized by the hardworking Finnish peasant, usually unassertive, serious, and honest in character. At this time national symbols, such as the blue-and-white flag, and rituals, such as national holidays, reinforced Finnish solidarity. After Finland's Civil War in 1918, the winning White army came to emphasize the "West-Finnish" peasant farmer as representative of "true Finnishness," thereby rejecting cultural traits associated with the East or Russia. The 1920s and 1930s saw an encouragement of conformity and an identification with nature and the environment as becoming key aspects of the Finnish national character. Ollila

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<sup>39</sup>Robert Rinehart, "Finland's European Vocation." *Scandinavian Studies* 74(3) Fall 2002: 428-31.

repeatedly stresses that the Finnish nation-building project was the work of the educated upper and middle classes, and points out that modernization has typically been valued over traditionalism in Finnish society.<sup>40</sup> We can gather, from the above points, the importance of the romanticized peasant ideal to Finnish identity; we can further see early tendencies to reject the East and embrace the West with regard to Finnish cultural traits and heritage. These tendencies, along with the fact that modernization has proved more important to Finns than tradition, imply that European integration should be accepted with relative ease in Finland.

Risto Alapuro (1992) explains that Finland's relationship with Russia – whether one of opposition or compliance – has historically defined its orientation to the world. It is therefore plausible that Finnish identity, too, has been centered on the fine line between East and West; this means that the Finnish “yes” to the EU in 1994 meant “yes” to a Western identity as well. Alapuro goes on to assert that, up until the 1994 referendum, Finns expressed fears that they would be “left alone” in the world if they did not join the EU; these fears were, at least partly, associated with a fear of falling into the backward “European periphery” with the former socialist states.<sup>41</sup> This supports the idea that Finns, in joining the EU, decided to embrace the ‘Western’ and the ‘modern’ and to turn firmly away from associations with the ‘Eastern’ and the ‘backwards.’ It also demonstrates the importance of identity in informing the Finnish choice about Europe – not as a negative, but as a positive.

Christopher S. Browning (2002) takes Alapuro's ideas a step further when he argues that Finland has emphasized either the Eastern or Western aspect of its identity depending on context, and that Finland has reinterpreted its past to fit the needs of the present. “In shaping our

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<sup>40</sup>Anne Ollila, “Perspectives to Finnish Identity.” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23(3-4) September 1998: 128-30, 134.

<sup>41</sup>Risto Alapuro, “Finland, Thrown Out Into the World Alone.” *Scandinavian Studies* 64(4) Fall 1992: 699, 704-5.

identity,” Browning says, “our interpretations of the past are...explicitly politically loaded.” He explains that, during the Cold War, most Finns viewed the Soviets as trustworthy friends, and the Soviet Union as a great power concerned with its “legitimate security interests.” Now, however, the popular perception is that the Soviets were a subversive enemy during the Cold War, and that Finnish-Soviet relations were a “total aberration and betrayal of the ‘Western’ Finnish self.”<sup>42</sup> This clarifies the importance of Russia to Finnish identity; the Finns have been able to define Russia as the “Other,” therefore allowing Europe to become a continuation of the “Us.” Browning’s discussion also reveals the flexibility of Finnish identity over time.

Kaj Sjöholm (2004) relays the fact that Finland, with its two official languages of Finnish and Swedish, is one of only three ‘bilingual’ EU members. Sweden ruled Finland from the twelfth century until 1809; therefore, Swedish long served as the language of administration and learning, while Finnish was instead considered to be a colloquial language of workers and peasants. Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, the Finnish language began to spread through schools and became “a force strong enough to weld a nation state out of what had been accepted for centuries as just another region of Sweden.” After the period of Russian rule, Finnish finally materialized as the major language. Swedish, the once “high-status” language, became instead a minority language officially equal in status to Finnish. Today, the approximately six percent of Finns who speak Swedish as their first language live primarily on the Åland Islands, on the southern coast around Helsinki, and on the west coast in Ostrobothnia.<sup>43</sup> These facts suggest that the Finnish language played a major role in the formation of Finnish national identity. We can further deduce that the historical categorization of

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<sup>42</sup>Christopher S. Browning, “Coming Home or Moving Home? ‘Westernizing’ Narratives in Finnish Foreign Policy and the Reinterpretation of Past Identities.” *Cooperation and Conflict* 37(1) 2002: 47-49.

<sup>43</sup>Kaj Sjöholm, “Swedish, Finnish, English? Finland’s Swedes in a Changing World.” *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 36(5) 2004: 637-640.

Swedish speakers as the administrative elite and Finnish speakers as peasants and ordinary people contributed to some anti-elitist sentiment and the formation of urban-rural and center-periphery cleavages in Finland. Additionally, it should be possible to discover the relevance of these cleavages today by comparing the geographical distribution of Swedish speakers and Finnish speakers with regional voting patterns in Finland's 1994 EU referendum.

### **NORWAY & FINLAND**

John Logue (1992) points out that the Nordic states have faced two unique challenges since the formation of the European Community: first, the challenge of adapting Social Democratic policies to European policies; and, second, the challenge of squaring the Scandinavian democratic tendencies of “decentralization, negotiation, and citizen control” with the contrasting European tendencies of “centralization, directives, and technocracy.” Logue goes on to predict that so long as Nordic Social Democratic views lie to the left of dominant European views on most political and economic issues, and so long as European social benefits are of a lower standard than those in Scandinavia, the European question will continue to “pit North against South, less well off against affluent, and periphery against Oslo” in Norway. Finally, Logue emphasizes that the EU's “democratic deficit” will remain a problem for European citizens until two major issues are addressed – namely, that the European project represents states instead of peoples, and that the “language, actions, regulations, and culture” of Europe's technocrats lies beyond the reach of ordinary European citizens.<sup>44</sup>

Eric S. Einhorn (2002) supports a rationalist line of thought when he argues that the Nordic governments have adopted a “*lagom*” or “just enough” attitude toward European integration; they make rational decisions about integration in order to “maximize their political, economic, and strategic advantages or to minimize risks,” all the while desiring to maintain their

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<sup>44</sup>Logue 1992: 630-39.

position as sovereign and independent actors. He emphasizes that a common Nordic “political culture” based upon consensus and pragmatism has contributed to Norden’s new role as “bridge-builder” between Europe’s East and West. Additionally, Einhorn posits that federal visions of a “United States of Europe” are doomed to meet resistance in the anti-imperial Scandinavia. Even now, voter turnout for European Parliament elections is much lower than for national elections; while this is true for many countries in Europe, it is especially so in Norden.<sup>45</sup> This demonstrates, if not a lack of interest, at least a lack of communication between Nordic citizens and the EU.

Pernille Rieker (2004) discusses changing Nordic security identities in light of the end of the Cold War. During the Cold War, Nordic foreign policy could be aptly described as the “Nordic Balance,” aimed primarily at maintaining balance between the rival superpowers; since the end of that era, however, concerns have shifted. On the one hand, the Norwegian government – despite the fact that its security doctrine has consistently been in line with the EU – has tended to lean toward NATO, the United States, and Great Britain, allowing an attitude of “Atlanticism” to dominate its security identity and foreign policy concerns – even during the Cold War. On the other hand, Finland – an established ‘neutral’ – was driven to seek the security guarantees of EU membership due to the collapse of the neighboring Soviet Union and related concerns about developments in Russia. Rieker argues that the Finnish government was easily able to reformulate its policy of neutrality as one of ‘non-alignment’ in the EU because, for Finns, neutrality was based more on strategic considerations than on some greater moral obligation.<sup>46</sup> Rieker’s discussion suggests, first, that Norway’s membership in NATO and attitude of “Atlanticism” have served to render the EU an unnecessary security apparatus. Second, it reveals a link between security and identity for Finns, who were forced to reevaluate their position on

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<sup>45</sup>Einhorn 2002: 268-70, 278-83.

<sup>46</sup>Rieker 2004: 369, 375, 385.

the boundary between East and West after the Cold War; in signing up for EU membership, they chose the West. Finally, it shows the flexible nature of Finnish identity in the fact that security policy was so easily reformulated and adapted to fit modern strategic needs.

Sieglinde Gstöhl (2002) addresses the importance of considering identity concerns in evaluating Scandinavian attitudes toward the EU. She says that in Finland, where security anxieties have dominated foreign policy since independence, the end of the Cold War created a “window” of opportunities – both political and economic in nature – for joining the EU. In Norway, however, political constraints have combined with geological and historical factors to overshadow any possible economic benefits of full EU membership. Oil revenues alone cannot explain Norwegian reluctance toward the EU, Gstöhl says, because these revenues were not yet a factor when Norwegians voted “no” in 1972. Instead, the fishing and farming sectors – which are marginal economically – can be considered primary sectors from an identity standpoint, because they were able to embody themselves as the heart of ‘Norwegianness’ and rally votes of “no” to the EU in the 1972 and 1994 referenda, even from people who were not employed in these sectors.<sup>47</sup> This reveals a link between economy and identity, insofar as if EU membership is perceived as a threat to the fishing and farming sectors, it is perceived as a threat to the very essence of the Norwegian way of life.

Gstöhl goes on to argue that, because the Norwegian welfare model has been the most highly planned and subsidized version in Scandinavia, Norwegians have “tied the way they see themselves to the welfare state.” It is logical to conclude that the welfare state forms a core element of the Norwegian national identity, and that Norwegians therefore tend to fear European infringement on welfare policies as infringement on their sense of ‘self.’ Finally, Gstöhl points out the relevance of political cleavages in determining Norwegian attitudes toward the EU,

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<sup>47</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 529-35, 539-41.



arguing that, in 1972 and 1994, the Norwegian rural population wanted to protect “traditional culture” from the urban “central authorities.”<sup>48</sup> We can infer that, if some Norwegians wanted to protect their culture from authorities in their own cities, certainly they also wanted to protect it from authorities in the even more distant Brussels.

In analyzing voter patterns in the three 1994 Nordic referenda on EU membership, Tor Bjørklund (1996) further demonstrates that political cleavages remain relevant in modern Norwegian society. For example, he shows that women, farmers, fishers, the less-well-educated, the public-sector employees, and those from rural areas in northern and western Norway – in other words, the “social and geographic periphery” – tended to vote “no” to EU membership. In contrast, men, the better-educated, the private sector employees, and those from urban areas – in other words, the “social and geographic center” – tended to vote “yes” to membership. Indeed, Norway’s capital of Oslo and its surrounding counties represent the only urban area with a decisive majority for membership in 1994. In Finland, Bjørklund says, severe problems in the domestic economy – including an unemployment rate of almost 20 percent – combined with feelings of uncertainty about Russia’s future in giving strength to a vote of “yes” to the EU. Still, he points out that farmers and others living in rural areas comprised a significant portion of those opposed to membership.<sup>49</sup> This illustrates the possible importance of an urban-rural cleavage in analyzing Finnish attitudes toward the European project.

Kaare Strøm (1992) supports the idea of multiple identity orientations, expressing that Europe is only one of several possible “transnational identities” for Scandinavians and must compete with Nordic, global, and Atlantic identifications. It is plausible that this has led to a minimalization of the EU’s perceived importance, at least in the eyes of Norwegians. Strøm goes

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<sup>48</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 529-35, 539-41.

<sup>49</sup>Bjørklund 1996: 18-19, 23-29.

on to posit that the general Scandinavian aloofness toward Europe revolves around several traits common to the region, including Norden's historical and geographical position on the European periphery and the lack of a "colonial tradition" common to continental Europe. Finally, Strøm offers another voice supporting the importance of cleavages in attitudes toward Europe. For example, the relevance of the center-periphery and urban-rural cleavages in Norway is illustrated by the fact that, in 1972, citizens of Oslo voted almost two-to-one in favor of European membership, while 72.5 percent of voters in the Northern province of Nordland voted "no" to the EC. Anti-EU sentiment, Strøm says, runs strongest in "peripheral, primary-sector dominated areas."<sup>50</sup> This information reveals differences between Norden and Europe that contribute to the building of an "Us" versus "Them" mentality. It also demonstrates that old societal divisions like political cleavages still influence how Norwegians view themselves in relation to Europe. Finally, it suggests the importance of primary sectors like agriculture and fisheries in helping to determine a vote of "no" to the EU in Norway.

Finally, Ole Wæver (1992) posits that Nordic identity is about being *different from* and, to a degree, *better than* continental Europe, while all the while being *part of* Europe. This Nordic sense of being "different" and "better" than European neighbors to the south stems from the success of the Nordic welfare model and from ideas that Norden has been more peaceful, and has had more "social and global solidarity," than continental Europe. With regard to Finland, Wæver says that the EU could present a challenge to Finnish national identity, as Finns are especially sensitive and emotional about the right of foreigners to buy national firms, forests, and coastline. This illustrates the importance of environment and nature to the Finnish identity. Nevertheless, he goes on to cite Pertti Joenniemi's idea that the Finns are psychologically apt to handle EU membership because they can "[transfer] their 'Big Brother' image from the Soviet Union to the

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<sup>50</sup>Strøm 1992: 500, 503, 506, 520.

[EU].” Further, the issue of neutrality is moot for Finns because neutrality, for them, transforms with strategic considerations. These suggestions imply that the Finnish identity is flexible in nature and should be relatively adaptable to European integration.<sup>51</sup>

Wæver moves on to discuss Norway, asserting that the country’s raw-materials economy allows it to manage without EU membership. Furthermore, he says that the Norwegian “freedom-fighter spirit,” which developed during the experience of collective resistance to German occupation in WWII, makes it difficult to argue for EU membership.<sup>52</sup> In a later publication, Wæver (2002) makes the valid point that it is a vital element of “any foreign policy vision for any country in Europe...to imagine a Europe compatible with a vision of the nation/state in question.”<sup>53</sup> In other words, in order for Norwegians and Finns to accept European integration, they must be able to perceive or construct a European identity that is compatible with their national identity.

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<sup>51</sup>Wæver 1992: 77, 79, 84.

<sup>52</sup>Wæver 1992: 90-91.

<sup>53</sup>Ole Wæver, “Identity, Communities and Foreign Policy: Discourse Analysis as Foreign Policy Theory.” *European Integration and National Identity*. Ed. Lene Hansen & Ole Wæver (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 2002) 25.

## **CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION**

As demonstrated in the literature review, Knud S. Larsen *et al.* and Alexander Wendt posit that national identity provides a framework for the behavior of both citizens and government officials; thus, in engaging collectively, both citizens and their governments will work to preserve their own identity while learning how to adopt a larger collective identity. Taking this a step further, constructivist theory argues that identities, as “constructions of nation- and statehood, shape interests and thus also integration policies.”<sup>54</sup> This means that in order for a given population to approve of the idea of European integration, that population’s construction of Europe and European identity must coincide with the national image of self, or national identity. It is on these constructivist theoretical premises that I base my analysis of national identity and the EU in Norway and Finland.

From a more rationalist perspective, Eric S. Einhorn – as stated previously – argues that the Nordic governments have adopted a “just enough” attitude toward European integration; they make rational choices about levels of cooperation in order to capitalize on advantages or to diminish risks, all the while insisting on their validity as sovereign and independent actors.<sup>55</sup> This theoretical basis provides an appropriate rationalist framework in which to analyze the economic and security policy decisions made by the Norwegian and Finnish governments with regard to the EU.

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<sup>54</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 536.

<sup>55</sup>Einhorn 2002: 268-269.

## NORWAY

National identity in Norway has always revolved around the idea of “the people” as the central concept of “the nation.”<sup>56</sup> This concept of “the people” versus “the elites” as the basis of Norwegian national identity has manifested itself in five important ways that have affected Norwegian attitudes about European integration: in three longstanding political cleavages – urban-rural, center-periphery, and the cultural cleavages revolving around language, alcohol policy, and religion – in the idea of the welfare state as protective and supportive of the ideals of “the people”; in the Norwegian historical struggle for the independence of “the people”; in the collective memory of “the people” of the unique Norwegian resistance movement during WWII; and in the idea of the “peasant culture” as the traditional way of life for “the [Norwegian] people.”

The results of a survey conducted by Larsen *et al.* (see pp. 15-16) reveal key values associated with Norwegian identity and ideology, as illustrated in Figure 5 below. The fact that the Norwegians surveyed ranked “socialism” and “social values” as highly meaningful items

<b>Figure 5: Norwegian “National Outlook” Values</b>	
Most Meaningful Values	Socialism Social Values Community
Other Highly Rated Values	Democracy Constitution Homeland Trade Union Liberty Standard of Living Justice Culture School
Data Source: Larsen <i>et al.</i> 1995, pp. 169, 172-173.	

<sup>56</sup>Neumann 2002: 124.

demonstrates a strong correlation between Nordic welfare state ideology and Norwegian national identity. The high rank of the “standard of living” and “trade union” values further illustrates this point; after all, it is welfare state policy that ensures the higher-than-average standard of living in Norway and regulates employment standards. In the values of “community,” “homeland,” and “culture,” one can infer the importance that Norwegians give to their traditional way of life and national spirit. Finally, the values of “liberty,” “justice,” “democracy,” and “constitution” illustrate the continued significance of the historical Norwegian struggle for independence and sovereignty. Taken together, these survey results support constructivist theories of national identity insofar as they show that concepts and ideals of “the nation” are widespread and socially embedded; the results also demonstrate that national identity remains a relevant factor in coloring how Norwegians view the world. The Larsen survey has provided a brief overview of Norwegian national values; in order to understand how these values could be affected or threatened by EU membership, we must look to the origins of Norwegian identity.

Political cleavages – especially the urban-rural cleavage, the center-periphery cleavage, and the cultural cleavages revolving around language, alcohol policy, and religion – have been dominant in Norwegian politics for quite a long time. Political cleavages, for the purposes here, refer to divisions within society, along group lines, that may result in political conflicts. For the most part, the Norwegian cleavages mentioned originated before Norway’s independence, when Norway was still connected to Denmark and Sweden. The “civil servants,” or the people who governed Norway under another crown (Sweden, or especially Denmark), lived in the cities and often supported the education and/or culture of that other crown. The true Norwegians of the country, or “the people,” resented this support of foreign culture, and group tensions eventually resulted in the formation of the urban-rural and the center-periphery cleavages. Indeed, “the

people” viewed the civil servants as a second and foreign culture – they resented the civil servants because they controlled the state, and they were suspicious of the civil servants because of their “supranational connections to the Danish culture...and to German culture.” Eventually, growing frustration between the two groups led Norway’s intellectual elite to push forward the already emerging language cleavage – “the people,” the true Norwegians, supported the rural Norwegian dialect of *landsmål*, while the civil servants supported their Danish-influenced dialect of *riksmål*.<sup>57</sup> In respect to cleavages, the urban, center, and *riksmål* people developed into the elitist rivals of the rural, periphery, and *landsmål* people; this split had major implications for the way in which Norwegians identify themselves and view the world around them.

<b>Figure 6: Geographical Groups Norwegians Belong To “First”</b>				
Base=2366	Norway [1990]		Norway [1996]	
	n	(%)	n	(%)
<b>Locality</b>	848	68.4	631	56.0
<b>Region</b>	161	13.0	199	17.7
<b>Country</b>	173	14.0	226	20.1
<b>Continent</b>	15	1.2	36	3.2
<b>The World</b>	28	2.3	29	2.6
<b>Don’t Know</b>	0	0.0	6	0.5
<b>No Answer</b>	14	1.1	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	1239	(100 %)	1127	(100 %)
Data Source: worldvaluessurvey.org (WVS)				

Figure 6 contains samples of Norwegians who, in 1990 and 1996, were asked the question, “To which of these geographical groups would you say you belong first of all?” The results clearly show that a large majority of Norwegians – 68.4 percent in 1990, and 56.0 percent in 1996 –

<sup>57</sup>Neumann 2002: 91-8.

identify themselves most strongly with their “locality.” It is safe to assume that the early formation of the language cleavage – which is associated with a split along urban-rural lines – contributed to this strong Norwegian identification with “locality,” where people were unified in language and values, and a weaker identification with “country,” where people were divided by these factors. It is also interesting to note that in 1990 – prior to the EU referendum – more Norwegians identified with “the world” than with “the continent.” We may conclude that Norwegians did not perceive their identity as compatible with that of “the continent,” and that this perception was a factor in the Norwegian vote of “*nej till EU*” in 1994.

The religious cleavage and the moralist cleavage over alcohol policy are related; the religious cleavage split Western Norway with the rest of the country over control of the Lutheran state Church, and in the 1972 EC referendum, fundamentalist state Church supporters – most from rural Western Norway – said they feared that the EC would abolish their church. The alcohol-policy cleavage split Norway between moralists who supported the abolition of alcohol and secularists who did not. Those who support(ed) the abolition of alcohol – Norwegians coming primarily from the country’s peripheral rural areas – tend(ed) to fear EC/EU alcohol policies, and EU alcohol policies have also been considered a minor threat to the strict state control of alcohol in Norway.<sup>58</sup> The exclusive sale of alcohol through the *Vinmonopolet*, Norway’s government-owned alcohol store, began after a ban on alcohol was lifted in 1922. The *Vinmonopolet* – which keeps early closing hours every day – remains the sole company permitted to sell beverages containing more than 4.7 percent alcohol in Norway today. Cold, dark regions like Scandinavia have experienced serious problems with alcoholism in the past; indeed, every Nordic government besides Denmark sells alcohol through a state-owned store. The strict policies of these state stores are believed to have significantly curbed alcohol abuse, so

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<sup>58</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 540.



it is easy to understand why some Norwegians view the more liberal EU regulations on alcohol with suspicion.<sup>59</sup>

It is clear that these cleavages contributed to the pitting of “the people” against “the elite.” As a result, Norwegian “people” today view foreign interference – in the form of European interference or EU interference – as inevitably bad and completely detached from the idea of Norway as a ‘true people’s nation.’ One can also see remnants of anti-elitism in the Norwegian perception of the European “democratic deficit” (see Einhorn and Logue, p. 17).

**Figure 7: Map of EU Referenda on EC/EU Membership, 1972 and 1994 (Svåsand, 2002)**

QuickTime™ and a  
TFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

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<sup>59</sup>This information is common knowledge; I received it in various conversations with Norwegian students and friends during my period of study abroad in Sweden.

As mentioned in the literature review, Tor Bjørklund has shown the lasting importance of these cleavages in Norwegian society. His analysis of voting patterns in the 1994 EU referendum demonstrated that Norwegians on the “social and geographic periphery” have traditionally voted “no” to EU membership, while Norwegians in the “social and geographic center” have traditionally voted “yes” to EU membership.<sup>60</sup>

One can see from the maps above (Figure 7) that Bjørklund is correct: Norway’s capital of Oslo and its surrounding counties represent the only urban area with a decisive majority for membership in the 1994 referendum. Additionally, the western and northern areas of the country represent the strongest degree of anti-EU sentiment, with many localities voting “75 percent or more ‘no.’” These voting patterns illustrate a Norwegian populace that was highly divided on the issue of EU membership in 1972 and 1994. The maps also demonstrate that Norwegian opinions did not change much between 1972 and 1994; if anything, the 1994 map on the right side of the figure shows a bit more anti-EU sentiment than the 1972 map on the left side.

Figure 8 further demonstrates the reality of the urban-rural cleavage and its effects on Norwegian attitudes toward EU membership. The data shows that only 6 percent of farmers –

<b>Figure 8: Proportion Who Voted ‘Yes’ to Membership in Norway in the 1994 EU Referendum According to Occupational Status</b>	
<b>Blue-Collar Workers</b>	<b>44 %</b>
<b>White-Collar Workers</b>	<b>58 %</b>
<b>Self-Employed</b>	<b>58 %</b>
<b>Farmers</b>	<b>6 %</b>
Data from Bjørklund, 1996.	

<sup>60</sup>Bjørklund 1996: 24-29.

who obviously live in rural areas, especially in western and northern Norway – voted ‘yes’ to EU membership in the 1994 referendum. This is a stunning difference in attitude from workers who are likely based in urban areas; white-collar workers and the self-employed were most in favor of full EU membership, with 58 percent of both their groups voting ‘yes.’ It is also relevant to note that, as of 1995, the agricultural sector comprised only 4 percent of the Norwegian labor force, while the industrial sector comprised 22 percent, and the service sector made up 74 percent.<sup>61</sup> The fact that the smallest percentage of the labor force – those in the agricultural sector – felt the most strongly about EU membership and were able to mobilize a ‘no’ vote in 1994, allows us to conclude that identity and economics are linked here. This means that the economic sector of employment has helped to shape the self-identity of Norwegians and their attitudes toward the EU.

The idea of the welfare state as being protective and supportive of “the people” forms a core part of the Norwegian national identity. The welfare state emerged in Norway after WWII in efforts to modernize the nation and rebuild the economy.<sup>62</sup> And the Norwegian welfare model was extremely subsidized – in fact, in comparison with other Nordic welfare models, the Norwegian model contained the highest degree of “economic planning and state control of money markets as well as great efforts at regional and industrial policies.”<sup>63</sup> A large public sector has allowed – since before the discovery of oil, but even more so in recent years – the liberal provision of social services, such as national health care and education, and transfer payments, such as pensions and sick pay.<sup>64</sup> The Norwegian people have long been able to support and protect themselves with welfare rights such as these, and, as a result, the Norwegians “tied the

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<sup>61</sup>CIA World Factbook.

<sup>62</sup>Neumann 2002: 107.

<sup>63</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 539.

<sup>64</sup>Logue 1992: 632-3.

way they see themselves to the welfare state.”<sup>65</sup> It is therefore plausible that, in light of Norway’s strong split between “the people” and “the elite,” Norwegians today are reluctant to become full EU members because they fear that supra-nationalist, elitist and capitalist Europe will infringe on the welfare rights that have offered them protection for so long.

Norwegians have long viewed European social and welfare policy with suspicion.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, Norwegians typically characterize their welfare state as “equal,” “healthy,” “sound,” “people-oriented,” and “democratically open”; in contrast, many have constructed views of the EU as “unequal,” “sick,” “decadent,” “bureaucracy-oriented,” and “undemocratic.” In this sense, I agree with Neumann’s assertion that, “to the extent that ‘Norway’ is tied in with the people and ‘the EU’ with bureaucracy, Norway may be represented as a political project that is incompatible with Europe.”<sup>67</sup> Constructivist theory plays a role here; the way that Norwegians have constructed the view of their society is in direct conflict with the way they have constructed European society. This incompatible nature of the Norwegian welfare model with regard to the EU has clearly oriented the hearts of “the people” toward reluctance to full EU membership. One can therefore see the emergence of another link between identity and economic self-interest as factors in Norwegian attitudes toward Europeanization: as the welfare state and its policies form a large part of Norwegian national identity and provide for the economic well-being of the people, Norwegians have made a rational decision to protect their interests and vote “no” to the EU.

The Norwegian national identity has strong foundations in the national struggle for the independence of “the people.” Because of a long domination by Denmark and Sweden, Norwegian national identity – as stated previously – developed as a definition of what

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<sup>65</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 540.

<sup>66</sup>Strøm 1992: 514.

<sup>67</sup>Neumann 2002: 119-120, 125.

Norwegians were not, e.g., Danes or Swedes. Domination also contributed to the Norwegian split between “the people” and “the elites.” The “foreignness” of the Norwegian civil servants was intensified when they supported the continuation of union with Sweden over independence; to “the people,” this support of elite foreign culture turned the civil servants into enemies of the “true Norwegians” and the “true Norwegian nation.” The “people’s struggle for independence” in 1905, and the attainment of independence in a peaceful manner, again differentiated Norway from Europe – Norway could solve problems peacefully and democratically, unlike the “European warrior states.”<sup>68</sup>

It is important to stress, moreover, that Norwegians perceive the word “union” as negative, due to their experiences playing the “weaker part” in cultural and political unions with Denmark and Sweden.<sup>69</sup> This suggests that, due to their negative connotation of the word “union,” Norwegians must view the idea of joining the European “Union” as not only dangerous, but almost repulsive. Once again, one can see constructivist theory at work. In line with the earlier assertion of Larsen *et al.* (1995) that national identity becomes most important when it is threatened, it is apparent that Norwegian identity has gained a louder voice in light of the fact that Norwegians view the EU as a threat to their national sovereignty. Indeed, Neumann states that, for Norwegians, EU membership was seen as “a question of being dissolved in a larger unit,” and as “a question of eradicating Norwegian democracy and identity by returning to a situation which had existed once before...a union with stronger parties.”<sup>70</sup> This means that the supranational nature of the EU is in direct conflict with the Norwegian sovereignty that resulted from the nation’s historical struggle for independence. Norwegians are reluctant to surrender

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<sup>68</sup>Østerud 2005: 710-11; Neumann 2002: 94-5, 99-102.

<sup>69</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 541.

<sup>70</sup>Neumann 2002: 115.

sovereignty and independence to the EU, namely, because they worked so hard to achieve it in the first place.

The collective memory of Norway's unique WWII resistance movement figures strongly in the national identity of "the people." While the Danes quickly surrendered to the Germans and the Swedes maintained neutrality throughout the war, the Norwegians resisted the Nazis and fought together upon German invasion and occupation in 1940.<sup>71</sup> The "freedom-fighter spirit" that came out of relative Norwegian success in collective wartime resistance seems hard-pressed to surrender any real degree of sovereignty to European influence. Rather, it is apparent that this shared wartime resistance instead contributed to a strong link between national identity and patriotic nationalism in Norway, and that it created the idea that those who did not participate in the resistance were locked out of the nation. Many European countries had strong resistance movements to Nazi occupation; it is important to emphasize, however, that as part of a quite young nation, Norwegians felt an enormous sense of pride in their resistance movement. This sense of accomplishment around the resistance became an important badge of national identity in the postwar period, as compared to other places.<sup>72</sup> The 1990-1993 World Values Survey shows that patriotism remains an important part of Norwegian national identity: 91 percent of Norwegians surveyed said that they would be willing to fight for their country if another war broke out at that time.<sup>73</sup> These sentiments suggest that Norwegians developed strong feelings of independence and resistance to foreign influence, which have contributed to their reluctance to accept EU membership today.

The romanticized ideal of "peasant culture" as the traditional way of life of "the

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<sup>71</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 539-541.

<sup>72</sup>Wæver 1992: 91.

<sup>73</sup>Ronald Inglehart, Miguel Basañez, and Alejandro Moreno. *Human Values and Beliefs: A Cross-Cultural Sourcebook. Political, Religious, Sexual, and Economic Norms in 43 Societies: Findings From the 1990-1993 World Values Survey*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2001.

[Norwegian] people” was an important construction in Norway’s national identity. Ironically, this peasant ideal was constructed first by Norway’s intellectual civil servant elite in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, in an effort to create a Norwegian cultural identity different from that of neighboring countries.<sup>74</sup> The elites suggested that Norwegians should treasure their simple lifestyle, and that the peasants carried on the “fire...the bravery and the endurance” of Norwegian days gone by. After Norway’s independence in 1905, when Norwegians began to look more deeply at themselves in relation to other Europeans, the romantic ideal of the “free peasant” became the nation’s unique characteristic that allowed it to stand apart from other European nations.<sup>75</sup> This focus on Norway as “special” contributed to the formation of the perception among Norwegians of Norway as the “us” and Europe as “the Other.” It is also important to stress here that Norwegians considered fishers and farmers to be the heart and soul of the “peasant ideal,” and, therefore, of “the people.” In this way, the very nature of “Norwegianness” has come to dictate that “it *is* possible to keep the whole territory populated...there *is* a fisher on each island and a farmer on each *fjell*.”<sup>76</sup> One can see truth in Gstöhl’s assertion that, in the 1972 and 1994 referenda, alarm at losing this “romanticized image of rural traditions and nature” as the ideal Norwegian lifestyle contributed to the Norwegian vote of ‘no.’<sup>77</sup> Peasant culture – in providing a callback to the past for many Norwegians who currently live in a sort of ‘oil-supported welfare paradise’ – forms a core element of Norwegian national identity. The idea of this element being dissolved into a larger European identity is clearly unacceptable to Norwegians.

Constructivist theory quite clearly applies to the identity-related aspects of the Norway-

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<sup>74</sup>Wæver 1992: 91-2.

<sup>75</sup>Neumann 2002: 92, 101-5.

<sup>76</sup>Wæver 1992: 91-2.

<sup>77</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 541.

EU relationship. However, rationalist theory also applies to Norway-EU relations in the sense that Norwegian leaders and citizens have acted rationally – out of self-interest – in their relationship with the EU, especially with regard to economic and security concerns. A few links between the two schools of thought have already emerged, but more should reveal themselves below.

In many respects, Einhorn’s earlier idea about Norwegian rationalism – that in considering economic relations with the EU, Norwegians tend to analyze costs and benefits and make a decision based on self-interest – has held true. For example, the economic situation in Norway was fairly strong at the time of the 1994 referendum, e.g., high employment, high living standards, and high petroleum income. Thus, Norwegians did not need EU membership to help stabilize their economy. Norwegian public opinion data in the chart below (Figure 9) supports these facts; little more than a quarter of Norwegians surveyed believed, in the period leading up to the 1994 referendum, that their economic system needed “fundamental changes.” This

<b>Figure 9: Public Opinion about the Norwegian Economy, 1990-1993</b>	
% of Norwegians who “strongly agree” with the statement: “This country’s economic system needs fundamental changes.”	28 %
% of Norwegians who consider the most important national goal to be “maintaining a high level of economic growth.”	48 %
Data Source: Inglehart <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	

suggests that a majority of Norwegians viewed any economic changes that might result from EU membership as unnecessary. Additionally, almost half of Norwegians surveyed ranked



“maintaining a high level of economic growth” as their key national goal. It is safe to assume that Norwegians, satisfied with the sound performance of their economy as things were, saw EU membership as unimportant to maintaining a high economic growth rate. These opinions resulted in a rational decision to join the EEA, which has allowed Norwegians to receive all the economic benefits desired from the EU without actually becoming a full member.<sup>78</sup>

A second example of self-interest contributing to the Norwegian vote of ‘no’ to the EU can be found in the idea that Norwegians wanted to keep their resources for themselves. The people believed that they had taken good care of their natural resources and that they should continue to do so; for this reason, despite repeated assurances from the EEA establishment that no “reduction of environmental standards” would be required, in economic production or otherwise, Norwegians remain skeptical of EU policy in regard to environmental standards.<sup>79</sup> Here one can see a link emerge between identity and self-interest. The Norwegians, recognized with the other Scandinavians for excellence in environmental and social standards, have internalized this factor into their identity. Indeed, Ingebritsen posits that the Nordics have been able to act as “norm entrepreneurs,” raising the bar for social policy in continental Europe.<sup>80</sup> This suggests that, for Norwegians, the EU represents a threat to social and environmental norms and thus also a threat to national identity. So, Norwegians have rationally chosen to protect their prized resources – the resources closely identified with the essence of “Norwegian-ness” – from European exploitation.

Additionally, rationalism dictates that primary economic sectors will influence support, or the lack thereof, for integration; in Norway, this concept has taken an interesting shape. Eliassen and Sitter argue that the most important economic basis of Norway’s European

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<sup>78</sup>Svåsand 2002: 331-332.

<sup>79</sup>Eliassen & Sitter 2003: 134.

<sup>80</sup>Ingebritsen 2004: 381.

reluctance draws on sectors that “face uncertainty or decreased subsidies if exposed to free trade and competition” – primarily agriculture and fisheries, the public sector, and Norway’s regional subsidy policy recipients.<sup>81</sup> This argument points overwhelmingly to links between national identity and self-interest in Nordic decision-making. First, it was established above that Norway’s enormous public sector has provided the basis for a liberal provision of social welfare state benefits. As the welfare state helps to define what it means to “be Norwegian,” citizens have recoiled from EU membership in an effort to protect the economic interests of their welfare model. In reference to the primary economic sectors and regional subsidy program, Østerud notes that offshore oil and gas deposits – Norway’s petroleum industry – form the core of the Norwegian economy, along with agriculture and fisheries.<sup>82</sup> Windfall profits from petroleum revenues have given Norway the opportunity to subsidize the agriculture and fishery sectors heavily in a regional program on which they have come to depend; indeed, direct subsidies to Norwegian agriculture are “amongst the highest in the world.”

It is clear at this point that oil is Norway’s leading economic sector. Nevertheless, when it came to EU membership, citizens in the sectors of farming, fisheries, and small industry were the ones able to lobby a successful “no” vote to Europe in 1994.<sup>83</sup> Why should this be the case? Here, it is necessary to re-emphasize in more detail the link between economics and identity. Despite the fact that the majority of Norwegians were employed outside of the economic sectors of agriculture and fisheries, as shown above, these sectors were able to “captivate the heart of the nation.” They represent and have a link to the traditional Norwegian “peasant myth” as a facet of national identity; it follows that the Norwegian population supported these sectors due to the fear

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<sup>81</sup>Eliassen & Sitter 2003: 128.

<sup>82</sup>Østerud 2005: 708.

<sup>83</sup>Iver B. Neumann, “Symposium on Ingebritsen, *The Nordic States and European Unity.*” *Cooperation and Conflict* 36(1) 2001: 89-90.

of a drop in rural populations with the centralization resulting from European membership. And a drop in rural populations would, after all, endanger the very core of the Norwegian identity.<sup>84</sup>

Rational choice theory also relates to concerns about security in Norway-EU relations. First, one may note that United Nations membership has provided an adequate channel for Norway to engage in “civilian crisis management and conflict prevention.”<sup>85</sup> Membership in the UN has also helped to construct the idea of “Norway” as a “brand for peacemaking, development aid and a better environment.”<sup>86</sup> It is logical to conclude that national identity has played into Norwegian security involvement in the UN, in the sense that the UN has reinforced Norwegian identity as being equated with a consensual brand of conflict resolution, a high level of environmental standards, and a protective stance toward developing nations.

Additionally, Norwegians allied themselves with NATO in 1949; hence the Norwegian “security identity” has been and continues to be dominated by ideas of “Atlanticism” – looking west to Great Britain and to the U.S. for security and protection, as well as for common interests. For example, like Great Britain and some other smaller EU members, Norwegians view NATO and the Atlantic orientation as a counterweight to excessive German-French influence.<sup>87</sup> During

<b>Figure 10: Norwegian Confidence in NATO, 1990-1993</b>	
% of Norwegians who have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in NATO	67 %
Data Source: Inglehart <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	

<sup>84</sup>Neumann 2002: 115.

<sup>85</sup>Rieker 2004: 379.

<sup>86</sup>Østerud 2005: 713.

<sup>87</sup>Rieker 2004: 385.

the Cold War, Norwegian NATO membership represented a delicate balance between the United States and the Soviet Union; since the end of the Cold War, Norwegian reliance on NATO has remained as strong as ever.<sup>88</sup> This has implications: with the guaranteed defense protection of NATO, Norwegians do not “need” the security guarantees of the EU.<sup>89</sup> The public opinion data in Figure 10 above supports this argument, showing that roughly two-thirds of Norwegians surveyed – 67 percent – expressed “a great deal” of confidence in NATO in the period leading up to 1994. It is logical to conclude that costs of full EU membership are many and security benefits are few, so Norwegians acted in rational self-interest and opted only for EEA relations with Europe in the 1994 referendum.

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<sup>88</sup>Østerud 2005: 712.

<sup>89</sup>Gstöhl 2002: 541.

## FINLAND

The constructivist-related concept of national identity is, visibly, a powerful factor contributing to the reluctance of Norwegian attitudes toward European integration. The concept of national identity is an influential factor contributing to Finnish attitudes toward European integration as well, but in a different way – it has contributed to the formation of a much more positive outlook on EU membership in Finland. Additionally, the way national identity developed in Finland differs greatly from the way that it developed in Norway. Interestingly enough, issues of national identity have almost consumed current Norwegian debates on European integration, while national identity is not really a salient issue on the current agenda of Finnish debates. Of course, this does not mean that national identity is less important to Finns than Norwegians – it has simply manifested itself in a different way in the two nations.<sup>90</sup>

“Finnishness” has typically been characterized as “a culture of opposition and resistance.” Throughout the Cold War, Finns preferred to remain in the shadows of international politics – in fact, the Finnish government has been so doggedly committed to a policy of neutrality that EU membership was considered impossible through the 1980s. However, the new decade began with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, and EU membership suddenly became the hot issue on the Finnish political agenda. Explanations for the Finnish burst of European enthusiasm often revolve around the idea that Finns wanted to downplay perceptions of their nation as a representation of “Soviet subordination”; they thought that EU membership would provide legitimate international recognition that Finland fits and belongs in the West. Many Finnish citizens also viewed EU membership as a “manifestation of identity,” or a way to achieve a more authentic recognition of the liberal Western cultural values and democratic institutions that Finland has enjoyed since independence. Well-educated, urban

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<sup>90</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 189.

males – who believed that membership could improve democratic openness and government decision- making capabilities – comprised a large percentage of EU supporters in 1994.<sup>91</sup>

<b>Figure 11: Finnish Public Opinion About Government, 1990-1993</b>	
% of Finns who “strongly agree” with the statement: “Our government should be made much more open to the public.”	42 %
% of Finns who say that their most important national goal is “giving people more say in important government decisions”	59 %
Data Source: Inglehart <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	

The public opinion data in Figure 11 demonstrates that a significant percentage of Finns surveyed placed a great deal of importance on two issues in the period leading up to the 1994 EU referendum: first, improving government openness, and second, giving the electorate more of a say in government decisions. As the Finnish people opted for full EU membership in 1994, it is probable that they viewed the EU as an organization that could help them achieve these goals.

Still, the path to EU membership was not a complete cakewalk. Some Finns – usually women, or those citizens with a generally low education level or rural upbringing – did express concerns over EU membership in the period leading up to the referendum. One concern, the idea that Finnish sovereignty could be compromised in the EU, was quieted by the concept above that EU membership simply represented a public reclaiming of the Western values that Finland had historically supported – but had sometimes lost the ability to exercise – as an underdog during times of Russian predominance. Other concerns centered on issues such as a possible decrease

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<sup>91</sup>Jungar 2002: 399-402.

in welfare state benefits and the undemocratic nature of the EU.<sup>92</sup> Regardless, in the end, the majority of Finnish people were persuaded to say ‘yes’ to Europe, and Finland entered the EU in 1995. It is certainly apparent that the nature of Finnish national identity played a significant role in the relatively widespread Finnish acceptance of full-scale European integration.

The Finnish national identity lacks, to a large degree, the “people versus elite” element that so strongly typifies the Norwegian national identity. Instead, the Finnish identity is most characterized by flexibility and a “dual concept of the nation” as a “culture nation” and a “state nation.” Finns have the unique ability to separate the two “nation” concepts, to separate culture from politics, because – as mentioned previously – the two concepts developed separately and at different times.<sup>93</sup> It is therefore plausible that this flexible identity has allowed Finns to swallow the European pill of supra-nationalism more easily than her Nordic neighbors.

The assembling of any kind of Finnish identity began quite late, in the early 1800s, after Finland – already under Swedish domination – was conquered by Russia in 1808-1809. The Russian government gave the Finnish people a relatively high degree of political autonomy and supported their cultural development. In the sense that ‘Finland’ did not begin as a sovereign state and could not pursue political independence because this would clash with Russia, the construction of a nation based on culture and people naturally took priority over the creation of a nation based on power politics. Additionally, the fact that the “culture nation” was created by Finnish elites – who spoke Swedish as their first language - in a Russian framework implies that Finnish identity was invented, not naturally developed.<sup>94</sup> While modern Finnish society lacks any real degree of tension between Swedish- and Finnish-speaking Finns, this early language cleavage manifested itself in the emergence of urban and rural communities that contained heavy

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<sup>92</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 182-185.

<sup>93</sup>Hansen 2002: 214.

<sup>94</sup>Rinehart 2002: 427-428.

concentrations of either Swedish speakers or Finnish-speakers, respectively.

**Figure 12: Map of Finland's Language Communities** (Sjöholm, 2004)

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

Figure 12 illustrates the point above; we can see that Swedish-speaking majority communities exist primarily in the Åland Islands, the region of Ostrobothnia, and the urban centers around Helsinki and Turku, while Finnish-speaking majority communities exist primarily along the rural



coastline and in the country's interior. It is important to note that, in Finland, the 1994 stronghold for EU supporters was concentrated in the urban and populous triangle of Helsinki (73.6 percent of citizens voting 'yes' to membership), Turku (63.5 percent voting 'yes'), and Tampere (61.8 percent voting 'yes').<sup>95</sup> Together, these observations suggest a correlation between language, national identity, and EU support in Finland: the strongest level of 'yes' votes to EU membership, in 1994, came from urban areas inhabited by a Swedish-speaking majority.

Moving back to the formation of Finnish identity, the concept of the Finnish nation was, in the beginning, not political but cultural – it emphasized “language, rule of law, competent administration, civil development and economic progress” as key elements. The concept of the national was also “emancipatory,” in the sense that it united all people and superseded any possible cleavages. In contrast to Norway, the goal of the Finnish nation was not to protect some sort of unique national identity, but to “grow as a cultural entity.” As a result, Finns did not see resistance to the state as desirable or necessary – they could be loyal to the Finnish “culture nation” and the Russian “state nation” simultaneously.<sup>96</sup>

Toward the end of the 1800s, Russia became repressive and the concept of the “state nation” finally emerged in Finland to bond with the “culture nation.” Finnish identity at this time centered on definitions of what Finns were not, i.e., Russian or Eastern. The Finnish nation continued to be defined by “contrasting Finnish-ness with Russian-ness” after independence in 1917. However, following WWII, Finns became distracted by the question of how to deal with the Soviet Union and the Cold War. The “culture nation” again prevailed over the “state nation,” as evidenced by the fact that the Finnish-Soviet relationship centered on the concept of “mutual trust.” The Finnish state and Finnish nation worked together to protect national unity, and the

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<sup>95</sup>Bjørklund 1996: 24-25.

<sup>96</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 194-196.

concept of the nation as “emancipatory” again became central.<sup>97</sup>

It seems that the fact that Finland acts today as a link between Russia and Europe, and that Finland continues to encourage closer cooperation between Russia and the EU, show that national identity construction has played a strong role in Finnish EU and foreign policy. It is also clear that, because the Finnish “cultural nation” developed in the shadow of a larger Russian “state nation,” it has been easier for Finns to accept the merging of their current national identity with the larger identity of the EU. This implies, according to constructivist views, that the Finnish construction of Europe fits quite well with the Finnish construction of self, namely the Finnish national identity. In Figure 13 below, we can see that a good majority of the Finns surveyed – 61 percent – have a positive attitude toward changes in their lives. This data further illustrates the malleable nature of Finnish identity, suggesting an easy adjustment to life changes brought about by full EU membership.

<b>Figure 13: Finnish Public Opinion – Adapting to Change</b>	
% of Finns who “strongly agree” or “quite strongly agree” with the statement:  “When changes occur in my life, I welcome the possibility that something  new is beginning.”	61 %
Data Source: Inglehart <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	

Indeed, Joenniemi says that, “there is no firm image of a ‘Finland’ now clashing with a firmly defined ‘Europe’” – instead, the flexible nature of the Finnish identity allows the two constructs to work together.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>97</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 197-201.

<sup>98</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 208.

National identity, as an application of constructivism, has played a clear role in determining the positive nature of Finnish attitudes toward the EU. However, self-interest in economic and security issues, as an application of rationalism, has also contributed to the Finnish attitude toward European integration.

In the early 1990s, the Finnish economy suffered an intense crisis, due largely to the loss of a major trading partner with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the “decline of the Eastern market.” In exploring possible solutions, Finnish leaders acted out of self-interest and applied for EU membership – after all, who could better help to stabilize the Finnish currency and re-energize the Finnish economy than the EU?<sup>99</sup> Additionally, it follows that, since the EU was so instrumental in getting Finland back on her economic feet, it was easier for Finns to accept the EMU. After all, they had learned to rely on the Euro. Here, one can see a link emerge between identity, economics, and even security: the inherent survival instincts of the Finnish people not only provided them with a rational appreciation of the economic benefits and political security that EU membership entailed, but also dictated a degree of ease in merging national identity with a larger European identity and accepting “Finnish-ness” in a European context.<sup>100</sup>

As has been established, Finnish security concerns have always involved a strong consideration of Russia. Over the years, Finland has gone from belonging to Russia to acting as a “bridge-builder” between Russia, the Baltic States and Europe. After WWII, Finnish leaders refrained from joining NATO, but maintained a policy of non-alignment – and Finland remained staunchly neutral into the beginning of the 1990s. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, however, outside threats to Finnish security have greatly decreased. While always keeping an eye on their neighbor to the East, Finns began – for the first time – to look west to the EU with regard to

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<sup>99</sup>Joenniemi 2002: 188.

<sup>100</sup>Rinehart 2002: 430-431.

security issues.<sup>101</sup>

Additionally, it has been fairly easy for the Finns to replace their traditional doctrine of “neutrality” or “non-alignment” with EU security policy, primarily because they had adopted neutrality, in the first place, with purely strategic considerations in mind. Once the international security environment changed, the Finnish security policy was able to mold itself into a new shape.<sup>102</sup> It is logical to conclude that the Finns acted rationally, or in their best security interests, by joining the EU. With no NATO alignment, the EU gives Finns a new degree of protection and

<b>Figure 14: Finnish Confidence in NATO, 1990-1993</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;">% of Finns who have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in NATO</p>	<p>29 %</p>
<p>Data Source: Inglehart <i>et al.</i>, 2001.</p>	

a number of friends in defense. In showing that only 29 percent of Finns had a strong degree of confidence in NATO during the period leading up to 1994, Figure 14 demonstrates the need for a different form of security as a positive aspect of Finnish EU membership. Full European cooperation also allows Finland to replace bilateral Finnish-Russian relations with much more secure EU-Russian relations.<sup>103</sup> Finally, Finland benefits from EU membership in the security arena because of the reputation of Finnish politicians as excellent negotiators and mediators. Active participation in EU security policies gives Finland a louder voice and purpose in the EU. A link emerges between identity and security here; first, it is probable that the flexible nature of Finnish identity contributed to the ease with which Finns were able to redefine their neutrality

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<sup>101</sup>Rieker 2004: 375.

<sup>102</sup>Rieker 2004: 375-376.

<sup>103</sup>Rinehart 2002: 431-432.

doctrine. Second, in giving Finns the chance to embrace a role as conflict mediators, EU membership has also given them the chance to embrace an important part of their national identity.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

In this thesis, I have researched and analyzed the reasons why Norway has consistently behaved as the most EU-reluctant nation in Norden, with only EEA-participation in the EU and an electorate that has turned down full EU membership twice. I have also examined possible reasons why Finland remains the least EU-reluctant Nordic nation, with full and active EU participation and a relatively high degree of public support for it. I found no single political theory in my research that can aptly discuss every aspect of the nature of relationships between nation-states and the EU. Hence I hypothesized that, instead of dichotomizing Norwegian and Finnish attitudes toward Europeanization into finite categories of identity and self-interest, we should seek to find the “grey area” or “middle way” between these two approaches. I did use a framework of constructivism to analyze Norwegian and Finnish national identity and a framework of rationalism to analyze interest-oriented aspects of Norwegian and Finnish relationships with the EU, but I discussed the interdependent relationship of the two dynamics along the way.

I have found that, in Norway, a national identity centered on the idea of “the people” as the “heart of the nation” has manifested itself in multiple ways, ultimately resulting in a negative construction of Europe as an elitist and undemocratic “Other.” This construction of Europe is clearly incompatible with the Norwegian construction of self as a people-centered and democratic “Us.” In regard to economic issues, Norwegians have acted in self-interest; they receive all the economic benefits they need from the EEA, so they have no special incentive to join the EU in this regard. However, the “Us” vs. “Other” construction has also factored into economic questions in multiple ways. For example, to the extent that Norwegians have tied their perception of themselves to their highly subsidized welfare state, the Norwegian people have

fought to protect that welfare identity in the face of a European Union that lies to the right of Scandinavia on most major social and economic issues. Additionally, the economic sectors of agriculture and fisheries – despite representing an ever-smaller proportion of Norwegian workers and growing ever-more dependent on state subsidies for survival – were able to present themselves as the embodiment of “Norwegian-ness” and so influence a vote of “no” to EU membership in the 1994 referendum. In the area of security, Norwegian leaders have certainly acted out of self-interest; since Norway receives a guarantee of security as part of its NATO alignment, no security benefits that could stem from EU membership seem necessary at the present time. It proved more difficult to find links between identity and self-interest in the security arena, but I did discover that the United Nations has provided a forum in which Norwegians can assert to the world their self-identification as a generous, consensus-oriented, and democratic people. In this light, Norwegians do not need to rely on the EU as a channel through which to affirm their national uniqueness and importance in the world.

I have found that, in Finland, the flexible and dual nature of national identity has allowed the Finns to separate culture from politics, resulting in a positive construction of Europe as a complement, not a threat, to the Finnish construction of self. The Finns have acted out of self-interest with regard to economic issues; the comparatively stable EU economy provided the perfect solution to the intense economic crisis Finland suffered in the early 1990s. Finnish leaders have also acted out of self-interest with regard to security issues; as Finland has never been aligned with NATO, the EU has provided a degree of protection and security to Finland in a changing and unpredictable world. Active participation in the EU security arena, and in international organizations like the UN, has also given Finns the chance to raise their voice in

regional and global politics and to demonstrate their traditional negotiating skills – thereby giving them the chance to assert their national identity.

In my view, these findings clearly demonstrate that neither national identity, as related to constructivism, nor self-interest, as related to rationalism, can by itself explain Norwegian and Finnish attitudes toward European integration. Instead, the two factors have worked together to play a significant role in determining the nature of the Norway-EU and Finland-EU relationships.

I am aware that both of the theories I applied to my research have come under various criticisms. Perhaps with more time and more research, and in the context of an even lengthier study, these criticisms can be addressed and evaluated. In the future, it would be especially interesting to perform a study comparing Norway with a fellow “reluctant Scandinavian” – perhaps Iceland – with regard to issues of identity and self-interest in a European context.



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