European Mobility and Spatial Belongings
Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden
Vasileios Petrogiannis

SÖDERTÖRN DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS
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Abstract

Nation-states and national identities are a product of European history and have been the most salient framework of spatial identification since the nineteenth century. In the past decades, however, the EU has attempted to foster a supplementary European sense of identity, embodied in the notion of European citizenship. Moreover, the European continent encompasses various macro-regions that have been presented as having certain historical significance and that play a role in identity politics. Two prominent examples are the Baltic and the Mediterranean regions.

This study reconstructs through interviews the overlapping identifications of Latvian and Greek migrants, respectively – migrants who have moved to Sweden in different time periods after the Second World War up to the present. The interviews focus on issues related to integration, feelings of belonging and spatial identification with the countries of origin (Latvia, Greece) and residence (Sweden) in order to understand the significance of the nation in the current European context. Another aim is to examine how the idea of a common European identity, as an aggregate based on national and regional affiliation, works in practice. Furthermore, the interviews executed in this study give an account of how migrants position themselves in relation to the Baltic Sea region and the Mediterranean as well as to alternative macro regional spaces. The study of immigrants’ narratives about their social and everyday life, and their personal experience of coping with public authorities seeks to improve our understanding of the current phenomenon of internal European migration, which is still an under-researched field.

The analysis shows that the nation, both that of origin and of residence, remains the most significant space of identification for the interviewed EU-migrants. It is obvious that the EU has not brought forth a European identity parallel to the national one. However, elements of European identification and belonging exist in the responses of the migrants, revolving around their benefitting from free mobility inside the EU. This study shows also that there barely is any particular identification with the Baltic and Mediterranean regions among the examined migrants. However, other macro regional identifications appeared, such as the Baltic States for Latvian and the Balkan for Greek interviewees.

Keywords: migration, intra-European migration, European mobility, national identity, European identity, regional identity, belonging, macro-regions, Baltic Sea, Mediterranean, Latvia, Greece, Sweden.
Sammanfattning (Summary/abstract in Swedish)

Nationalstaten och nationell identitet är produkter av europeisk historia som sedan 1800-talet är den viktigaste utgångspunkten för individers upplevelse av rumslig identifikation. Under de senaste decennierna har EU också försökt att aktivt utveckla framväxten av en kompletterande europeisk identitet, uttryckt i idén om ett europeiskt medborgarskap. Förutom det rymmer den europeiska kontinnten olika makroregioner som presenterats som historiskt viktiga och som spelar en identitetspolitisk roll. Två centrala exempel är Östersjöregionen och Medelhavsrumpen.

Genom intervjuer med lettiska och grekiska migranter som kommit till Sverige under olika tidsperioder, från andra världskriget fram till idag, syftar denna avhandling till att rekonstruera intervjuersonernas överlappande identiteter. Frågan om vilken betydelse identitet kopplad till nationen har i dagens europeiska kontext utforskas genom att intervjuerna fokuserar på frågor som handlar om integration, känslor av tillhörighet och rumslig identifikation med ursprungsländerna (Lettland eller Grekland) och till det land där de nu bor (Sverige). Avhandlingen bidrar även till att undersöka hur strävan att åstadkomma en gemensam europeisk identitet, som en kombination av nationell och regional tillhörighet, kan fungera i praktiken. Intervjuerna som genomförts för denna studie ger vidare en inblick i hur migranternas identitetpositionerar sig i relation till Östersjöregionen respektive Medelhavsrumpen och till andra möjliga makroregionala rum. Migranternas berättelser om bland annat sociala nätverk, vardagsliv och personliga erfarenheter av att hantera offentliga myndigheter, bidrar till att ge insikter om inom- och europeisk migration, ett fält där forskningen för närvarande är begränsad.


Nyckelord: migration, intra-europeisk migration, europeisk mobilitet, nationell identitet, europeisk identitet, regional identitet, tillhörighet, makro-regioner, Östersjön, Medelhavet, Lettland, Grekland, Sverige.
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Part 1
1. Introduction

1.1. Identities beyond the nation

Lefteris: How much Greek you are and how much Swede”. Typical stupid question! And I respond 40% Greek, 30% Swede, and the other 30% I have lost somewhere in between.

Artis: You see, the Latvians do not see me as Latvian when I go there [...] OK, we are half Latvian and half Swede. This is what we are. And because of all the different schools and places I have been with work, 23 places in Sweden. So, I feel home nowhere and everywhere.

The above quotes are taken from in-depth interviews with Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden who have been informants for this dissertation. In the first quote, Lefteris quantifies his national affiliations in an attempt to organize his national identifications, while leaving a percentage for his belonging in a spatial void created by his migration experience. The second quote shows Artis’ non-conventional relationship with his country of origin. The desire to belong to Latvia is somehow nullified by his non-migrant compatriots in Latvia, leaving him in a state of ambiguity regarding his national belonging. For him, the migration experience, which is accompanied by hyper-mobility, has created a sense of boundlessness and at the same time a lack of affiliation.

The two responses show the complexity of belonging and identification in a migration context. For migrants, especially long-term ones, nation-states seem to be an insufficient and even a problematic framework for expressing their affiliations and identifications. The spatial void expressed by Lefteris and the boundlessness or lack of affiliation indicated by Artis can be regarded as a means of positioning themselves outside the narrow scheme of the nation-state. It is precisely this kind of spatial openness that this dissertation seeks to explore. Focusing on Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden, this research examines individuals’ identifications and belongings on different spatial levels (national, European, regional) and scrutinizes the entanglement of this spatial nexus.
In today’s hyper-mobile world, especially in the European Union (EU) context, we would also expect individuals to express spatial identities outside the frontiers of the nation-state. Migrants are de facto related to at least two nation-states – their country of origin and country of destination – but they may also relate themselves to other territorial and non-territorial entities.

The identifications of Lefteris and Artis, as well as of other Greek and Latvian informants in this research, can be related to EU-level processes regarding the institutionalization of Europe and construction of a European identity via a series of strategies (Fornäs 2012, McCormick 2010). Until recently, a number of politicians and scholars working with EU issues have been optimistic about the possibility of inhabitants of the continent adopting a European identity (Trenz 2015). EU free mobility has been a salient tool in this effort to promote European integration and construct a European identity (Recchi 2015). For this reason, intra-European migrants are sometimes highlighted as prominent representatives of the European ideal (Favell 2008a). But is this also reflected in the self-identifications of migrants? Is Europe an area to which they feel affiliation?

Despite efforts towards European unification, the continent has never been a homogenized area, which has hindered establishment of a common identity. Historically, it has always been a space of division, which in regional terms is particularly manifested along the south-north and east-west axes (Delanty 1995; Baumeister and Sala 2015; Pocock 2002). The EU as a project, especially after the fall of the Iron Curtain, tried to bring its constitutive parts together and soften their differences through integration. This took place within the framework and ideology of regionalism, of which the EU is also a primary example (Fawn 2009). European macro-regions, the Baltic Sea being a particularly prominent example, became an additional tool to promote EU integration (Stocchiero 2010). Efforts to establish a Baltic Sea identity (or, from an economic perspective, a regional brand) became part of the regionalization process. The Baltic Sea region became an example of regional cooperation for other macro-regions such as the Mediterranean Sea. Besides the institutionalization efforts by the EU, the Baltic Sea region and the Mediterranean have played an important historical and cultural role, the first having been alluded to as the “Mediterranean of the North” (Henningsen 2008). The extent to which Greek and Latvian migrants to Sweden feel affiliation to these two regions will be explored below, as will whether the regions could become significant...
spaces of belonging and add to or replace spatial identifications typical of a nation-state.

This dissertation aims to contribute to the field of political sciences and to the literature on nationalism, Europeanism and regionalism by revealing the dynamics of national, European and regional identifications and belonging, as understood by intra-European migrants: the agents of European mobility. Interviewing post-WW2 Latvian and Greek migrants to Sweden may elucidate how intra-European migrants construct their affiliations to different spaces, at the scale level of the nation, macro-region, and Europe. The dissertation explores to what extent and how they relate themselves to the nation (Sweden, Latvia, or Greece), Europe (or the EU), and macro-regions (Baltic or Mediterranean Sea). The questions to be addressed are: 1) How do intra-European migrants discursively construct these three types of space and their own identifications in relation to these spaces? 2) How do they formulate their sense of belonging to these spatial entities? 3) What is the significance of each of these spaces for those migrants?

Sweden’s general understanding and assessment of policies intended to create cohesion and identity among citizens depend on information of the kind this dissertation aims to develop. Political attempts at enhancing, promoting or even halting the process of Europeanization would benefit from taking into consideration how the EU project is seen at the micro-level. By investigating the everyday consequences and perceptions of European integration, and the positioning of the individual in this process, the study helps to explore its present dynamics in terms of belonging and identification and gives glimpses of its future prospects. Additionally, the results may be helpful in debates concerning what policy choices are recommendable or inadvisable. For instance, one of the findings in this study – that feelings of belonging to and identification with macro-regions are weak – could be taken to indicate the need to target, in a more fruitful manner, integration and cooperation within a macro-regional framework. Lastly, investigating the attitudes of EU migrants towards both the nation of residence and that of origin helps us to understand what role the nation-state plays as regards belonging in an era of large-scale migration, both in a European context and in a world in which global flows will continue irrespective of national attempts to control them.

By answering the research questions, this dissertation contributes to various scientific fields such as political identification, migration studies, and European and area studies, in that it fills a research gap regarding the
identification and belonging of migrants in multiple and overlapping spaces, focusing on the nation-state, Europe and macro-regions. The following part of the introduction examines the dynamics between unification and division in Europe and how this is translated in regional terms. It illustrates the state of the art regarding intra-European regional migration and migration from Greece and Latvia to Sweden, as well as the multi-scale identifications in a migratory context. In addition, it points out the research gap regarding the multi-spatial self-identifications of migrants.

This dissertation is affiliated with the overarching project “Spaces of Expectation: Mental Mapping and Historical Imagination in the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Region”. That project promoted comparative research between the macro-regional settings of the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea region. The present dissertation chose Greece and Latvia as countries representing these macro-regions and Sweden as a fruitful choice of destination country, given the comparably large immigration to Sweden from Greece and Latvia during the post-WW2 period and until today.

1.2. Europe: a space of multiple otherings

Europe has been geographically and institutionally constructed, via the EU, as a unified space. EU citizens have the right, under some conditions, to move and reside freely inside this area. However, Europe has been a fragmented area historically and culturally. In order to illustrate its heterogeneity, many scholars have referred to “Europes”, using the plural form (Delanty 2006; Lehti and Smith 2003; Mishkova and Trencsenyi 2017; Stadius 2001; Stocchiero 2010). Thus, for Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden, the country of origin (Greece or Latvia) and that of residence (Sweden) presumably belong to different “Europes”, or different regions. Greece is a country of the European south that has historically been in between east and west, but that throughout the 20th century has participated in all of the western political institutions and organizations, thus demonstrating its western orientation (Tsoukalas 2002). Latvia has also constantly been on the edge of east and west and, after the Soviet period, the country has tried to establish itself among the western nations (Mikkel and Pridham 2004). In recent years, both countries have experienced economic crises and significant outflows of migrants, predominantly to other European countries (Hazans 2019). Between 2010 and 2018, the number of
emigrants from Greece was 925,299 individuals.\(^1\) For Latvia, the total number of long-term emigrants after 1991 until 2018 was 617,762 individuals.\(^2\)

Sweden, as the country of residence, lying in the European North, managed to become one of the most developed countries in the world. It was transformed from a country of emigration in the 19th and early 20th century into a popular destination for economic migrants and asylum seekers during the post-WW2 period (Svanberg and Tydén 2005). It was a destination country for WW2 Latvian refugees and also for many Greek economic migrants and refugees during the 1960s and 1970s. Many post-independence Latvian migrants as well as Greeks who emigrated during the eurozone crisis have chosen Sweden as their country of residence.

All three countries also belong to the EU, whose ambition, through decades of European integration, is to construct a more unified political and economic area by softening the differences between the different “Europes”. An important tool in this process was establishment of the idea that Europe is a space of common culture. The European institutions have therefore initiated a discourse of a common cultural base from which a European identity could be developed (McCormick 2010; Heffernan 1998).

European identity is relational in the sense that its construction involves a distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Simonsen 2004, 357). In this process, creating the Other by differentiating them from “us Europeans” is an element that may enhance the sense of belonging to Europe (McCormick 2010, 5). The question of what Europe is or what differentiates Europeans from non-Europeans is an issue not only for the overall ambition of creating a common identity, but also for EU citizens. Zygmunt Bauman (2005,17) argued that Europeans are “we who do not know who we are, as we have no fixed identity”. This paradoxical reasoning is particularly relevant in the case of intra-European migrants, who have to deal with a further uncertainty regarding their identity. They have the legal status as EU citizens, they are residing in a space of “we” defined by the EU, but also by a national “they”, at least upon arrival, denoting the country of residence. Thus, the country of residence can at the same time be a space of belonging and non-belonging, raising the question of how the European “we” co-exists with the national “they” in an intra-EU migration context.


In a period of “hot nationalisms” in the European continent, this puzzle of belonging in a European “we” and at the same time multiple national “we” and “they” becomes even more complex. It seems that the post-cold war optimism for a post-national, supra-national era has lost its dynamics and potency. After almost two decades of intense integration on the European continent through the EU and a series of EU enlargements towards the east, a rise of nationalism and national introversion is apparent on various levels of political and social life (Zoonen 2013, 45; Latcheva et al. 2012). Moreover, the increase in electoral support for nationalistic political parties in Europe shows that the people of the continent might believe that domestic problems are more effectively dealt with on the nation-state level than by the EU. A prominent example of this understanding is “Brexit”, a term referring to the UK’s departure from the EU after the June 2016 referendum. One of the issues that emboldened the anti-EU rhetoric in the country, defining the referendum’s result, was the critical view of internal EU migrants, predominantly those from eastern Europe, who were said to take part in social benefit tourism (Vasilopoulou 2016, 222). This anti-EU migration rhetoric, furthermore, is not a unique UK phenomenon, but can be seen across many EU countries.

After the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements to Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the institutionalized right of free movement inside the union was expanded to the nationals of the new member states in 2011 and 2014, respectively. The discrepancy between accession and acquisition of the right of movement for the citizens of the new member states was based on fears from the older member states that the inflow of low-skilled eastern European workers would create turbulence on their labour markets. The “Polish Plumber”, for example, became a symbol of cheap labour and a stereotypical image of the eastern European migrant that took hold in the Western European imaginary. Similar fears about uncontrolled migration from the South to the North, accompanied by negative images and stereotypes related to laziness and fraud, appeared in the European political and media discourse during the Eurozone economic crisis in 2010 and afterwards. The pejorative acronym PIIGS (Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain) appeared in the early years of the crisis, first in the economic journalism and later propagated in the broader discourse, aiming to describe the general economic inadequacy of the countries of the southern EU member states (Heinrich and Stahl 2017). This term was an indication of resuming lapsed stereotypes and generalizations concerning nations and regions,
which were dormant but nevertheless present and rooted in history (Baumeister and Sala 2015).

Furthermore, the North-South economic division during the Eurozone crisis gave rise to claims about the existence of a centre-periphery system inside the EU, involving political and economic consequences, especially for countries of the periphery (Baumeister and Sala 2015). Similarly, the post-WW2 (geopolitically motivated) spatial division between East and West was maintained during the gradual enlargement of the EU to the east, indicated by the use of the adjective “post-communist”, as Eastern Europe was in a transition period towards political and economic integration with the rest of Europe.

Moreover, to promote integration between “East and West” and “South and North” (but also to support cooperation between EU and non-EU countries), the EU moved to create a number of macro-regions, including the Baltic and the Mediterranean Sea regions (Cappellin 1998; Duboi et al. 2009). Part of this process was to promote the establishment of soft versions of macro-regional identities, hence creating yet another area of “we” and “them” and so adding another element to the already complicated matrix of potential identities for the individuals inhabiting these spaces. The intra-European migrants who are the focus of this study, Greeks and Latvians, may potentially carry with them the regional identities of the Mediterranean or the Baltic region and/or be perceived by other as individuals affiliated with these macro-regions. All of these collective identities – the national, the European and the regional, which are based on different types of othering, create a series of potential spatial inclusions and exclusions and entanglements of “we” vs “them”.

To sum up, taking as a point of departure the politics of belonging, i.e. specific political projects aimed at constructing belonging in particular ways to particular collectivities (Yuval-Davis 2006, 197), to three different spaces on the European continent and the current debates on migration linked to a rise of nationalism, not only in Europe but also globally, this study examines how intra-European migrants relate themselves to three spaces of different scale: the national, the macro-regional, and the European. The dissertation focuses on EU migration from the southern and eastern EU periphery – migrants from Greece and Latvia – to address issues of identification and belonging in the macro-regions of the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea regions, for which efforts have been made by the EU to create an institutional framework (Bialasiewicz and Giaccaria 2012; Kurunmäki 2016).
One of the fundamental pillars of European integration and the most important element of European citizenship, according to Eurobarometer surveys, is the freedom of movement for the people of the European Union’s member states (Recchi 2005). The bilateral agreements between the rich industrial countries of the European North and southern European countries after World War 2, alongside the 1957 Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, were the preliminary first stage of what later became the right of free movement, part of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which also introduced the concept of European citizenship (Preub 1999).

Indeed, international migration inside Europe took place throughout the 20th century and the directions, trajectories and volumes of migration changed repeatedly. Up until WW1, Northern Italians moved to Switzerland and to France, while Spaniards, Belgians, Swiss and Poles also migrated to France. Austrians, Poles, Serbians, Belgians and the Dutch went to Germany, while Germans, the Dutch, Italians and Poles moved to Belgium. WW1 ended the free movement of labour and other aspects of globalization in Europe (Mayer 1972, 173). The general economic decline on the continent and the rise of nationalism, which undergirded the transformation of many regions into independent states, went along with the closure of borders for reasons concerning the defence of these new sovereign entities (Wimmer and Schiller 2002). After the end of WW2, a centre-periphery system was established, which is still prevalent in the south to north migration patterns within Europe (King 2015). Ireland, and Scotland in the west, Finland, in the north and Spain, Italy, Portugal and Greece in the south were part of the scarcely industrialized European periphery, in contrast to the rich industrialized centre, including countries like Sweden (Kaelble 2011; Penninx 1986; Mayer 1972; King 2015).

Contemporary migration flows are often multidirectional and transient, mixing different kinds of migration and mobility, such as tourism, commuting and student migration (Krings et al. 2013; King 2002; O’Reilly 2007). This is significant for Europe, and especially within the EU, as the

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For example, the Gastarbeiterprogramm for West Germany, the gastarbeider programme for the Netherlands and Belgium and the arbetskraftsinvandring for Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland.
open borders inside the union have facilitated intra-EU mobilities. The EU
citizen status defines the legal presuppositions for establishing oneself in
another EU country, and it also creates a category of migrants who are both
“insiders”, because they move inside the institutionalized space of the EU,
and “outsiders” in the sense they are migrating outside of their nation-state
of origin. The characteristics of these intra-EU migrants vary. They may
have decided to migrate for different reasons; they may be low- or high-
skilled migrants, white- or blue-collar workers, labour or lifestyle migrants,
or they may have decided to move for other reasons. Interestingly, the most
common type of migration during the sixties and seventies, that of eco-
nomic migrants from the European South to the European North, reap-
peared once again on the continent during the past decade. For instance,
according to the 2013 OECD International Migration Outlook, there was a
considerable increase in migration flows from the southern part of Europe
to Germany.

The turning points in intra-European labour mobility, alongside the
guest-worker regime, were the fall of the Iron Curtain at the beginning of
the 1990s and the enlargement of the EU after 2004 (Kussbach 1992; Favell
2008b). These two events enhanced labour migration, as it became much
easier for people to move across countries within the EU (Favell and Recchi
2009). A new element of today’s labour migration is that, in addition to low-
skilled workers who traditionally moved to the West, now high-skilled
migrants as well choose the same migration direction, seeking better work-
ing conditions, better employment and career opportunities (Krings et al.
2013; Lett and Smith 2009; Anderson et al. 2006; Anghel 2008; Cizkowicz et
al. 2007; Favell 2008a and 2008b). Both types of migrants face similar
challenges of migration and adjustment to their “new societies”, although
the high-skilled migrants have better options for finding a higher social
status job that may precipitate their social integration (Martinovic et al.
2009). For example, the latter category of high-skilled migrants is some-
times described using the term “expatriate” rather than “migrant”, denoting
the different hierarchy status of these two categories (Lett and Smith 2009;
Boyle 2006).

As pointed out by Recchi (2015, 81), mobile European citizens form an
understudied migrant category. Migration scholars have focused primarily

\footnote{For a detailed quantitative presentation of intra-European mobility, see Recchi 2015.}

migr_outlook-2013-en , accessed 11 November 2017.}
on east-west migration in Europe after 1990, leaving other migration trajectories on the continent under-researched. There are, however, exceptions to this research gap. David Ralph (2015) studied the mobility motivations of Irish cross-border commuters who felt forced out of Ireland when the “Celtic Tiger”, following the 2008 economic crisis, began to be heard along with the Mediterranean “PIIGS”. These people, Ralph argued, deal with many complexities and problems in their lives, which are related to mobility and their need to settle down. He was also very critical of the expression “EU free movers” because “their (relatively privileged) lives, are far more nuanced, far more protean than any simplistic picture of nomadic, peripatetic ‘free-moving Europeans’” (2015, 191). Braun and Recchi (2009, 85) stated that we “know surprisingly little about the objective and subjective profile of the emerging population of free-moving Europeans”. I would add that we know even less about the free-moving Europeans who are a by-product of the recent economic crisis, which, in addition to east-west migration, has created a recent south-north one. Anna Triandafyllidou and Ruby Gropas (2014) argued that, until 2014, there were no other academic studies on the topic, with the exception of a study on Ireland by Irial Glynn, Tomas Kelly, and Piaras McEinrin (2013). Based on an e-survey conducted on 1820 high-skilled Greeks and Italians who had decided to emigrate, Triandafyllidou and Gropas (2014) showed that the migrants did not only move because of deprivation and anxiety over general conditions in their home country, but also because mobility is currently seen as a fundamental element of career and professional self-realization. The past few years have seen an increasing research interest in South-North migration within Europe in the wake of the recent economic crisis. The edited volume “South-North Migration of EU Citizens in Times of Crisis” (Lafluer and Stanek 2017) contains a compilation of different studies focused on intra-EU migration from Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece to northern European countries. Using quantitative and qualitative data, the studies examine the socio-economic integration of southern European migrants in their destination countries and how the right of free mobility inside the EU became a contentious issue during the crisis. Another research initiative regarding south European migration, with a focus on the Greek case, is the “Greek Diaspora Project” at the University of Oxford,

6 Greek Diaspora Project: https://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/research-centres/south-east-european-studies-oxford/greek-diaspora-project, accessed 20 January 2020
1. INTRODUCTION

which has examined the Greek diaspora in different contexts in Europe and around the world and published a series of studies on this phenomenon.\(^7\)

Furthermore, the 2008 economic crisis has brought the economic conditions in Southern Europe closer to that of Eastern Europe, which was, inter alia, one of the push factors for the East-West migration flow. Kahanec and Zimmermann (2010) mentioned that the eastern European migrants who moved to another EU country after the 2004 EU enlargement are still more likely to be viewed as migrant workers, who mostly seek to increase their labour income. The same is the case for southern EU migrants, nationals of old EU member states who have exercised their EU right to free mobility. However, the south-north migration in Europe did not trigger the same level of animosity in destination countries as the East-West one (Lafleur and Stanek 2017, 215). Furthermore, even during the euro crisis, EU movers from Southern Europe were proportionally fewer than those from Central-Eastern and Baltic States (Recchi 2015, 77). Moreover, Favell and Recchi (2009, 24) argued that intra-EU migrants from central-Eastern Europe face discrimination and barriers that migrants from Western Europe do not experience. This might also be the case for the southern European new arrivals in Sweden, as well as in other European countries. Lafleur and Stanek (2017, 10) noticed that some north European countries, such as Belgium and the United Kingdom, treated the new (post-2008) influx of southern European migrants mostly with hostility, while France was neutral and Germany very encouraging of some types of new southern EU migrants.

1.4. Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden after 1945

During the recent emigration wave from Greece to other European countries, Sweden has been a popular destination (Mavrodi and Moutselos 2017, 42). In 2000 there were 10,851 individuals with Greece as their birthplace living in Sweden, while in 2010 the number had risen to 11,381 and in 2018 to 18,917 (Statistics Sweden).\(^8\) Despite this situation, there is remarkably little research dedicated to the phenomenon of Greek migration to Sweden. Most of the studies that do exist regarding migration from Southern Europe to Sweden date back to the 1960s and 1970s, which was

\(^7\) See list of publications of the “Greek Diaspora Project”: http://seesoxdiaspora.org/publications/working-papers-series/

\(^8\) Statistikmyndigheten SCB: http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/sv/ssd/START__BE__BE0101__BE0101E/UtrikesFoddaAntAr/table/tableViewLayout1/; accessed 25 03 2017
the period with the strongest migration flows from the European Mediterranean area to Sweden (Svanberg and Tydén 2005). The autocratic political regimes in Spain, Greece and Portugal in combination with the generally poor economic conditions in the region mobilized the European Mediterraneans to seek a better and safer life in the industrialized, social democratic Sweden. It was the Italians and the Greeks who constituted the majority of the migrants who selected Europe as their destination. The Spaniards mainly chose Latin America and the Portuguese Brazil, for obvious linguistic and cultural reasons (Portes 2015).

This condition is reflected in the literature, which consists of studies focused on the Italian and Greek migration in Sweden. The research interest started in the late 1970s, culminated in the 1980s and diminished in the 1990s and 2000s, with not more than some sporadic studies. Most of the research have focused on the daily lives of Greek migrants and the cultural dialogue between the Greeks and the locals in a specific region or town in Sweden, such as Uppsala, Stockholm or Gothenburg (Caitatzi 1982; Engelbrektsson 1987; Markopoulou 1981; Mitkas 1985). In addition to the economic migrants, there were also political refugees who tried to flee from the authoritarian regime that ruled Greece during the period 1967–1974. Using migrants’ narratives and statistical data, Christina Markopoulou (1981) discussed the reasons for migration and return migration, but also the level of integration of the migrants in Swedish society. According to the literature, the Greeks who lived in Sweden during that period expressed their satisfaction with how the Swedish state had welcomed them as labour force, although they also reported feeling like strangers and having little hope, they would manage to become integrated into and equal members of Swedish society.

During the Soviet period, the mobility of individuals from the Baltic States to Sweden took place in a refugee context owing to the political situation in the region. In terms of size, this immigration was insignificant until the early 1990s (Mayer 1972; Ekengren 2014). The independence of the Baltic States in 1991 and the 2004 EU enlargement were the two political factors that facilitated migration from the Baltic States to Europe (including Sweden). However, it was the economic crisis of 2008 and the high unemployment it resulted in that maintained the already high emigration

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*Sweden and Ireland were the two EU member states that put no restrictions in place regarding the mobility of workers from the new eastern European EU member states.*
trend from the “Baltic Tigers”\textsuperscript{10} to other regions of Europe (Galgóczi and Leschke 2013; Apsite et al. 2012). A 2013 OECD report (Joost and Engbersen 2013) stated that the three Baltic countries experienced continuous emigration after 2008, with negative consequences for their future population, the current working-age population, and negative impacts on the labour market, the national economy and other social developments.

As regards Latvian immigration to Sweden, existing research (at least what is available in English or Swedish) is minimal. Jenny Olofsson (2012) stated that the main gateway among immigrants from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland to Sweden before 2004 was marriage, but EU membership offered the option for more people to choose labour migration as a means of moving to Sweden. Olofsson (2012) and Apsite et al. (2012) predicted that, in the coming years, the number of migrants from the Baltic States would rise, following the ongoing trend that began in 2008. Since Latvia joined the EU, it has lost one-fifth of its population, illustrating the strong migration outflows from Latvia to other EU countries and especially to the UK and Ireland (Apsite 2013; Lulle 2014). In 2000, there were 917 individuals born in Latvia who were residing in Sweden, with the number increasing to 2305 in 2010 and 8,226 in 2018 (Statistics Sweden).\textsuperscript{11} Bela et al. (2016) examined the dynamics of memory in the context of forced migration via the oral histories of Latvian migrants in Sweden, and concluded that personal memories expressed via life stories, photographs, memorial sites and archival material have become part of the common diasporic narrative of the Latvian community in Sweden. There is also an edited volume by Bela et al. (2010) published in Latvian. Translated to English the title is “We didn’t go to Sweden to become Swedes”, and the volume contains both academic articles and life stories from Latvian migrants. Moreover, “The Emigrant Communities of Latvia”, edited by Rita Kaša and Inta Mieriņa (2019), consists of studies on Latvian communities in different countries around the world. These studies include research on migrants by the scholars Iveta Jurkane-Hobein and Evija Klave; these migrants are people who self-identify as Russian-Speaking Latvians and are based in Sweden and Great Britain, respectively. Using in-depth interviews, the authors tried to understand how individuals who are part of a minority,

\textsuperscript{10} Baltic Tigers is a term used for the three Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, especially with reference to their huge economic growth between 2000 and 2007.

\textsuperscript{11}Statistikmyndigheten SCB: http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/sv/ssd/START__BE__BE0101__BE0101E/UtrikesFoddaAntAr/table/tableViewLayout1/, accessed 25 03 2017
both in the country of origin and that of residence, construct their national identities. Apsite et al. (2012) examined immigration from the Baltic States to Sweden, focusing in particular on migrants from Latvia. They stated that, besides the economic drivers, there were also social reasons for Latvians to emigrate to Sweden, with intermarriage, predominantly between Latvian women and Swedish men, being one significant factor.

1.5. The multi-spatial identities of migrants

The state of the art regarding multi-spatial identities of migrated individuals is relatively poor. The edited volume by Herb and Kaplan (1999) examined overlapping or nested identities by examining the national identity along with other spatial identities at a meso- and macro-level, drawing examples from around the globe. In a European context, several studies have examined the nexus of national and European identities among EU citizens across Europe. Spain has been a case study for exploring nested identities at a non-nation-state level (Medrano and Gutiérrez 2010; Moreno et al. 2000). However, few studies have interrogated this relationship as regards intra-European migrants. Ettore Recchi (2015), in “Mobile Europe: The Theory and Practice of Free Movement in the EU”, touched upon various issues of identification in relation to Europe, integration paths and political participation, which are examined using both quantitative and qualitative research, including in-depth interviews. The author argued that these movers do have a heightened cosmopolitan understanding of their identifications, but they are numerically too few to contribute significantly to creating a critical mass of EU-oriented political participation. Furthermore, despite framing the differences between EU movers in both macro-regional and national terms, as western and eastern European migrants, Recchi did not examine other identifications beside the European and the national, although he did pay some attention to micro-regional and local identifications. The same observation applies to other studies similar to Recchi’s, which have focused primarily on the significance of the relationship between nation and Europe for intra-European migrants, or on issues of ethnicity and social class but merely in a national context (Duchesne and Frognier 2008; Favell 2004; Favell 2008a; Favell 2008b; Grabowska 2003; Hermann et al. 2004; Recchi and Favell 2009; Scott 2006). Moreover, in a study on how Bulgarian university students in the UK define their multiple identifications as Bulgarians, Europeans, migrants and students, Elene Genova (2016, 394) argued that identifications are dynamic, context-
1. INTRODUCTION

specific and in continuous negotiated relationships. Verlot and Oliver (2005), taking a qualitative ethnographic approach, examined the dimensions of European identity of “elite” European expatriates in Brussels and Spain, looking at social responsibility in relation to the local context. They (2005, 275) concluded that social commitment is realized mainly among expatriate associations, while failing to include locals in association activities and in this way creating a feeling of pseudo-Europeanness. However, there are no studies examining the puzzle of migrants’ spatial self-identifications beyond the nation-state on the European and macro-regional scale.

The state of the art in migration and European identity studies has revealed a research gap concerning the question of the multi-spatial identification and belonging of migrants on the scale of nation, macro-region and continent. The main contribution of this dissertation is to open the discussion and supply new knowledge to this under-researched field. There is a plethora of studies trying to highlight issues of European and national identifications under the prism of European integration, however they have failed to take into consideration possible macro-regional identifications, despite using a regional typology. Overall, based the previous research on intra-European migration presented in sections 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5, above, it becomes obvious that scholars in the field, but also various political institutions, have examined migration movements in regional terms. However, the nation-state is still treated as the main unit of analysis for better understanding migratory phenomena. Intra-European migration is expressed as movements between south and north, east and west or, in the case of Latvia – by grouping the country with Estonia and Lithuania – as the Baltic States. Additionally, the EU context creates terms of spatiality, such as EU mobility in lieu of migration and third-country nationals vs. EU citizens. The question at hand is whether this regional grouping, which is realized through a top-down approach to migrants, is adopted by the individuals themselves in terms of identity and belonging to spaces beyond the nation-state. Furthermore, this research will add empirically in the relatively poor literature on Greek and Latvians’ migratory experience in Sweden that quantitative methodology or surveys
cannot address. Giving voice to the subject of intra-European migration offers an in-depth analytical approach to migrants’ social, cultural and labour integration, everyday practices in a migration context, and their attitude towards the nation they originate from and reside in. Additionally, this research will try to shed light on the migrants’ point of view regarding the possibility of identifications and belonging to the macro-regions of the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea, but also Europe.

The dissertation is organized in the following way: The next chapter presents the theoretical framework, which uses theories of nationalism, Europeanism and regionalism as well as theories of identity and belonging. Chapter 3 illustrates the methodological toolkit used to examine the material and is based on interview analysis, thematic analysis and methodological tools from the Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) approach. Chapter 4 includes a historical overview of migration in Sweden in the 20th and 21st century, which includes background information on the social reality in Sweden during the migration period of the informants in the study. Also, Chapter 4 contains a discussion on how Europe, Sweden, Greece, Latvia, and the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea regions have acquired a specific meaning mainly in relation to the meaning of Europe. The following six chapters present the analysis of the interview material on identification, belonging and discursive construction of the three types of space. The last chapter summarizes and discusses the findings derived from the analysis and aims to provide answers to the research questions: 1) How do intra-European migrants discursively construct these three types of space and their own identifications in relation to these spaces? 2) How do they formulate their sense of belonging to these spatial entities? 3) What is the significance of each of these spaces for those migrants?
2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Introduction
The theoretical framework of this research draws on ideas and theories from different disciplines and fields of studies. Concepts from social science, political geography and migration studies will be employed for the analysis of the spatial identifications and feeling of belonging of intra-European migrants. The empirical case study carried out here, of internal European migration and migrants from Greece and Latvia to Sweden, enables an examination of issues of belonging to the nation, Europe/EU, and the Baltic and Mediterranean Sea macro-regions. The aim of the research is to investigate how the intra-European migrants identify themselves with this matrix of spaces and how this may affect their sense of belonging to these spaces as EU citizens residing in another EU country.

The theoretical framework built for this study is based on several theoretical claims, which will be briefly mentioned in this paragraph and analytically discussed throughout the theory chapter. First, this dissertation views regions of any kind as socially constructed, including how geographers conceive of them, Europe being a prominent example. Furthermore, because they are products of the human intellect, the three types of space in which this research is interested (i.e., Europe, nation and macro-regions) have geographically, historically, and institutionally overlapping qualities, with each quality giving meaning to the Other. The social construction of these spaces is furthermore related to (and possibly the product of) processes of nationalism, Europeanism and regionalism. Second, identification and belonging are concepts that counter the analytical shortcomings of a rigid understanding of identity. Third, the dynamics of identifications and belonging are defined by the politics of inclusion and exclusion – in other words, the politics of belonging as formulated by the tropes of nationalism, Europeanism and regionalism in the European space. This creates a nexus of different inclusion and exclusion practices (discursive and non-discursive), which cause different “we” vs. “them” dichotomies that affect the extent to which individuals, including migrants, do or do not feel spati-
ally and socially well placed. Fourth, migrants’ personal perceptions, understandings and experiences of migrant spaces arguably have an impact on what identifications and sense of belonging they have in relation to these spaces. Antonsich’s (2010) five factors of belonging, which will be presented in detail below, form a heuristic tool for understanding the dynamics of “belongingness.”

Another theoretical and methodological stance of this dissertation is its critical approach to the hegemony of the nation-state in previous research. While the choice of definition of the nation-state as a concept influences how scholars generally approach social science research questions, it is arguably particularly crucial for research on transnational migration. The assumption that “the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world” amounts to methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Schiller 2002, 301). John Agnew (1994, 77), who talked about the “nationalization” of social science, tried to highlight this problematic paradigm of the methodological assumption of the nation-state as a “timeless space” by coining the term “territorial trap”. The territorial trap involves three geographical assumptions. The first refers to the reification of the fixed territoriality of the state; the second to the conception that economic political activity is clearly divided between domestic and foreign, and the third that society is defined by and contained in the territory of the state. Based on these assumptions, Agnew argued that the “territorial trap” creates an analytically narrow research framework, especially in a hyper-connected world of complex population movements.

By identifying as its units of analysis not only the nation-state, but also the Europe and macro-regions, and by formulating a theoretical framework focused on the issue of belonging in spaces of different scales, this dissertation suggests the possibility and significance of identification and belonging to spaces of various scales, one nested inside the other.

Furthermore, this chapter elaborates on the issues of internal and international free mobility by linking the notions of national and European citizenships. This will assist in our understanding of how the right to both free mobility and abode inside the EU may produce a sense of belonging to the union. Moreover, this chapter draws on theories of nationalism and displays the mechanisms of nation building, the aim being to finds parallels with the EU and the construction of different regional units, for example the Baltic and Mediterranean Sea regions.

Furthermore, theories of identity and belonging are presented, as they will assist us in better understanding transnational identifications such as
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

diaspora, hybridity, and cosmopolitanism, which will eventually be applied to the interview material for de-coding the nexus of spatial identifications of the informants.

2.2. The significance of space(s)

This research uses the notion of space extensively, owing to its abstract qualities and semiotic inclusiveness. Space is not necessarily linked to territoriality, and it may conceptually transcend the bounded place of specific borders. Tuan (1977) argued that space is something more abstract than place, as the latter is something we can experience with our senses and includes a sense of sensorial proximity.¹² The use of space and spatial identities in this research is more appropriate than the use of place, because spaces has broader and more inclusive qualities. Even the phrases “national place” or “European place” sound spatially over-specific. Because nation, Europe and macro-regions are constructed spatial units, the contingency of the borders reflects their contingency as containers of specific societies or communities residing inside these borders (Agnew 1994). Thus, without downgrading the significance of “place” for the construction of individual identities, the protean qualities of the constructed areas and the variety of spatial scales in this research render the term “space” more appropriate and inclusive than the more context-specific “place.”

In addition to the natural geophysical frontiers, which have defined human history, space also includes political borders and the territories encircled by them. Borders, whether physical or political, are crucial to human migration, as they separate the “Us” from the Other, with the Other often being migrants: foreign bodies and minds (Balibar 2002). The institutionalization of space into political units of nation-states gave the authority to the latter to regulate who may enter the national space and who may not.

Hence, for research on migration and diasporas, the notion of national may, for example, extend beyond the borders of the country of origin and refer to an ex-patriate inside the borders of the nation-state of residence. Space is therefore a useful analytical tool for encompassing the three units of analysis – i.e. nation, Europe, and region – which are not only of different scales, but also differ from each other in political, institutional and historical

¹² For a more analytical discussion on the notions “space” and “place”, see Feld and Basso (1996), Relph (2008) and Tuan (1977).
character. When needed, however, the notion of space will be combined with more context-specific understandings of territoriality. For this study, the concept of space furthermore helps us not only to explore the analytical connections between nation, Europe and regions, but also the possible salience of other spatialities.

Various disciplines have asserted that the various geographical units are socially constructed and that this aspect of construction is crucial to our understanding of history and politics, space being equally important as time. As Warf and Arias characteristically stated: “Geography matters, not for the simplistic and overly used reason that everything happens in space, but because where things happen is critical to knowing how and why they happen” (2009, 1). Especially after the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the accession of several European countries to the EU, the increased interest in regions and regionalism forms part of the post-cold war “spatial turn” in the social sciences and humanities (Mishkova and Trencsenyi 2017; Pugh 2009). Space helps us to understand political and social phenomena in a more complete way, by taking not only the national, but also local and regional spatial level into account (Rodell 2008). This approach challenges the dominance of the nation-state as the only unit of analysis. Globalization and the unique regionalism of the EU have created new spatial conditions, which especially in the 1990s and 2000s challenged the monopoly of the nation-state territory as the most important spatial unit of analysis (Wimmer and Schiller 2002).

2.3. Citizenship, territory and mobility

Migration refers by definition to movement and a temporal, seasonal or permanent relocation in space. The “migratory space” has been formed through history by both geographical and socio-political factors, and it does “not only consists of one or several spatial locations but also of politically, economically and culturally relevant ties” (Faist 1997, 247). Migratory space includes the space of origin, the space of transfer, and the space of destination. It is a space of great complexity for the migrants, the stayers and the locals in the new destination. It includes different levels of belonging, as it is characterized by different modes of “otherness” that vary over time.

However, the term migrants does not only refer to people who cross inter-national spaces. Internal migration is a term used to describe the mobility of people inside the state. This mobility, in contrast to inter-
national migration, is free and not regulated by particular rules and conditions. All citizens generally have the right to relocate their professional and private activities freely inside the state to which they belong. Historically, internal migration has not always been uncontrolled by political regimes. For example, in the Russian Federation and the Soviet Union, China, or the apartheid regime of South Africa, people’s mobility was controlled based on which individuals or groups of people were considered to be desirable or undesirable in particular spaces, for reasons usually related to the regime’s security or administration (Maas 2013, 11–15). The right of free mobility came as a right of citizens in the modern liberal nation-state and proliferated globally through international treaties and declarations of human rights (Maas 2013, 9). Along these lines, it can be argued that the legal status of migrant ceases from the moment that the individual becomes naturalized, i.e. acquires the citizenship of the “migratory space”. Citizens of a nation-state enjoy the right of abode and the right to free mobility within the territory of the state. Thus, citizenship has, by definition, a spatial dimension, as the rights it entails are linked to the territorial or geographical boundaries of the state.

The EU constitutes the sole example of a supranational space whose legal inhabitants have the right of free movement and residence, via a common citizenship. For example, the legal status of the Greeks and Latvians who migrated to Sweden after WW2 have been defined and regulated by the Swedish legal framework on how the country should receive and treat foreign people who wish to reside in its territory. However, from the moment Sweden became an EU member state (in 1995), the European regulation regarding people’s mobility inside the union was an additional legal dimension that affected migrants from other EU states – including Greeks and later Latvians (after Latvia’s accession to the EU in 2004).

Citizens’ right to free mobility inside the territorial boundaries of their nation-state is found in the liberal constitutions of states all over the globe and has been normatively justified by numerous scholars (Maas 2013). Historically, the association between citizenship and the nation-state goes back to the socio-political effects the French revolution brought to political systems in Europe. Prominent scholars such as Durkheim and Marshall

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13 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).
14 In the Nordic region, no Nordic citizenship was constructed to justify the right of movement and residence, like in the EU, where European Union citizenship was discursively and legally created.
have linked citizenship to specific legal rights (Collyer 2014). Kymlicka (2002, 284) stated that “citizenship is intimately linked to the liberal ideas of individual rights and their entitlement on the one hand and to communitarian ideas of membership in and attachment to a particular community on the other. Thus, it provides a concept that can mediate the debate between liberals and communitarians”. Hence, the right of free mobility is directly linked to liberal ideas and to the legal framework of citizenship in modern democracies, but also to the idea that citizens belong to a larger community. It is the bounded political space of the nation-state with a specific and well-defined territory, the space of community of citizens, within which the individual has the right to travel freely and reside numerous times and in every part of the territory. Thus, the territory of the nation-state is the space in which the national community is located. This does not imply that all nation-states are ethnically homogenous, only that the population is identified with the institution of the state (Herb 1999). Although the liberal vision of politics does not include any independent principle of community, such as shared nationality, language, and identity, culture or religion, the vast majority of liberal democracies have tried to establish a common national identity among the population living permanently under its jurisdiction (Kymlicka 2002, 208, 263). According to Kymlicka (2003, 11), the nation-state is a territorial entity in which a historical community occupies a certain geographical space or homeland and shares a common language and culture. Although there are many examples of multi-lingual nation-states, multi-lingualism implies a constant tension between an ethnos and a demos in the construction of modern societies and in the definition of citizenship, creating in-state “Otherings” between an exclusive ethnos and an inclusive demos (Lehning 2001). Migration is affected by the antagonism between these two understandings of a nation.

In conclusion, free mobility in the modern world is bound to citizenship both as an individual right and as a right linked to a sense of belonging to a community of people occupying a certain territory steered by the state – a territory in which the citizen-individual can freely move and reside. Lehning argued that, besides its legal dimension, citizenship is also an “identity, an expression of one's membership in a political community” (2001, 06). This suggests that EU citizenship – the only legally created supra-national citizenship, in addition to the legal rights it gives to EU member state nationals, implies the existence of a community, a common space of belonging. In any event, the right of free mobility, despite its con-
ditionality,\textsuperscript{15} is part of the EU’s politics of belonging. This becomes even more pertinent during a period when third-country migration to the EU and the post-Brexit mobility right of British and EU citizens are highly controversial issues.

Hence, for intra-European migrants, free mobility inside the EU means having the opportunity to change residence within a large political system, divided by various jurisdictional boundaries, but in a space with common citizenship, though not identical to national citizenship (Maas 2013). EU citizenship unifies the national spaces of EU members, creating in that sense a demos, and possibly an identity, similar to multi-ethnic federal states such as the US, Canada, or Switzerland, as it is focused on the territory and not a specific nation or “ethnos” (Witte 2016). The EU and its occasional federation ambitions embody Jurgen Habermas’ ideas (criticized by many for being over-idealistic) on the creation of a de-nationalized space in which “constitutional patriotism” replaces nationalism and facilitates the equal coexistence of different cultural, ethnic and religious communities under a new political culture based solely on the rule of law (Habermas 1994, 27). Even though Habermas’ “constitutional patriotism” is only a proposition, it exemplifies the idea that EU citizenship and identity have the potential to create a supra-national space with an “a-national” identity, based on a common culture and common values.

Furthermore, free mobility is a prerequisite for regulating the regional and sub-national inequalities (Logo 2013) caused by the unequal spatial distribution of wealth and income. Free mobility inside a state, and in the EU, gives people from poorer areas the opportunity to seek labour and better opportunities in a richer region, thus facilitating social mobility (Logo 2013). Likewise, inside the European space, EU citizenship gives people the opportunity to seek labour elsewhere, mitigating the economic inequalities that affect the citizens of the union, but it also affects other types of disparity. For example, a Swedish pensioner may enjoy the Mediterranean climate by residing permanently in one of the Swedish communities of pensioners created on the shores of Spain, or an Estonian may

\textsuperscript{15} The Directive 2004/38/EC stipulates the conditions under which an EU citizen has the right of residence in another EU member state beyond the period of three months. The directive also defines the conditions of expulsion of an EU citizen who might illegally reside in another EU member state, that is, beyond the initial time-frame of three months: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32004L0038&from=GA , accessed 25 09 2017
move to the UK to advance her career development (Woube 2014; Saar 2017).

Besides the practicalities related to free mobility, some scholars have made normative claims indicating that EU citizenship has beneficial and emancipatory potential for the individual. Floris de Witte (2016, 2–4), for example, argued that EU citizenship is a stateless way of belonging to a certain community that offers individuals flexibility of identification. He also argued that free mobility in the EU should be defended in a normative way, as it enhances the idea that domination of the nation-state should be challenged because it reduces the complex nexus of identifications and belonging of a subject to a one-dimensional being: the national. Even within a nation-state framework, Witte (2016, 4) claimed:

> It is free movement, in a sense, which disciplines the nation-state, and ensures that its civic institutional structure does not fall in the traps of the ethnos within which it historically grew (2016, 4).

The significance of Floris de Witte’s approach for this research is that the nation-state may serve as a mechanism that constrains individuals and imposes on them a specific identity, the national one. Hence, the question is whether the European space (which is a conglomeration of national spaces) and the EU’s free mobility have the potential to “liberate” the individual from mono-spatial national belonging, as Floris de Witte (2016, 4) argued. Can we see the opening up of spatial belongings other than the national ones – e.g., European or regional belongings – among individuals who are subject to regionalization and Europeanization projects?

The discussion on citizenship identifies two constitutive elements: rights, on the one hand, and identity and belonging, on the other. Each of these elements is experienced in a geographical context, regardless of how this context is defined. The function of citizenship can be discharged at a multitude of levels, from local government and functional interest groups, to the region, nation, and eventually to the cosmopolis (Heater 1990, 318–9). However, Malmborg and Stråth (2002) argued that the EU was not created to challenge the nation-state, but rather to support it. The right of free movement, for example, is reserved for nationals of the EU member

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states. In that sense, the European space is not a unified space but one fragmented by the nation-state, and thus individuals are moving within and across national spaces. The latter shows the antagonistic relationship between nation-centric and non-nation-centric approaches to European integration. One sees the EU as a possible “liberator” from the nation, and the other deconstructs the EU as merely a synthesis of different nation-states. However, both of these approaches can be found at the level of politics or scholarly discussion. This dissertation examines these theories using a bottom-up approach by asking intra-European migrants about their self-identifications with this matrix of spaces within the EU.

2.4. Imagined communities of different scales, and intra-European migrants.

In the sections 2.5–2.7, I discuss the social constructionist understanding of the three spaces – i.e., the nation, the EU and macro-regions – in relation to theories of nationalism, Europeanism and regionalism. Furthermore, I seek to link the established banality of the nation-state as political unit with the EU’s efforts to create its own banality in the minds of the people. Banal regionalism – which has been attempted for macro-regions, especially the Baltic Sea – also becomes part of this triangle, whose every point directs the production of an identity or a sense of belonging.

The right of movement inside the nation-state can be normatively justified, either as a derivative of citizenship in a communitarian or in a liberal approach. However, regardless of the approach, following a social constructionist viewpoint, the nation-state is an imagined community. According to Benedict Anderson’s famous work, the nation-state is an imagined community because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson 2016, 6). Anderson also argued that the origin of the nation-state goes back to the development of print media in capitalist societies, something that was crucial for the constitution of one vernacular language in a specific territory. Newspapers, magazines and novels created a homogenized space for a specific area and time, where everyone was aware they were participating in a “mass ceremony” of reading the same printed, community-distributed material distributed. Following the same logic, Uriya Shavit (2009, 18) noted that the modern tools of communication (television, radio, newspaper) have worked as new objects, new tools in a “mass ceremony” of
the imagined community. For example, every day in Stockholm, hundreds of thousands of people, regardless of their occupation, urban locality, citizenship, ethnicity, age etc., have been participating in the mass practice of picking up the free newspaper “Metro”\(^\text{17}\) from specific stands, or sharing it with each other, or just finding it lying around somewhere. Such a trivial everyday activity, among many similar activities, is continually “reassuring the individual that the imagined world is visibly rooted in her everyday life” (Anderson 2016, 33–34).

Michael Billig’s (2006) concept “banal nationalism” refers to the invisible aspect of nationalism, the banal representations and activities of nationalism in daily life, which confirm that a specific territory coincides with a specific nation and reproduces the people’s identification with the nation. Such repetitive representations of banal nationalism include use of the national flag for various activities, national anthems, pictures on currency, the national press, how the types of news are divided into national and international, or the weather forecasts, and in general everything that enhances the “us”–“them” division and, ultimately, belonging to the imagined community of a specific nation-state.

This national space of the imagined community and of banal nationalism does not only include the nationals born in the country, but also migrants who have left their “own” imagined communities and settled in their new country of residence, with its own apparatus of banal nationalism. The mechanisms that the Swedish state utilizes for reassuring its existence will likely not appear banal to its migrants. Hence, for this group (at least those who are new to the country), national symbols will typically appear as rather obvious. At the same time, because migrants also come from nation-states with a similar apparatus, they may find various symbols of nationalism both logical and legitimate. One may also expect that migrants will interpret symbols of nationalism in relation to the status similar symbols have in their home countries. The overarching question that arises here is how migrants react to or interpret various expressions of banal nationalism they encounter in their new society. Are they indifferent (“neutral”) to them or do the national symbols remind them of their foreign status, their “otherness” in terms of nationhood in the national space of the Swedish state?

\(^{17}\) The in-paper edition of “Metro” newspaper ceased to be distributed in Sweden in August 2019.
When it comes to EU migrants, they reside in a national space that is defined by a national “they”, but at the same time by a European “we”. The latter is expressed by another institutionalized banality that is still present, even though it is less incorporated into everyday life than the national one is. The EU, as a supra-national polity, has applied many of the tools of nation building in its effort to establish a common identity among its populace and to outline its territory. Hence, it has its own banalities to remind people of its existence. One characteristic example is that, in most EU countries, all official buildings are expected to fly the European flag alongside the national flag. In the Eurozone countries, citizens conduct their everyday transactions using a common currency that bears common symbols and representations of Europe. Thus, following the rationale of Billig, although embryonic and less sophisticated than in the nation-state, a “banal regionalism” exists that reminds people – natives and EU migrants – that they belong to a common institutionalized space: the EU. In Billig’s words: “The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building” (Billig 1995, 8), and in the EU space, this is the EU flag. Furthermore, Laura Cram argued that, despite what several empirical studies have shown, the socializing effects of EU institutions are weak and less significant, failing to construct or shape a post-national identity. Banal Europeanism constitutes an implicit or sub-conscious attachment to the EU and,

[…]it is manifested in a normalisation of the EU as a legitimate political authority such that to challenge this norm is to challenge the status quo. Banal Europeanism may also play an important role in creating a latent political community which may be mobilized by interested actors or significant events (2012, 83).

To these kinds of elite imposed or institutional banalities one could add unofficial ones, like the weather reports, which usually start with the European and the macro-regional space, which includes the national. Or even the newspapers that divide the news into the categories domestic, European, and global. Significant to the discussion on banal Europeanism is the discourse – produced mainly by nationalist movements around Europe – on the fear of Islamization of Europe. This discourse constructs Muslim citizens and refugees as a threat to the existence and identity of Europe as a Christian region (Holm 2007). It is related to similar fears on a national
level, a product of “hot nationalism”, that is the “consciously manipulated forms of nationalism” (Calhoun 2017, 19) that are translated, from a regional perspective, into “hot Europeanism”. One characteristic example of such “hot Europeanism” is the “Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident” (abbreviated “Pegida”) political movement. The “Defend Europe” initiative of far-right nationalists from different European countries wants to prevent African migrants from reaching the shores of Europe using a boat on the Mediterranean. The question that can be derived from the discussion on banal and hot modes of Europeanism, but also from its material existence in the everyday life of the EU space, is how this affects EU migrants. Does this produce feelings of inclusion? Does it create a space of “us” even though they are migrants in a foreign national space of “them”?

Summary

In this part of the theory, I explained how the right of free mobility is linked to the notion of citizenship and how intra-European free mobility is similarly, but not identically, based on the status of EU citizenship. Furthermore, I argued that if nationalism creates a unified space in which a national identity is constructed and sustained, and in which a certain citizenship is valid, the same has been attempted by introducing Europeanism on the European continent. The trans-European migrants are subjects not only to nationalisms (banal or not) of the home country and the country of residence, but also to Europeanism, particularly because they are exercising perhaps its most significant practical dimension, which is the spatial right of European citizens inside the EU space.

2.5. Regions and regional identification

Following the previous discussion around the constructionistic quality of nationalism and Europeanism, this section seeks to explore regions as a
potential space of identification, especially in an intra-European migratory context, with a specific focus on the macro-regional scale. At the same time, it will illustrate how the various meanings inherent in overlapping spaces have been developed over time and reveal how these meanings have created stereotypes and identification for the people of these spaces.

What are presumably the main spatial political entities for the interviewees (also called informants) in this study – Sweden as a space of destination and Greece or Latvia as a space of origin – also include other spaces or sub-national regions, as they belong to supranational spaces with relatively well-defined territories linked to vague cultural and historical areas. The criteria for placing nation-states and regions in groups are flexible, and the rationale for this can be justified, for example, with reference to history, culture, geopolitics, or economy. This dissertation focuses on the European space, on the one hand, and on the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea regions, on the other.

The globalization and transnationalism of the late 20th and 21st century caused nation-states to adopt a regional cooperation logic not only in economic life, but also in social, political and cultural life (Paasi 2009). This phenomenon has been designated “regionalism”, but is also, as the suffix suggests, an ideology (Kurunmäki and Marjanen 2018), which expresses “the urge for a regionalist order, either in a particular geographical area or as a type of world order” (Fawn 2009, 13). The empirical application of this ideology in the global space is called “regionalization”, i.e., the transformation of a less institutionalized area into a space of increased “regionness”. Regionalization is used to describe the process through which a geographical space is transformed from an a-political, non-territorial area into an institutionalized subject with its own interests (Fawn 2009, 13–14). In that sense, regionness is analogously understood as “stateness” and “nationness”.

Many scholars who study regionalism tend to agree on the social constructivist dimension of regions (Derek 2009; Fawn 2009; Petrogiannis and Rade 2016; Söderbaum 2003). As Rolf Petri (2008) has noted, there is a similarity between the procedure of nation building and that of region building. Anssi Paasi (2009, 20) maintained that regions need to be treated as historically contingent phenomena and that their creation follows a certain pattern:
At first a set of (at times contested) political, economic or cultural discourses are created concerning the possibility of a region. Such ideas are then introduced into plans and maps and ultimately regions may become materialized.

However, in today’s globalized world, where the notion of transnationalism has become the main tool for explaining the new phenomena human mobility has brought about, the idea of regions as something that has some kind of essence, though problematic, should be scrutinized because it has “an effect on the actions of citizens and on broader social practices” (Paasi 2009, 20). The modern world has a political and societal need for the existence of specific areas with common characteristics that can be grouped in terms of a region and function as potential transnational problem solvers in a complicated globalized world. This can be illustrated by the plethora of regional, international, transnational, and global organizations that have been created after WW1 and WW2 and, especially, after the fall of the Iron Curtain (Archer 2015).

Many definitions of region have been based on geographical, historical, cultural, social, economic and political criteria (Fawn 2009). The so-called realist school tends to claim that some regions are “real”, which means that they exist as geopolitical entities independent of human perception and conceptual schemes. Others, who base their theories on constructivist and post-structuralist approaches, see regions as not “natural’, objective, essential or simply material objects”, but rather as “socially constituted phenomena”, which “come to life from the moment that we start to think and talk about them” (Söderbaum 2003, 27). Regions are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed, defined and redefined by a series of actors who respond to the changes taking place inside and outside them. Hence, regions are projects in the making and can be “defined post factum”, as they are constructed by actors who might use specific political structures or institutions and geographical characteristics. Generally, researchers have acknowledged that regions are far from simply being natural. How they are defined depends on the nature of the problem or question under investigation (Hettne and Söderbaum 2000; Dubois et al. 2009).

This dissertation follows a social constructionist understanding of regions, as it sees them as products of human thought and agency. For example, what has been considered Mediterranean throughout history, which countries or nations belong to and constitute the Mediterranean region, has been constructed within the realm of human intellect and activity (Horden and Purcell 2000). Especially regarding the institu-
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tionalization of regions, the definition of regions is critically a political decision (Götz 2016).

Typically, regions conjure up the idea of a “homogeneous block of space that has a persisting distinctiveness due to its physical and cultural characteristics” (Agnew 1999, 92). However, the different meanings provided by the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) are indicative of the plethora of semantics related to the notion, as the dictionary includes nineteen different meanings of the word “region”, most of them having a political dimension. Etymologically, it derives from the Latin regio(n-), which means “direction, district”, from the verb “regere” ‘to rule, direct’, which illustrates the fundamental political and societal significance of the notion. Although the first and main definition of “region” in the dictionary is the general “a subdivision of the earth or universe”, “region” has meant different things, from a whole kingdom to a small district and even part of the human body (OED).

Rick Fawn (2009, 12) suggested that historians and political scientists “know a region when they see one”, and economists identify regions through the existence of formal trading structures. Various disciplines recognize predefined regions based on institutional and economic parameters. By contrast, historical and cultural regions are vague, and their definition depends on which exact criteria have been selected. History and culture create a vague demarcation for regions whose logic can be easily criticized and counterargued. The book “The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order” by the American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington (1996) is a prominent example of an attempt to categorize the world into different regions based on cultural and historical affinities. Furthermore, regions have been employed to enable political (and other) elites to institutionalize certain territories. The process of giving meaning to geographical space based on a cultural dimension, such as art, literature and architecture, has usually been combined with the notion of regional identity (Paasi 2009). Such regionalism can be found on different scales, from a small region dominated by a certain city to a whole continent. Traditional regionalism functioned as the cultural and historical framework in which some regions were “baptized” as nations. The emergence of the nation-state constitutes the transformation of regions of former empires, or kingdoms, into culturally and politically organized entities.

The formation of current nations, regions or even the EU is a product of historical contingency and an outcome of a variety of processes (Persson and Stråth 2007). What we today call sub-national or supra-national macro- or micro-regions have had the nation-state as a “yardstick”. During the period in which the nation-state rose, some of the current sub-national regions unified to nation-states, some potential macro-regions became nation-states, or broke down into nation-states. Neumann (1994) gave an illustrative example of why Scandinavia or the Nordic region did not manage to construct one unified political unit. Because the region lost its historical momentum of becoming a nation-state through the movement of “Scandinavism”, its latent nationalism transformed regional aspirations into the Nordic cooperation. Although this study is primarily interested in exploring the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea with all their spatial attributes (east, west, north, south, European and non-European), it also leaves open the possibility that the migrants interviewed have other kinds of spatial identification and belonging.

2.6. European Union and region building
The most advanced organization in which the construction of political institutions correlates with the institutionalization of a region is the European Union. In its framework of regional integration, the EU itself has initiated a process of acquiring national characteristics as a union of states. This process includes the creation of a flag, an anthem, license plates, money, citizenship, and passports, all of which are meant to facilitate European integration and a European identity among citizens of the EU member states (Fornäs 2012; Shore 2000). The ambitious plan of creating a union of highly diverse nations made the EU not only a product of modern regionalization, but also a region builder in the European space.

After the 2004 EU enlargement, institutional establishment of sub-regions in the European space was initiated as a way to strengthen integration and create connective nets across the EU member states. The initial allocation of EU funding (700 mil. euros per year) for cooperation initiatives that may promote the establishment of cross-border regions inside the EU at a micro-level as well as the European research projects “EXLINEA” and “EU BORDER IDENTITIES” show the importance of cross-border region building for the EU (Scott 2006; Perkmann 2003, 153). At the macro-level, the EU launched the strategy for the Baltic Sea region in 2009, which was meant to serve as a paradigm of regional cooperation for other areas of
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The EU space, including the Mediterranean region. The EU started a series of initiatives, like the EU-funded project ‘MEDGOVERNANCE’, in order to enhance regionalization of the Mediterranean (Bialasiewicz and Giaccaria 2012).

The EU’s interest in promoting multi-level regionalization in the European space seems to follow an idea to promote and encourage cooperation between the European nation-states, by supporting the creation of a common European identity, targeting citizens of the entire union. The “macro-region” is the appropriate level to examine the relations between nationalism, regionalism, European integration and their respective identifications, because of its more profound transnational character as compared to the micro-level. As Norbert Götz and Heidi Haggrén (2009, 3) argued, it is important to examine regions not for the sake of regionalism in theory, but in order to understand the “middle ground between nation-states on the one hand and comprehensive continental or global organizations on the other hand”. The Mediterranean and Baltic Sea are macro-regions that have been laboratories of EU region building and can also serve as laboratories for an investigation of a third regional space of belonging beyond the national and the European one.

2.7. Two EU Macro-Regions: The Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea; ambitions and reality.

Macro-region is a political concept borrowed from the field of international relations. According to the EU’s administration terminology it is “an area including territory from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges [...] geographic, cultural, economic or other” (European Commission, 2009, 1-7). For the EU, macro-regions are political tools intended to contribute to “Europeanization” (Stocchiero 2010, 5). The gradual institutional integration of the European continent through the European Union and the independence of the Baltic States from the Soviet Union after the fall of the Iron Curtain have changed the regional character of the Mediterranean and the Baltic. The Mediterranean became a water shield dissevering and protecting Europe from the rising secular and religious tensions in the Asian and African neighbourhood (Tsardanidis and Guerra 2000, 321-322), creating a new separate region consisting of the southern part of the EU. The recent,
so called, migratory crisis in the Mediterranean and FRONTEX\textsuperscript{20} activities in the area have regionalized the sea as an EU space that forms the southern wall of what many have criticized as an EU fortress. However, after the EU’s expansion to the East, the Baltic Sea region became an internal EU sea, with the exception of the enclave of Kaliningrad and the area of Saint Petersburg. After the end of the Cold War, the three Baltic States of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, which opposed both political Sovietization and demographic Russification during the Soviet period, decided to become part of the group of western geopolitical institutions (Götz 2014, 13).

The concept of macro-regions has been proposed for sub-regions of the Mediterranean Sea, yet exclusively for the European shores, for example an Adriatic-Ionian macro-region (Stocchiero 2010). The EU began its effort to regionalize the Mediterranean area much earlier than the Baltic (Tsoukalis 1977; Bialasiewicz and Giaccaria 2012). However, the high diversity and institutional division between EU and non-EU countries in the Mediterranean renders construction of the Mediterranean as an EU macro-region a much more complex task than the Baltic Sea (Tourret and Willaert 2011; Jones 2011), as the external factor is much greater and broader (in the Baltic Sea macro-region, only Russia is a non-EU country). Dubois et al. (2009, 21-24) indicated that EU macro-regions and macro-regional strategies operate as a tool for European integration and increased territorial cohesion and that, for the EU, “it is assumed that some territorial specificities are shared between regions belonging to a certain larger geographical zone, thus providing a certain territorial identity to this larger zone”. The regionalization of the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea areas, promoted by the EU, implies the continuous making of a regional identity. As Paasi (2011, 13) emphasized, this does not come to a final phase, but is rather continually re-produced through social communication, thus shaping regional identity. As for the Baltic and the Mediterranean regions, a soft version of identity, much closer to region branding, was initiated by the EU with the “Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region” (EUSBSR) and the EU-funded project “MEDGOVERNACE” (Duboi 2009; Bialasiewicz and Giaccaria 2012). However, an actual Baltic or Mediterranean identity does not seem to be present and appears difficult to established. Marcus Andersson (2007) examined whether a region with ten countries can create and support a common brand. His findings describe the absence of a common identity in

\textsuperscript{20} European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union.
the Baltic Sea region and the difficulty to establish a Baltic Sea regional brand. Regarding the Mediterranean region, the EU initiative for a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) aims “at integrating the two shores of the Mediterranean, not just at the political or economic levels, but also at the social and cultural levels” (Panebianco 2003, 1). The EMP’s aim is very close to Paasi’s (1986) argument that the region building includes or should include a soft type of corresponding regional identity.

The media are also important players in region building, in establishing a certain brand or creating a specific identity. On the discursive level, the media produce meanings that are attached to regions. Bernd Henningsen (2011, 18) pointed out that “the public discourse understands identity in an essentialist fashion, searching for tangible commonalities and factual proof of homogeneity”. Johan Fredborn Larsson (2010) used surveys to investigate how citizens of the Mediterranean Sea and Baltic Sea regions understand themselves, their neighbours, and each other. He concluded that the survey participants seemed to share something of a Mediterranean identity. However, this was not the case for the Baltic region, where residents identified themselves mostly with their nations and not with the Baltic Sea region. The sub-regional level of the three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) attracted the interest of many scholars, but mainly with regard to studying the nation building process of these three democracies in the post-Soviet era. The Baltic Sea region has also gained the attention of various scholars who have tried to examine post-Cold War identity politics in Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea region within the new European geopolitical framework (Henningsen 2005; Lehti and Smith 2003).

Furthermore, the recent economic crisis was an additional factor that changed the meaning attached to these two regions. The three Baltic States had received, until the 2008 economic crisis, the flattering designation the “Baltic Tigers”, owing to their strong economic performance. In contrast, for the Mediterranean EU countries, the acronym PIIGS became a symbol for their economic problems. However, the 2008 economic crisis affected the people living in the two regions not only at the discursive level of public opinion, but also practically when the crisis created and enhanced the push factor for immigration.

2.8. Identities and mobility

In this part of the theory chapter, I will present different approaches that are related to identities and to human mobility and that will serve as analytical
tools for understanding my informants’ dynamics of belonging to the overlapping spaces of nation, macro-region, and Europe. The discussion in this section will be around the notions of identity, identification and belonging as well as diaspora, hybridity, transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, and translocational positionality.

Identity is an important concept in migration studies. Already in 1983 Gleason stated that identity is a basic term in the discourse on migration and ethnicity (1983, 911). The identity concept became popular in the social sciences in the 1950s, and it was popularized by the psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson, who coined the expression “identity crisis”. The concept of identity has been criticized for describing too much and at the same time saying too little (Anthias 2008; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Gleason 1983). It says too much because it includes different elements that constitute the subject, which can be related to self-understanding, to legal attributes, to identification processes and, through this, to the formation of collectivities and the politics of identity. At the same time, it says too little because it focuses on the identity as merely a possessive attribute of the individual, omitting the structural dynamics that formulate identities (Anthias 2008, 7). In relation to the “verbosity” and the “laconism” of identity, Brubaker and Cooper (2000, 10) made a distinction between hard and soft understandings of identity. The former preserves the vernacular meaning of the term, which implies a continuity of the identity over time without alternations. Furthermore, the hard understanding entails that identity is something all individuals and groups have or should have and that groups that have the same identity are homogenous and aware of their boundedness. In contrast, the weak or soft understanding of identity tends to be too flexible, unstable, and fluid to be used for analytical purposes.

Nonetheless, the “soft” version of identity, in comparison to the “hard” one, gives the researcher more scope to approach issues of identity in a situational and contextual framework in space and time. For example, it may operate as a heuristic tool for research purposes when one has to investigate how people understand identity in relation both to their selves and to others. Some may express a specific and concrete identity, placing themselves in a category with specific attributes. Such an identity may be related to collective types of identities, like a specific national one, or to other types of collective identities. Though this identity may be expressed by an individual in “strong” terms, analytically this does not mean that the way the individual perceives it has remained the same throughout time. Especially in a migratory context, territorial or space-bounded identities are
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challenged by definition, as the individual’s everyday experience is taking place in a national space other than the one of origin, cohabitating with groups of people with different ethnic and cultural spaces of origin. In this study, I am critical of the hard understanding of identity as a quality one has and whose content remains stable over time. This study acknowledges softer dimensions of identity, yet it does not claim that people change their understandings of the self arbitrarily, but rather that they adopt impermanent identities that are ephemeral in nature – that change and adapt to different contexts. A softer approach to identity leads to terms and notions that challenge essentialist and monothematic comprehension of identities.

The concept of identity has been a key tool for investigating migrants’ position in relation to spaces to which they legally and emotionally belong. This has been even more crucial as ethnic markers have become more visible in a globalized world, but it has also been side-lined in supranational regionalization projects (Anthias 2008), like the EU, which create new types of boundaries and, thus, new types of inclusion and exclusion. The EU is a space fragmented by its member states, but also unified by them. Its external borders are the borders of the member states in the periphery. Thus, it is an “extra-inclusive” space, as the citizens of the member states have the right of free movement and the right of abode inside the EU, and an “extra-exclusive” space in relation to all people outside the EU. This automatically creates categories of individuals who have more rights than others, for example, EU citizens and third-country migrants. In the Swedish context, the hierarchy is even more complex and more inclusive for citizens from the Nordic region, as they have additional rights related to migration than do migrants from other EU countries. The categorization of migrants does not exclusively refer to the spatial aspect that defines the movers’ status. Other categories related to the qualitative attributes of migration are of legal or scholarly interest, e.g., economic migrants and lifestyle migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, permanent or temporary migrants, high-skilled and low-skilled migrants. All these different types of categorizations create a series of hierarchies in the migrant population that construct “welcome” and “less welcome”, “hostile” and “non-hostile” subjectivities (Anthias 2008, 7). Each category is accompanied by a specific discourse on identities, by the “self” and about the Other dipole, by the certainty and the doubt of belonging to the “we” and to the “they”, and consequently by the matter of inclusion and exclusion in the social space (Anthias 2008). Besides territorial identities, other intersectional identities such as gender, race, class or sexuality define the migration experience of the individual and
enhance or weaken the exclusivity and inclusivity of the territorial and social space (Anthias 2008, 13-15).

Hybridity is another concept that has been extensively used in migration studies, mainly in research on second-generation migrants, but also in relation to diaspora. Because this research includes individuals who came to Sweden as children (categorically proximate to second-generation migrants), grew up and became old in the country, and generally migrants who have lived for decades in Sweden, hybridity serves as a useful analytical tool. The notion of hybridity challenges the static and essentialist understanding of identity formation related to culture. It puts emphasis on how transnationalism has caused new intercultural lifestyles and intercultural practices in art, economy, language and food. It shows that the individual could bear a hybrid of different cultures, which eventually give shape to his/her identity (Anthias 2008; Pieterse 2001). It implies that the “hybrid” individual has synthesized several different identities. The subject of migration gathers elements from many cultures and identities, usually in a hierarchical order; these elements may operate in synergy or be related antagonistically in the construction of personal identities. This synthesized identity or multiple identities create a dynamic framework in the understanding of the self, as they position migrants in relation to various loyalties and simultaneously to many spaces of belonging. Because this research focuses on spaces that reflect a variety of, e.g., geographical, historical and institutional hierarchies, hybridity and multiple identities may serve as an analytical tool to understand how the subjects of migration are associated with this matrix of hierarchies regarding the construction of their personal identities. However, hybridity – though it provides a logical explanation of many of the modern social phenomena related to globalization and personal identifications – has also been subjected to criticism. According to Pieterse (2001), the current use of the term does not acknowledge that hybridity is a longue durée phenomenon, with different dynamics in various historical periods. It is not a new phenomenon of the last centuries, but it has intensified during this period. Because of its omnipresence in history, it ends up being inoperative as an analytical tool. All individuals are “mixing cultural elements and traces across places and identities […] this has become an ordinary experience” (Pieterse 2001, 237). Moreover, a problem with the notion of hybridity is the emphasis that it puts on boundaries and cultural purity. It implies that hybrid identities are merely a synthesis of fractions of other bounded and pure identities and not something new and autonomous. This becomes explicit with the term second- or even third-
generation migrants, as it treats them as hybrid products of different but defined national and cultural spaces. While I take this critique into consideration, I believe that hybridity and especially multiple identities are analytically adequate to express the self-understanding of some of my informants in the context of this study.

Diaspora is another concept of high relevance to migration studies. Etymologically, it means the dispersion of a group of people, derived from the Greek “διασπείρειν”, to disperse. Human migration and generally human mobility of large numbers of people to other parts of the world is a constitutive element of world history. The diaspora initially denoted the historically scattered Jewish, Greek and Armenian populations and later religious minorities in Europe. During the past decades, it has been used more generically to refer to groups of people not residing in their homeland (Ang 2003; Faist 2010). However, according to Ang (2003, 142-143), fragmentation of the global political space into the nation-state system, as well as technological advancements that have made the migrant’s connection to the home country easier and more direct, have transformed the subject of migration into a member of a global diaspora instead of a member of an ethnic minority inside a nation-state. In previous research, “diasporas” have been treated as a matrix of networks whose members are the agents and subjects of social, cultural and economic ties between the mother country and the current country of residence (Dahlman 2004). The notion is also used to describe people in exile who have lost their homeland and whose desire to return to a restored homeland is a goal that generates the political mobilization of diasporic subjects (Dahlman 2004). For “non-exile diasporas”, supporting the national interest of the motherland might be another reason for political action in the country of residence. Such political activity renders the diasporic communities a geopolitical entity in the international community (Wahlbeck 1998). Contrary to Ang’s (2003) “global diaspora”, this understanding of diaspora places the question of identity in a strict framework, while also recognizing its transnational character. It creates a national centre linked to numerous diasporic centres, as it treats all members of the diaspora as subjects of the mother nation. This strong connection of the diaspora to the national centre is justified by a proto-

22 By this I mean diasporas whose home country is in a political condition that permits return migration of members of the diaspora.
nationalist, primordial reasoning, where the national space travels through the bodies of its migrants and their offspring, nullifying that distance (Ang 2003). Wahlbeck (1998, 30) called this supposedly strong bond between the motherland and diasporic communities “nationalism in exile”. Here, one might expect the national “imagined community” to transcend the concrete national space and through diasporas entangle the “transnational” with the “national”, and so transnational identities with national ones. The signifier Greek, Latvian, or any other national demonym, is adequate evidence for the differentiation of the corresponding immigrant group from the overall population of the country of residence. This lumping of people into one group, regardless of whether or not one has a diasporic identity, is the reason use of the term has received negative critique (Malkki 1992, Brah 1996).

In this study, I understand diaspora not as a space that is an extension of the national context into a transnational one, but rather as a space of communication of people, where cultures meet, confront and are in a dialectic relationship with each other. In this respect, diaspora is denationalized as it is not the national centres that “produce their diasporas, but rather the diasporas that reinvent their centres” and become an “expression of fragmentation, of the multiplicity of loyalties and belongings” (Isabella and Zanou 2016, 6–7). Nevertheless, the plurality of my informants necessitates the conceptual variety of the notion diaspora. For example, Latvians who migrated prior to the country’s independence have a different migratory experience as compared to those who came to Sweden in an EU context, as the former belonged for decades to a diaspora in exile, while the latter have simply exercised their right of free mobility.

Another concept that should be discussed in connection with diaspora, and that has been used in the social sciences to analyse many social phenomena, is transnationalism. Like diaspora, transnationalism does not come with exact definitions. The various meanings are overlapping, but while both terms refer to cross-border processes, transnationalism has a broader conceptual scope and includes diasporic as well as other phenomena. Transnationalism is used at the micro-level to discuss vibrant associations of migrants of two or more countries and at the macro-level when it refers to transnationally active networks, groups, organizations, and generally transnational economic and political activity (Faist 2013; Faist 2010). Furthermore, it refers to more recent developments in human mobility facilitated by the technological advancements of our era, which have changed the quality and frequency of the contact between the migrant
and the homeland. (Vertovec 2001). According to Faist (2010, 20–22), while in diaspora the discussion around integration and assimilation is related to the rights of diasporic groups to retain, or at least incorporate, their unique cultural characteristics in their “new societies”, in transnationalism the question is whether the transnational subjectivities will be able, or willing, to integrate into the societies of settlement. EU integration and the efforts to establish a common collective European identity combine both the micro- and the macro-levels of transnationalism. Moreover, the macro-regional building of the Baltic Sea, and the ambition to development a Baltic Sea identity, was realized under the spirit of transnationalism in the post-Cold War period. Hence, transnationalism is open to the possibility of multiple spatial identifications and belonging(s).

If diaspora and transnationalism are cross-border, supra-territorial concepts, then what is their relationship to globalization? While the former refers to the state or regional scale, globalization refers to the universal level, with its identity-related concept being “cosmopolitanism”. Cosmopolitanism – in contrast to transnationalism, which does not have aspirations of universality – “presupposes the existence of a global societal space and thus a global horizon of observation by agents and researchers, described as a “global cosmopolitan condition” (Faist 2010, 31–32). Cosmopolitan identities are usually aspired to by people with a higher education, who tend to identify themselves more as global citizens than as migrants (Faist 2010). Given that my group of informants includes highly educated individuals, the notion of cosmopolitanism is theoretically and analytically useful in relation to the question of multiple identifications and belongings to overlapping spaces.

One common critique of all these different types of identities and their related concepts is that they ignore issues related to gender, ethnicity, class, time and space. This results in the omission of issues of power related to social positions and spatial location, while proceeding to generalizations about the identities of specific groups of people. One remedy for this, which is theoretically and heuristically useful as it addresses all the aforementioned problems, is Floya Anthia’s (2008, 15–16) concept of “translocational positionality”. This concept rejects the dislocations, the notion that someone or something is not in the proper place, because there is no assumption of a fixed space from which someone becomes dislodged. The concept is critical of spatial classifications in relation to national belonging and is inclusive of other individual characteristics, such as gender, sexuality, and class, as factors that define identification and belonging. Also, in the understanding
of “translocational positionality”, though some might decide to migrate and leave their country of origin behind, they are not stripped of their gender, class or race. One remains man or woman, middle class or elite, white or dark skinned. What changes, however, is the spatial context and social space (new for the mover) in which these non-spatial attributes are now experienced. To put it in Anthia’s words:

[... ] the term ‘translocational’ refers to the complex nature of positionality faced by those who are at the interplay of a range of locations and dislocations in relation to gender, ethnicity, national belonging, class and racialisation. Positionality takes place in the context of the lived practices in which identification is practised/performed as well as the intersubjective, organisational and representational conditions for their existence. (Anthias 2008, 15–16)

This concept is analytically useful for this research, as it includes individuals of different ethnicities, genders, phenotypes, and social classes who have decided to relocate their lives in different moments in time and to different locations in space.

Returning to theory on identity, it has been argued that overuse of identity in the social sciences has stripped the notion of any “theoretical rigour and precision” (Jones and Krzyzanowski 2008, 38). Brubaker and Cooper (2000) proposed the term “identification” as a potential remedy to this problem. This term was used by Sigmund Freud to explain the process through which an infant is attached and assimilates itself to external persons or objects. In the social sciences, identity is considered an “…artefact of interaction between the individual and society – it is essentially a matter of being designated by a certain name, accepting that designation, internalizing the role requirements accompanying it, and behaving according to those prescriptions” (Gleason 1983, 915). Identification, derived from the verb “to identify”, moves the spotlight to the agent who conducts the identification process. This agent may be the individual, naming “self- or internal identification” or some other agent who applies “hetero- or external-identification” on the subject. Our tendency or need to identify ourselves and others is “intrinsic to social life”, and it takes place on numerous occasions in the ebb and flow of everyday life (Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 14). The way in which self- and hetero- identifications are performed varies in time and space. This makes identification, compared to the hard understandings of identity, something “fundamentally situational and contextual”
Identification is also divided between relational and categorical modes. The first relational mode implies identification by reference to one or several things, like position in the family, in the occupational environment, or in a peer group. The categorical mode involves identification as a category, as a taxonomy in a group of people with specific attributes, based on race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, citizenship, nationality, language, etc. (Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 15).

One very powerful taxonomer is the modern state, which uses categorical identification to more efficiently exercise bio-political governance. When it comes to human mobility, this is an important aspect, as states are the main identifiers and agents that quantify and categorize their subjects based on spatial attributes and belonging. Hence, the state monopolizes the power to categorize individuals as legal or illegal migrants for administrative purposes, with consequences for the labour and residence rights and obligations individuals have inside its territory (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). However, in the EU context, the state has shared this monopoly with the EU, which is why the categories of European citizen and third-country nationals have been created. In this framework, intra-European migration has been conceived of as “mobility” and intra-European migrants as “movers”. Beside self- and external-identifications of individuals that have clear and distinguishable agents, Brubaker and Cooper (2000, 16) argued for a special kind of identification that “does not require a specifiable ‘identifier’”, a specific agent who is responsible for its production and dissemination of identification. This agent can be “pervasive and influential” through the anonymity and impersonality of the narratives and the discourses that articulate the attributes of the identification. Examples of this kind of identification are discourses that use stereotypes and generalizations, drawn from a historical pool of categorization of spaces, during EU enlargement to the east and the Eurozone crisis.

2.9. Sense of belonging

Nation-states, as the controllers of their respective territorialized spaces, have the authority to decide who and what belongs to the state space – who and what may or may not enter this space. The term belonging has been extensively used in xenophobic rhetoric, just as it is expressed in the phrase “you don’t belong here” (Sicakkan and Lithman 2005, 27). The concept of belonging is of crucial importance to human mobility, and it has served as an analytical tool in many studies on transnational migration (Antonsich
2010; Sicakkan and Lithman 2005). It has been used as a remedy and as an alternative to the concept of identity and its “analytical shortcomings”, mainly because it is context sensitive and allows the complexity of identity processes to be analysed more rigorously (Jones and Krzyzanowski 2008, 38). Sicakkan and Lithman (2005, 25), in a comparison of identity and belonging, stated that the former has self-centric qualities – it is about the self in relation to the self – while the latter relates both to itself and to others. They also asserted that the analytical value of belonging is that it implies that participation is not directly linked to membership (Sicakkan and Lithman 2005, 27). For example, there are many migrants who feel they belong to the country of residence without being citizens. Additionally, the “semi-mode” membership of intra-European migrants involves more rights as compared to third-country migrants, yet fewer in relation to national citizens in the state they reside in. This distinction probably affects the sense of national belonging and identification of EU movers. Furthermore, Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008, 41–42) suggested one could have transient, unclear or even contradictory positions towards a specific collective identity. One may, for example, associate strongly with a particular collective identity, and at the same time have an attachment or belonging to another collective identity. This approach is useful for this research, which examines how possible spatial identifications linked to the national, European or even regional scale co-exist. Individuals may belong to a variety of “objects of attachment” that can be expressed through self- or hetero-identifications (for a detailed analysis, see Sicakkan and Lithman 2005, 27). Belonging as a process, and as something particularly idiosyncratic, especially in contrast to categorical identities, has dynamic characteristics. Belonging is not fixed, but rather contested by different discourses and power relations, by and between the self and the others. The advantage of the notion is that it can be used in the plural form, showing the possibility of multiple identifications, but also of belongings in addition to the current ones (Yuval-Davis 2006, 199; Sicakkan and Lithman 2005, 27). This understanding is useful for research such as this dissertation, which examines human mobility in a transnational context, the aim being not to find statistically representative identities, but rather to discover and understand the dynamics of belonging in relation to different spaces and territories.

The concept of belonging has two main analytical modes. The first refers to the sense of belonging, to the feeling that someone may have for a well-defined space, such as the place called home, where he or she feels safe. The second refers to how various discourses and institutions create spaces that
include or exclude individuals; hence, it involves the politics of belonging. The latter refers to boundary discourses and practices that separate “us” from “them” and that organize the population into socio-spatial insiders and outsiders (Yuval-Davis 2006; Antonsich 2010). An individual’s feelings of belonging to a place have consequences for his or her self-identification, which makes “belonging and processes of self-formation mutually implicated”, as the “who I am” is in direct connection to “where do I belong” (Antonsich 2010, 646). According to Marco Antonsich (2010, 647–649), there are five factors that help generate a feeling of belonging: autobiographical, relational, cultural, economic, and legal. The first refers to the past that connects the individual with a place and all the experiences, relations and memories this includes. Relational factors concern the personal and social circle one has in that specific place. Of the cultural factors, language is the most significant, as it is the main medium of constructing meaning, understanding reality and communicating it with the rest of the community. Other cultural expressions are related to religion and cultural practices, for example, food production or a specific cuisine. Good economic preconditions, such as the existence of an environment with stable material conditions, ensure good quality of life for the individual and assist in developing a sense of belonging. Legal factors are related mainly to the right of abode and its specific attributes, which make the individual feel safe and secure in a place, generating feelings of belonging to this place. Krzyzanowski and Wodak (2007, 104) argued that, if collective membership such as residence and labour rights or citizenship is granted, one’s belonging is stabilized. Moreover, if the status of the individual’s membership in the target society is challenged, there is a risk of putting him or her in a limbo stage of belonging.\(^{23}\) Antonsich (2010) referred to the total time one resides in a place – hence length of residence – as an additional factor in defining the sense of belonging.

However, whether one feels one belongs to a certain place or does not is mainly a personal question and particular to every individual. The conditions that might affect the sense of “place belongingness” are regulated, to a great extent, by the “politics of belonging” (Antonsich 2010). Boundary discourses and practices that construct an “us” and “them” binarity are at

\(^{23}\) The negotiations between the EU and the UK for the status of EU migrants living in the UK and British citizens living in one of the EU member states challenge the status of membership for both these groups and probably affect their sense of belonging by creating a sense of “in between’ in various collectives and not belonging to any of them” (Krzyzanowski and Wodac 2007, 104).
the very core of any politics of belonging (Antonsich 2010, 649). Governments organize people in groups of individuals with common attributes or based on their membership status, thereby contributing a spatial aspect to the politics of belonging. In this way, belonging is linked to identity, the identity of the individual being part of a collective categorical identity, which is the reason why “politics of belonging often times conflate with identity politics” (Antonsich 2010, 649).

Citizenship is a state tool for exercising “politics of belonging”, as a way to organize who is an insider and who is an outsider, to maintain state authority on its space and secure its territorial boundaries. This is accomplished by requiring an “official, public-oriented ‘formal structure’ of membership” that constitutes legal belonging, i.e. citizenship, for individuals who comprise the state’s political community (Antonsich 2010, 645). Common to various political theory approaches is the view that citizenship entails a combination of obligations towards the political community and rights for the individual as an outcome of membership to the community. Civic, political and social rights give access to the aforementioned five factors that may generate belongingness, and thus belongingness is significantly regulated by the state through application of the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2006, 208). Yuval-Davis (2006, 208) also referred to the “spatial rights” that an individual might have and that include “the right to migrate, the right of abode, the right to work, and the right to plan a future where one lives”. Yuval-Davis had in mind the precarious conditions of refugees and asylum seekers. However, one could add to this – though it is contextually much different – the discussion on the spatial right of British and European citizens in the EU and in the UK, respectively. Brexit, or even the possibility of a Grexit during Greece’s economic crisis, brings again to the epicentre the spatial significance of the state in comparison to the EU. Uncertainty concerning the future of the EU renders national citizenship more significant to the individual than European citizenship.

There is a continuous debate, especially in immigration countries, on the difference between “political” belonging and “real” belonging. In this framework, Ghassan Hage (2000, 45–46) coined the terms “passive belonging” and “governmental belonging”. The first refers to the sense of being home inside a nation-state and the feeling that you belong to this nation. The latter refers to the sense of unofficial authority nationalists feel they have to regulate and decide who should feel at home inside the national space and under what terms. Hage (2000, 45–46) discussed these two types of belonging in relation to Bourdieu’s notions of “cultural capital” and
“habitus” (Bourdieu 1986), thus creating the concept of “national cultural capital”. He argued that, for a certain part of the nation-state citizenry, national cultural capital is the source of legitimacy for exercising governmental belonging. Furthermore, he called the part of the population that perceives the national cultural capital in essentialized terms a “national aristocracy” and defined the elements that constitute it. Hage (2000, 45–46), with reference to the Australian context, argued that, for certain individuals or parts of the population (immigrants, autochthonous minorities), belonging to the national group will never be enough to be a full member of this exclusive aristocratic group, regardless of one’s accumulation of national cultural capital. He defined national cultural capital as:

[...] the sum of accumulated nationally sanctified and valued social and physical cultural styles and dispositions (national culture) adopted by individuals and groups, as well as valued characteristics (national types and national character) within a national field: looks, accent, demeanour, taste, nationally valued social and cultural preferences and behaviour, etc. (2000, 53)

This understanding of belonging is relevant to Agnew’s (1994, 59) discussion on the “territorial trap”, presented earlier. Agnew discussed the uncritical tautology of the nation-state and the territorial state, where the latter is endowed with the legitimacy of expressing the character and the will of the first. This “will” or “character”, in Hage’s terms, is what defines the national cultural capital of a nation-state. Agnew’s metaphor of the nation-state as a container of a certain population is congruent with Hage’s reasoning on national cultural capital in a specific territorial context. Continuing the metaphor of the state as a container, I argue that the national container seems to have transparent qualities. By this I mean that, regardless of the effort of individuals, those who do not belong to the national aristocracy will inevitably and continuously be a visible Other. Hage’s theorizing around national belonging is based on the Australian multicultural context, but it is relevant to any national space that has received immigrants and includes autochthonous minorities. It is a useful tool for highlighting and analytically tracking the hierarchies of identities and belonging in a national context.

The dialectic relation between the “we” and the “they” includes the various discourses and political practices of multicultural societies. “Otherness” has a dynamic transformability and denotes different groups of people
in every historical period. Many of the terrorist attacks in Europe during the last decades perpetrated by persons born and raised in Europe or others who travelled to the Middle East to join Islamic state forces initiated a discussion on the relation between institutional belonging, i.e. citizenship, and actual belonging. Moreover, many politicians\textsuperscript{24} have supported an understanding of Europe as a region with common values, which draw on a common historical experience and culture. People from other cultural contexts are not seen to belong to this space and are therefore expected to assimilate to it. This has been apparent in discourses concerning the integration of refugees who entered Europe during the recent so-called refugee crisis, which implied a cultural boundary between Europe and people from other, mainly non-western, regions.

2.10. An Application of the Discourse Historical Analysis

This dissertation examined data from the interviews using the Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) approach, as formulated by Wodak et al. (2009 [1999]) and De Cillia et al. (1999). Theoretically, De Cillia et al. (1999, 157) saw discourses as a medium through which “social actors constitute knowledge, situations, social roles, as well as identities and interpersonal relations between various interacting social groups”. DHA puts weight on historical subjects and incidents, attempting to understand how these are echoed in specific discourses. Because this study seeks to investigate identifications and belonging to spatial units of heavy historical significance, DHA is an appropriate theoretical and methodological perspective (Reisigl 2017). Furthermore, the concept of context is a key notion in DHA and also significant for the purpose of this dissertation, which bases its analysis on interviews with individuals, each of whom relates in a unique way to the three spatial units. This relation is defined by the individuals’ specific discourse on their relationship with the three types of space, which is affected by the historical and socio-political context in which they have experienced and are still experiencing migration, as well as by education, gender, age, profession, ethnic affiliation or even political and ideological orientation (Reisigl 2017, 53). This research primarily uses the methodological tools of DHA to analyse the different dimensions of identities and

\textsuperscript{24} “For Europe, Integrating Refugees Is the Next Big Challenge”, https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/01/13/europe-integrating-refugees-next-big-challenge, accessed 25 03 2017
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sense of belonging to Europe, nation and macro-regions via the logic of continuance, disruption, reproduction and alteration.\textsuperscript{25}

2.11. Conclusions

This dissertation sees geographical and institutionalized spaces via social constructionism and, thus, perceives them as products of the human intellect. It aims to avoid the dominance of the nation-state as the main or only unit of analysis in the social sciences, by examining both national and regional identities and sense of belonging in an intra-European migratory context.

Inspired partially by nationalism, regionalism can also aim at constructing institutionalized and territorial spaces of identities. The EU is a unique and illustrative example of the relationship between the two -isms, as it has adopted many of the identity-making strategies of the nation-state. These strategies, which manage to essentialize the nation-state, come with the term “banal nationalism”. In an EU as well as regional context, these strategies are called “banal Europeanism” and “banal regionalism”, respectively. Additionally, the right to free mobility inside a territory is linked to citizenship of the nation-state and in a European context to EU citizenship, implying the belonging of the citizen to a specific community and to a collective identity. Furthermore, the EU has attempted to apply regionalism in the historical macro-areas of the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Sea regions. This complex relationship of spaces becomes even more complicated if it is investigated in an intra-European context, where a number of spatial identities might antagonize each other or co-exist. This research aims to examine this nexus of spatial identities and sense of belonging to these spaces.

Furthermore, the variety of terms used in the field of migration studies shows the complexity of migration as a socioeconomic and political phenomenon as well as the intricacy of the task of investigating migratory identities. I have argued that a hard understanding of identity is not the appropriate analytical approach for apprehending how individuals relate to their overlapping spaces of nation, region and Europe, especially in a migratory context. Instead, concepts such as identification and belonging are more appropriate for this task. However, following Krzyzanowski and

\textsuperscript{25} A more thorough explication of the methodological tools adopted from the DHA is presented in the method chapter.
Wodak’s (2007) reasoning, I do not believe that identity is a notion that should be abandoned. It is extensively used in current discourse and has also been the medium through which I was able to communicate with my informants concerning issues related to the term. I see identity as the outcome of mechanisms that are related to identifications and belongings. Belonging initiates processes of identification, which eventually are crystallized into an identity – a specific sense of self. This is not related to the hard version of identity. Because identifications are on-going processes, their outcome has an ephemeral quality. Hence, it is more meaningful to investigate both the sense of belonging – as this might be a factor that eventually causes the individual to say, this is my identity, or this is how I perceive myself in a specific context – and the forms of identification. A lack of sense of belonging might also be the cause of an individual’s de-identification. Furthermore, someone could bear sentiments of belonging and partially identify with a specific space, without reaching the level of conscious identity. This does not mean that the relation of individuals to this space is insignificant and that it cannot act as an element that affects their migratory experience or the way they relate to other spaces. There is also the possibility that a person may bear or be given a specific identity without having a sense of belonging to the specific spatial entity. For example, national identities might be seen as given, because of the dominance of the nation-state, without being adopted by the individual, and adopted to a lesser degree by the migrant individual. Furthermore, even if an individual has a sense of belonging to a space and some identification processes have been initiated, it is still possible that no conscious identity has been adopted by the individual. The latter understanding of the relation between identity and belonging is crucial to this study, as it includes regional spaces such as the Mediterranean Sea and Baltic Sea, which are not institutionalized at the level of the nation-state, though attempts have been made to do so. Hence, it would be a rather futile to attempt to discover whether there is such a thing as a Baltic Sea or Mediterranean Sea identity – of the hard type. What is more interesting to investigate is what kind of elements of belonging or what forms of identification the migrants have to these two sea regions and how this is related to the other two spaces in a migratory context.

Furthermore, I agree with Antonsich’s (2010, 653) assertion that “empirical studies on feelings of territorial belonging” should pay attention to the intersection of two ongoing dynamics: the individual and the social. He argued that belonging should be examined in relation to the present
space, both place (“here”) and time (“now”), in all their multiple scales. Thus, grounded in the previous theoretical discussion, this study hypothesizes that the overlapping or nested spaces, i.e. the national, regional and European, with their different modes of belonging, do affect the migratory experience of Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden. The questions that need to be answered, similarly posed by Krzyzanowski and Wodak (2007, 96), are what kind of belongings, identifications and identities migrants bear in relation to these nested spaces, how all these spatial connections are intertwined with each other, and finally how this is translated personally and emotionally. Furthermore, the migrants’ identities are more difficult to examine than, for example, the national identities of those “who enjoy relatively stable points of reference”, i.e., non-intra-national migrants (Krzyzanowski and Wodak 2007, 98). Though it is not only individuals but also groups of people who migrate, “migration remains a singular, subjective and unique experience which resists generalization” (Krzyzanowski and Wodak 2007, 98). This study – by taking into consideration not only the national, but a combination of spatial references of different scales – has the potential to shed more light on this complicated process of identification and belonging, as it investigates Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden from various backgrounds, in contrast to similar research that focuses solely on one spatial level. At any event, the goal of the study is not to present migrant categories or identities in statistical terms, and the study does not presuppose the existence of certain identities. It seeks to demonstrate the dynamic effects these differently institutionalized and historized spaces may have on the individual’s sense of self in a migratory context. It aims to examine how three types of nested spaces (national, regional, European), accompanied by their own discourses on their construction and existence, create a sense of belonging to the group of Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden.

The different terms of relevance for this study – such as diaspora, hybridity, transnationalism, globalization – are significant for migrant identifications. They come with theoretical and analytical shortcomings, but also with particular advantages. For example, the concept of diaspora assists in conceptualizing many dimensions of the phenomenon of ethnic or national short- or long-term migration in the world. Some individuals do belong to a diaspora as a national group that is living in exile and waiting to return to the homeland and that has taken part in political activism to fulfil this goal. This applies to the Latvians who left their country under the Russian invasion after WW2. However, treating all Latvians living in Sweden as part
of a diaspora in exile, or as active members of the Latvian diasporic community, would be problematic. Again, what is missing here is contextualization of the term within a historical framework. However, if we simply abandon such typology, including identity, it would be like throwing the baby out with the bathwater. For that reason, this study will use notions like diaspora and hybridity as heuristic tools in order to analyse social reality and the relational, processual and situational identity in migration, always taking into consideration the overall context and the dislocation positionality, which includes gender, race, class and generation.

In conclusion, the identifications and belongings of the Greek and Latvian migrants to their germane nations and to Europe and macro-regions will first be analysed in general by looking at how the informants express their relationship to these spaces and, second, by considering the different notions related to migration, the five factors of belonging, as defined by Antonsich (2010), and the DHA, as applied by Wodak et al. (2009 [1999]) and De Cillia et al. (1999).

The exact steps of analysis of the data from in-depth semi-structured interviews with the informants, which are based on a qualitative thematic analysis, will be presented in the following chapter.
3. Methodological points of departure

This chapter presents the methodological process for selecting the informants, conducting the interviews and collecting the data for the study. Methodological limitations and reflections as well as the position of the researcher in qualitative research will also be discussed. Finally, this chapter ends with a presentation of the ethical dimensions of conducting interviews and the confidentiality of interviewees’ personal information.

3.1. Interviews as the chosen method of inquiry

The particularity of intra-European migration – a phenomenon that combines elements of internal and international migration – and the variety of spatial belongings potentially found in Europe create an interesting, but complex, area for research. It is this complexity that makes qualitative methods and semi-structured in-depth interviews the appropriate approach to answering the research questions posed in the study. As Bruce Berg (2004, 31) argued, the more complex the phenomenon, the more difficult it is to explain using non-qualitative methods, as the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Quantitative methods with big N samples may offer some insights into the sense of belonging and issues of identification of individuals in relation to spaces. However, qualitative research, especially in-depth interviewing, enables the researcher to dig deeper and retrieve knowledge, not mere information from each case, and to find the pieces of the puzzle, thus giving a fuller picture of the phenomenon under study. Dabbs (1982, 32) argued that, as a notion, quality is directly related to the nature of things, and Berg (2004, 3) added: “Qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions of things”. In this sense, qualitative research provides the pertinent tools, as I will have to discuss many of the different notions Berg referred to in order to approach intra-European migration as a phenomenon as well as the different identifications and sense of belonging the migrants may have in relation to the nested spaces of nation, Europe and macro-region.
Another way to explore this issue would be to conduct a survey with closed-ended questions. A previous attempt by Johan Fredborn Larsson (2010) examined whether the inhabitants of the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic Sea regions adopted a corresponding regional identity and explored their perception of the other region. His study managed to draw some general conclusions about these regional identities. However, the survey method used did not provide any deeper insights into the reasons the study participants tended to identify or not identify with their macro-regions. When one aspires to transcend the nation-state as the unit of analysis and to reach out to other possible spatial identifications, surveys neither provide the appropriate methodological tools nor capture the dynamics between the various spaces and phenomena related to human mobility (Castagnone 2011).

The data for the analysis were acquired by conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews. Semi-structured in-depth interviews have been used extensively as a method of inquiry in the social sciences to capture individuals’ narratives and forms of storytelling (Weiss 1994). This method has also been used extensively in studies on migration and integration. This kind of interviewing allows scope for developing a basic rapport, thus allowing the interviewer to build a relationship of trust and extract information that the interviewee would not provide in a typical survey (Weiss 1994). An interview with close-ended questions would be a barrier to discovering how the informants understand, construct and interpret social reality.

3.2. Approach to qualitative research interviewing

The abductive research strategy developed by Norman Blaikie (1993; 2009) serves the aim and scope of this research and is an appropriate approach for qualitative interviewing. This strategy focuses on discovering and describing how social actors understand and interpret social activity, what their motives and incentives for action are. Its abductive side lies in “the process of constructing theories or typologies that are grounded in everyday activities and in the language and meanings of social actors” (Ong 2012, 417). Though closely related to the grounded theory method, an abductive research strategy has different ontological and epistemological presuppositions.26 It is a more bottom-up as opposed to top-down approach, as it

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26 For a detailed comparison of grounded theory and abductive research strategy, see Ong 2012.
tries to reflect on social reality through the minds of actors and not merely through the researcher (Blaikie 2009, 89–90). The descriptions that emerge through the researcher-participant interaction is the basis for processing the data to arrive at a technical description (Blaikie 2009, 89–90). As this research is interested in the perceptions and sentiments of belonging to various spaces and their meanings, it is ontologically positioned around the assumption that “people’s knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of the social reality” (Mason 2002, 63). Furthermore, this research strategy follows an epistemological assumption that sees the production of knowledge as a reinterpretation of people’s everyday knowledge that results in systematized academic language (Blaikie 2009, 95).

In this study, I follow the two steps of abductive reasoning presented by Blaikie (2009, 92), in an attempt to answer the research questions. The first step is descriptive in nature and related to the everyday activities and meanings of the Latvian and Greek migrants in Sweden, as well as to their perceptions of the three overlapping spaces and how they relate to them. The second step is to “derive categories and concepts”, which will assist in understanding how the migrants identify themselves and how they narrate their sense of belonging to nation, Europe and macro-regions. This will be realized by discussing the different parts of the theory – such as the construction of nation, Europe and regions and the different types of identifications and belongings related to a migration context, such as diaspora, multiple identities, hybridity, and cosmopolitanism – in relation to the interview data and the derived categories and concepts. For these two steps, a thematic content analysis of the data will be conducted, alongside a discourse historical analysis.

Furthermore, this dissertation sees the relationship between the interviewer and the informant through the prism of “active interview”, as analysed by Holstein and Gubrium (1995). They adopted a social-constructionist approach in the social sciences, as for them reality is apprehended, understood, organized and conveyed in everyday life through a nexus of different procedures, conditions, and resources, which are called “interpretive practice”. In the empirical purview, interviews are interactional events that occur between two actively interpretive subjects, i.e. the interviewer and the interviewee, who are constructed on site and whose produced meaning is socially constituted. What differentiates this approach from conventional ones regarding its epistemological stance on interviews, and subsequently data analysis, is the agency the interviewee has in the
production of meaning-making. The interviewer and the informants are engaged in joint active interpretation of the information, experiences and identities the latter brings up aiming to understand their reality by reflecting on the topics the interviewer is interested in. Hence, both interviewer and interviewee are “necessarily and unavoidably active”, as each is involved in the meaning-making process through “interpretive practice” (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 4). Active interviewing treats respondents not merely as repositories of knowledge or units of stored information and data, which the interviewer seeks to dig out, but rather as “constructors of knowledge” (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 4).

In an “active interview”, interviewees do not merely respond to questions; they are storytellers, narrators of experiences, emotions, opinions, and expectations, connecting disparate parts into a coherent, meaningful whole, in a specific place and time. Their stories are a product of the aforementioned improvisation activity in communication with the interviewer from whom they draw inspiration, in a give-and-take life-story game (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 27–29). This game is played according to the rules, which are the interviewer’s research topics, and with tools taken from the latter’s own stock of knowledge and experience (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 27–29). This is the approach I, as an interviewer, followed while collecting the data. I was the one who established the main discussion topics, which revolved around the informants’ experiences, opinions, viewpoints and identifications in relation to different spaces. The main interview questions, as well as the follow-up questions, were formed by, among other factors, my own experience as an EU migrant in Sweden. Additionally, the overall interaction with my informants and my aim to stimulate the discussion, generate new insights, but also benefit from their already existing stock of knowledge were realized in what effectively became a give-and-take life-story game.

Furthermore, the informants appear with multiple identities in the interview practice. In my research, the respondents did not only have the experience of a migrant, but also of an expatriate, an EU mover, an EU citizen. They could identify as a Greek citizen, a Latvian citizen, a European, or a person coming from the Mediterranean, or the Balkans, or the Baltic States, from the Baltic Sea, Eastern or Southern Europe, Sweden, or Scandinavia, etc. For instance, when the interviewees speak as Greek or Latvian migrants, they draw on a different stock of knowledge than when they speak as EU citizens, who compare themselves to third-country migrants. This stock of knowledge contains information and experiences that are accumulated over
3. METHODOLOGICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE

time. Can it then be argued that the responses and narrations provided in the present, which the interviewee gives the interviewer through storytelling, reflect in full and with clarity a personal past? This knowledge is only partially historical. While the interviewee delivers answers, these are created in situ and do not fully reflect that person’s past. The past is linked with the present through the interviewee’s narration, and what is actually delivered is the opinions of the respective positions from which one can speak about life; experiential details and progress over time depend on what is being made of the present – the role one assumes – in the interview (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 32). What an active interviewer should do is to try to acquire different kinds of answers, such as opinions, feelings and behaviours, by activating different stimuli from the present and the past. The interview guide includes several questions intended to stimulate discussion on the migrants’ lives when they were still living in their home countries, such as why they decided to migrate and questions about their current living conditions in Sweden. My interviews include individuals with different life stories who arrived in Sweden during different historical periods. For example, some are economic migrants of the 1960s and some of the 2010s, other war refugees of the 1940s or political refugees of the 1970s. All these people tell their own stories, responding to my questions in the present. What they say about Greece, Latvia, or Sweden or how they identify themselves with the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic Sea regions are reflections of their present beliefs, through interpretations of old experiences in their home countries and in Sweden.

Much of the literature on interview strategy and technique focuses on how the interviewer can obtain valid and accurate information from participants by minimizing the personal “noise” that might affect the interview data’s validity (the extent to which data analysis gives the “correct” answers) and reliability (the extent to which the interview questions will be answered in the same way regardless of the time or the place in which the interview is conducted). According to Holstein and Gubrium (1995, 3), interviews are framed as a potential source of bias, error, misunderstanding, or misdirection – a persistent set of problems to be minimized. The relationship between the interviewee and the informant is seen as a power relationship that inevitably exists between the two constituents of the interview activity (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, 3). Kvale (2006, 496) argued that it is only when we recognize the power dynamics in the construction of knowledge through interviews that we can conduct objective and ethical interview research. According to this logic, the interviewee is the subject of the
research, as it is his or her thoughts, beliefs, sentiments and perceptions that constitute the data under study. Furthermore, the interviewer, who is responsible for conducting the interviews and data analysis, is also subjective, drawing on his or her own experience, position in the social structure and the institutions to which he or she belongs (Limb and Dwyer 2001). This subjectivity is linked to the term “positionality”, which means that our personal perception and acquired knowledge are not objective and independent, but instead determined by our position in the social structure (Johnston et al. 2000). In my case, besides being a migrant in Sweden, I bear other societal attributes, and I have a different life story than my informants do. So, my personal experiences and subjective position affect the way I interpret reality. Positionality also describes the power relation between the interviewer and the interviewee, and how the former sees, perceives and judges the latter, based on his or her own experience and values. This school of thought on interviewing claims that when the researcher ignores or does not acknowledge the biases that positionality entails, there is a risk of distorting the social reality that emerges from the interviews instead of reflecting it (Vargas-Silva 2012). A proposed remedy for the positionality problem in qualitative research is self-reflexivity, through which the researcher creates awareness of the existence of divergent meanings and truths (Bryman 2012). According to this approach, self-reflexivity commits the researcher to an active and continuous process of critical self-study. This process is the tool that helps the researcher to identify potential predispositions and self-projections of values on the subject and the data (Dunbar et al. 2002).

However, if one adopts the qualitative method of “active interview analysis”, the notions of positionality and self-reflexivity are filled with different content. Because there is no objective reality, which the researchers seek to discover and represent by avoiding the bias that derives from their own “positionalities”, the experiences, identities, and social positions of the researchers become an integral part of the interview’s meaning-making production and eventually of the data. Additionally, during the interview and afterwards, during the process of interpreting the data, positionality becomes a catalyst for the production of meaning and the analysis, as the researchers draw from their own experience and knowledge in order to explore, for example, common aspects of experience, identities, or opinions
that, for some reason, the interviewee might find difficult to recognize and express (DeVault 1990).27

3.3. Analysing the data

When analysing the data, I follow the method of Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) as developed by Ruth Wodak and the Viennese school of discourse analysis (Reisigl 2017). Theoretically, De Cillia et al. (1999, 157) saw discourses as a medium through which “social actors constitute knowledge, situations, social roles, as well as identities and interpersonal relations between various interacting social groups”. The methodology of the present study builds on an approach that is based on Wodak et al.’s work *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* (2009 [1999]), summarized by De Cillia et al. (1999) and explained and applied in different modes in the works of Wodak and Krzyzanowski (2007), Jennifer Clary-Lemon (2010), Sheyholislami (2011) and Gilmartin and Migge (2015). I find, as do Gilmartin and Migge (2015), Wodak et al.’s approach to the construction of national identities more broadly applicable, as it can be extended beyond the national context to other spatial entities, something that might contribute to a deeper understanding of the national. De Cillia et al. (1999, 157) used three analytical tools, accompanied with sample extracts. Their toolkit includes:

1. Contents/topics
2. Discursive strategies
3. Linguistic means of realization.

The method I used in treating the data is the following. First, I am interested in identifying the salient topics that appear in the data from the interviews with the Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden concerning their relationship to and understanding of the national, European and macro-regional spaces.

Second, this part of the analysis discusses the discursive strategies the migrants use to position themselves and others in relation to these spaces and to create a sense of belonging or not belonging. These macro-strategies

27 Marjorie L. DeVault (1990) suggested that, in some cases, it is important for women to be interviewed by a woman researcher who can help them to track hidden, unrecognizable experiences and identities.
will help in understanding the complexity of spatial identification, going beyond the national level. Third, part of the methodology is an explanation of the linguistic means, such as metaphors, spatial deixis and deictic pronouns, that reveal how the informants understand and express their spatial identifications and belongings.

The general themes addressed by the informants in the interview data will be presented and discussed in relation to the theoretical framework. As Wodak (2001, 70) argued, the DHA follows an abductive research strategy, as “a constant movement between the theory and the empirical material is necessary”. De Cillia et al. (1999) are not explicit about their criteria for identification of the topics, and I have chosen to follow a qualitative thematic analysis, though Wodak and Krzyzanowski (2007) and Wodak et al. (2009) have called it “qualitative content analysis”, where they combine it with discursive strategies. For defining the topics or themes, a thematic analysis has been applied to the data using descriptive coding (Hsieh and Shannon 2005; Braun and Clarke 2006). The interview data have been read several times, allowing the researcher to obtain an overall picture of the data and, as a first step, to detect what themes may be found in the corpus. Then sentences or phrases from the interviews were labelled with descriptive titles in order to locate the various themes within the data. Finally, codes were sorted into themes and sub-themes based on how these codes were related and linked to each other (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1279; Braun and Clarke 2006, 86–88). What De Cillia et al. called “semantic macro-areas” and “topics” in a qualitative thematic analysis terminology are understood as “main themes” and “sub-themes”, respectively.

The analysis is supported by employing the discursive strategies identified by De Cillia et al. (1999, 160–161), which help to construct identifications with and to display the individual understanding of intra-European migratory subjects of the national, European and macro-regional spaces found in my material. My aim was not to follow Wodak et al.’s (2009) methodological pathway, where she operationalized the notion of “topos” from argumentation theory to define the discursive and sub-discursive strategies. My endeavour was to uncover and examine all of the discursive strategies the informants use to express spatial identification and to present these strategies so as to reveal the manifestations of identification

28 For the differences between qualitative thematic analysis and qualitative content analysis, see Vaismoradi et al. (2013).
3. METHODOLOGICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE

and eventually belonging of the informant in relation to their germane spaces.

According to De Cillia et al. (1999, 160), there are four main linguistic strategies that, on the one hand, presuppose or emphasize national same-ness and difference (the two most important characteristics of identity formation), as well national uniqueness, autonomy and independence from third political entities and inclusion, unity and continuity in a national context. On the other hand, they are used to presuppose or emphasize exclusion from the national context and heteronomy, fragmentation and discontinuity.

The first category is Constructive strategies, which are those linguistic means whose purpose is to build and establish a shared identity “through particular acts of reference” such as by using the pronoun “we” in connection with toponymical categories such as, “we, the Greeks” or “we Europeans”. Generally, shaping a “we group” is an important element of constructive strategies. Perpetuation and justification strategies suggest a continuity and retain the status quo of the “we group”, frequently with reference to the Other. Transformation strategies are used to discursively reconstruct a spatial identity within another one, which is of a different scale or different quality. In a migratory context, this strategy is important, as it helps to form hybrid or multiple identities, which encompass different spaces, replace one space with another (the home country with the country of residence), or substitute the national with a larger framework, such as the European one. The last category of linguistic strategies is the dismantling or destructive strategies, which aim to demolish or de-mythologize existing spatial identities. In a national context, this could involve dismantling a national identity so it can be replaced by another one or deconstructing the notion of nation as such in order to construct a cosmopolitan identity. In the European context, this becomes illustrative, as the effort of EU institutions to create a sense of belonging to something common and a European identity can easily be challenged by the citizens of its member states. Simply put, discursive strategies are the ways people choose to construct, dismantle, perpetuate or transform their spatial identities through the use of language. These discursive strategies could be called discursive techniques, or processes. However, I agree with Wodak et al. (2009) and De Cillia et al. (1999) on use of the word “strategy”,²⁹ as it highlights the agency that

²⁹ See also Wodak et al. 2009, 31-32.
people have in the construction of social reality. This is also in accord with the theoretical framework of discourse analysis, which understands discourse not only as a constitutor of social practice, but also as something that itself is constituted by such practice (Wodak et al. 2009).

Deixis and different types of metaphors are additional tools that will assist in the data analysis. As mentioned, the personal pronoun “we” is an important element of discursively constructing spaces of “us” and “them”. Billig (1995, 94) also emphasized the deictic attributes of “we”; “The crucial words of banal nationalism are often the smallest: ‘we’, ‘this’ and ‘here’, which are the words of linguistic ‘deixis’”. Regarding a spatial context of belonging, De Cillia et al. referred to a national “we” of the people who today populate the nation, an expanded historical “we”, which includes all of the individuals considered to have been part of the nation; they even referred to the subnational and supranational “we”, such as that of various localities, regions or Europe. The linguistic trope of metaphor has also been found to be significant when constructive strategies are used by the interlocutors. In the processes of Othering, metaphors are not mere linguistic phenomena, but as Wodak and Boukala (2015, 96) argued, they can be used “to represent inclusion and exclusion and the discursive construction of in-groups and out-groups in persuasive images related to common-sense experiences and beliefs”.

The methodological toolkit and coding process I used are summarized in the following three tables:

1. Contents/topics/themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases of coding</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Multiple reading of the data and preliminary identification of themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Coding the data at the phrase or sentence level, in terms of content, with a word or phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Combination of codes for generating overarching themes and sub-themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>Thematic organization of themes and sub-themes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Discursive Strategies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases of Coding (DS)</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Coding for constructive strategies: attempts by the informants to construct spatial, collective and individual identifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Coding for dismantling strategies: attempts by the informants to de-construct or eradicate spatial, collective and individual identifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Coding for perpetuating strategies: attempts by the informants to reproduce and maintain collective and individual identifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>Coding for transformative strategies: attempts by the informants to alternate collective and individual identifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 5</td>
<td>The identified DS were labelled based on their content and organized in tables according to spatial units and interview groups, then inductively generalized. (see appendixes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Linguistic means of realization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodological Tool</th>
<th>Use in the analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metaphors</td>
<td>Metaphors were identified throughout the data and discussed in the analysis when they were found to be significant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deictic elements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-related deixis: “We”, “they”, “us”, “them” etc.</td>
<td>Deictic elements of the interviewees’ answers and narrations were identified and discussed to contextualize their answers and discover intentions of inclusion and exclusion, identity construction and expression of sense of belonging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space-related deixis: “here”, “there”, “below” “above” etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-related deixis: “now”, “before”, “back then”, “tomorrow” etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data were analysed by applying the abovementioned methodological tools compounding a mixed-methods approach, as it combines elements of qualitative thematic analysis and DHA.
3.4. Sampling criteria: selection of the informants

The informants who participated in the interviews were selected based on three main criteria: time and total period of migration, level of education, and gender. The purpose of this approach was to create a group of informants with diverse characteristics rather than to form a sample that would reflect some kind of population representativity. The aim of this diverse sampling strategy is to explore and examine the attitudes, perceptions, belongings and identifications of a varying group of informants in relation to nation, Europe and macro-regions. The interviews showed signs of saturation already from the first sessions, owing to the informants' responses concerning macro-regional identifications. The overall in-depth and lengthy interviews led to data saturation, although such a claim is always relative, especially in studies based on in-depth interviews. This qualitative research of this dissertation, using in-depth interviewing, adds to the knowledge about spatial identification, especially in a European context, and complements quantitative studies with similar research interests. Although generalizations derived from this study primarily concern the participants, this does not exclude the possibility that they may be relevant to groups of people who share characteristics with the participants. Furthermore, this study elaborates on an under-researched topic, thus generating additional knowledge about the question of multi-spatial identification and belonging in a migratory context, inspiring future research as well.

Regarding the general profile of the participants, some of them came to Sweden as refugees, either after the Soviet occupation of Latvia or during the 1967–1975 dictatorship in Greece. Some came as third-country migrants when Latvia, Greece or Sweden were not yet part of the EEC or the EU. Hence, the participants’ relocations to Sweden may have been facilitated by geographical proximity or bilateral agreements between Sweden and other European countries. The context was also European and regional, although it was not the EU context. By working with different generations, this study shows how migrants who have experienced various periods of recent European history relate to these three institutional, historical and cultural spaces on different scales. They are citizens of the

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30 For a detailed explanation, see the introduction to Chapter 9 and 10, “The construction of identity, identifications and sense of belonging to macro-regions”
EU, Latvia or Greece, some of them also of Sweden, and part of the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Sea populations, respectively.

Hence, the sample for this research includes migrants who belong to different phases of migration flows from Greece and Latvia to Sweden. I created a group of informants with variation in total years of residence in Sweden, including people who arrived in the country from 1944 and up until 2012. The reason for this is that I wanted to include in my sample the voices, thoughts and experiences of people who have experienced different socioeconomic and political realities, which have also probably influenced their reasons for migration. The periods of immigration entail different discourses and narratives, in relation to both the home and host countries and concerning the nation, Europe and the Mediterranean Sea and Baltic Sea regions. Varying historical periods offer different meanings to the three spaces and to the various space-related dualisms (North vs. South, East vs. West). Additionally, the exact legal or personal identity the informants have is related to the time period in which their migration from Greece and Latvia to Sweden was realized. These identities can be migrant, guest worker, political asylum seeker, EU migrant, EU citizen, a third-country citizen, an expatriate or a refugee, depending on the “when” and the “why” of migration.

Furthermore, many scholars (Baumeister and Sala 2015; Gelanty 1995; Heffernan 1998; Malmborg and Stråth 2002; Mikkel and Pridham 2004; Pagden 2002; Persson and Stråth 2007; Tsoukalas 2002; Stråth 2002) have argued that, despite the variation in the meanings attached to the regions, there also seems to be relative semantic continuity concerning what each region symbolizes. For example, the division between East and West has changed throughout the 20th century up until today, but it still exists, if one considers for example how the third-country migration issue has been dealt with by the EU countries and presented in the press. Consequently, the people who migrated in the 1960s, 1990s or 2010s have been exposed to different discursive realities that, however, belong to the same semantic field, both in the countries they left and in the country they chose to move to. For instance, the Greeks who were part of the arbetskraftsinvandring and those who left because of the Eurozone crisis might share some similar push factors, but they are part of different discursive regimes regarding the concept of “nation” and the idea of what Greece, Europe, or other spaces

Correspondingly, the Swedish society and the Swedish discourse on or image of Greece of the 1960s is arguably different than that of the 2010s. Similarly, the Swedish discourses around Latvia and the notion of Latvia as a Soviet republic and as a democratic republic belonging to NATO and the EU are logically divergent. However, despite potential differentiations in the meaning of the two countries during recent decades, both of them belong to spaces of semantic continuity enforced by the binary opposition of East-West and North-South. Hence, and in order to juxtapose the theory with the narratives of my informants, my intention was to have at least one representative from both Greece and Latvia who arrived in Sweden in the different decades. This naturally gives age variation in the sample. I am mentioning age because it is a fundamental factor for how people follow different life patterns, depending on which generation they belong to and which life phase they are experiencing (Giele and Elder 1998, 15). People of different ages have been exposed to different discourses and narratives; they have different expectations and ambitions connected to their pre- and post-migration period. M. Wingens et al. (2011, 1), discussing six life course principles in relation to migration and integration, mentioned that the principle of time and place “refers to the fact that individuals’ life courses are embedded in and shaped by the respective historical times and places they experience, i.e. by historically particular economic, socio-cultural, and political circumstances”. For example, “ageing in place” – migrating at a younger age and getting older in the country of residence – gives totally different experiences than migrating as an older person, as a Latvian refugee of the 1950s who has been living in Sweden since then or a Greek middle-aged man who arrived in Sweden because of the economic crisis. Age is also naturally linked to the period of migration and to sentiments of nostalgia or negativity regarding the host or home country of the individual and the experienced adaptation dynamic (Walsh and Näre 2016). It also seems likely that the level of familiarity with social media is higher among younger than older people and that this may affect how people of different ages experienced the first years of migration and their overall socialization and integration in the new society. Recent migrants might feel less need to organize their lives and socialize around national or cultural communities, or the opposite. New generations may take advantage of new technological advantages to keep in close contact with their home countries and actively participate in old and create new diasporic communities. However, although age was taken into consideration during the data analysis, it is a
characteristic that comes as a result of the migration-generation criterion for selecting the group of informants.

Regarding education, I have selected the interviewees based on their educational level: with and without a university degree. Level of education affects the way people interpret reality, and as a socioeconomic factor, it positions the individual in certain social strata as different levels of education afford different kinds of social capital. Additionally, the level and type of education, alongside other skills, is a crucial factor in defining the migratory process. Finding employment, integrating in the society, socializing with locals and other migrants are issues affected by the migrants’ level of education. For example, research on European identification has shown that there is a difference between low- and high-skilled workers concerning how they identify with their nation and other types of collective identification, as high-skilled workers tend to be more cosmopolitan and open to identifications other than the national one (Checkel and Katzenstein 2009; Favell 2008a).

Moreover, research has shown that gender is a significant factor shaping the migration experience (Mahler and Pessar 2006; Willis and Yeoh 2000). Some examples concern how migration brings together people (both movers and residents) from different gender regimes, gender being a decisive factor for integrating migrants in the new society and how people perceive themselves in this society. Some of the stereotypes and generalizations linked to spaces relevant to migrants may have a particularly strong impact both on the process of integrating migrants in their host societies and on the way they position themselves in these spaces. For instance, regional stereotypes may mean that male migrants from Eastern Europe have to deal with the image of the “Polish plumber” (Recchi 2015), and females may have to struggle to avoid being perceived as a potential health care or service sector worker. Regarding the relation between the nation and gender, there has been extensive research theorizing how nation and nationalism, through a metaphorized geography, have engendered and sexualized individuals as elements of its also gendered corpus:32 allegorizations of the nation as female, the motherland, mother tongue, the man as the protector of the nation, the woman as a symbol of the nation’s potential and desired growth. These discourses around nation and gender may have an impact on how men and women migrants are seen and treated

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32 For an overview, see Brinker-Gabler and Sidonie (1997).
in Sweden and how their new societies perceive them as engendered subjects. Moreover, Beutin et al. (2016, 35) stated that the image of the man as the family breadwinner is reflected in European unification policies and is constantly being reproduced by the media, trapping women in domestic jobs, creating barriers to the labour market and, thus, making the integration process for migrant women more complicated. The report written by Beutin et al. (2016) for the European Commission acknowledges that migrant women have a greater chance of being employed in the care sector. Although it is important for women to have access to the labour market, if need be in such a specific part of the domestic economy as the care sector, this might perpetuate the traditional role of women as caretakers, especially that of migrant women. Furthermore, gender is directly related to sexuality, a constitutive part of an individual’s personality and identity, which not only has an impact on how a migrant’s life is socially formulated but may also be the main reason for migration (Manalansan 2006). Moreover, the Standard Eurobarometer on the European Citizenship (2016)\(^{33}\) shows that women and men have different attitudes towards Europe and the EU as well as towards various issues related to the latter.

Latvians and Greeks in Sweden come from and have experienced two very different contexts. While this research is primarily interested in their cases in their own right, the common attributes of these two groups also provide an opportunity for comparative insights. Both Greece and Latvia are European countries, and since 2004, after Latvia’s accession, both are members of the EU. Moreover, the two countries are part of two European macro-regions defined by closed seas, the Mediterranean and the Baltic, which as spatial units have historically contributed to the cultural, economic and political interaction not only of people living in the regions, but also those living in Europe as a whole. Latvia and Sweden belong to the same macro-region, whereas Greece is a southern European, Mediterranean country; this offers an interesting comparative dynamic in relation to the migrants’ spatial belonging. For example, it is an open question whether and how Latvian migrants in Sweden use their common belonging to Sweden and Latvia as a means to enhance their personal sense of belonging to Sweden.

3. METHODOLOGICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE

3.5. The practicalities of the interviews

In order to find my informants, I used a combination of different techniques. The first four informants, who participated in the pilot study, were introduced to me by my personal network in Stockholm. The rest of the interviewees were reached through Facebook and via snowball sampling, as well as through common acquaintances. Regarding Facebook as a medium for finding informants, I made a post in one social group for Greeks living in Sweden and in two groups for Latvians living in Sweden. My post included a very short description of my research, links to my personal webpage at the university and also a link to the umbrella project this dissertation is part of. I assured anyone reading my post that strict confidentiality would be applied regarding the interview data and the participants’ personal information. In the Latvian social groups on Facebook, I also mentioned the availability of an interpreter in case the participant prefers speaking his or her mother tongue instead of English, adding that the interpreter is also bounded by confidentiality rules.

The interviews were arranged at the convenience of the participants and conducted in a place they chose. There was variation in the places where the interviews were conducted. Some interviewees preferred to be interviewed in their home, others at their workplace; two chose to come to my office at the university, and finally some interviews took place in public spaces, usually cafes. Two of the interviews were conducted via video teleconference. The purpose of letting the interviewees chose the exact place and time for the interviews was to make them feel safe and comfortable. This is a factor that helps the flow of information and enhances the dynamics of the dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee, where the latter may reduce self-censorship and generally improve the quality of the interview. Regarding the place of residence of the interviewees, two of them reside in Gothenburg, one in the countryside, and the rest in the wider Stockholm-Uppsala urban area.

The interviews were conducted between June 2015 and February 2018 and their length varied from 0.96 hours to 2.50 hours (mean 1.31 hours). The 24 interviews generated a total of 32.75 hours of recorded data: 15.41 hours for the Greek and 17.34 hours for the Latvian migrants. The Greek informants were interviewed in Greek, which is also the mother tongue of the researcher. Ten Latvian informants were interviewed in English, one in English assisted by the Latvian interpreter and one completely via the interpreter. The participants included eleven men and thirteen women.
(mean age 44.6 years, range 28 to 79 years). The Greek sample includes six men and six women. The Latvian sample includes seven women and five men. In the overall sample, eight informants have no tertiary education and eighteen have a tertiary education.

3.6. Collecting data through qualitative interviews

To organize the interview, a questionnaire was used that was divided into five themes. The first part of the questionnaire includes general questions covering personal information about the interviewee as an individual, but also items enabling a complete picture of his or her life, both in Sweden and in the home country. The second cluster of questions discusses issues related to migration and integration in the host society. The third thematic group of questions addresses the notion of the nation and interviewees’ identification with it. The fourth part of the interview discusses issues related to Europe and the EU. The fifth theme concerns the macro-regions of the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic Sea.

The questionnaire was tested in a pilot study with four informants, two Greeks and two Latvians, to discover how the interviewees would react to the questions. For example, some of the interviewees were not aware of the concept “stereotype” and had some difficulty grasping the notion. Hence, I realized that, for some of the interviewees, further explanation and clarification would be needed for some of the questions. The interviewees were more engaged during the first part of the interview, which included a personal narration of their biography. The interviewees had some difficulty discussing issues related to Europe and the EU, especially the regions, as compared to the national spaces of Greece, Latvia and Sweden. This is an interesting finding in itself. It is also the reason the data are richer for the national space than for Europe and quite poor in relation to the macro-regions of the Mediterranean Sea and Baltic Sea. Clarifications, explanations and follow-up questions were employed to facilitate discussion, but I was fully aware that I should, if possible, avoid any leading questions. For instance, in the first question on regional identification, the majority of informants understood a sub-national rather than macro-regional space. These issues will be elaborated further in the analysis section.

For the interviews conducted after the pilot study, although the questionnaire was present during the interview, it was used more like a guide

34 See Appendix 3.
and checklist for covering all of the research themes, while the order was left to the interviewees and I followed the flow of the discussion. The purpose of this was to let the interviewee share experiences and opinions without being hindered by a strict and overly pre-configured list of questions. I usually started the interviews by asking for some personal information such as age, education, subsequently asking the interviewee to tell me his or her personal migration story. This part of the interview included most of the elements that explain the informants’ connection to and image of the national space, that of both origin and residence.

3.7. Reflections on methodology and methodological limitations

The interviewing method has been well established among social scientists during recent decades, regardless of discipline (Flick 2002; Holstein and Gubrium 1995). It has become increasingly popular among scholars who use a small sample of interviews in their research (Crouch and McKenzie 2006). However, I use the word sample mainly for practical reasons. The participants have not been selected based on their unique characteristics, which constitute them as individuals of a certain kind, but rather as variants of specific historico-societal settings and of experiences that derive from these settings (Crouch and McKenzie 2006, 493). As Crouch and McKenzie (2006, 493) stated, inspired by Abbot (1992), small sample research whose purpose is to produce narratives can be conceptualized as “‘cases’ which are states arising within a field of a particular set of circumstances, which casts them as ‘engaged in perpetual dialogue with their environment’, doing or enduring a variety of things, ‘each of which may be seen as an event arising either in agency (what they do) or in structure (what they endure)’”.

Although the participants in my research are members of certain national migrant groups in Sweden, they have not been chosen on a basis of representativity for their overall community population. The purpose was to collect more interesting results and to include in my analysis voices and experiences from different individuals with different demographic and societal characteristics belonging to different moments in the modern migration history from these two countries to Sweden.

It is obvious that a researcher who is Greek is more aware of the Greek context than the Latvian one. While this might offer some advantages when it comes to analysis of the Greek data, the Latvian interviews are on the whole richer in information than the Greek ones. Generally, the Latvian informants were more explicit and informative when talking about topics of
national interest. They sought to offer me more information and introduce me to the Latvian context, whereas the Greeks seemed to assume I was already aware of and informed about the Greek context. This is also obvious from the length of the interviews, where the average interview duration for the Latvians was 1.45 hours, in comparison to 1.28 hours for the Greeks.

Language is another factor that undoubtedly played an important role in the data collection, as the Greek informants were interviewed in their mother tongue, while most of the Latvians were interviewed in English. However, this has been mitigated by the fact that those Latvians who were not interviewed in their mother tongue were fluent in English and did not seem to have had any difficulty answering my questions. Those who had difficulty expressing themselves in English were interviewed with the assistance of an interpreter.

3.8. Ethical considerations

Prior to the interviews, the informants were assured confidentiality. They were told their real names would be replaced with pseudonyms and that all their personal information would be kept confidential (Israel and Hay 2006). The real identity of the participants is known only to the researcher and his supervisors, and in the cases that the researcher was assisted in the tasks of translation and transcription, also to the interpreter or transcriber. The interviewees were informed that their participation is voluntarily, and no reimbursement was given to them. They were also explicitly informed about their undeniable right to interrupt or stop the interview at any time and withdraw from the research at any point. Furthermore, they consented to the recording and transcription of the interviews for later analysis. The recorded data and transcriptions were stored in a locked drawer in the researcher’s office at Södertörn University. A similar guideline mentioning the anonymity of the individuals, the confidentiality of their personal information as well as extra information on the project was written in the Facebook note for recruiting informants that was posted in three social groups. On the two occasions when the interpreter assisted the communication between the researcher and the informant, the latter was also explicitly made aware that the interpreter is bounded to the same research ethics guidelines as the researcher. Some of the transcriptions of the recorded interviews were not conducted by the researcher, but by another individual employed for this task. The transcriber also pledged to adhere to the rules of anonymity and confidentiality concerning the data. Upon com-
pletion of the transcription project, the employed transcriber destroyed all data (digital files were deleted and material in paper form was shredded) related to the research. Furthermore, all interviews were conducted in places selected by the informants where they felt relaxed and safe to share their opinions and experiences.

Various informants had quite calm reactions with regard to anonymity and confidentiality, stating that they would not mind me using their real names. This was especially true of the older Latvians, who arrived in Sweden as WW2 refugees, although they were aware of the confidential nature of the interview. They actually seemed to perceive the interview as yet another opportunity to tell their personal story to the public and declare the injustice their country experienced during the years of Soviet occupation. One Latvian informant showed me, at the beginning of the interview, a photo album with biographical notes and pictures of him and his relatives at different points of his life. Another Latvian informant, whom I interviewed in his home, showed me photos and books related to Latvia and the Soviet occupation, treated me to traditional Latvian bread and provided me with some printed material, such as a map with the locations of gulags in the Soviet Union, or programmes for activities of the Latvian community in Stockholm and Uppsala. One Greek informant, who wanted his voice to be heard regarding how his country was treated during the 2010 economic crisis, explicitly stated that he is proud of his opinions and thoughts and that he does not mind me using his real name. In the analysis section, I will elaborate further on the issue of the migrants’ political engagement in relation to their home country. Only one informant explicitly addressed me for reassurance about the anonymity and confidentiality of the interview.
4. Historical, conceptual and empirical background

The following two sections provide background information that will assist in contextualizing the cases this research focuses on, both as individual and as spatial instances.

4.1. Immigration in Sweden during the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century

This section gives a general picture of Swedish society and the political atmosphere that the migrants in the study encountered upon their arrival, but also during the years after their establishment in the country. It includes information on the migration trends in the country and presents the political and socioeconomic conditions that created the pull and push factors that defined immigration dynamics in Sweden. During the interviews, the informants referred to various historical moments and facts, which makes this chapter a means for contextualizing the migration experience of the study participants. In the data analysis, frequent references to this chapter will be made, as it puts the informants’ answers in context and helps in understanding the conditions in which their discursive identities and sense of belonging were created and evolved.

Before 1945

Sweden has received a significant number of migrants and refugees in comparison to its overall population size, and it has the profile of a liberal generous country in its migration policies. It is known for inclusion of migrants in the welfare state as well as for liberal terms for naturalization. However, the situation has not always been like this. In the late 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, Sweden experienced massive emigration flows, mainly towards the US. A combination of push and pull factors (the bad economic situation in Sweden in combination with high unemploy-
ment, religious suppression, the famine that hit the country in 1867–68, and higher wages in the US) caused a significant number of Swedes to seek better living condition overseas. More than 1.2 million people emigrated from Sweden up to 1920, which is a considerable number in comparison to its overall population (Quigley 1972; Hedenborg and Kvarström 2009, 252). This emigration was seen and articulated as a problem for Sweden, especially considering the country’s ambition to develop its industrial sector (Mörkenstam 2006, 285–288). The underpopulated Sweden needed a larger labour force, and this was hindering economic growth. The measures taken to promote return migration of expatriated Swedes did not have the desired results, and thus the possibility of introducing foreign workers into the Swedish labour market seemed inevitable. However, this possibility was framed as problematic considering the cultural and racial purity of the Swedish population, and at this time it was widely seen as desirable to preserve “the pure Swedish race” (Svanberg and Tydén 2005, 328). In this context, Germans, Anglo-Saxons and other Scandinavians were framed as welcome36 to the country, while other national groups like Finns, Roma, or Tatars were depicted using negative stereotypes and believed to have the potential to disrupt the social order37 (Mörkenstam 2006, 296–297). After the second decade of the 20th century, the discourse around migration was articulated in less racial language, and the term “non-Swedes” was used for the various foreigners in the country (Mörkenstam 2006, 300). However, this did not bring a more positive attitude towards immigration, as the goal of legislation at this time was to protect the domestic labour market. In the 1930s, there was a national discussion about and a general fear of the potential future decline of the Swedish population. The book “Kris i befolkningssfrågan”, written by Gunnar and Alva Myrdal (1934), proposed different methods (mainly state interventions) to reverse this trend, and it became a symbol for the application of biopolitics in Swedish society (Mörkenstam 2006, 313–314). However, and despite the reservations of Swedish poli-

36 The US Immigration Act of 1924 introduced similar provisions constraining the movement of southern and eastern Europeans to the US, as well as all Arabs, Africans and Asians, but excluding the north European migrants. Again, the intention of this law was to “preserve American racial homogeneity” (Ngai 1999).

37 In general, the immigration issue was linked to begging and homeless people, which were depicted as a burden to society and as “injurious migration” to Sweden. For example, Russians and Jews were seen as poor, lacking accommodations, and being involved in illegal actions. Finns also were vulgarly stereotyped as “incapable for labour, besotted for strong drinks and disobedient towards the authorities…” (Mörkenstam 2006, 296-297).
ticians, by 1945 a total of 195,000 foreigners were living in Sweden, with the highest proportion being individuals from the Nordic and Baltic States, but also many refugees, mainly Jews, who sought protection in Sweden (Mörkenstam 2006, 317).

**After WW2**

During the early 1930s, not only because of immigration, but also due to return migration of Swedes from the Americas, Sweden turned from an emigration to an immigration country. The abstention of Sweden from military conflict during the war helped the country to establish more successful industrialization and greater economic growth in comparison to other countries in Europe. This was accompanied by a strong demand for labour, which had to be imported from elsewhere (Lundh and Ohlsson 1994, 88–93). In the 1950s, around 256,000 people moved to the country as workers, and by 1965 half a million had migrated to Sweden (Wadensjö 1973; Hedenborg and Kvarström 2009, 256–258). The need for additional labour was the main reason for Sweden’s adoption of a more liberal immigration policy. This would allow the organized import of foreign workers from Europe and elsewhere to the country. The changes in immigration policy correlated with the country’s economic conditions (Lundh and Ohlsson 1994, 88). The refugees, who decided to remain in the country after the war, were also integrated into the labour market, as the demand for able bodies was urgent.

Throughout this period, and especially during the 1960s, regulation of labour migration flows was a product of negotiations between industry and the labour unions. For example, the latter argued for more extensive use of the domestic labour force, even engaging married women, instead of looking for workers abroad (Kyle 1979). In 1945, 31% of adult females (aged 15–64 years) participated in the labour market, and by 1965 the proportion had reached 44% (Lundh and Ohlsson 1994, 89). Nevertheless, industrial needs overcame labour unions’ resistance, and in 1947 the first bilateral agreements with Italy, Hungary and Austria initiated a greater, although highly controlled, transfer of workforce into Sweden. By 1950, skilled workers and specialists – like technicians and engineers from West Germany, Austria, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands – were positioned as a complementary labour force in the primary (e.g., metal, forestry industry) but also in the secondary (e.g., textile and clothing industry) and tertiary (e.g., hotel and restaurant services) sectors of the economy (Lundh and Ohlsson 1994, 72). After 1950, Sweden, in order to meet industry’s needs
for additional labour, decided to establish an open-door policy for workers coming from the Nordic region and, through a collaboration between companies and the Labour Market Board (AMS: Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen), to relax restrictions for non-Nordic workers who wanted to be engaged on the Swedish labour market (Lundh and Ohlsson 1994, 89). In 1954, the Nordic nations (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland in 1955) decided on a free area of mobility and labour, and passport control was abolished inside the region. This enhanced migration and led to the great Finnish immigration to Sweden. In 1955, already 3.7% of the Swedish population were labour migrants from 60 different nations, though most of them were from the Nordic region (60%), particularly Finland (Svanberg and Tydén 2005, 330).

During the early 1960s, despite positive predictions for economic development in Sweden, a debate was initiated for a more controlled inflow of migrants, based on uncertainty about how immigration would impact Swedish society in the future. The main argument was that migrants might suffer from social marginalization, which would eventually lead to the emergence of socioeconomically deprived parts of the population and eventually to the stratification of society, not only economically, but also ethnically and culturally. This argument was based on the fact that the current living conditions of foreign workers were below par in comparison to those of the domestic workforce (Borevi 2012, 36–39). Furthermore, the concentration of foreign labour, enforced by new migration flows from Greece and Yugoslavia in the mid-1960s, in low paying jobs and in certain factories and minor industrial areas caused problems related to housing shortages and integration in these workplaces. The co-existence of people who spoke different languages and were from different cultures was a barrier to the smooth operation of economic entities employing a large number of migrant workers. The trade unions’ uneasiness about possible low-wage competition between local and foreign workers, as well as the slight growth in unemployment towards the end of the 1960s, caused the Swedish government to impose regulations on non-Nordic labour immigration (Lundh and Ohlsson 1994, 91). The trade union movement, which participated more actively than before in the debate on restriction of immigration, raised fears that uncontrolled migration might lead to unrest and conflicts between local and foreign workers. At this point, all work permit applications had to be made from outside Sweden, and no application would be accepted from “freelance” migrants (Borevi 2012, 36). Because the economy still needed more able bodies and because of the new
regulations, AMS opened recruitment offices in Belgrade and Ankara in 1965 (closed in 1968). Around 300 Turks immigrated in an organized way to Sweden at this point, and others managed to enter the country individually as irregular migrants. By the late 1960s, Turks had become one of the biggest non-Nordic migrant groups in Sweden. For the Yugoslavians, the recruitment process continued through the 1970s (Svanberg and Tydén, 330). However, the domestic and international economic downturn at the beginning of the 1970s caused stricter regulation of labour migration, which led to the decision in 1972 to stop all foreign workers (with some exceptions for specialized immigrants) from migrating to the country. In principle, “the closed-door policy decided in 1972 has remained shut for the four decades since then” and until 2008, when a new labour immigration policy was introduced (Borevi 2012, 39).

One substantial difference between the guest worker programmes of other European countries, with Germany as a prominent example, and Sweden was that the latter never imposed temporal restrictions in the contracts made with the foreign workers. The labour unions were again the actors in this development, as they were pressing for equal rights for all workers independent of their origin, the goal being to avoid possible low salary competition from foreign workers. Hence, migrants were equipped with permanent residence permits and were eligible for all social benefits provided by the welfare state (Borevi 2012, 35). They also had the right to move from one employer to another without any restrictions within a specific occupation (Frank 2014, 419).

After WW2, Sweden developed its universal welfare state, the aspiration being to enhance national cohesion and solidarity. This also provided the same labour rights to all workers and shaped the inclusiveness of the Swedish welfare state towards the migrant population. The welfare state in Sweden, though it had some roots in a nationalistic ideology (national solidarity based on a primordial understanding of the nation) (Hellström et al. 2002), has operated as an apparatus of administrating the issue of migration in Sweden and as a means of establishing a multicultural society. The universality of the welfare state follows the principle that all have equal access to every right and that there is no need for special treatment, thus avoiding stigmatization of the people receiving benefits. However, this came into tension with the positive measures the Swedish state implemented to support migrants as part of the population with special needs (to be taught Swedish) and to support multiculturalism (to retain their own culture). To comply with the universal welfare state idea, the Aliens Act of 1954 gave to
migrants, together with permanent residence, the right to unemployment benefits after one year of employment and the possibility to bring to the country, with limited prerequisites, their family members. Additionally, though the migrants were full members of the national welfare community, it was recognized that they had also special needs deriving from the fact that they were coming from countries with a different language, societal structure and cultural traditions and that their ethnic and cultural identities were different from those of the Swedish majority (Borevi 2012, 36–47). The 1968 bill on migration, from the Social Democratic government, stated that migrants should have the right to maintain contact with their first language and culture, but also have access to the majority culture by being instructed in the Swedish language. Hence, several policies implemented during the 1960s and 1970s gave special rights and benefits to the migrant populations, including: Swedish language instruction for adults, interpreter assistance, lessons to increase familiarity with Swedish society, financial support for migrants to establish their own associations and practise their own cultural activities, immigrant children had the right to mother-tongue instruction in public schools and provisional support when taught other subjects, as well as instruction in Swedish as a second language. The right to retain one’s original culture was even written into the constitution. Furthermore, residents with foreign citizenship gained the right to vote in municipal and county elections38 (Borevi 2012, 43). During the 1960s and 1970s, the migration issue was not politicized, and the different political parties acted unanimously regarding various migration policies. The experience Sweden had with the preservation of language and culture came mainly from the Finns and the Estonians who arrived in Sweden as refugees during and after WW2. These two national groups had acquired the right to retain their cultural affiliation. This explains why the first migrant populations were institutionally treated and discursively framed as minorities whose cultural rights must be preserved (Borevi 2012, 45).

The unstable political conditions in major parts of the world from the 1970s onwards created new flows of migrants, most of whom were asylum seekers. Sweden was not only affected by this situation but became one of the most important host countries of refugees globally. In the mid-1970s, the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile pushed many of his political opponents

38 Sweden gave this right to its migrants already in 1976. Similarly, EU citizens have the right to vote and be candidates in local and regional elections in the EU country where they are registered as permanent residents http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/ , accessed 25 02 2017.
into exile, and many of them found refuge in Sweden. West Asian Christians, mainly Assyrians, and Vietnamese who were affected by the Indochina war, as well as people who fled the Iran-Iraq and the civil war in Lebanon, were refugee groups who moved or relocated to Sweden.\(^39\) Additionally, persecution of minorities in Rumania and Bulgaria created migration flows in Europe, some of which reached Sweden. It was the Bulgarian and Turkish migration to Sweden that initiated a debate on restricting the conditions of asylum seekers receiving refugee status in the country, which led to the December decision of 1989. This year was the last time Sweden accepted and gave asylum to all applicants. However, the refugee migration continued the coming years with people arriving from Ethiopia and Somalia. With the doors closed for labour migration and with a more restrictive refugee policy, the largest share of migration to Sweden after 1972 was realized through chain migration and reunification of family members (Borevi 2012, 47). During the 1980s – as the character of migration changed from labour to asylum seeking and as the countries of origin were now located outside Europe – Sweden made a retreat from the ambitious multicultural policies of previous decades. The main reason for this was a possible conflict between the ethnic (cultural rights) and the civic (citizens’ obligations to the state) identity of migrants. Hence, in the immigrant bill of 1986, the provision of treating immigrant groups as minorities was abolished. This right was reserved only for the historical minorities of Sweden, and it was stated that migrants should not be treated as collective entities, but rather as individuals with special needs. The idea of equal social rights for all also became the regulating factor for the number of migrants Sweden would accept, as the volume of labour migration would be related to the potential society had to offer migrants housing, education, social care and, of course, jobs (Borevi 2012, 56).

During the 1990s, the refuge flows continued with the same dynamics. In 1991, almost 26,500 asylum seekers claimed refugee status in Sweden. The war in Yugoslavia in autumn 1991 drove a great number of people to Sweden in search of protection, along with others coming from Iraq, Iran, Poland, Romania, Somalia and the former Soviet Union. In 1991, 42,250 individuals received the right of residence in the country for various reasons, only 18,600 of them refugees. Most of the new residents were admitted as relatives of people who had been accepted as refugees, and 6%

\(^{39}\) Sweden had participated in the quota programme for resettlement refugees of the UNHCR ever since 1950.
were accepted in the country as students, workers or adopted children. In the 1990s, almost one million people in Sweden had a foreign background, representing 160 countries, and native language instruction for children included 80 languages. The overall character of migration after 1990 compared with that of the 1960s was also different. After WW2 and until 1969, of the total of 135,595 migrants in Sweden, 64% were from the Nordic region, 36% from other parts of Europe and the rest from other continents. In the 1980s, 166,425 migrants arrived, of whom 12.8% were from the Nordic countries, 27.8% from other parts of Europe and the majority 59% from the rest of the world (mainly Asia and Africa). This trend continued until the recent years. During the 2000s, 418,143 people migrated to Sweden, 59% of whom were non-Nordic and non-Europeans (Svanberg and Tyden 2005, 340–345). Finally, only in 2016, at the peak of the so-called refugee crisis, 146,070 people migrated to Sweden, 72% of whom came from outside Europe, mainly Asia and specifically Syria (51,504).

Sweden’s accession to the EU in 1994 affected the closed-door migration policy of 1972, as the country had to comply with one of the fundamental pillars of European integration: free movement of people inside the union. The free mobility framework includes the European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss citizens. In connection with EU enlargement to the east, Sweden decided (alongside Ireland and Great Britain), in contrast to the majority of the older EU member states, not to apply “transitional restrictions” on the free movement of workers coming from the newly accessed post-socialist countries (Portes 2015, 7447). Until 2003, there was no political debate on whether Sweden should impose mobility restrictions on eastern EU labour mobility. However, at that time, some labour unions and political actors among the social democrats (Prime Minister Göran Persson) addressed the issue of benefit tourism. The question concerning the need for transitional restrictions rose suddenly to become a hot topic in the media. The parties of the opposition accused the government of using


41 The EEA agreement was established in 1992, and Sweden was one of its contracting members. The EEA came into force in 1994, and one year later Sweden became an EU member state. Thus, free mobility to and from Sweden and other EU and EAA countries has been possible since 1 January 1994.

rhetoric that ruined the image Sweden had among the new EU member states (Spång 2008, 84). The issue of labour migration of the new EU member states had already been discussed in a “Swedish Government Official Report”. From that it was concluded that the effect of this type of migration on the Swedish labour market would be marginal, while also suggesting that the government should be prepared to impose restrictions if needed (Spång 2008, 85). Another report in 2003 suggested similarly that the coming EU enlargement to the east would not have significant implications for the Swedish labour market itself (unemployment, wage dumping), but rather for the welfare state, as some minor employers could simulate employment in order to give certain individuals access to social security services. The report even referred to the great difference in living standards between Sweden and the accession countries, which could work as an extra factor in attracting benefit tourism. On 28 April 2004, the Swedish parliament voted against the social democratic government’s proposal for transitional restriction, and this issue disappeared from the political debate. The government however stated that if problems related to eastern European labour migration were to appear, they would be dealt with through new legislation (Spång 2008, 86). For the sixth EU enlargement, which included Romania and Bulgaria in the union, and for the seventh, in which Croatia became an EU member, Sweden and Finland were the only older EU member states to impose no restrictions on workers from these EU accession countries (Berg and Spehar 2013, 143). In the same liberal spirit, and influenced by a general neoliberal trend in the economy, in 2008 Sweden decided to open its borders to third-country migrants by applying a migration policy that is conditioned by employers’ demands, with limited regulating power from state authorities, and that treats high- and low-skilled workers equally (Frank 2014). Berg and Spehar (2013, 143–144) argued that Sweden’s oxymoron to imply liberal migration policy, despite the mediocre economic performance and relatively high unemployment among immigrants (especially among the non-European population) during the 2000s, is not only based on practical reasons (demographic change, labour market actors pressing for liberal migration policies), but also on the dominant pro-migration perspective of the majority of political parties in the Swedish parliament.

43 Finland imposed partial restrictions for the sixth EU enlargement.
The Social Democrats – who together with the Left Party have traditionally been more critical of an open-door policy, but who at the same favour generous refugee migration – started losing their dominant position in the Swedish political arena. The centre-right parties, with their increased influence in Swedish politics, supported partially by the Greens, were the actors who, according to Berg and Spehar (2013, 157), promoted intra-EU and third-country nationals’ labour migration and were more sceptical towards the refugee-friendly policies. However, the 2008 liberalization of migration policy, which included employers as actors in the process of recruiting labour migrants, created problems of exploitation of migrants and deterioration of their working conditions (Emilson 2016, 51). Because migrants have the right of residence, as long as they managed to stay employed, and because they were tied to a specific employer for two years, they were in many cases struggling to satisfy their employers, for fear of losing their jobs and, thus, being threatened with deportation (Frank 2014, 429).

Regarding refugee migration during more recent years, Sweden’s asylum system continued to be generous, in comparison to other western countries and even more so to eastern European countries. For example, during the Iraq War the city of Södertälje, south of Stockholm, received twice as many refugees as the US received. In 2013, Sweden received the largest number asylum seekers per capita among OECD countries. During the recent refugee flows, Sweden, alongside Germany, received a significant number of asylum seekers, as the flows of migrants coming from the Mediterranean were targeting Sweden as their destination country. The EU Dublin agreement, which stipulated that asylum seekers should proceed with their application in the first EU country they enter, was impracticable owing to the volume of people entering EU’s borderland countries and travelling to reach mainly Germany, Sweden or some other western European country. This was partially a consequence of the way Sweden and Germany treated the refugee and asylum seeker inflows the first two years. In the summer of 2014, Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt appealed to the Swedish population to “open their hearts” to welcome the new wave of asylum

seekers. In 2015, Sweden received around 160,000 asylum applications (almost 2% of its population), which was twice as many as in the previous year. In addition, an unknown number of migrants had escaped registration. The five countries of origin with the highest number of asylum seekers were Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, and Somalia. In early 2016, Swedish authorities announced that a significant number of applications would be rejected, around 80,000, for not meeting the criteria for asylum, leaving it open as to whether it would be possible to deport such a large number of people (Dahl 2016, 3).

Despite the number of people with an immigrant background and the continuous labour and asylum-seeking migration, the Swedish population still has an overall positive attitude towards this phenomenon. According to a recent poll 63% of the population believe that immigration is something positive for their country, with only 13% believing the opposite. This attitude makes Sweden the most migrant friendly country in Europe. However, more than half of the population — according to the previous poll — is concerned about the volume of asylum seekers in Sweden, indicating as the most important problem the integration of the foreigners into Swedish society. This problematization by Swedes of migrants’ integration can also be reflected in the socioeconomic status migrants have in comparison to the indigenous population. Svanberg and Tyden (2005, 344) argued that immigrants in Sweden still have very limited access to the social elite and that this is a result of the ethnocentrism on which the nation-state in Sweden was built. Migrants are still underrepresented in the political decision-making process as well as in senior positions in the public and private sector. Unemployment among migrants is higher, and it is more difficult for them to show and be recognized for their academic and professional merits. However, even if this is an accurate description of the situation, it only gives a very rough picture of migrants’ position in Swedish society. There is a need to examine the individual migrant from an

48 Eurobarometer: “Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or negative feeling for you. Immigration of people from outside the EU (11/2014)”: http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/chartType/mapChart/themeKy/59/groupKy/279/savFile/646, accessed 25 03 2017
intersectional perspective. Not all migrants deal with the same difficulties, and how society deals with them is related to gender, social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, age and other types of intersected identities (Anthias 2012).

Despite the overall positive attitude of the Swedish population towards migration historically, racist and xenophobic attitudes have also been expressed in society. Though Sweden has never been ethnically homogenous, the refugee flows of the 1980s and 1990s were perceived by some as something new and threatening. The asylum-seeking migration was both qualitatively and quantitatively different from the labour migration during the 1960s and 1970s, as at that time a large proportion of the new residents in Sweden were coming from outside Europe. By the end of 1980s, negative statements appeared in the public discourse regarding refugees and migrants. In the newspapers, pieces were published on criminality related to migration, human trafficking, and misuse of travel documents by refugees, or just references to the national background of people for irrelevant reasons. Radically racist and xenophobic organizations have been socially and politically marginalized in Sweden (Svanberg and Tyden 2005, 346).

However, two xenophobic political parties have appeared in the Swedish political scene during the past decades. The first was the New Democracy (Ny Demokrati), founded in 1991, which succeeded in entering parliament in 1991, but did not pass the electoral threshold in the following elections. New Democracy campaigned on restricting immigration to the country. The second party with racist and xenophobic origins is the “Swedish Democrats” (Sverigedemokraterna), founded in 1988. Though for almost two decades the Swedish Democrats had insignificant electoral support, they succeeded in entering parliament in the 2010 elections with 5.7 %, raising their share of the vote to 12.9 % in 2014. The dynamics and popularity of the party in Swedish society have been steadily growing. In the 2018 parliamentary elections, the Swedish Democrats received 17.5 of the votes and remained the third biggest political party in parliament. This is apparently related to the immigration policies the Swedish governments have been following during recent decades and to the discontent of a section of the Swedish population.

Summary and conclusions

Sweden has not always been a migrant destination country or a generous host of refugees from all around the world. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, a significant part of the Swedish population emi-
grated overseas, largely due to deprivation in their home country. Yet rapid industrialization during the first half of the 20th century and Sweden’s neutrality during the WW2, which left its infrastructures intact, created a great demand for additional workers that exceeded what was available in Sweden. The decision for large-scale labour immigration in Sweden was met with resistance. Some objections had an ethno-racial basis (keep the Swedish population pure, Swedish cultural elitism), and others aimed at protecting the rights of local workers. The demand for additional labour expressed by various sectors of the Swedish economy overcame this resistance, and Sweden decided to follow migrant-friendly policies and to sign bilateral agreements with migrant sending countries. Workers from different places moved to Sweden, from other parts of the Nordic region (mainly Finland), Southern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean. All these foreign workers were given, in contrast to more restrictive guest worker programmes, permanent residence permits, all the benefits of the welfare state and the same rights as local workers. Additionally, because Sweden adopted a multicultural approach in administrating the migrant population, the migrants were supported in maintaining contact with their mother tongue and culture. However, pressure from the labour unions against increasing migration and fears of a possible stratification of society (economically and culturally) caused Sweden to close its doors to foreign workers in 1972. The decades after, migration retained its dynamics, but turned from labour to asylum seeking, in combination with chain migration through family reunification with previous migrants and refugees. The asylum seekers’ countries of origin were now to a great extent in regions outside Europe. However, Sweden’s accession to the EU in 1995, and the 2008 migration policy amendment, allowed employers, under certain conditions, to employ even non-EU citizens, enabling labour migrants once again to enter the country.

From this section, but also from the rest of the introduction, it becomes apparent that the language and methodology used in the study of migration is based to a great extent on regional terms. Scholars tend to categorize migration flows by referring and grouping the migrant flows, and thus the migrants themselves, into regions. This might be different continents, or regions inside the continent, with Europe as a prominent example, as the regional terminology is rich in variation (north, south, east, west Europe,

49 The Swedish government agency “Statistics Sweden” uses, besides countries, also regions-continents as a unit of analysis.
Balkans, Baltic States, Scandinavia and Nordic regions). As Sweden and the other countries of the Nordic region were the first in Europe to create an institutionalized regional political apparatus, but also developed a discourse of regional belonging based on racial, cultural and linguistic criteria, the regional perspective seems to be more important here than in other parts of the world. The Swedish policy on Nordic migration, which gives special rights to migrants from the region, in comparison to both third-country and EU migrants, has not changed for more than 60 years. It was this regional framework under which Sweden treated the migration flows it was receiving, especially during the first decades of the 20th century, as Mörkenstam showed (Nordic, Scandinavia, the Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, Americas). This is related not only to geographical distance, but may have to do with the cultural and perhaps racial distance between Sweden and the sending countries or sending regions outside Scandinavia. In any case, it seems that Nordic societies have a tendency to see the world, especially Europe, through regional lenses.

4.2. Spaces: meaning and belonging

The different types of spaces to which the migrants from Greece and Latvia are related have been constructed through a variety of discourses and concepts throughout history and by different actors. Europe works as the entangling space, linking the meanings of the Mediterranean Sea and Baltic Sea regions as well as those of the national spaces of Greece, Latvia and Sweden. Insights into how spatial meaning has been created and associated with other spaces are useful in understanding how individuals relate to these spaces not only as spatial references, but also as subjects of migration. Furthermore, such insights will assist in contextualizing and better understanding the interviewees’ responses.

Europe

Spatial belonging, even in the current globalized era of more porous borders, is of crucial importance to individuals whose lives are emotionally and institutionally attached to various spaces and territories. Issues of belonging pose questions of who and what is the “us” and who and what is the Other. For example, the existence of the EU or a European identity would have no meaning without the construction of an excluded European Other (Hansen 2000, 3–4). Like every club with specific members, the EU has to establish its rules of accession, which at the same time set the
framework of exclusion. These rules have to be written in a way that justifies and gives meaning to the inclusion-exclusion relationship, separating those who legitimately belong to the club and those who rightfully do not. In the case of the EU, this justification draws first on history, geography and culture. However, even inside the club, some members have had to struggle more than others to fulfil the prerequisites of entrance and adequately justify why they are equally worthy to be part of the EU. Thus, the inclusion-exclusion dynamics and processes of “Otherness” do not cease inside the club that is Europe (Malmborg and Stråth 2002), they just change qualities. For example, during the Eurozone crisis, the discourse that many politicians chose to use when referring to Europe as something united, which needs to be saved, overlapped with negative rhetoric directed at the southern periphery and the people residing there. They were seen as the problematic members of the union who struggle to adjust to EU standards (Baumeister and Sala 2015). Similarly, negative discourses appeared after the end of the Cold War and EU enlargement to the east, especially in relation to fears of mass migration from this region (Delanty 1995). However, all of these discourses, stereotypes and fantasies – which create a series of cultural, political, economic hierarchies, and different aspects of belonging – have historical roots and are related to the different meanings each national or regional space has been charged with during different periods of history (Baumeister and Sala 2015).

Thus, the spatial division of Europe in macro-regions is not only geographical or political, but, according to many scholars (Persson and Stråth 2007; Malmborg and Stråth 2002; Gelanty 1995; Heffernan 1998; Pagden 2002), it has been realized in historical and cultural terms. Europe itself, initially as an idea and later as an institution (EU), has been used by various elites, who by seeking justification in history and culture have tried to create a European identity for the European space as such just as well as for the people living inside this space (Shore 2017). For example, Gerard Delanty (1995, 1–3) argued that Europe is an idea that has been invented not by the masses but rather by the elites, the intellectuals and the state traditions and that it is no less constructed than the nation-state.

The construction of Europe and the protean outline of its borders have been correlated with the Christian religion and heritage based on the

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50 This was part of the debate around which role Christianity should have had in the European constitution. 1. “Christianity bedevils talks on EU treaty” https://www.theguardian.com/world/
values springing from ancient Greece and Rome and later on from the Renaissance and the Enlightenment (Delanty 1995, 16–29). Even during discussions on formulation of the EU constitution, there was a dividend debate on whether references to Christian values should be added to the preamble of the text (Kuna 2004). However, the idea of cultural uniformity on the continent was not adequate for solidifying the meaning of Europe or of a collective European identity. Throughout history, the existence of an Other has been a constitutive element of the formation of Europe. This Other varies in each historical moment and analogously takes different forms, always in relation to where the core of Europe has been positioned. The position of the centre of Europe also defined the periphery of the continent and consequently the space of the Other. The spatial and also cultural proximity of the periphery to the Other gave a sense of “semi-Otherness” to the periphery of Europe (Wolff 2000). Exclusion from the core of Europe has caused many countries of the periphery to wonder how remote their nations are from the European idea or how European their nations really are. This doubt with regard to spatial belonging reveals a repeating “tension between Europeaness and the true self” (Malmborg and Stråth 2002, 10). One may also wonder why this question about the degree of “Europeaness” endures among the European countries, especially those in the periphery of the continent. One answer might be related to what Delanty (1995) and Malbog and Stråth (2002) have argued, following Said’s theory on orientalism, concerning construction of the myth of Europe’s cultural superiority in comparison to the rest of the world. Throughout history, this superiority, sometimes only cultural, or even racial, applied to the “Other’s” different designations: barbarians, infidels, uncivilized, communists, or Islam. Hence, differentiation from or association with the Other is also a measure of the degree of “Europeaness”. The continuous efforts throughout history to define Europe as a concept and as a region are due to the abstraction of the term “Europe” and its qualifier “Europeaness”. Yet these efforts have created a bounded space that expands or shrinks and whose centre and periphery are continually changing depending on where the “real Europe” lies. Like every bounded space, it creates a dichotomy of “us” and “them”, of spaces with different quantities of endo-European and exo-European elements (Shore 2017).

In order to outline the contingent spatial nature of what is considered to be the “real Europe”, Lehti and Smith (2003) referred to Europe in the plural. The essentialist division of the European space in cultural terms, which has its roots in the romanticism of the 18th and 19th century, was based on imaginations and stereotypes for whole groups of people, nations, regions and thus “Europes” (Lehti and Smith 2003; Stadius 2001). In endo-European terms, this is translated into questions concerning which part of the spatial fraction of Europe lies in the political, cultural and economic centre, which the periphery is constantly trying to approach and approximate (Baumeister and Sala 2015; Malmborg and Stråth 2002). Regarding the exogenous elements, the question of, for example, where Russia or Turkey should be positioned in relation to Europe is part of the process of finding the fixed space of the continent that embraces the notion of “Europe” and that delineates the “Other(s)”. 

According to Sierp and Karner (2016, 1), this essentializing understanding of space and of people, derivative of the “us” and “them” dynamic, caused the individuals to lose their agency and particularity and to become a container of an assumed habitual core that defines the collective as they become subjects of “reductive portrayals of ‘culture’, ‘tradition’, ‘nation’ or ‘race’”. In an EU context and in relation to access to the European space, this massive “Othering” based on spatial criteria is operated by, among others, the European citizenship and the Schengen area, in addition to special visa regulations that facilitate the mobility of citizens of western countries to Europe, while reducing the mobility of everyone else. Engin F. Isin (2012) and Iker Barbero (2012) have asserted that global migration regimes are based on racial, colonial and geopolitical criteria, as they create spaces that are differently permeated by individuals of different spaces of origin. These immigration regimes suggest that non-western migration subjects are problematic as regards their integration into western societies and their ability to adequately and consistently perform their role as citizens. This brings up the issue of migration and integration and the question of whom integration policies are targeting: which migrants from which regions. How does a western migrant experience the integration process in comparison to a non-western migrant in the Swedish context? Because the European space includes the national and the regional spaces, I briefly illustrate below how, according to some scholars, the meaning of Europe is conceived of by Sweden, Greece and Latvia and how these national spaces are related to the European one in terms of belonging.
Sweden and Europe

Bo Stråth (2002) suggested that the relationship between Sweden and Europe has been based on the dipole of conservativism vs. progression. The two Christian dogmas of Catholicism represented mainly by Latin Europe, and Protestantism, the main doctrine adopted in Scandinavia, constituted the theological and ideological ground upon which this binary opposition operated. Despite the obvious north-south character of this religious opposition, the fact is that Sweden has been constantly in a hostile relationship with the Russian empire, and “the geographic orientation of Sweden has been understood in east-west rather than north-south terms” (Stråth 2002, 127). Bo Stråth (2002, 130) even claimed that, at the beginning of the 20th century, Sweden’s friendship with Germany and its general “Russophobia” were based on racialized theories of a “natural opposition between Slavs and Germans”, with Swedes belonging to the Germanic tribe. Regarding the cultural connections to Europe, France and Germany have been the main points of reference for the elite. Later in the 1930s, the modernization profile that Sweden, especially the Social Democrats, wanted to follow found inspiration in the US. The German and French languages began gradually losing ground as the foreign language of educated Swedes. The Swedish policy of neutrality is a product of the ambivalence in belonging, which in the 1950s “gave rise to a kind of third-way identity” that conceived of Sweden as a neutral, progressive, humanitarian great power, which at the same time would keep Sweden aloof from the geopolitical and ideological quarrels of the two great powers. However, the end of the Cold War, globalization and neo-liberal economic discourse that leaked into the rhetoric of the Social Democrats paved the way for Sweden to become a member of the EU, which as a non-military international organization did not threaten the Swedish dogma of neutrality (Stråth 2002). Finally, according to Bo Stråth (2002), there are two concepts that illustrate Swedes’ mental mapping of the rest of Europe. These concepts are the “continent” and “Europe”. In the UK, Europe and the continent are synonymous terms, while for a Swede, going to the continent means leaving the Scandinavian peninsula, which is however part of the European landmass.

Greece and Europe

The meaning of and the relationship to Europe in Greece is not less complicated. Constantine Tsoukalas (2002) maintained that Greekness and the self-perceptions and images of Greeks were initially based on discourses
and narratives initiated not in Greece, but rather in Europe. This defined the relationship the country would have with the rest of the continent, from the efforts to establish a Greek state until today. According to Tsoukalas (2002, 29), regardless of the geographical position of Greece in the Balkan Peninsula, the Greeks do not have and do not feel any intimacy with the Slavs. The feeling of belonging is stronger for the European West, but paradoxically “when speaking of ‘Europeans’ the Greeks almost invariably refer to the European Other to the exclusion of indigenous Greeks”. The image of the “glorious” Hellenic civilization as the cradle of western civilization was in contrast with the underdeveloped, poor and illiterate country at the beginning of the 19th century (Tsoukalas 2002). This created an ambivalent attitude towards this peripheral European country inside Greece and in Europe, as it lies so close to the orient and at the same time is the historical centre of Western Europe; Greece is in between. The Greeks had to justify and prove to the rest of Europe that the construction by Europeans of the myth that modern Greeks are the “true” (even racially) descendants of the ancient “Hellenes” is far from a myth, but an actual fact. Just as in the Swedish case, but for different a reason, the Greeks had to invent their own “third way” to justify the link between the ancient glorious past and modern Greece. This “third way”, which was built on a claim of continuation between the past and the present, was also characterized by two approaches to Europe: Euro-idolatry and Europhobia (Tsoukalas 2002). This dialectic tension was never resolved, even though it was softened when Greece became a member of the EEC and thereby “an integral part of the developed – and by extension ‘civilized’ – West, not only on the symbolic but also on the institutional level”.

Latvia and Europe

Klas-Göran Karlsson (2002, 169) argued that the Baltic States, among them Latvia, have always been in a dilemmatic position regarding which identity they should associate themselves with (Baltic, Nordic, European, Western). However, at least during the 20th century, the Other that has defined the “we” has been the Soviet Union and later its successor the Russia Federation. The in-between position of Latvia at the intersection of the West and the East, like Greece in the Balkans, did not stop the country from looking towards the West. The accession of Latvia and the other two Baltic States to the EU has been a top political priority since the mid-1990s (Mikkel and Pridham 2004, 718). As Karlsson argued (2002, 170), the term “Western” or “European” in Baltic discourses was not only a geographical or geopolitical
positioning, but also a signifier of “superior cultural, political and moral objective to be perceived” – a mission equal to that of establishing a national identity. If Greece for some period of time was looking sympathetically towards the orient or the East, Latvia had a more western outlook.

Despite being the battleground of two great powers such as Russia and Germany, the Soviet experience and the Russian and Russian-speaking minorities the country inherited from the Soviet period constituted one of the reasons for Latvia, and the rest of the Baltic States, to look for supranational connections westwards. And again, if for Greece orthodoxy might be a barrier to an uncomplicated connection to the West, for Lutheran Latvia religion was an additional element that consolidated the character of the country as non-eastern, as this Christian dogma had been established in the country through German and Scandinavian influences (Karlsson 2002). Generally, Karlsson (2002, 187) argued that, for the Baltic States, Europe:

…does not merely represent traditional civic values as democracy, market economy and state of law for them. ‘European’ also communicates more abstract values that transcend traditional borders between civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism, values and clearly distance the Baltic States from eastern chaos, disruption and uncertainty. Among them are continuity, harmony, persistence, prosperity, stability and unity.

History has shown that Latvia’s national sovereignty has always been precarious owing to its geopolitical position. However, the existence of the EU project and the Soviet experience explain the stance Latvia held towards the EU, but also towards NATO after its independence. Two years before Latvia became part of the EU, there was broad cross-party consensus on the issue of EU membership (Mikkel and Pridham 2004, 719). The public discourse prior to the referendum for the accession of Latvia in the EU acknowledged the differences between the EU and SSSR as political entities, emphasizing the EU’s “acceptance of national citizenship and of course its democratic rules, procedures and beliefs” (Mikkel and Pridham 2004, 721). The EU provides reassurance that the West and its great powers have been transformed into more cooperative and less aggressive neighbours, and NATO

51 Karlsson stated that, in the national discourses of both in Latvia and Estonia, before the first independence the Baltic Germans were mostly regarded as the main enemy, whose cultural and socio-economic dominance interfered with national aspirations more directly than the imperial Russian power did.
acts as a protector for Latvia’s independence and sovereignty from the threat lying to the east (Karlsson 2002).

The meaning of the Mediterranean in relation to Europe

The way Europe has been conceptualized and essentialized is directly linked to the framing of its constituting regions. In a dialectic opposition, the latter gives meaning to Europe, and Europe defines its germane regions. The spatial binaries on the European continent, West-East and North-South, permeate and incorporate regions and other spatial political entities.

The north-south dichotomy on the European continent is rooted in history and in discourses, which include stereotypes, misunderstandings, images and imaginations that come from both sides. Scholars from disciplines such as history, political science, sociology and anthropology have tried to explain the differences between the two spaces, drawing on the historical evolution and different cultural, political and economic experiences these two spaces have had. The Mediterranean has been the natural and cultural locus from which this division embarks. Fernand Braudel (1993, 28), in his magnum opus entitled The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II and written in 1949, claimed that Northern Europe, which lies beyond the “olive line”, has been a crucial part of the history of the Mediterranean, as the North is influenced by the Mediterranean, which has been also influenced by the North. The Mediterranean region has been both the centre of civilized Europe, endorsing the Greco-Roman world, and part of its periphery, because during the past century, the centre of the continent seems to have moved to the North. However, after its political and institutional unification under the Roman imperium, it was never again domesticated as a coherent institutionalized region under a distinct authority. Vaso Seirinidou (2017, 86) asserted that the constitution of the Mediterranean in the 19th century as a distinct region “was mainly a by-product of a new conceptualization of space” intended to rationalize and give legitimacy to the imperialistic ambitions of the Great powers of Europe. The recent efforts of the EU as region builder for institutionalizing the region are merely the initiative of light regional cooperation, especially in comparison to political entities like nation-states or the EU. However, the history, and the modern discourses around Southern-Europe in contrast to the north, may enhance possible identification with the region, especially in a migration context, where the banal nationalism of the country of origin is much less present and migrants find themselves in a multicultural environment, such as the Swedish one.
For example, the European Mediterranean has been part of a “moral geography”, where the south is a zone of archaic mobility and backwardness in contrast to the protestant North, as the origin of capitalist and industrial modernity. To designate this moral geography, which includes stereotypes and imaginations about this region, scholars have coined the term “Mediterraneanism”. This term describes the substantiation and essentialization of the geographic environment as well as the historical and cultural characteristics of the region and is analogous to Said’s “orientalism” (Seirinidou 2017, 90; Baumeister and Sala 2015, 31 and 34).

The pejorative term PIIGS, which was used for the southern European countries hit by the 2010 Eurozone crisis, is merely an expression of the North-South dichotomy, which to a certain extent is based on cultural essentialism. According to Vossole (2016), the explanation for the causes of the Eurozone crisis and the way it was treated was based on discourses of the de-politicization and political culturalization of Southern-Europe. That is, political phenomena are dislocated from their historical and structural basis and geopolitical power relationships and are framed as a logical consequence of the culture, mentality or even climate. Southern Europe and the Mediterranean regions have been essentialized in relation to a spatial identity based on that logic. Attempts were made to justify the cultural imaginary for the people of the Mediterranean, as lazy and backwards in contrast to the North or even generally to Europe, on the grounds of the problematic relation this region had to different stages of modernity (Vossole 2016). Izabella and Zanou (2016, 9) mentioned that the 19th century saw the rise of orientalism and the crystallization of cultural geographies and geopolitical hegemonies based on the “‘backward Islamic Orient’ as the polar opposite of western or European Christian civilization and progress”, affecting regions like Southern Europe, the Balkans and Northern Africa. In short, a sort of “Mediterraneanism”, directly related to orientalism, has been cultivated for decades through discourses of cultural exoticism framed by climatic determinism and accompanied by stereotypes, which not only frame the South as being hedonic, emotional, talkative and passionate, but also as being juxtaposed to the North (Stadius 2001; Vossole 2016; Horst and Stahl 2017). The modernization and industrialization of Northern Europe in the 18th century and the rediscovery of Greece and Rome as the basis of the European civilization created a romantic idea about the Mediterranean region in Europe. However, there was an apparent contrast to the development of Northern Europe, for example, “environmental degradation, political corruption, backwardness and poverty, as well
as vulgarity and sentimentalism were highlighted as inherent characteristics of the Mediterranean, a marginal area of the civilized European world”.

(Vaso Seirinidou 2017, 83).

The migration flows of the 1960s and 1970s from the Mediterranean region, which was characterized by economic stagnation and undemocratic regimes, to the industrialized and democratic north in combination with mass tourism, which is mainly constituted by the consumers of the global North attracted by the history and climate of the Mediterranean, enhanced the image of the region as the Other of the North. These exoticized images are not only imposed on, but also adopted by the inhabitants of the Mediterranean (Seirinidou 2017). One characteristic example of Mediterraneanism, which combines all of the different eras of the region, is modern Greeks. While racist ideology has to a certain extent recognized them as the offspring of the classical Hellenes, the 400-year period of Ottoman rule is the reason why they have not been considered fully European (Goldberg 1993; Vossole 2016; Baumeister and Sala 2015; Horst and Stahl 2017). However, according to Argyrou (2005), the way they have been looking towards the West as the civilized world and attempts at self-criticism during the recent crisis show their self-appropriation of Mediterraneanism. Moreover, Seirinidou (2017) asserted that the Greeks have favoured a Mediterranean identity to the alternatives, such as a Balkan one.

The meaning of the Baltic Sea region in relation to Europe

The success of EU macro-regional policies for the Baltic Sea region, at least until Russia started showing less desire for cooperation and took a more aggressive stance, made this region a paradigm of cooperation and regional integration for other areas, including the Mediterranean. Braudel called the Baltic Sea “the Mediterranean of the North” to show the importance the sea has for the overall region (Grzechnik 2012). From the “hyperborean” paradise of ancient Greeks, to Montesquieu who placed the birth of democracy in this region, to the German nationalists who tried to frame the Baltic Sea as the cradle of western civilization, the region lies, as does its southern counterpart, in the periphery of the continent (Henningsen 2011, 43). If one excludes the period of Danish and Swedish imperium, and the Hanseatic era, which positioned the sea at the historical centre, periphery has been the norm and not the exception for the region (Stadius 2001; Henningsen 2011).

Although after the Cold War the EU showed great interest in the Baltic Sea, and despite efforts to construct a common Baltic Sea identity or at least
a branding name (Andersson 2007), the region seems to be fragmented between East and West, North and South. The efforts to construct a space with a collective identity have merely been an elite project with no “bottom-up recognisance” (Henningsen 2011, 16). The Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States in 2007–8 even came up with the term “Balticness”, 52 trying to encompass all the positive discourses about the region. However, the Baltic Sea identity still remains an un-realized goal (Henningsen 2011; Götz 2014). Furthermore, the term “Balticness” has connotations of the sea in the English language as well as in Latvian, Lithuanian, and Slavic languages, but none of the other countries in the region use this term to refer to the sea. In Swedish, for example, the Baltic Sea is called “Östersjön” and the Baltic States are called “Baltikum”, which bring the term “Balticness” closer to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania than to the overall region itself (Henningsen 2011). In 2011, Bernd Henningsen (2011, 48) argued that the region should serve as a model of “peaceful social change, successful economic development, and clear integration”, which today hardly seems to reflect the reality, given the tensions with Russia and its geopolitical competition with NATO in the area as well as the retreat from democratic values in Poland. However, Henningsen’s argument reflects the overall optimism about the region’s future that prevailed after the collapse of the Iron Curtain. The term “Baltic tigers” – used to denote Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which successfully applied neo-liberal economic dogma in their economies – also shows this optimism, as well as the conceptual, or onomatological, pandemonium in the region. 53 Hence, the three Baltic States are by name closer to a Baltic identity than their neighbouring countries are.

As with other European regions, the Baltic Sea is found among discourses and mental mappings in Europe that divide the continent in accordance with the logic of the compass. If the north-south dichotomy is based on climatological conditions, the west-east one is merely cultural. The era of Enlightenment placed the West at the core of Europe, situating below it the other Europes, the South and the East, less civilized and less European that the West-centre (Lehti and Smith 2003). If the east-west dichotomy in

53 The fact that the Mediterranean needs no geographical category to be treated as a region, while the “Baltic” as such, without the sea, at least in the English language, leaves the concept open to various understandings that require clarification, shows the difficulty of defining it as a region.
the Baltic Sea was in a way contingent, considering the unified effects of the empires and the Hanseatic league in the region, the post-WW2 Iron Curtain delineated and solidified this binary opposition. However, Larry Wolff (2016, 17–23) argued that long before WW2, Europe’s West and East have been in a dialectic relation, as the former needed the latter to operate as its defining Other, and thus it had to invent it. Frithjof Benjamin Schenk (2017) also maintained that “Eastern Europe” has always been almost exclusively a term denoting an Other and a foreign geographical, political and cultural space.

Although Eastern Europe, like the Mediterranean or Southern Europe, has been pictured as backward, unfamiliar and exotic, it does not have exo-European elements, at least in a geographical sense. Eastern Europe was at all events Europe, and unlike the Mediterranean, there was no aquatic element to differentiate parts of the region from something non-European. This element, however, was endo-regional, as the sea itself connected and divided the region, serving as the geographical boundary that defines Eastern Europe, the Other Europe, the “across Europe”, where Latvia is located.

In this discursive and historical framing, the Baltic States and Latvia, lying in the eastern periphery of Europe and the Baltic Sea, have always tried to maintain their cultural existence and establish their political independence among the great powers of the region, but also to find their regional position in one of the “Europes” (Lehti and Smith 2003, 14). Up until the Baltic States’ independence from the Soviet Union, the three countries were considered part “of the lost and forgotten past” (Lehti and Smith 2003, 14). During the post-Soviet era, the rest of Europe’s interest in the three Baltic nations increased. According to Lehti and Smith (2003), the EU, mainly its members from Scandinavia and Germany, tried – in a patronizing manner – to assist Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in becoming westernized, democratized and economically liberalized. As Lehti and Smith (2003, 25) characteristically stated:

the Balts had to be educated to be good citizens of the market economy. Uncivilized easterners had to be civilized and taken into the superior western and/or Nordic model. Further evidence of such a policy of res-

ponsibility was that the Balts and also the Russians of the north-west were quickly included in Nordic exchange systems and grants.

The efforts of teachers and the good performance of students brought the Baltic States closer to the West, earning them the name “Baltic Tigers” for their good economic performance, at least until the 2008 economic crisis, and for becoming members of the EU, NATO and recently the Eurozone. The Baltic States’ desire to disentangle from the East, which for them means the Russia Federation, and the West’s desire to re-establish an old space, caused the Baltic Sea macro-regional cooperation to be even more vibrant. However, though Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania requested membership in the Nordic co-operation, they were refused full participation. Especially Latvia, which had a positive historical memory of the period when it was part of the Swedish empire, was hoping to enhance its connections with Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia (Ščerbinskis 2003; Karlsson 2002).

Summary

In this section, I have tried to show – by discussing the meaning of Europe, the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Sea regions as well as of Sweden, Greece and Latvia using a West-East, North-South axis framework – how all of these spaces are conceptually interconnected and how their meaning is transferred, just as a liquid is between connecting vessels.

This leads to formulation of the concept of “nested spaces”, which denotes all of the overlapping qualities and characteristics that a number of spaces have and that cause each one to be nested inside the other. This concept is an adequate analytical tool, in that it facilitates our understanding of spatial entities not merely as a geographical scheme independently positioned on the earth or as homogenous, independent and autonomous political or cultural spatial entities, but rather the opposite. They are spaces that are interconnected through history and political activity, and the existence of each of them, conceptual or institutional, is directly dependent on the existence of the others. They are nested not only in geographical, but also in historical and cultural terms with imaginations, fantasies and myths that delineate their meaning. Thus, they are linked with each other and entangled on different levels. The meaning of one is in a relative position with that of the others. One cannot geographically, historically or culturally imagine or position Greece, Latvia and Sweden outside the Mediterranean Sea or Baltic Sea regions, outside Europe or outside the spatial binarities of
East vs. West, South vs. North. The concept of nested spaces reveals the dynamics of producing and defining the meaning each space has inside the system of nested spaces.

One way in which each country sees itself is through the prism of Europe and its meaning, a meaning acquired during every period in history. Delanty (1995, 7) argued that Europe is not a natural geopolitical framework, but is composed of a core and a number of borderlands in connection with the eastern frontier. Greece and Latvia have been part of these borderlands at least since the core of Europe has been established in Western Europe. Malmborg and Stråth (2002) claimed that Europe is not a conceptual rival of the nation-state and national identity, but rather something that accentuates and legitimates their existence. As they characteristically wrote: “Meanings of the nations are inscribed in the meaning of Europe and Europe is inscribed in the meaning of the nation” (Malmborg and Stråth 2002, 9). The nation-building of Sweden, Greece and Latvia has been realized in relation to the biggest space of the three nested ones, which is Europe, and not independent of it. Europe has been central in forming the European nations, even though it has been antagonistic “with alternative Atlantic, Mediterranean, Slavic or Nordic macro-regional identities” (Malmborg and Stråth 2002, 10).

All of the discourses concerning what the “real Europe” is include questions about what and how the West and the East, the North and the South are constituted in relation to endo-European and exo-European elements. What constitutes the “we” and the “them”, the inside and the outside, how the Other frames and defines the self are all issues of significance not only to third-country migrants and policies concerning their integration, but also to intra-European migration. Though the EU has undertaken initiatives for political and economic integration of the European continent, this does not mean that the goal has been achieved – far from it. At present, the division into many “Europes” is justified by economical and socio-political factors. Additionally, discourses that include stereotypes, misunderstandings, spatial imaginations and mental mappings, whose origins go back in history, help to sustain the fragmentation. In the current period of hot nationalisms that are challenging attempts to achieve deeper EU integration, stereotypes, prejudices and imaginations are used to justify national uniqueness by constructing and solidifying the Other. “National stereotypes, essentialisms, metonymical polemics, new (or actually old) racisms” (Sierp and Karner 2016, 4) are linked and translated into a regional scale and hearken back to the historical division of Europe. Before the construc-
tion of nation-states, stereotypes operated on the regional level and it seems that this is now being repeated even macro-regionally, given the acronym “PIIGS” and the term “Baltic Tigers”. Also, the recent comments by the US President,\textsuperscript{55} who devalued migrants from Africa, in contrast to Scandinavians, whom he welcomed to the US, showed just a small glimpse of the significance of regional belonging and regional categorization, especially in a migratory context. This statement by Trump is similar to the racial discourse in Sweden at the beginning of the 20th century concerning who was considered a good versus a bad migrant (Mörkestam 2006). Thus, stereotypes and imaginations of nation-states usually also characterize the broader region to which the states belong, which also reveals the regional aspect of cultural and/or racial essentialisms (Timberlake and Williams 2012). This is one of the reasons why countries do what they can to be placed in superior regions in the global hierarchy, one example being the Baltic States’ efforts to become members of the Nordic region.

Part 2
Introduction to analysis

In the following chapters I analyse the material from the interviews with the informants of this study. The aim of the analysis is to examine how the migrants discursively construct their identities and identifications in relation to spaces of different scale, but also how they present and understand and hence also construct their nations of origin and residence, Europe and the macro-regions Baltic Sea and Mediterranean. Furthermore, it seeks to discover the dynamics of identifications and belonging of migrants in relation to these spaces which are historically and institutionally entangled, especially after the initiation of the political and economic integration of the European continent. In times of rising hot nationalisms, economic disparities, globalization and efforts for – but also resistances against – European integration, this study, by examining the identities and sense of belonging of intra-European migrants, will provide an insight into the individual understanding of these political processes. This becomes pertinent, especially in the case of intra-European migrants, who the last decades have been affected by a complex relation of politics of belonging, such as national, and European citizenship, and discourses around European identities and efforts for macro-regional constructions with the Baltic-Sea region as a prominent example.

Theoretically the analysis draws on social constructivism and employs a variety of concepts and approaches such as nationalism, Europeanism, identifications and identities of individuals and of spaces, as presented in the theoretical framework developed in the theory chapter.

The methodological tools for achieving this aim are interview and thematic qualitative analysis, combined with an approach of discourse historical analysis. The themes and subthemes discovered are based on a descriptive coding of the answers and narrative of the informants. Furthermore, since the interviews are semi-structured and in-depth, the themes of the qualitative analysis partially reflect the topic division (nation, Europe, Macro-region) and the content of the basic questionnaire.

The disposition of this part of the dissertation is divided into six chapters. Chapters 5 and 6 analyse the discursive construction and sense of
belonging to the national spaces of Sweden, as the country of residence, and Greece and Latvia as the country of origin of the informants. Chapters 7 and 8 discuss issues of identification and belonging to Europe, as the informants are both intra-European migrants and European citizens. Chapters 9 and 10 examine the significance of the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea regions for the Greek and Latvian immigrants respectively, but also possible identifications to other spaces beside the three ones, which are the focus of this research.
The construction of identity, identifications with and the sense of belonging to the nation

Despite the predictions coming from post-nationalist arguments on the devaluation of its importance, the nation-state remains a particularly consequential space and a “locus of belonging” (Brubaker 2010, 64). The world is articulated in a system of nation-states, which define both politics of identity and politics of belonging which are processes of territorial inclusion and exclusion and thus Othering. The existence of the nation-state divides human mobility into internal and transnational migration and constructs migrant identities, such as economic migrants, asylum seekers, etc. Hence, unavoidably issues related to the nation-state are prominent in the interview-questionnaire but also in the interviews as such.56

In general, all four discursive strategies (constructive, dismantling, perpetuating, and transformative), as formulated by Wodak et al. (2009) and De Cillia et al. (1999) in their study on the discursive construction of the Austrian national identity, appeared in the narratives of the Greek and Latvian informants. The deictic uses of “we” and “they”, are present in order to define national, and migratory differentiations, such as Greeks, Latvians and Swedes, “old” and “new migrants”.57 Furthermore, the national “we”, or spatial deixis, such as “here” and “there”, “down there”, “up here”, or “this country” offer the interviewees the opportunity to contextualise their self and external-identifications.

56 The number of questions related to a specific space and the actual time allocated to this space is not necessarily analogous. For example, despite that the questionnaire included several questions about the macro regions of Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea and also additional “on the fly” questions during the interviews, the results, in terms of material, were limited.

57 In order to emphasise how different issues are related to the two main migration flows from Greece or Latvia to Sweden I refer to “old and new migrants”. For the Greek informants, with “old migrants” I refer to those individuals who migrated to Sweden during the 1960’s and 1970’s and with “new migrants” to those who emigrated after that period, but mainly those who arrived the last two decades. The “old migrants” for the Latvian informants, are those who arrived in Sweden during and the immediate years after the WW2. The “new migrants” are those who moved to Sweden after Latvia’s independence from the Soviet Union.
5. Greek migrants: identifications with and sense of belonging to the nation

The data for this part of this analysis were thematically extracted from the interview transcriptions based on the Greek migrants’ narratives and answers related to the national space (country of origin and country of residence). The themes and their respective sub-themes, which I identified by applying a thematic qualitative analysis to the data with descriptive coding, are as follows:

- Spaces of national cultural dispositions: The character of the state, The character of society, Climate as producer of national cultural dispositions.
- Migratory space(s): Space of emigration, Space of immigration, Old vs. new migrants.
- Gender, and social and educational capital.

5.1. Spaces of national cultural dispositions

Comparisons and generalizations were voiced by the Greek informants to show how they relate to their two germane national spaces as well as to describe their relation to these spaces in a migration context. Following Hage’s (2000) and Agnew’s (1994) reasoning, Sweden and Greece have been presented as containers of a certain national capital, which is referred to as cultural values characterized by certain dispositions or a certain national habitus.

The informants used constructive strategies to create the two national spaces, as areas that contain populations with specific cultural dispositions as well as bear their own specific character. Perpetuating strategies were used to emphasize the long-term quality of the dispositional spaces and their resilience in a migratory context, in other words, to stress that national
habitus remains intact even outside the country of residence. Furthermore, Sweden was also discursively described, using transformative strategies, as an area that eventually adapted to the new social reality created by the migration inflows.

The character of the state
According to the Greek informants, the national space of origin is steered by an ineffective state, mainly the government and welfare state, which are disorganized and generally problematic. The narratives and answers of all informants include personal experiences and a general criticism of a country in which political corruption seems to be the rule and one of its fundamental problems. In many instances, the informants mentioned the problematic relationship between Greek society and the Greek state. Spyros explained the causes of the recent economic and political crisis in Greece by referring to the generation gap. In his view, there is a discrepancy between the national habitus of his generation and of previous ones: “It was our parents and grandparents who brought the country to this situation, not us”. He mentioned in the same answer the metaphor “those three hundred hustlers”, meaning the members of the Greek parliament. By referring both to time – generations – and institutions, Spyros described the chronic problem of corruption in his country of origin. Nikos complained about the impotence of the various institutions in Greece, that together constitute a non-functioning state. Odysseas, who left Greece in 1973, in line with Spyros, referred to the corrupted political system that had forced him out of his country, also appropriating negative external identifications and generalizations:

Odysseas: Nothing! I do not accept it (the nation), from the moment that my nation, or state sent me out. They shouldn’t steal so we wouldn’t need to leave. [...] they spent all the money and even we, here, we have to pay for them. Because back then and even now, to me it’s not a state. It’s a state of thieves. It’s the mentality of the Greek that “I care only for my interests”. Foreigners have every right to call us cheaters. But this is how we have been taught.

Giorgos, who during the interview was in many ways critical of his national space of origin, alluded in a negative tone to his contacts with the Greek embassy in Stockholm, which for him was yet another indication in a problematic national space of origin. In other words, the Greek embassy in
Stockholm is miss-located in Sweden because, in Giorgos’ view, his country of residence respects its citizens. In contrast to Greece, Sweden is a space of order and respect for its citizens. Giorgos tried to explain the problematic condition of the Greek state, linking it to a cultural disposition or a general habitus, as he stated that Greece’s problems are “all related to this mentality of cheating and avoiding taxes and stealing […]. Other informants also described corruption as a national problem, to the point of being part of the national character. They mentioned how the Greeks who had emigrated to Sweden during the early period had tried to take advantage of various benefits given by the Swedish state as well as the different methods they had used to receive residence permits, as already in 1970 Sweden had begun constricting the additional labour force from abroad. Odysseas explained how he managed to immigrate to Sweden despite the mobility restrictions:

Interviewer: How did you come to Sweden? Was it with those bilateral agreements between countries for labour workers?

Odysseas: No, we came with the excuse of the coup. We asked for asylum here. “We do not like Greece as it is; we do not like the coup”, we said. I went to the police and I said the “impeachment”, as we used to say back then.

Interviewer: Who advised you to go and say these things, the “impeachment”?

Odysseas: Some older Greeks from here. They told me to go and say the “Creed” or the “Our father” as they were also saying back then. But I was afraid of being arrested if I travelled back to Greece.58

Odysseas was instructed and advised, by Greek migrants older than him who lived in Sweden, to apply for political asylum by mentioning to the Swedish authorities that he had been politically prosecuted by the coup regime in Greece. The Greek migrants of that period had even invented their own secret terms, which were “impeachment”, “Creed” or the “Our father” as Odysseas said, to encrypt the process of acquiring residence permits on the grounds of political asylum. Thus, political conditions in Greece were used as a means to get around migration control in Sweden, even if the asylum seeker had not actually engaged in political activity in

58 Because he would have criticized the regime by seeking political asylum in Sweden.
Greece against the junta regime. Odysseas, like other Greeks of that time, had managed to permeate the Swedish national space by using the excuse of the nation-state of origin. Since there had already been migration movement from Greece to Sweden, from the 1960s onwards, and while the socio-economic conditions in Greece remained relatively unchanged, people used the accumulated experience of the Greek diaspora in Sweden to continue the migration movement. This reveals an oxymoron that refers to how the state authority and control over a specific space and society, in other words the territoriality of the nation-state, operated as a hinder to but also facilitator of successful migration in terms of legitimacy. Thus, political conditions in the nation-state of origin during the period of Odysseas’ emigration were the means he and other Greek migrants used to get around the migration restrictions Sweden had implemented at that time.

In a way, the interviewees also described how the early migrants had exported their supposed national cultural disposition towards corruption to their space of immigration. Lefteris explained that he had consciously avoided being employed by his co-patriots during the period of his emigration, because his personal values were in opposition to a Greek habitus dislocated in a migratory context. His desire not to work as cleaner was not due to the status of the job, but rather, as he stated, “Because I would have a Greek for a boss, and they were talking about black labour and sick leave. Those things were alien to me. I respected what Sweden gave me and it was difficult to do those things”. Other informants, mainly new migrants, expressed their grievances with the behaviour of early migrants, and not necessarily only Greeks, towards the Swedish State. They tried to explain the change in migration policies in Sweden as a result of this behaviour, which ultimately affected new migrants’ migration opportunities. Giorgos stated, for example, that “During the 1960s these people came, and they started to understand what actually took place”. With the deictic “these people”, Giorgos was referring to the migrants of that period in pejorative terms and differentiating himself both temporally and qualitatively: he was not a typical migrant. The pronoun “they” has multiple meanings, as it could be Swedish society, Swedish politicians or the Swedish authorities; it is used to describe a kind of ignorance of what was taking place in Sweden in terms of population administration, as “they” were not aware of the behaviour of early migrants. According to some informants, realization of “they” regarding this habitus of the migrants eventually transformed the country’s migration policies. This generalization of the Greek national disposition of corruption was accompanied by an image of
the innocent, naïve Swedish state and people. The new migrants, Giorgos and Spyros, expressed their grievances about the old migrants and their disappointment with the practical implications of the change of migration policies for them:

**Giorgos:** A lot of Greeks came here back then. And there were not just Greeks. There were people from other countries during the 60s and 70s. Sweden was a very open country then. [...] if I had come twenty years earlier, I might have gotten a student loan. But I came in 1995 and they said that I wasn’t a Swede and the rules are different now and I cannot get a loan.

**Spyros:** The Greeks of Sweden, and I’m sorry to say this, from the age of my parents and back, it was those people who did the biggest frauds and then they opened the eyes of the Swedish people. [...] They had problems with the authorities and little by little things got tougher. The system changed and things became more difficult for our generation.

The informants described the national habitus of corruption as being to blame for the constantly troubled economy. They portrayed Greece as a space of permanent deprivation. The informants, regardless of the time period of their arrival in Sweden and regardless of their age, referred to the poor economic conditions in their space of origin – conditions that, to different degrees for each individual, have been important push factors for their migration. Sofia, for example, who migrated because of the recent economic crisis, explained that she had migrated because she had not received a salary for six months.

The narratives of the interviewees show the density of this problem in the Greek space and its relation to the emigration trends, which follow the historical economic development of the country. While for those migrants who emigrated during the 1970s, the national space of origin was described in relation to conditions of poverty, deprivation and political totalitarianism, new migrants mobilized because of the current economic crisis, which led to the perception of Greece as a “space of no-future”. Though some new migrants may also belong to the student or lifestyle migration category, the current economic situation of their country of origin defines their current and future life planning as well as their relation of belonging to Sweden. As Natalia characteristically stated: “I didn’t feel like a migrant but lately I’ve started to feel like one”, trying to explain how the recent economic crisis and the unfeasibility of return migration have caused her to change her self-identification, from a European mobility practitioner to a migrant
in Sweden. Such pessimism with regard to the country of origin is apparent throughout the data from the Greek interviewees. Konstantinos explained his decision to emigrate as, “There was no prospect there,” and Spyros made a pessimist prediction about the perpetuating character of the crisis, presumably because of the so described Greek national habitus, which makes any improvements unlikely:

Spyros: My view is that nothing is going to change for the coming 55 years. I am telling you this because I truly believe it. There are even worse days to come.

Comparing the situation of the country of origin with the country of residence seems to be an integral part of the migratory experience. A series of binary oppositions are discursively produced in order to provide an illustrative picture of the differences between Greece and Sweden, depicting two antithetical spaces. Sweden is constructed as a space of order with clear rules and regulations. A word the informants often used to describe the political and societal situation in Sweden is “system”, which can be interpreted to mean a structured, well-functioning society and state. For them, Sweden is a space of an automated system, where the unexpected is the exception and not the rule, while the latter is associated with Greece. Giorgos identified himself with Sweden; he expressed having the responsibility to assist in perpetuating and defending its system: “I want to protect my country and the society and its system with all its provided services and benefits and so on and so forth”. And he continued by juxtaposing the sense of trust he feels in the Swedish authorities with his feeling about Greek authorities: “In Sweden I trust the state, I trust the companies, I trust the politicians”. The well-functioning Swedish state even manages to counterbalance the frustration with the cold climate and lack of sunlight during the winter. Eleni also referred to Italy as a possible migrating country which, however, like Greece, lacks the advantages the Swedish state has despite the better climate. She said that experiencing the Greek reality even for a relatively short time period is an adequate reminder of why she decided to leave Greece:

Eleni: I think I have fewer practical problems just because I’m in Sweden, regarding what I get from the state and in comparison, to Greece and Italy. Ok, the weather is a problem […]. When it’s winter and it’s too dark outside, I get also depressed and I am thinking “when am I going to leave this place?” but then I go for a week to Greece and say, “oh it’s nice actually in Sweden”.

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The topic of the well-functioning state in Sweden is a dominant throughout the interviews. According to the informants, the Swedish space runs under the aegis of the state, which operates as an agent to provide security for the people living inside its territory. Comparatively, the Greek state is often described as an unsuccessful institution. Some informants used the metaphors of the state as a father figure and the country as a mother home to express the idea that the state is obligated to protect its citizens-children. Magda and Nikos both blamed the inability of Greece to support its citizens for their emigration:

**Magda:** If Greece was what it should have been it wouldn’t have sent ‘her' children away”.

**Nikos:** Because for me, fatherland means when you don’t push your children away, then you can say that you have a fatherland.

In contrast, according to the Greek informants, Sweden is a competitive country. They emphasized the technological advances Sweden has achieved, and they described Sweden in general as a space of progress and advancement. Most of the Greek interviewees reported having experienced moving to Sweden as relocation into a space of modernity and as leaving behind a backward space. This impression seems to have an intertemporal element, as migrants from different time periods referred to this difference between the country of origin and that of residence. Nikos described the advancement of Sweden as a product not only of the state’s organization, but generally of the Swedish national cultural capital:

**Nikos:** Look, these people here, I believe, they are a thousand years in front of us. In the way they think, and of course in terms of infrastructure and economy. They think very differently than we do.

Some informants also dwelled on the long period of peace Sweden has enjoyed. According to them, Sweden is a space of cooperation, especially with its neighbouring countries, where resolving conflicts in a peaceful manner is a common value. This recurs as a comparative inference of what their country of origin has experienced. Greece’s modern history is rich

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59 In the Greek language, countries are nouns with gender. They can be male, female and neutral. In Greece’s case, and for the great majority of countries, the grammatical gender is female.
with war conflicts with rivals and problematic relationships with bordering countries in the Balkan region. This constitutes a binary opposition of war versus peace represented by the Greek and the Swedish space, respectively. Giorgos offered as an example the problematic relationship between Greece and Turkey, while emphasizing the neutrality of Sweden and thus the perpetuation of peaceful conditions in the country: “We have not been to war for 500 years. Even during the WW2 Sweden was sitting there and staring”. In Giorgos’ quote, he clearly used “we” to identify himself with his space of immigration, which is a space of peace. Odysseas recalled not travelling to Greece in 1974 during the Cyprus crisis despite the “call to arms” issued by the Greek state. He self-identified as Greek in terms of cultural disposition, stating: “Greek I am, but for the Greek way of life, the peaceful life. But when I am Greek and they call me to go to war, why should I go?”, and proposed negotiation and dialogue as a solution to the bilateral relations of nation-states. Furthermore, Odysseas’ quote shows the relationship of the state with its citizens, the latter being part of the nation-state. Odysseas’ migrant status was not a reason for the Greek state to refrain from drafting him. Legal belonging to the imagined community of the Greek nation, at least for the Greek state, is not disrupted by the spatial circumstances of the individual or his personal identification and belonging in relation to the nation. Furthermore, in this case, Sweden, exemplified as a space of peace, might have reinforced Odysseas’ decision not to participate in the “call to arms” and for him to become a pacifist.

The character of the society
The informants perceived Swedish society as a reflection of the state – as a society that is stable and trained in following rules and not challenging its norms. It is an individualistic society, but its members have a developed social solidarity habitus, which enables a strong feeling of trust among them. The Greek migrants in this study described how they had arrived in a space of individualistic solidarity that has contributed to the construction of a well-functioning state. Their home country suffers from barren individualism, which seems to be the main source of Greece’s chronic problems. Konstantinos mentioned that, “When I first came here, I saw a society which runs properly”. The deictic “here” in his quote differentiates Sweden from

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60 Odysseas was referring to the time of Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. The Greek state issued a call to arms for all Greek male citizens. Odysseas received the note to join the Greek forces while he was in Sweden.
5. GREEK MIGRANTS: ... BELONGING TO THE NATION

his country of origin “there”, suggesting an opposition between Swedish and Greek social organization. Thus, society is as an extension of the state, which follows the pattern of oppositions between Greece and Sweden. However, for some of the informants, the well-functioning society in Sweden comes at a cost, which is its individualization. Irini, a mother of two, complained about the social isolation she feels in Stockholm and about the quality of human relationships: “Even the newsstand worker (in Greece) is closer than the grandma here. That’s how it is”. Regarding this isolation, she reported feeling anxious about the society in which her children will grow up. Lefteris offered another view, describing the structured and well-organized Swedish society in negative terms. He explained the process of getting a residence permit in Sweden via partnership with a Swedish citizen:

**Lefteris:** When I got the permanent permit, the police came three times to check me and my Swedish partner to see if we were really together. 61 And I was impressed because they asked me “And how many underpants do you have?”, “I don’t know, five, six, eight. I have never counted them”, “and how many shirts?” And there was a minimum number. If you had less than two you wouldn’t get the permit. They would assume you’re not actually cohabitating with the woman, but that you just brought two shirts. […] Then I started to get angry with Sweden. Those people are so standardized, they have put everything under rules and norms, their lives, even their breath. I would never have expected them to ask me such things.

In Lefteris’ narration, it is obvious that the state and society are understood as being in an intertwined relationship, as the one seems to be a reflection of the other. The process the Swedish immigration office employed to uncover fake partnerships created a frustration in Lefteris, not directed at the state as such, but as he said, at “Sweden”, at the Swedish society and state. This is indicative of how a migrant might understand the relationship between the institutional and societal dimension of the space of immigration, which,

61 Lefteris sought political asylum in Sweden in 1973. Before arriving to Sweden, he had been arrested in Greece and severely tortured by the junta regime because of his political beliefs. However, he did not receive political asylum because he did not want to give information on his political activity in Greece to the Swedish police, fearing that Swedish authorities would share this information with the Greek regime. For that reason, he applied for a residence permit on the grounds of co-habitation with a Swedish partner. Lefteris stated that this was a common practice among Greek migrants of that period because Sweden had closed its border to labour workers. According to Lefteris, this practice had even taken commercial dimensions, with Swedish women being paid by migrants to fake partnership.
given the context, produce different dynamics of belonging. Some informants explained that they had to culturally adjust their Greek habitus to the habitus of the new society. They narrated personal stories in which their cultural disposition initially brought them into conflict with the Swedish society and state. Often this cultural disposition was framed as a national habitus, using collective pejorative adjectives such as “Ellinaras”\(^{62}\), meaning a Greek who bears all the negative national stereotypes and habits in hyperbole. The national character of “Ellinaras” is antithetical to the “Swede”, and this is what initiates the migrated individual’s conflict with Sweden. Lefteris confronted some difficulties adapting to university education in Sweden because of language issues. He said that he had tried to deal with these problems “thinking again in a Greek way”, meaning in the wrong way. The emphasis on this contradiction between the Greek and the Swedish national habitus is particularly evident at another moment in Lefteris’ narration, when he mentioned that “here even the ghosts are more civilized”, an obvious exaggeration of how much the Swedish habitus differs from the “Ellinaras”. Based on this understanding of self-identification, and the construction of national identities, it can be argued that Hage’s (2000) concept of “national cultural capital” encompasses national characteristics, which explain the entirety of belonging to the nation-state and which also define, based on individual characteristics, the level of and prospects for the individual’s belonging to the nation-state of residence. Taking into consideration how the Greek informants described their national habitus, it can be argued that this operates as a form of capital in their space of origin, but not in Sweden, where it is merely a national habitus of the Other. In the space of immigration, the national habitus can be capitalized on to the extent that there are some overlapping characteristics with the national cultural capital of this space. The other way of accumulating the national cultural capital of the country of immigration, in this case Sweden, is through processes of acculturation. Eleni stated that she had to change her behaviour in order to adjust it to what can be understood as a Swedish national habitus:

**Eleni:** So, when I came to Sweden, my behaviour changed towards the more Swedish model, which is ok. I will work, but if I don’t manage to finish something today, I will do it tomorrow. There are some rules that I will

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\(^{62}\) Ellinaras, etymologically, is a compound of the noun “Ellinas” meaning a Greek man, and the ending “-aras”, which is used in nouns to emphasize their attributes.
5. GREEK MIGRANTS: ... BELONGING TO THE NATION

respect. I will not be loud, and when I’m in a certain place, I will try to respect the people around me. Unlike in Greece (where) you go to a café and sometimes you cannot hear what your friends are saying because of the noise.

Marie-Pierre Le Hir (2014, 5), explaining Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, stated that it is not only a product of history crystallized in certain dispositions, but also leaves some space to agency for orienting personal practices. According to this interpretation, it is this part of habitus which includes the agency that gives migrants the ability to transform their initial national habitus.

When the acculturation process had begun, as in Eleni’s case, the Greek informants found themselves in a new relation of belonging with their national spaces. They referred to conflicts with other co-national migrants in Sweden or during their travels back to their country of origin. In this case, the Greek habitus of the migrants had been altered to a hybrid version that includes elements of the space of immigration. This transformed habitus is what initiates and – in a way, because it is hierarchized as superior – legitimates conflicts with other Greeks, both in the space of origin and in the space of immigration, triggering sentiments of belonging but also non-belonging. Odysseas narrated several stories about when his new hybrid habitus had brought him into conflict with people in Greece. On the other hand, Lefteris felt almost a personal obligation to assist his fellow Greek migrants in accumulating some Swedish national capital:

Lefteris: And whenever I could, I was discussing with them (other Greek migrants), with the hope that I could help them to start thinking in a better way. Better in my view. But later they told me that this way of thinking is actually the Swedish way!

Furthermore, Odysseas stated that, regarding the relationship between the state and society, the cultural disposition of Greece is incompatible with European values. He was himself accustomed to these European values through his migration experience in Sweden. Despite the spatial belonging of Greece to Europe, in Odysseas’ opinion, there is no cultural belonging. Thus, for him, Europe operates as a space of superior cultural habitus, which also incorporates the Swedish space. The Greek migrants, through the deictic “we”, have been acculturized as Europeans in the spatial context of Sweden, and thus they are culturally differentiated from Greeks living in Greece:
Interviewer: Did Sweden change your way of thinking?

**Odysseas:** Yes, in every respect. First of all, you become more European, though Greece is European, but I’m sorry, no.

Interviewer: When you say European, what do you mean?

**Odysseas:** We got into another system, seeing the world differently. It’s about the system. This is what we learned here.

The space of national disposition is transferred through the bodies of the migrants in the space of immigration and then transformed according to the cultural dispositions of the new homeland. Returning to Hage’s (2000) concept, it becomes clear from the informants’ answers and narratives that the national habitus is transformed into national cultural capital when it initiates a sense of belonging. The migrants, through their own agency, try to adapt their national habitus to expectations connected to the national cultural capital of the space of residence in order to initiate a process of belonging to the latter.

**Climate as a producer of national cultural dispositions**

On many occasions, the informants explained the varying character of the Greek and the Swedish national spaces – and their relation to the state, society and eventually the individual – using the factor of climate. They explained the differences in the way state and society operate in each country, based on the different climatological conditions existing in these two spaces. While Greece is a warm country, described as suitable, almost solely, for vacationing, the cold climate of Sweden creates the culturally dispositional space of order and organization. Irini and Nikos, for example, explained the Swedish national habitus and the well-functioning state as follows:

**Irini:** In Sweden, for example, because of the cold and darkness, you barricade in a way inside the house, you’re by yourself. You have a distance and you get alienated from other people. The transportation is more difficult, being spontaneous is more difficult. Everything is more organized cause you have to, there is no other way. That’s why the bus comes on time. Because you cannot wait 20 minutes at the bus stop, the further south you go, where there is more sun and higher temperature, the more you are outside, the more you are with people, the more extrovert you become.
Nikos: The Swedes have another culture and mentality compared to the Greeks. They are lonelier. Maybe because of the climate, but the Greeks want to socialize, to say this and that.

According to the Greek interviewees, the North European climate makes Sweden a space of labour. Darkness during the winter days and the relatively lower temperatures throughout the year create the proper conditions for defining Sweden as an appropriate space for work, where entertainment seems the exception and labour the rule. The interviewees saw Greece as Sweden’s geographic binary in a European context, in that the Greek climate creates a space suitable for vacation and recreation in which work is a secondary need. Similarly, in a European context, Gilmartin and Bettina (2015), in interviews with intra-European migrants in Ireland, also identified weather as a factor of disassociation with the country of residence, as Ireland is described as a space for work where weather is a downside, in contrast with the climate in the country of origin. Just as with the Greek informants, feelings of nostalgia for the country of origin and dissatisfaction with Ireland owing to the climate conditions are apparent in the answers of the Gilmartin and Bettina’s (2015, 87–88) interviewees.

However, the climate in Greece does not only create feelings of nostalgia, but is also described in almost pejorative terms as a vacation space, where productivity, work and a strong economy do not prevail. This Othering of the Greek space takes place not only though the views of Swedes, but also through the perceptions of the Greek informants, who take part in the exotification and Othering of their national space of origin. Natalia reports that her Swedish colleagues have named her “teacher of the sun”, because according to them, she comes “from an exotic country”, which they have experienced as a “place of vacation and joy”. In her narration, Natalia adhered to a stereotypical trope among the Greek diaspora, namely that “Greece (is) for vacation and abroad for work”. This phrase links climate to society, state and economy, as the first appears to define the socioeconomic conditions in her country of origin, discursively constructing Greece as a space merely for leisure, and conclusively framing her decision to emigrate from a space of no-labour to a space of labour.

Climate can also be used as an alternative to essentialist explanations of the existence of a national habitus. Konstantinos is an informant with profound anarchist political views. During the entire interview, he tried to abstain from any generalizations related to nation. Instead he used climate as an explanatory factor for the different cultural dispositions one could
find in Sweden and Greece. He found this to be the only valid explanation for the differences in the cultural dispositions between the Greeks and Swedes, as he believed that “For the rest, nation is a fiction”. He mentioned that, when it comes to a certain mentality, the only difference between him and the Swedes is that the latter have grown up in a colder climate.

5.2. Migratory space(s)

The national space of origin and national space of residence have been described by the Greek informants as spaces that are historically and characteristically bound to a specific migratory experience. The national in this case also includes the local (town, village) as a migratory space, as the mobility rights of the citizens of subsidiary spaces are shaped by state-wide politics. The discursive strategies used when discussing this theme are constructive, perpetuating and transformative. The informants forged an identity for Greece and Sweden as eminent emigrant-sender and immigrant-receiver spaces, respectively. In the “old” vs. “new migrant” dichotomy, the construction of the backward non-integrated old migrant, was applied mainly by the newcomers. The informants presented these discursive constructions as perpetuating phenomena.

Space of emigration

Greece was described by most of the interviewees as a space of emigration. Historically, it has been the space of origin for many Greek emigrants who, for different reasons in each period, have decided to seek their abode in another national space (Fakiolas and King 1996). For example, Spyros stated that “For me, the third biggest Greek city is Melbourne, then it’s New York and then comes Patra”, emphasizing the scale of the Greek diaspora and its dispersion spatially and in magnitude.

The historicity of emigration in the space of origin is reflected in the family or hometown histories of the Greek informants who arrived in Sweden during different periods after WW2. A combination of political and economic push factors in the national space of origin have caused phenomena of mass emigration. This applies in particular to the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, when economic deprivation and political instability forced thousands of Greeks to seek labour and refuge in many European countries, among them Sweden. The narratives of the Greek informants who arrived in Sweden during that period include information on local, family and chain emigration. Certain phenomena, such as established contacts that
facilitated the relocation of fellow villagers or family members and even migrant brides, were part of the migration reality of the Greeks during that period. Maria, who was sent to Sweden after an arranged marriage with a Greek migrant, remembered that she did not know the exact geographical location of Sweden: “I didn’t know anything. I didn’t know where I was going”, while she mentioned some of the push factors that forced people to seek labour outside the country: “Everyone was leaving. Things were difficult. It was the junta. The fields did not turn a profit. We were unemployed or we were working in the fields. The future was not bright”. Magda told stories about the period when her parents moved as guest workers to Sweden while she was raised by her grandparents, something that seems to have been common practice among Greek migrants of that period:

Magda: [...] in pre-school, I remember, it was Mother’s Day, and, in the celebration, there were only three mothers because all had become immigrants. All the rest were grandmothers and grandfathers. So, you were thinking “should I give the flowers to my grandma? Why is it called Mother’s Day?” So, then you were starting to understand that something was wrong; “Why isn’t my mother here?”

The same trend, but with significantly different characteristics, can be found in the answers of newer Greek migrants in Sweden. Due to the recent economic crisis and high unemployment in Greece, thousands of high-skilled individuals have emigrated from Greece the past decade (Cavounidis 2015). Irini, trying to categorize the different types and eras of Greek migration in Sweden, stated that the identity is the same for all individuals, but at the same time she mentioned the qualitative differences between them, especially those who had emigrated recently:

Irini: We are all migrants. Only the quality changes. Those who left because of the economic crisis are many, and highly educated migrants.

Student and academic mobility, moving for improved career possibilities and labour migration are types of migration to which the informants of this study are bounded, through their own experiences, but also through the experiences of friends and relatives. Thus, Greece has been framed as a spatial source of emigrants.
Space of immigration

For many of the Greek informants, Sweden appears as a space of immigration. It is a space that has managed to absorb and neutralize the initial goal of many migrants, namely return migration. According to the interviewees’ narratives, the majority of the first Greek migrants in Sweden were aiming to accumulate a small amount of capital that could later be invested back in the country of origin. However, for many the goal of return migration was realized many years later. The informants, who are no longer active on the labour market, have adopted the strategy of seasonal migration, which usually involves some months of residence in each of the two national spaces to which they feel attached. Though they have the option of a complete and permanent return to the space of origin, they have chosen to return periodically to the space of immigration, as they feel attached to both spaces. Maria mentioned that she returns to her home in Stockholm before Christmas and then goes back to Greece in March. This phenomenon of seasonal migration could be called the “Persephone phenomenon”.63 Apart from a sense of belonging to both spaces, other reasons for called the senior migrants “Persephone(s)” are practical, for example, the more efficient interior heating during the winter time as well as better health services in Sweden as compared to Greece.

In the case of most of the informants, they already had a personal contact in Sweden who had facilitated their decision to move and their integration into the new society. Regarding her decision to immigrate to Sweden, Sofia, a recent migrant, said: “We had some relatives here and I decided to come to Sweden”. Family, friends and the general diasporic community established in this new space of immigration render Sweden a less foreign space. Characteristic of this is Natalia’s decision about the exact space of immigration, in that her decision also had a macro-regional dimension. She wanted to immigrate to Scandinavia and finally chose Sweden as a space “friendlier to Greeks”, because of the migration history in the country and the presence of the Greek diaspora.

Furthermore, Sweden is a space of immigration not only because of the Greek diaspora, but also because of other migrant groups with whom Greek migrants could socialize. For the informants of the older period, this socialization was realized with other diasporic groups such as Finns and

migrants from the Balkans. Maria, for example, narrated that her husband was initially accustomed to the Finnish language rather than Swedish, owing to his socialization with Finnish co-workers. For the newer and better educated informants, the migratory space provides an extended multinational environment defined by the highly internationalized population of the Stockholm area. Giorgos described an internationalized social circle that he created in Sweden, saying that it consists of: “people from India, Sri Lanka or Bangladesh, Germany and Austria, very open, very nice people. Two of my best friends are from Austria, one from Spain, another one from India”. Furthermore, Sweden, as a space of immigration, de facto initiates negotiations of belonging between the subject of migration and the space of residence. This is defined by the perspectives the migrant has with regard to re-approaching Sweden from a space of immigration to a space of belonging. In that sense, the identity of the individual is transformed through a sense of belonging or it may be perpetuated because of a sense of non-belonging. Maria, for example, decided to send her children back to Greece to live with their grandparents and be educated in her space of origin and belonging:

**Maria:** I left my country and I came to another country and became a migrant and I would remain one. And that is why I wanted my children to go back to Greece, so they will not feel like migrants. That was a bad feeling that I kept inside me. And I was saying to myself that no matter how many years you stay in Sweden, you will be a stranger, not a Swede.

In Maria’s case, the transformation of migrant self-identification was never realized, and Sweden remained a space of immigration, which for her means the perpetuation of her alienated migrant identity. The feeling of constant non-belonging in Sweden acts as a permanent trauma for her, a trauma she is trying to protect her children from at the expense of a divided family.

**Old vs. new migrants**

Though I tried to include migrants from different time periods in this research, there are two main migration flows from Greece to Sweden and these also reflect the Greek sample. The first occurred from the 1960s to the 1970s and the second after the 1990s until now. This time gap between the two generations of migrants creates two groups, which I call “old migrants” and “new migrants”. These terms are not related to the age of the indi-
individuals, but to the actual period in which they realized their relocation to Sweden. In the informants’ narratives, a certain dynamic between these two migratory groups is revealed. The first group has been living in the space of immigration for decades with established lives and different levels and qualities of integration into Swedish society. The members of the second group found an already organized diaspora with which they came in contact, at least in the very first stage of their migration. It was mainly the new migrants who referred to the diasporic population as two distinct groups: the new and the old generation of Greek migrants to Sweden. The old migrants saw the current emigration trend to Sweden as an unfortunate phenomenon for their home country, given the negative effects this might have on its future.

There are two main topics the new migrants referred to when they spoke about the national community, which for them includes the Greeks who came to Sweden during the first immigration wave. The first topic concerns issues of solidarity and mutual assistance in the space of immigration. Sofia and Nikos strongly expressed their objection to the lack of solidarity. Both are low educated and speak only Greek. Upon arriving in Sweden, they sought assistance from the local Greek community in their effort to find work, both expressing their disappointment in receiving none. Sofia, for example, stated: “I didn’t feel the warmth or help from my co-patriots, the first Greek migrants in Sweden”. Furthermore, they mentioned that their expectation before and upon their arrival was that the Greek diaspora, via the organized national communities, would operate as a channel to facilitate their integration process, as they would know about that process. The transposed Greek national space in the Swedish one, realized via the Greek diaspora, did not meet their expectations of belonging to a Greek community in the migratory context. Natalia remembered, with an empathetic tone, a dialogue she had engaged in with an old Greek migrant, showing how the new migrants might have approached the old members of the Greek diaspora:

Natalia: Once an old Greek woman told me ‘Humph, and it’s all these new Greeks who are coming all the time, nowadays’. But, ok I understand that, like you want to go to a café and relax and drink a coffee and there are these newcomers coming and asking, ‘where should I go, where should I send my CV, where is this, where is that?’ It can be frustrating.
However, it seems that the construction of a “less” imagined (and more real) diasporic national community was created and maintained during the establishment of the first Greek migrants in Sweden. It is less imagined because, in contrast to Anderson’s (2016) definition, it seems that the members of the community, owing to its small size, were actually acquainted with each other. Odysseas, Magda, and Lefteris mentioned several times how national solidarity had helped them to cope with the difficulties of establishing themselves in a space where the official language was unknown to them. Odysseas explained that their relocation in Sweden was smooth because of the Greek migrants who had arrived some years earlier and assisted them in getting established: “We didn’t have any (problem). We found the Greek community here, interpreters, everything we wanted”. It seems that, in a migratory space, the imagined community may become less imagined and more real, not only because of the size of the community, but also because of the sense of being a minority inside another national population and because of the mutual need for solidarity within the group.

The second topic again mainly mentioned by the new migrant informants, is a criticism of the old migrants for their outdated mentality and nation-centrism. In the new migrants’ view, many old migrants have not managed to properly integrate into Swedish society, but have instead remained strongly attached to their nation and to a certain outdated mentality. Nikos, as well as Lefteris, expressed a kind of disappointment in their co-nationals, criticizing them for backwardness and a lack of desire to integrate, whereas for the new migrants, integration seems to be an aspiration. Nikos admitted that the old migrants had not: “managed to leave behind the mentality of this place down there (Greece)”. Thus, there was agreement that the old Greek migrants had not actively sought to transform their national habitus by incorporating elements of Swedish national capital, or in other words they had not pursued cultural integration.

As for the old migrants, it seems from their answers that they perceived the recent migration outflows from Greece as a national trauma. They also recognized that the current trend of emigration from Greece will have negative effects in the future, owing to all the high-skilled individuals who are leaving Greece because of the recent economic crisis and high unemployment. In this way, they added to the narrative of recent emigration being part of the “national tragedy” related to the economic crisis.
5.3. Elements of national belonging and non-belonging

The informants constructed their spaces of belonging with reference to how they perceived themselves, coming from a space of emigration and arriving in a space of immigration. The main elements defining their sense of belonging to the national space are language, religion, socialization and integration, the meaning of nation, citizenship, national phenotype, and locality in a national context. The discursive strategies they used are a combination of constructive, dismantling, perpetuating and transformative strategies, as all are useful in creating, for example, hybrid identities or expressing multiple belongings. With regard to discursive strategies, the informants have had to dismantle the Greek identity in order to construct a new one that combines both national spaces. However, dismantling strategies are also used to deconstruct the notion of nation as such, the goal being an a-national identity. Transformative strategies are used to express how the Greek identity has been influenced and so changed by the migratory experience in the Swedish national space. Finally, strategies of perpetuation show how the informants have maintained their national belonging, which in many cases acts in parallel with the identity of the migrant. The four discursive strategies are applied intermittently throughout the interviews, for a different purpose each time and linked to spatial belonging.

Citizenship

For most informants, citizenship was mainly perceived in utility and practicality terms, rather than as a means of belonging and identification to the space of immigration. Swedish citizenship was considered to come with certain rights and privileges. Odysseas, who arrived during the 1967–1974 dictatorship regime in Greece, mentioned that getting Swedish citizenship had a twofold purpose with different spatial dimensions. Not only – as he said, “When they hear Swedish citizen, they might treat you better” – did it improve for him the citizen-state relationship in Sweden, but it operated as a safety measure against the arbitrary nature of the 1967–1974 dictatorship regime in Greece. Moreover, the informants referred to naturalization as an additional legal attachment to a national space, which mainly gives mobility rights and state service benefits. Proceeding with this process is a self-evident, almost axiomatic, decision for many informants, and it is based on utility criteria. Lefteris, for example, remained in the state of permanent resident for almost thirty years. In his view, the only meaningful reason for
applying for Swedish citizenship was that, at that time, one could only buy specific market shares if one was a Swedish citizen.

Eleni, besides the practical benefits of being a naturalized Swede, used her newly acquired Swedish citizenship as an alternative means of national identification. She expected that Swedish citizenship would act to neutralize any negative comments about her Greek heritage based on the recent economic crisis in her country of origin. She said: “now although I’m a Swede, if I say I’m Greek I know there’s gonna be a negative connotation, comment on the term Greek”. However, it seems that external identifications in a migratory context do not take into consideration legal status, but rather ethnic connections. Thus, Eleni reported being externally identified primarily as Greek, despite her Swedish naturalization.

However, for a few interviewees, naturalization does not only have practical dimensions. Acquiring citizenship is not a sine qua non for self-identification with Sweden, but rather a marker of completion of the migratory process and an indicator of belonging to the space of immigration. Maria said she wanted to obtain Swedish citizenship because she wanted to feel like a full citizen, an inhabitant of Sweden with a full set of legal rights. The word “complete”, which Maria used, probably refers to the end of a process, where something is fulfilled, and for her this is the migratory period in Sweden, as she had decided to become a “Persephone”:

**Maria:** I wanted it also. […] It was that I also wanted to be complete. I wanted to have all of the rights here. Because I was living in Sweden and I was going to live in Greece. A security, a safety. And since I have the right to get it, why not?

Also, it was mainly the new migrant informants in the study who mentioned that they had naturalized or were thinking of applying for naturalization in Sweden because of the insecurity regarding the EU’s continuity in the future and Greece’s place inside the EU. This is influenced by Brexit and the Greek economic crises, which were underway during the same period when the interviews were being conducted, both of which put the EU in a precarious state. Swedish citizenship would ensure them visa-free travelling between the country of origin and that of residence, in case any political incident related to the EU were to distort their right of free movement. Konstantinos talked about his plan to apply for Swedish citizenship because of the overall situation in Greece and the EU, and Natalia stressed her anxiety about the possibility of re-establishing a visa process from Greece to
Sweden, if Greece were to be expelled from the EU. Konstantinos’ and Natalia’s approach to Swedish citizenship indicates that the national space is still regarded as more stable and secure than the European one. Despite being intra-EU migrants, they sought to acquire the status of a naturalized citizen as an extra layer of legal security for their right to abode in Sweden rather than relying on the status of European citizen. Based on these answers and taking into consideration Antonsich’s (2010, 648) argument that legal factors create a sense of security for the individual in relation to the nation-state and thus create a sense of belonging, one can infer that belonging to the EU does not provide the same sense of security in the minds of intra-European migrants. It is evident that national legal belonging has maintained its primacy.

Thus, based on the answers of the informants who have naturalized in the space of immigration, this is a rational and obvious decision, as acquiring citizenship entails a number of rights that can operate as a protective mechanism for the precarious state of the migrant. The EU, as another political unit that provides citizenship and rights of abode, does not give rise to the same feeling of safety among the interviewees, who are also EU citizens; national citizenship feels more secure.

Language
As Benedict Anderson (2016) explained, the construction of nation-states as imagined communities has been carried out, among other things, through the propagation and establishment of a specific official language via state institutions and the various types of print media. By moving to another national space migratory subjects find themselves, in many cases, obliged to work, socialize and arrange their relations with the state in the official language, which is also, in most cases, a feature of the national identity of the space of immigration. However, the migrants, as subjects of the nation-state of origin, are also part of another collective identity and a national space with a specific official language. For several of the informants, mainly those from the early period of Greek migration to Sweden, language is a symbol of national identification. This conviction is reflected in their effort to pass their mother tongue on to their children, as a means to preserve their national identification among coming generations. This represents in a way a primordial understanding of nation, as the bloodline offspring of the very first immigrants should participate in the Greek national collective, but also
a cultural dimension of the understanding of nation, where language constitutes an important pillar of identification. Language is among the cultural factors considered to be important for collective and spatial belonging as “it evokes a sense of community” (Antonsich 2010, 648). Magda emphatically stated that she wanted her children to learn Greek in order “to be Greek”, and also in order to be conscious of their national belonging, or in Magda’s words, “to know their roots”. However, other informants, following a non-primordial approach and emphasizing the value of polyglossy in an internationalized world, mentioned that they have consciously chosen to teach their children to speak Greek, while others also have focused on the utility and practical dimensions of knowing an additional language. Giorgos, for example, stressed that there is no sentimental reason behind his decision to start speaking with his daughter in Greek. The main reason he gave is the practical benefits of knowing the Greek language owing to its historicity and influence on other languages and science:

Interviewer: And why is it important for your daughter to learn Greek?

Giorgos: It’s not important to me. [...] And Greek provides a deeper understanding of words we use in Swedish, in English or in other languages. The language of medicine is Greek, chemistry, even the numbers. She learns now the kilometre, megabyte all these mega, micro, hecto, mili. Half of them are Greek and half of them are Latin. So, if she knows Greek it will help her understand more.

The importance of language as a symbol of national identity is also reflected in the diasporic community’s choice to offer courses in Greek. The right of migrants to keep and pass their language on to their offspring is also recognized by the Swedish state, as it funds such efforts. In the answers of many informants, mainly those who came in contact with the educational system, either by themselves or through their children, the ways in which the Swedish state supports immigrant languages were mentioned. Furthermore, in a migration context, language could operate not only as a means of identification with the home country, but also as means to defend it. In Natalia’s case, emphasizing the historical value of her native language was a counterbalance to the increase in negative stereotypes about Greece during the

years of the economic crisis. For her, language had another type of utility as part of her national identity. In a migratory context, the historicity and general influence of the Greek language has been used by Natalia as a remedy for her wounded national pride, offended by negative discourses targeting her country of origin and thus herself, as she self-identified with that specific space:

**Natalia:** [...] But in 2011 when they (the locals) heard Greece they were saying “Oh you, that you get your pension at the age of 50, that you live off the loans we give to you” and so on. And because of that I turned a bit argumentative like this word is Greek, and so is that one.

Odysseas referred to language as a symbol not of a specific national identity, but of the identity of the migrant. Especially for the early migrants, such as Odysseas, who did not speak English, Swedish was and is used as the lingua franca among the migrants. However, it was transformed through the experiences and life conditions of the migrants of that period. Odysseas referred to “Rinkebysvenska”, an idiomatic variant of Swedish created during the period when he arrived in Sweden. He described this language in pejorative terms and as a sign of isolation from the rest of the Swedish society, as this language had been created and evolved in the spatiality of migrant-dominated urban regions. Thus, speaking Rinkebysvenska was a feature of non-belonging, rather than the opposite:

**Odysseas:** I was speaking to them (to his children) in Greek, because my Swedish was not so good. Rinkebysvenska as we were saying. Parararara, praprapra (imitating someone speaking really fast). The tongue was going the wrong way. Rinkebysvenska.

**Interviewer:** Who came up with this term?

**Odysseas:** Someone must have said it and then we were saying it for us Greeks, and the Swedes were saying it. And it remained then after that. The language of the foreigners. It is hurere (hur är det?), de ra (det är bra), rrrr

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65 Nowadays, because other suburban areas also have a high concentration of immigrant population, Rinkebysvenska is a synonym of other terms such as: invandrarsvenska (immigrant Swedish), slang (slang), blattesvenska (‘blatte’ Swedish), förortssvenska (suburban Swedish), med brytning (broken), ghettosvenska (ghetto Swedish), miljonsvenska (million Swedish) (Bijvoet and Fraurud 2010, 182).
The relationship between language skills and sense of belonging was mentioned by other interviewees as well. The identity of the migrant in Sweden transcends the phenotype and is linked to how well one masters the language. Being born or having been raised in the space of immigration gives you the opportunity, despite your or your parents’ national origins, to achieve proficiency in the language, thus concealing from the ears of locals any migratory connections. Giorgos, who has strongly adopted the Swedish national identity and has emphatically disaffiliated with Greece, mentioned how his foreign accent reveals his non-Swedish national origin, positioning him in a non-belonging relationship to Sweden:

**Giorgos**: [...] they ask me “where are you from?” and I say “Sweden”. But sometimes they will insist “yes, but your parents?”, and then I will answer; “my parents are from Greece” or “I have been raised in Greece, but I have been to Sweden for many years”.

Interviewer: And why do you believe there is this follow-up question?

**Giorgos**: If the one who asks is a Swede, he may understand because of my accent that Swedish isn’t my first language and if someone else sees that I’m not blond, they ask where I come from.

Hence, proficiency in language and pronunciation are important parts of the national cultural capital. Giorgos has experienced that, although he has mastered the Swedish language, his non-native intonation automatically deprives him of a portion of the Swedish cultural capital and reduces his sense of belonging to Sweden. It seems that the only way to gain access to this part of the national cultural capital is either by being born in Sweden or by migrating at a very young age.

Hence, language is an important indicator of national belonging, both to the space of emigration and to the space of immigration. The informants make conscious decisions regarding their efforts to retain and pass their mother tongue on to their offspring and to master the language of the space of immigration. However, language can be an indicator of continued non-belonging through non-identification with the space of residence, despite the effort of the individual to achieve self-identification with a new national space, as in Giorgos’ case. Natalia also expressed her anxiety about not hav-
ing managed to fulfil her goal of integrating into Swedish society, as she is afraid, she will not manage to learn the language at an adequate level. She mentioned a friend of hers who is half-Swedish and has been struggling with the language despite being in the country for ten years. Natalia answered that her friend told her: “he feels like a stranger in this country”, and because of that she said: “this makes me feel really anxious about my integration here”. Overall, for most of the informants, language is an important element of belonging, either to Greece, which in most cases is a de facto belonging, or a means to achieve a desirable level of integration in Sweden via acquisition of an important element of the Swedish national cultural capital.

Religion

Another aspect that defines national identification in a migratory context is religious belonging. Religion is linked to cultural expressions such as traditions and habits, which according to Antonsich (2010, 648) generate a feeling of belonging to the space of residence. The ways in which the informants constructed the two national spaces in relation to religiosity and their personal perception of and stance on religion define their sense of belonging to the germane national spaces. Some of the informants mentioned the value of religion as a significant part of their identification with the national space of origin, as religion not only preserves but even enhances identification with Greece. For Magda, religiosity is categorized as a non-Swedish marker. She said she was religious, and she framed Sweden as a space of non-religiosity, which contrasts her to her space of residence: Sweden. She said she felt she was in between two spaces: that of emigration, as a space of religiosity, and that of immigration, as a space of secularism, represented by her Greek mother and by the locals, respectively:

**Magda:** For Swedes, yes, I’m religious. For my mother, no. Because I don’t go to church often. If you tell Swedes that you go to the church, they’re like, “Oh are you “religös (religious)”?” and if you answer “yes”, they look at you like you’re even crazier, like “engineer and “religös”? What a crazy combination is this?”

**Interviewer:** Are you Greek orthodox?

**Magda:** Yes!
For Lefteris, an old communist and self-professed non-religious individual, Greek orthodoxy has a certain utility for his Greek national identification and belonging. He stated that because he had failed to transfer his native language to his half-Greek daughter, Greek orthodoxy could operate as a redeeming feature. For him, religion symbolizes and incorporates a great part of the Greek identity. Lefteris explained that he deliberately baptized his daughter Greek orthodox to establish new and enhance old social relations with individuals in Greece. The institution of godmother and godfather, created via the baptism ceremony, was one of the reasons Lefteris wanted his child to become Greek orthodox. He mentioned that: “my daughter, in case she wanted in the future to develop some connection with Greece, she would have someone to contact”. In addition, he indicated that religiosity had created not only sentimental and symbolical links with his country of origin, but also spatial connections. In Lefteris’ view, practicing or merely being present for activities in the Greek Orthodox Church in Sweden is spatially out of context, as Sweden is stereotypically connected to a different Christian denomination. According to him, this kind of religiosity acquires meaning only in the appropriate space, which is his space of origin. For Lefteris, a certain religion is connected to a certain space and is deprived of its meaning and utility outside this specific spatiality. He has connected Greek Orthodoxy with the Greek space and probably Protestantism with the Swedish one, and that is why he reported not feeling emotionally and symbolically satisfied by participating in Greek Orthodox religious activities in Sweden, as the former seems for him ectopic to the latter:

Lefteris: When I’m in Greece at Easter I will go to church. Here, I’ve never been. I’m not inspired here to go to the Swedish Greek church, because this does not satisfy my need for “Greekness”.

In other words, what Lefteris was implying here is the connection of country with a specific national religion or a national church. Stig Hjarvard (2012, 35), inspired by Billg’s “banal nationalism”, coined the term “banal religion”, referring to religious elements that are not detected through conscious thought. In the case of Greece, the national flag, bearing the “Greek cross”,66 combines both types of banality. However, the migratory context

unveils this banality from religion and, by juxtaposing the different denomination of the space of residence and that of origin, constitutes religion as a conscious element of national belonging and identification.

In his narration about a racist incident he had experienced in Stockholm, Konstantinos, also non-religious and with anarchist political sympathies, identified non-Muslims with Greek identity. He said he was once perceived to be Muslim, because of his beard and probably his darker phenotype. He did not tell the person who had called him a Muslim that he was not actually a Muslim:

Konstantinos: Someone thought I was a Muslim. [...] He started telling me that the Muslims are coming here, and they bring violence and stuff. I met him in a bar where I was drinking with my Turkish friend. And he was saying that the Muslims are doing all these things, but of course he started by saying “I’m not a racist but” [...] and he started to say that “yes I understand that you’re educated, but not all Muslim are”. And I didn’t tell him I’m Greek.

Though Konstantinos would probably deny any connection between his spatial belonging and religion, the fact that he framed it in such a way probably reveals the power of a discourse of a national normativity that links Greek identity with Christianity.

Other informants, such as Spyros, Natalia, and Maria, considered religion a conscious part of their Greek national identity, which can and should be practised in the space of immigration. Spyros, in contrast to Lefteris, found religion to be an extra means to be connected with Sweden, which though it is not orthodox, is a Christian country. This created for him a space which he could identify with:

Spyros: I have two motherlands. One here and another down there. And also, family and religion. I am Greek Orthodox. I never thought to change and become Lutheran. The Swedes are Christian Lutherans. I’ve been to a wedding and baptism here. They have the same creed as we Greeks have.

Interviewer: So, in a way religion connects you with Sweden?

Spyros: Yes. It connects me. It doesn’t make me feel different.

Hence, religion is utilized here as another compartment of national identification and belonging. Sweden is described as a space of secularism and non-religiosity that does not offer the informants feelings of belonging.
Lefteris mentioned explicitly that he believes that, “Here there is no such thing as religion. They are not religious at all”. What Lefteris stated, to some extent, might reflect the efforts of the Swedish elite, mainly the Social Democrats, to construct a country of modernity and progress via “secularized Protestantism”, in contrast to a Catholic conservative Europe (Stråth 2002, 136). Thus, for Lefteris, Greek Orthodoxy, as part of the non-Swedish Europe, operates as an additional segment of a collective identity that is more related to construction of the Greek national identity than to a need to practise religion – and at the same time, it is a means of differentiation from his country of residence.

Socialization and Integration

The only theme that has many and clear elements for almost all interviewees (except Magda) – regardless of the year of arrival in Sweden, age, language skills and education – is the sense of belonging in a divided space of the autochthonous population and migrants. The Greek migrants of this study reported seeing Sweden as a space of meagre socialization. In their view, socializing needs are satisfied through enhanced relationships with the migrant element of the population. The qualitative characteristics of their socialization depend on the migrating period and language skills. For the old migrants, there were two main ways of socializing outside the nuclear family. The first and most important was the co-migrated relatives and the people who constituted the Greek diasporic community. Language was a difficult barrier that kept working migrants from socializing with non-Greeks. For them, Sweden as a space of labour was synonymous with being a space of meagre socialization. The work environment was the second place of socialization for the old migrants participating in this research. The space of work was where they met with other migrant co-workers, sometimes developing acquaintances. The older migrants in particular referred mainly to co-national socialization and a sense of social isolation and segregation. Odysseas explained why he had abandoned his occupation as a car mechanic, for which he had also received vocational training, to become a cleaner. The main reason was that he did not want to be spatially separated from the places in Stockholm where the majority of the Greek diaspora was located. Odysseas described his decision as a sacrifice for the sake of socialization and spatial proximity to the Greek community. Furthermore, he pejoratively called the urban concentration of the Greek diaspora a “ghetto”:

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Odysseas: [...] then I went to school to be a car mechanic, I got my diploma and worked in a garage in the city centre. But later Sweden started to locate them out of town, so they went to Hagsättra. “Will you come along?” they asked me, and I said “no” because I didn’t want to leave our ghetto in Tensta. There was our foundation. The foundation of the Greek community. After that I stopped working as an engineer and I started working with städa.

Interviewer: You found this idea better than continuing with the work at Hagsättra?

Odysseas: No. It was the fear of not being, or the desire to be close to the Greek community. And that made us stay stedadori.67[...]

Interviewer: Does it have a negative meaning, “ghetto”?

Odysseas: It has a negative meaning.

Odysseas’ need to reside close to the heart – or as he calls it the “foundation” – of the Greek community shows his sense of insecurity when spatially separated from the community, as this would presumably enhance a feeling of isolation in a society where he already felt like a stranger. Lefteris, Maria, and Odysseas narrated stories and personal experiences in which the side effects of social isolation were manifested. A lack of social trust, mainly in state services and state organization as well as mistrust in cultural norms and social organization, enhanced the sense of segregation. Lefteris talked about how Greek migrants of his period mistrust the state, and Odysseas about his own personal unpleasant experience with the police. In addition, Maria explained why she and her husband decided to send their children

67 Here, Odysseas created a new word based on the collective experience of Greek migrants around the occupation of cleaner in a Swedish migratory context. The word “städare” shows the frequency of this occupation among the Greek migrants not only of Odysseas’ period, but also among new migrants. At some point during the interview, almost all of the informants referred to the occupation of cleaner. The Swedish word städare (cleaner) from the verb “att städa” (to clean) has been Hellenized by adding the suffix -adoros (ultimately, through Venetian -ador, from Latin -ator) to the verb to create the agent noun stedadoros, which denotes the job of cleaner. In Greek, the suffix –adoros is used to create agent nouns denoting occupation, a person with certain skills, or an individual practicing illegal or negative actions. It can be argued that cleaner has been a national occupation for Greek, either as an introductory job or as a permanent one. During the 1990s there were officially registered in Sweden 500 cleaning companies owned by Greek migrants, which shows the strong activity of the Greeks in this section of the economy (Gougoulakis 1998, 12)
back to Greece for their school education while they stayed in Sweden, their reason being mistrust in and alienation from Swedish society:

**Maria:** It was difficult for us to send them back to Greece, but the children of my husband’s brother were already in Greece and we were told that we should also send them to Greece to get educated. If they stayed here, they would end up being illiterate. That’s what we thought. Many people back then sent their children to Greece because they were uneasy about not understanding Swedish society and how the school system works. Because at the beginning, what we did wrong was that we didn’t send our children to kindergarten. I was sitting with my children and raising them by myself. I thought that this is what I should do. We didn’t know the language, so we weren’t informed back then. I didn’t know much.

For the high-skilled newcomers in the sample, socialization is based mainly on international contacts they form in their workplace. The English language works as the lingua franca in initiating and facilitating closer contacts. For example, in the case of Eleni, whose previous migratory experience in Italy and proficiency in the Italian language became a way to meet Italian migrants in Stockholm, this was a conscious choice regarding socialization in the space of immigration. Thus, by capitalizing on her migration experience from Italy, she created a third trans-national space in Sweden by engaging with the Italian community, thus satisfying her need for socialization:

**Eleni:** Most of my friends are Italians and through them I have all my activities.

Interviewer: Do you socialize with any other people?

**Eleni:** Italians, Germans. Greeks not so much. I used to know some who left, but I don’t know other Greeks. My close friends are not Greeks anymore.

In general, for some informants, immigrant socialization becomes the only option. However, for the new migrants, like Nikos and Sofia who speak only Greek, co-national socialization is the only option, though they did express their desire to form contacts with the local population and other migrant groups. Sofia explicitly mentioned language as a barrier to socialization: “I speak only Greek and that’s a problem […] If I knew English or Swedish, I would love to have friends from other nationalities”. To point out the
importance of language for socialization and generally for integration, Nikos used a militaristic metaphor: “Language is a weapon I don’t have”. Additionally, Nikos was pessimist about his future integration. He tried to explain this by stereotyping the cultural difference between Greeks and Swedes that is a hinder to his integration:

**Nikos:** I can’t say that I could integrate into Swedish society. Because Swedes have another way of living. Our culture is different. They don’t really socialize with anyone. They’re lonely. This is how they are. I don’t know why. Is it the climate? Is it their culture? I can’t say really. We’re different. We are a bit more joyful. I’m not sure if I could be friends with a Swede.

According to some informants, developing more intimate relationships with the local population, for example, a partner relationship, was generally a facilitating factor for enhanced social relationships with the non-migrant population. Giorgos stated that he consciously sought to exclude co-nationals from his social circle, his goal being to advance his social, linguistic and cultural integration:

**Giorgos:** If I would hang out with other Greeks, I would speak in Greek so I wouldn’t improve my Swedish. […] In the beginning I was consciously and openly avoiding them.

However, a feeling of frustration regarding socialization is apparent throughout the interviews, as are grievances concerning the lack of more intimate contacts with the non-migrant population. Even Giorgos, who throughout the interview built up a negative picture of Greece, with Sweden being its opposite Other, found socialization and forging close relationships with Swedes with a non-immigrant background problematic. He argued that socialization is: “the only thing! The only thing about Sweden where I prefer Greece and the Greek mentality”. In the view of many informants, Swedes were collectively described as unapproachable and as having a tendency towards solicitude and isolation, which hinder attempts to integrate and hamper a sense of complete belonging to Swedish society.

This commonly experienced problem of socializing with the non-migrant population was framed in relation to the national character or cultural disposition of Swedes. In the framework constructed by the interviewees, part of the national habitus of Greeks, who have been raised in the meridian Other of Europe in comparison to Swedes, is being sociable and
extroverted. The Swedes, who do have not migration references, were constructed as a group with the opposite characteristics – characteristics that have been shaped by and in Sweden’s geographical location. Referring to Antonsich’s (2010, 647) five factors of belonging, relational factors, i.e. “personal and social ties that enrich the life of an individual in a given place”, are important in creating and maintaining a sense of belonging to a group. Furthermore, social relationships that do exist, but that are weak, do not satisfy the personal need for socialization and intimate contact, and such relationships tend to be insufficient for generating this sense of belonging. It seems that the informants lacked long-lasting close relationships with the non-migrant population and that this had created a sense of non-belonging to the space of immigration.

The meaning of nation

Most of the interviewees referred to specific elements that constitute a collective national identity and show a non-primordial, but rather cultural and historical, understanding of the nation. It might be the case that this definition of nation constructs Sweden as an open national space one can belong to. A strictly primordial view would create inflexible national identities and would constitute identification with Sweden being incompatible with other national as well as other spatial identifications of a higher order. A primordial national belonging would also exclude migrants, being non-natives, from the possibility of belonging to Sweden and, thus, would render Swedish national identification incompatible with a multiple identities system. However, during the interviews, many informants fell into contradictions, as their views related to national identification were in contrast with their cultural and territorial understanding of nation. The way the interviewees expressed their belonging to the two national spaces shows how they position themselves as migrating subjects in relation to these spaces, especially in relation to the space of immigration.

Spyros provided a characteristic example of a constructive strategy for creating a hybrid identity with contradictory understandings of the nation. He specifically referred to nation as a raceless population that lives in a defined space and shares collective goals. Nevertheless, he took a blood-line approach to his Greek national belonging and a cultural one to Swedish national belonging:

Spyros: Nation is all the people living in a country, who are united in struggling for what’s best, without racism, and acting to achieve this […] I’m
50–50. I have Greek blood, but I identify myself with both (Greek and Swedish) […] I have two homelands. One here and one down there.

This discursive strategy of national identification in a migratory context, which combines primordial and cultural definitions of nation, can be called a “synthetic strategy”, as the subject of migration tries to combine conflicting understandings of national belonging that, nevertheless, fit his identification needs in a migratory context. In the “nation” and “ethnos” dipole, Spyros constructed the former as non-primordial, as this quality is attached to the latter. In that sense, he portrayed his membership to Sweden as “nation” and to Greece as “ethnos”.

Other informants, in the spirit of Spyros, attempted to construct hybrid identities by combining the national identities linked to their migratory spaces. However, each individual constructed these hybrid identities with different dynamics and sense of belonging to the two spaces. Migration has also caused a number of interviewees to denounce their Greek national identity and replace it with the Swedish one, with identity of a higher order, such as the European one, or with other a-national and more cosmopolitan identifications. Giorgos stated that he prefers being identified with Europe than with Sweden or Greece, and he even endorsed self-identification of a global order, such as “citizen of the world”. Odysseas used another strategy that can be called “identification according to interest”. He argued that he chooses national identification according to the occasion and his personal interests, as he identifies himself as a mix of Greek and Swedish “(I am) Demi. Greek Swedizen (with Swedish citizenship). When it suits me, I’m Greek and when it doesn’t, I’m Swedish and that’s it”. He rejected the self-identification of the migrant, because in his opinion, spatial position is not related to a sense of dislocation:

**Odysseas**: Wherever you live is your home country. It doesn’t mean anything; I say it with all my heart. They were singing about the migrant life, Kazantzidis,68 “water is salted, and food is bitter”. No! “Homeland is where it (life) is good”.69

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68 Stelios Kazantzidis was a Greek singer representative of a category of music related to the phenomenon of Greek emigration and diaspora, especially during the post-WW2 emigration wave.  
69 The equivalent in Latin would be “Ubi panis ibi patria”, meaning “Where there is bread, there is (my) country”.

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However, this strategy of “identification according to interest” concerns Odysseas’ legal attachment to the nation via citizenship and to the safety (material and emotional) that a national space provides. According to Antonsich (2010, 648), economic factors contribute to creating a safe and stable material context for individuals and their relatives. This also explains why Odysseas, despite self-identifying as Greek in Sweden, rejected the migrant identity. Sweden has provided him with the economic factors that trigger a sense of belonging and, thus, neutralize a sense of non-belonging.

Konstantinos and Lefteris, who have left-wing political sympathies, saw the nation as a social construction, giving a political and historical explanation. Konstantinos, following his definition of nation, self-identified as an a-national or “citizen of the world”. He said that, in some instances, it is social and not national spaces that define belonging: “despite the fact that I was in Greece, I was not feeling ok”. This shows that spatial position outside the nation-state territory does not automatically challenge the individual’s sense of belonging. On the other hand, Lefteris constructed a hybrid national identification for himself, in which the predominant role is nevertheless that “I feel more Greek”. Lefteris even assigned proportions to his national identification in response to the demand from the autochthonous part of the population the he position himself in relation to the nation-state of origin and the nation-state of residence:

Lefteris: […] “How much Greek you are and how much Swede?” Typical stupid question! And I respond 40% Greek, 30% Swede, and the rest 30% I have lost somewhere in between. […] It’s a diplomatic answer.

Lefteris recounted that he cannot reveal the fact that he feels predominantly Greek, and he tried by quantifying his national identification to give a satisfactory answer. He even said he perceived this demand as an aggressive way of compelling a certain national categorization, merely because of his migrant identity: “I saw irony and aggressive behaviour from the Swede posing that question. It is like saying, ‘Now I put you in a tight spot; now you’ll have to admit that you’re actually a Greek’”. Lefteris’ answer shows the general demand placed on migrants to spatially and sentimentally situate themselves in a nation-state matrix. Thus, national identification in a migratory context is not merely an issue of self-identification, but equally of external identification. The question of national belonging becomes imperative not only for the migrant, but also for the non-immigrant, probably conscious member of its national space, who has the need to place the migrant
in a national context and according to his or her own national cultural capital. As Lefteris mentioned, for the society of the space of immigration, he cannot exist in a nation-state without being forced to position himself in relation to the space of origin and to the space of residence, in terms of national belonging.

Migration can also assist in national disaffiliation with the space of origin. According to Giorgos, the space of immigration, as a national space, gives opportunities for dismantling, transforming and eventually replacing his national identification with the country of origin with that of residence. National hierarchies are also important to this kind of belonging, and in this case, Sweden is considered to be of higher rank than Greece. Giorgos mentioned the example of his international trips in an attempt to explain why he chooses the Swedish national identity rather than the Greek. He referred to national identity as being a brand, where Sweden “scores” higher than Greece. He mentioned the US, where Sweden has a more prestigious brand than Greece does. He also mentioned Turkey, a country with which Greece has been in variety of historical quarrels, and for Giorgos this is an additional disadvantage of choosing to travel with his Greek identity when he travels to that country. The passport is an element of banal nationalism, as it is a token used often in everyday life that is not only an actual and symbolic representation of national belonging, but also, as for Giorgos here, of self-identification:

Giorgos: When I travel, I travel with my Swedish passport. I don’t speak so much Greek. […] for me being a Swede is something good, like everywhere you are, in a hotel in Turkey or in the US they say to you “Oh are you from Sweden? Oh, so nice”. It sounds nice to people that you are coming from Sweden, or Scandinavia in general, in comparison to other countries such as Greece. If you say Greek, people have stereotypes and there might be some kind of hostility against Greece, but if you say Swedish, everyone has good thoughts.

Giorgos strongly emphasized his sentimental distance from Greece. Although migration gave him the opportunity to adopt a new national identity and belonging and to replace the old one, he wanted not only symbolic or emotional detachment, but also legal detachment. In his application for Swedish citizenship, Giorgos requested renunciation of his Greek citizenship:

Interviewer: Why was it important to you to get Swedish citizenship?
Giorgos: For me it was really important to be a Swede. I have always been thinking that I belong to this society and not the other (the Greek one). When I received Swedish citizenship, I checked the box that says, “I don’t want to have my older citizenships”, but Greece does not accept that. I think Greece is one of the three or four countries in the world that doesn’t accept that. So, they say, “once Greek, forever Greek”.

However, recognition of a hierarchy among nations can enhance national belonging in a migratory context to the space of origin, despite its lower status compared to the space of destination. Sofia referred to Sweden and Germany as nations she would rationally prefer to be identified with, rather than Greece. These examples are not random. Sweden is the country to which Sofia has decided to migrate, and thus a space where she wants to build up her identification and sense of belonging. When the interview was conducted, Germany was the most powerful EU nation-state and the one defining to some extent economic policy in Greece during the recent crisis:

Sofia: I do feel Greek and I’m very proud to be Greek. I wouldn’t like to be Swedish or German. Greece is a very beautiful country with nice people.

For all of the informants, their national and migrant identifications were constantly in flux and they could offer contradictory self-identifications. Their migrant identity was not erased by hybrid or sole identifications to Sweden. Regarding whether one adopts the immigrant identity, it seems that external identifications are more important than self-identifications. Many times, the informants said it was society that assigns them an immigrant identity and positions them as the Other. Maria explained that, despite being in Sweden for decades, her self-identification as a migrant creates a permanent feeling of non-belonging. Sweden, as her space of immigration, has not created feelings of belonging and, in this way, transformed her migrant identity into a local one, despite the fact that she feels emotionally connected to this space:

Maria: “[…] the places I have walked, to see people. Because the people who walk this area and who I know, I’ve known them for 40 years, I have nostalgia. I will never say I hate Sweden. I love Sweden, I have feelings for Sweden just like I have for Greece.”
Eleni said she preferred the self-determination of the European citizen, as for her the term “migrant” has negative connotations. Identification with a space of a higher order, encompassing both Greece and Sweden, is her strategy for rejecting the migrant identity. Though similar to other informants’ strategy of denouncing national identity by invoking identifications to a higher order, such as cosmopolitan identifications, Eleni talked about a legal framework, European mobility, to solely de-emphasize her migrant identity, but her national one:

**Eleni:** But unfortunately, when they say it (migrant) now I think it’s a negative word. [...] I consider myself a citizen of Europe in the good sense of Europe: the free movement of people. I don’t want to accept the label “migrant” because as I said, migrant has a negative meaning for me.

According to the informants, migration creates opportunities for dynamic relations of identifications and belonging or even non-belonging to the two national spaces. The migrants’ identity lies in a relationship with these attachments, and it is realized not only through self-, but also through external identification and categorization.

**National phenotype**

At various times during the interviews, many of the informants mentioned perceiving Sweden as a space with a blonde and pale-skinned population. This stereotypical view of Sweden is an instant hinder for the informants as regards constructing a national belonging to the space of immigration. This view is guided by both the self- and external-identifications that relate the informants to the Swedish space. Giorgos, who strongly self-identifies with Sweden, mentioned personal experiences when he has been asked to “reveal” his true origin even though he speaks Swedish fluently. Two elements “betray” his non-Swedishness. The first is his migrant accent when he speaks Swedish and the second his phenotype. Giorgos said that comments like this no longer upset him, however he finds them unreasonable, because his spatiality and self-identification are Swedish:

**Giorgos:** [...] if someone sees that I’m not blond, they ask me where I come from [...] Yeah, even if you’re Swedish and you were born and raised here, they will still ask you “and what about your parents? Are they also from Sweden?

Interviewer: Is this annoying?
Giorgos: No, not so much, I know that there are people who get annoyed. Some time ago it would annoy me more, because why is that important? I live in Sweden, I speak Swedish; why are you so interested in learning where I come from and then you press me to tell you about the second level?

The strategy against discriminatory comments related to phenotype and spatial belonging that mainly the old migrants chose to follow is mainly apathy and inconsideration, as they did not want to confront the overall situation. The dominant discourse of white blonde Sweden was probably too difficult for them to challenge, and as Maria stated, “it was obvious that we were different”. They have accepted their phenotype as a marker of difference between the migrant and non-migrant population. Odysseas and Lefteris also mentioned phenotype as a sign of national differentiation, but they placed it in a social class context. They stressed that the racist comments were coming from low-educated and socially deviant Swedes, devaluing these Swedes’ hostile comments. As Odysseas said, “We were hearing from Swedes who were lower educated people. The Swedes who were gentlemen never said anything like that”. According to him, the reaction of other Greeks migrants of that period was to emphasize phenotypical differences by filling the binary opposition of “svartskalle” (blackhead) with the word “ljusskalle” (blondhead), which they called the fair-haired locals, “[…] they were calling as svartskallar,70 “black heads […] And we called them ljusskallar”. However, by reproducing this racist discourse, they were amplifying their disassociation with the space of immigration and emphasizing the stereotypical image of Sweden as a space of blonds.

Magda referred to a group of historical migrants in Sweden, the Walloons, in an attempt to find a means of attachment to Sweden, but still as a dark phenotype exception in a perceived homogenous blonde Swedish population. According to Magda, language skills served as a protection against discrimination or dislocation, as the non-immigrant population had difficulty placing her spatially. However, it seems that the old migrants’ most important strategy for disregarding non-migrant individuals’ comments on non-belonging based on phenotype was indifference:

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70 Blackheads, “svartskallar” in Swedish, is a derogatory term used in Sweden during the 1960s and 1970s to refer to the dark skin and hair of migrants who arrived in the country, mainly from Mediterranean Europe during that period.
Magda: I had two great advantages. First, I speak Swedish extremely well and so the Swedes get confused. They wonder “what is this now? She can be a black-head Swede”. There are some Valloner\textsuperscript{71} here. The second is that I am...I am not sure...naive? I was not paying attention to these things. I didn’t see them.

The association of a certain phenotype with national belonging is not only related to the Swedish space, but also, through external identification and stereotyping, to people with origins in the Greek space. Eleni, who is blond with green eyes, was asked to spatially clarify her phenotype, which some Swedes viewed as ectopic to the Greek space:

Eleni: They have asked me how it can be, and I’m not a brunette, and I explain to them that in the area I come from in Greece we have this colouring. Because I think that for the Swedes, a Greek looks like a suntanned man from Crete. What the films show actually.

Taking into consideration Magda’s historical reference to Walloon migrants in Sweden in trying to explain her sense of belonging despite being a brunette, it seems that phenotype has been of intertemporal importance in creating spaces of inclusion and exclusion in Sweden. These processes of Otherness are based on binary oppositions, where the stereotype “Swede means blonde” is left open to be filled with contrasting meanings such as “svartskalle”.

Locality in a national context

The spatial point of reference for the informants’ lives, moving down from the scale of nation to the urban level, is the actual locality where the migratory experience takes place. The informants’ perception of space reflects historical developments concerning how migrants organize and position their lives in the place they live. Old and new migrants have different understandings of how the urban space of Stockholm constitutes the intimate area of life activities.

It seems that the old migrants experience spatial distance to a greater degree than the new migrants so. The latter seem to see urban space as a more connected network of spaces and to be interested in the cultural and

\textsuperscript{71} Walloons were a group of people, mainly businessmen and guest workers, who emigrated from the area of Liege in Belgium to Sweden during the 17th century (Evans and Rydén 2007).
social opportunities this space provides, as the greater Stockholm-Uppsala area is the cultural, financial and educational hub of Sweden. In Eleni’s view, migration is related not only to the national space, but also to the urban one. Stockholm is the only city in Sweden where she could see herself living; she stated that it “combines the cultural interests I have with the right size of a city that I like”. The international character of Stockholm in comparison to other Swedish cities is another important factor underlying her establishment in the city.

By contrast, old migrants seem to see Stockholm as a fragmented area with borders to transcend. One of the reasons might be that their social isolation from non-migrants and co-national socialization have created bounded migratory localities inside the urban space of Stockholm. A characteristic example is offered by Odysseas, who decided not to pursue a career as a car engineer because the company had relocated from the city centre to another place inside the Stockholm urban area. The reason was that he wanted to stay close to the Greek community or, as he called it, the “Greek ghetto”. Maria and Lefteris have remained relatively immobile inside the urban space, as they have positioned their lives in sub-urban areas. Their answers indicate the importance of the personal contacts that have defined their perception of the spatial distance. Maria said: “We left from that village (in Sweden), in 1973, and we came here to this part of the city. Since then we have stayed here […].” Spyros, however, who is a new migrant, constructed another type of locality that unifies Stockholm and Uppsala in one urban space. In this way, the spatial distances inside the urban space are shortened. In contrast to Maria and Lefteris, Spyros stated: *Uppsala and Stockholm, it’s the same. It’s like a suburb.*

Moreover, already established contacts and job opportunities in a specific place are factors that encourage chain migration among some informants and that eventually define the locality of migration and the life course. Giorgos chose Stockholm as the city to migrate to because his preferred university programme was there, but still he said the main reason was a relative who was already situated in Stockholm and who facilitated his translocation. Natalia gave a two-dimensional understanding of the urban migratory space. The first is related to the Greek national community located in Stockholm, which created a sub-urban space much smaller than the actual Stockholm area. Natalia explicitly wanted to ensure her anonymity in the interview and asked me not to refer to places where she has lived in Sweden during her immigration, because, as she stated, “Stockholm is a village”, most likely referring to her co-national community. In another
instance, where she described her feeling of social isolation generally in Sweden, she mentioned that the size of Stockholm works as a remedy for this feeling. Thus, for Natalia, Stockholm changes its size contextually, as it incorporates two spatial dimensions. The first is the Greek community, which transforms the urban into the rural. The second is the actual size of the city, which offers a more vibrant life. Furthermore, Natalia who used to live in a smaller city in Sweden, has experienced two different types of migration: international and internal, from a rural to an urban space. Furthermore, her pre-migration urban living past made her want to continue living in an urban space:

**Natalia:** I prefer living in Stockholm because it’s a rich and big city with more opportunities, something that softens the overall climate of isolation that exists in Sweden [...] I used to live in Athens and so my goal was to come to live in Stockholm.

For some informants, migration is related not only to relocation to a new national space, but also to a specific locality inside the nation-state. The size of the city and the opportunities afforded by living in a specific place work as decisive factors in the migratory experience. The concentration of the national diaspora to urban localities and the establishment near them are mostly important to the old migrants, who perceive the urban space as fragmented.

**Gender and social and educational capital**

The last section of this part of the analysis is not a theme derived by coding but is entangled with the previous three themes. It has its own implications for the migratory experience, as it concerns gender and issues related to gender positionalities in the national spaces of origin and residence. Furthermore, it discusses how the interviewees’ social and educational capital affect their migratory experience.

The informants constructed Sweden and Greece as two spaces of gender equality and gender inequality, respectively. However, Sweden was discursively dismantled into a space of inequality by some female interviewees. Perpetuating strategies refer to traditional gender roles that were preserved despite spatial dislocation due to migration.

Sweden was framed by the informants either as the par excellence space of gender equality or as space of meretricious gender equality. Greece received the opposite attributes of being a space of gender inequality. For
the interviewees who described Sweden as a gender-equal country in name only, gender roles define the migratory experience according to the specific time context and social and educational capital of the individual. According to Eleni and Magda, gender and national self- and external identifications have operated in synergy and affected their working lives. Eleni’s naturalization as Swedish citizen is not a sufficient indicator of her Swedishness in her working environment, as she also reported feeling hesitant and insecure about her Swedish belonging. Thus, she is still perceived as non-Swedish, which in combination with the fact that she is a woman, hinders better cooperation with her male co-workers and potentially her career development. She stated: “If I were a man things would be easier, because I would have better bonding with the other men, and I would have been treated differently”. Similarly, in Magda’s view, both her gender and her national origin have operated as a means for her colleagues to exoticify her. It seems that stereotypical perceptions about the Greek national character are used as a basis for this exoticification. Magda is called “tokiga Grekinna” – the “crazy Greek woman” – a description of her dynamic personality at her workplace:

Interviewer: Do you believe there is gender equality in Sweden?

Magda: No, I don’t believe this. This is the other big fairy-tale of Sweden. I’m sorry, now I will say it bluntly. No, I don’t believe it. The facade is this, but if you look at the statistics it’s not like this at all. […] I’m different; in the way that I behave. They use the term, “aggressive” because I’m a woman and I don’t know if it’s because I am Greek or a woman. […] I have argued many times about things, and I’m known as the “Greek woman”, who says what she thinks. But they’ve told me that they call me “tokiga Grekinna”. And they have this self-image that Sweden is the most “jämställd” (equal) country in the world. It’s not! It’s not! It’s not! And it’s not just me who says this. It’s we, the women, we say so.

In their narrations, Magda and Lefteris alluded to the notion that society and prescribed gender roles affect processes of integration and assimilation in the space of immigration. Magda suggested that society tends to perceive migrated women as less threatening to local society, which makes her more easily accepted by and absorbed into the new national space of residence. Furthermore, Magda argued that men have more difficulties being accepted as a new part of the migratory context because they tend to be seen as possible threats to the national space.
Lefteris asserted what Magda was describing as societal perceptions of the gendered subjects of migration by ascribing to men and women specific attitudes and dispositions related to their gender and probably to their national and religious character:

**Lefteris:** the Greek women were exposed to fewer dangers in society than the Greek men. Men were more prone to danger, adventure and risk than the women. So many fell into that. The women have more connection with society, because they don’t have any aggressiveness, they compromise. Generally, to compromise and to find a solution, they are more prone to that. The male foreigners are more aggressive socially or even religiously.

For Maria, gender defines her spatiality in relation to residence because she was a migrant bride, but also because of her overall migratory experience. She arrived in Sweden after a wedding arranged by her and her husbands’ family. The spatial distance was neutralized through a letter exchange with her future husband, and though it was not a forced marriage, Maria had to decide on her future life under specific and constraining conditions, in a space that was unknown to her. Maria said: “I did not want to go since I didn’t know so much about everything here”. The traditional gender roles affected Maria’s life course in a migratory context. She had to participate as a labour worker and be responsible for the housekeeping, which left little free time for her to learn Swedish. Mastering the Swedish language, according to her, could have facilitated her life as a migrant and probably mitigated her sense of isolation in Sweden:

**Maria:** [...] a Greek guy was in charge of organizing some lessons in Swedish on the weekends for workers in the factory. It was mostly men who went. He was being paid by the factory. I didn’t go since I had to clean the house on the weekends. We were traditional in that sense. [...] The only mistake I made; I should have learned Swedish from the start. Life would have been easier in every way. That was a huge mistake.

For some male interviewees, military service in Greece, which is only obligatory for male Greek citizens, was an additional factor defining their relationship to the space of emigration and immigration. In the case of Giorgos, one of the informants with strong disaffiliating sentiments towards the national space of origin, migration had operated as a means of justifying these sentiments by means of comparison. The obligation to participate in a national army as a result of his national legal belonging had enhanced his
5. GREEK MIGRANTS: ... BELONGING TO THE NATION

desire to dissociate from this national space. Because he rejected this obligation linked to his Greek citizenship, Giorgos lost the right of international mobility when the Greek state refused to issue him a national passport. Here, the national passport ceases to be a mere token of banal nationalism and not having it has practical consequences. The Greek state punished Giorgos by constraining his right of movement outside the Greek borders, rendering the national space a national prison in which he must be detained. Odysseas, who was already a migrant in Sweden when the Cyprus crisis of 1974 occurred, was also called back to Greece at this time because of a call to arms. Odysseas decided not to answer to the call, because he did not feel there were any genuine causes to fight for. However, his male children completed their military service in Greece, despite being born and raised in Sweden. This was a consequence of their Greek citizenship, but for Odysseas, who used an active form of the verb “send”, it was a sign of their and his national belonging to the national space of origin:

**Odysseas:** In 1974 when I went down the coup happened, and they called me to the army. And I was thinking, “For what should I go and fight? For a small piece of land my dad had left me? And get killed for that? Because with the first shot, you’re dead. The children of the big guys will be alive. So why should I go and fight? If there was a possibility not to go, I wouldn’t go. I do not accept anything […] I send them (his male children) to do their military service. Three of them went to the army [...].

Social and mainly education capital are other factors that shape the migratory experience as well as the way in which each of the informants related to the two national spaces. Following the traditional typology, where the social strata are divided into lower, middle and higher social classes, it is evident from the Greek informants’ life stories that immigration mainly concerns the lower class, but in times of crisis, like the recent economic crisis, it also concerns the middle and upper class as well as people of various educational backgrounds and age groups (Triandafyllidou and Marourof 2017, 34–36). The informants who arrived in Sweden with low educational capital are in most cases members of the lower class. It seems that they have stayed in low-skilled jobs for longer periods and that their lack of language skills has

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forced them into co-national socialization, thus obstructing their full social integration into the space of immigration. Some of the immigration policies in Sweden, mainly during post-WW2 period, seem to have promoted improvement of the low skilled migrants’ educational and social capital (Lefteris entered the university on quotas for foreigners, and Magda found a job in a similar way). At present, facilitators of migration are realized through common EU membership, which offers some extra benefits to EU citizens, for example, free higher education, visa-free mobility, and no obligation for working permits. However, it seems that the informants with low-skilled and low-paid jobs have not had enough free time to take Swedish language courses. Sofia, for example, complained that her extensive working hours had not left her enough time to go to the school that teaches “Swedish for immigrants” (SFI). However, Eleni, who is high-skilled and works at a Swedish national institution, rejected SFI and decided to pay for private lessons to get a better quality education.

5.4. Conclusions

Analysis of the interview data from the Greek informants concerning the national space showed that the defined themes and sub-themes are interwoven. There is no absolute thematic division, as elements of one sub-theme can be found in another one. This reveals that constructing national identifications and belonging, especially in migration, is a complex process in which the situational contextual nature of various attachments plays an important role. Furthermore, this interwovenness tends to resist hasty generalizations and constitutes the migratory experience of the individual as singular, subjective and unique (Krzyzanowski and Wodak 2007, 98).

The Greek informants in this study utilized all four discursive strategies during their narratives and answers in order to position themselves in relation to their germane national spaces. The space of immigration creates its own dynamic in the informants’ choice and use of discursive strategies. It is the space where the national spaces meet and converse that causes the subject of migration to create, destroy, maintain, and change old and new spatial identifications. Constructive strategies were used to create national spaces with specific characteristics inhabited by people who relate to these spaces and bear a relative national character. However, the temporal difference between the old and new migrants revealed a tension between co-nationals in a hetero-national space. The space of immigration has also
given the informants an opportunity to dismantle the nation as such, as well as to detach themselves completely or partially from national belonging and eventually create new, transform or perpetuate old national identifications, which lead to attachments to the national space. Theoretically, this part of the analysis contributes to the DHA by revealing and indicating the specific discursive strategies the informants used to construct their national identifications in a migratory context.\footnote{See Appendix 4.}

The deictic uses of “we” and “they”, in most cases, follow the rule that “we” may stand for Greek migrants and “they” for Swedish non-migrants. Other uses of deixis in the material are the discursive construction of two migratory groups: the “old” and the “new”. Furthermore, the deixis is used to create an “us” group that includes the spatial “here”, representing the migratory space of Sweden and a “them” located “there” or “down there”, denoting Greece. These uses of deixis not only create spatial or temporal binarities but are also strategized to create spaces of inclusiveness and exclusiveness, which is an important tool for the migratory subjects’ creation of identifications and belonging concerning the national space of origin and that of residence.
6. Latvian migrants: identifications with and sense of belonging to the nation

The themes identified from the interviews with the Latvian informants have similarities with the themes from the Greek informants’ interviews, especially regarding elements that produce a sense of national belonging or non-belonging. However, the overall discussion with the Latvians was pervaded by a significant Other based on a national historical experience, which affects the dynamics of belonging to the space of immigration. This Other alternated in the answers and narratives of the interviewees, sometimes being Russians or Germans, but mainly the Soviets. The Latvian informants, like the Greek ones, used all of the four discursive strategies, formulated and used by De Cillia et al. (1999) and Wodak et al. (2009), in their effort to construct, dismantle, transform and perpetuate national identifications based on the migration experience. The themes and their respective sub-themes – which I identified by applying a thematic qualitative analysis – are the following:

- Spaces of History: History and belonging, Size matters, Soviet, post-Soviet and non-Soviet spaces, Old vs. New migrants
- Elements of national belonging and non-belonging: Citizenship, Language, National phenotype, Spatial proximity and distance, Cultural proximity and distance
- Migrant identifications
- Gender, and social and educational capital.

6.1. Spaces of history

Events in Latvia’s recent history, especially with reference to the Soviet experience and the post-independence period, were employed by many of the Latvians informants to express their identifications with their germane nation-states as spaces of belonging and non-belonging. The informants even introduced historical references from the pre-Soviet period into the discussion to explain specific identifications and personal stances in relation
to the national space. For the old migrants, history defined their lives, as they had migrated to Sweden as refugees and Latvians in exile. In some parts of their story telling about their migration to Sweden, their first years as refugees and the fate of their co-patriots during the Soviet occupation, Artis, Elya and Modris became highly sentimental.

**History and belonging**

For many interviewees, history served as a tool of connection to or dismantling of the national space of origin or immigration. The common historical past between Latvia and Sweden was described as the common denominator linking the two spaces and thus connecting the people of the two countries. References to a joint historical past were also made when the discussion revolved around issues of national identification or belonging to Sweden as the space of immigration. Maija, for instance, discussed the acceptance and cultural understanding shown by native Swedes in relation to migrants in Sweden, owing to the common history of the two countries. She referred to the Hanseatic League, to which cities in both Sweden and Latvia had belonged. She emphasized with some pride that Riga was at one time the second largest city in the Swedish empire. In Maija’s view, this common past had created a similar national mentality in Sweden and Latvia:

**Maija:** The way of thinking. The old Hansa state and all this stuff […] Riga has been the second largest city in the Swedish empire, and it was a Swedish city for 90 years in the 17th century and then they (Swedes) lost the war. Then Russia came and took over Latvia; they took over the administration, but the rulers, the noblemen were still Baltic Germans. So, I’m more understandable for the Swedes.

Maija’s quote alludes to a preference for Swedish and German authority over Latvia as opposed to Russian authority. Her remark that “they” (Swedes) lost the war seems to indicate that they lost something that was rightfully theirs, referring also a common German heritage which via the Hanseatic League, connects Sweden and Latvia. This interpretation is justified by the fact that Maija’s comment “I’m more understandable for the Swedes” was expressed directly after her historical remarks about Sweden, Russia and Germany. In the same frame, Modris referred positively to the era of the Hanseatic League and the Swedish presence in Latvia, creating a
historical and spatial connection by making reference to cities in his country of origin and his country of residence:

**Modris:** Riga, Visby, Linbazi in Latvia, they were in Hansa. They celebrate it even today, together with Germany. Then you have the Swedish bright era in Latvia, from 1600 and up to 1721 when the Swedes lost Livland. And Livland was part of Latvia’s and Estonia’s coastline.

The Latvian informants largely took a negative stance on Russia, however they did differentiate between Russia as a state and Russians as individuals. Furthermore, some interviewees used the terms “Russia” and “Soviet Union” interchangeably, suggesting their understanding of the continuity of the Russian empire and the Soviet Union in relation to Latvia’s history. The preference for the Swedish presence in Latvia over the Russian presence was confirmed by Artis when he was explicitly asked about the issue. His explanation was that the Russians and the Soviets pursued an assimilatory occupation targeting Latvia’s culture, in contrast to the Swedes and Germans, who lived separately from the native Latvian population. During her interview, Elya used the word “Ruskies” as a pejorative term for Russians, even though she was referring to the Soviet period. When I asked her about her choice of that word, she answered: “This is a bit, you know. It’s not very positive. Like gypsies”, thus expressing her negativity regarding the country and its people. However, in another instance, she said positive things about the Russian people: “I think Russians are quite nice as people”, putting this statement in the historical context of WW1, when Latvians moved to Russia to avoid the German invasion: “both my parents had been living in Russia for three-four years, […] the Germans wanted to take over Latvia”. It seems that it is almost normative among Latvians to have a negative attitude towards Russia, with Elya admitting that “it sounds strange” to call Russians “nice”. This attitude towards Russia is probably not only related to the historical past, but also to a current belief among the informants that modern Russia constitutes a threat to Latvia’s sovereignty. Artis, a fierce critic of Russia, had been an engaged activist for Latvia’s independence during his years in Sweden. He even implied that he and a friend had confiscated three Soviet flags outside the Swedish Parliament in 1964 during the visit of a Soviet official. They later used one of these flags as a doormat in the Latvia Youth centre. History, especially Sweden’s position on the Latvian issue during the Soviet era, is what defines Artis’ feelings about and sense of belonging to Sweden. On multiple occasions, Artis
referred to his disappointment at Sweden’s complaisance and neutrality in relation to the Soviet Union’s demands. Artis used the characterization of the Swedish people as “peace damaged” (*fredsskadade*) contextually to explain a mentality of compliance, but also of false humanism. Artis mocked the image of Sweden as a humanitarian power by bringing up the extradition of Baltic soldiers (*baltutlämning*) from Sweden to the Soviet Union in 1945. This incident had disturbed his feeling of belonging to his space of residence. He stated that, in relation to this incident, all Latvians are embarrassed for Sweden. However, despite his overall critical attitude towards Sweden, Artis expressed contradictory identifications with Sweden. Motivated by a feeling of a constant Russian/Soviet threat, he decided to voluntarily join the Swedish Army. He said:

**Artis:** I have lost one country, mine, and I said when I was a teenager, I will not lose the other. When I was 15 or 16 years old, I joined the armed forces and got a rifle at home, to be able to defend Sweden if the Russians should come here.

The trauma of being a refugee because of the Soviet occupation of Latvia contributed to a sense of belonging to Sweden, Artis’ second home-country, which he would defend from the perpetrator of this occupation. According to him, this feeling ceased when, after Latvia’s independence, the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in Tallinn that the Baltic States were no longer occupied by the Soviets. It was then that Artis terminated his voluntary services with the Swedish Army: “I am not willing to offer my blood and life for a country, whose foreign minister does not know anything about neighbouring countries. Only 149 km from Sweden”. 74 The reference to the spatial proximity of Sweden and Latvia, which for Artis was a means of emphasizing connectivity, enhanced his feelings of disappointment at the minister’s stance during an important period in Latvia’s history. Furthermore, Artis expressed his desire for return migration to a free Latvia so as to dissociate himself, spatially and symbolically, from Sweden. Some of the old Latvians noted that the aspiration of an independent Latvia after WW2 kept the aim of return migration alive, also defining the refugees’ migration and residency plans. For instance, Elya implied that her first husband was a

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74 Artis was referring to Sweden’s Minister of Foreign Affairs (1985–1991) Sten Andersson, who in 9 November 1989, while in Tallinn, stated that Estonia was not occupied by the Soviet Union (DN 10 November 1989, page 12, Dagens Nyheter archive).
Latvian on purpose and that her co-patriots, at least for the first years, were not engaged in learning Swedish, as they were convinced that the geopolitical situation would eventually result in an independent Latvia and thus in their return from exile: “we were sure that the English and Americans would help us get rid of the Ruskies and so we could go back”. However, their aspiration to return, according to Elya, ended when they realized that the decisions of the great powers of that time were not in favour of an independent Latvia: “we understood that the negotiations were not in our favour. That England, Churchill, sold Latvia to the Ruskies. That was what we thought. That they sold us”. Artis’ family, though they had wanted to immigrate further to the US or Canada, as many other Latvians had done, decided to remain spatially close to Latvia so that their relocation back to their homeland, after reestablishment of independence, would be immediate and easier: “[...] What Brits and US said, ‘we will support your resistance’. So, my parents thought that we would be free and not need to go far. That’s why (they did not immigrate to the US or Canada)”.

Hence, the informants used elements of history to construct a common historical space connecting their space of immigration and the space of origin. This also suggests a joint mentality, which has precipitated the integration and facilitated the acceptance of Latvian migrants in Sweden. The referent historical elements, such as the Hanseatic League, took place in the distant past, implying that this common Swedish and Latvian mentality has a perpetual quality, as it spans across the centuries. The informants’ perception of Sweden’s stance on Latvia during the Soviet period creates dismantling identifications with Sweden, and the construction of a negative identity and national mentality attributed to the Swedish people, who are considered “fredskadade”.

Size matters

The size of Latvia in area and population as well as its geographical and historical position between the great powers of the region has been framed by a number of interviewees as a factor that has defined a certain national habitus. Guna referred to litigation she had with a Swedish state authority. The legal outcome of this was eventually in her favour, and according to Guna, this was both celebrated in the Latvian community in Sweden and reported on by a newspaper in Latvia. Guna presented this incident through her self-identifications as a representative of the Latvian nation. Guna recounted this incident as a proud Latvian, who had managed to win over Sweden, which was denoted using the metaphor “the big guys”, while
Latvian was depicted as a less significant thought capable nation: “we are a small nation, but we can do it anyway. We can win over the big guys”. It seems that the use of the plural “big guys” reflects the overall Latvian historical experience of being disparaged by the other larger countries in the region. For that reason, Guna gave a national character to this personal incident, herself being an example to her fellow Latvians, who, according to her, are trapped in a national habitus of the small nation and suffer from a mentality of incapability and low self-esteem:

_Guna:_ We have been the servants of other countries, because Sweden ruled in Latvia as did, Russia and Germany. Maybe somebody else whom I don’t remember. We have been servants in our own country and the mentality is still there. And I tell them (the Latvians) all the time, ‘You can do it. Look at me!’

Furthermore, Guna stressed that she was able to be successful even in Sweden, a country depicted using positive characteristics, while juxtaposing the Swedish and the Latvian national habitus. The Latvian national habitus is shaped by the historical experience of being a small country whose fate is controlled by great powers. Elya, also referring to the size of Latvia, constructed the historical experience of multiple, alternating occupations of Latvia by other political units in the region as something inevitable. Any efforts to resist would be fruitless, as Latvia, a small country, would be unable to mount a real resistance: “We belonged to Russia and the Germans and people have been troubled all the time, they couldn’t help it. Such a small country!”

Upon arrival in Sweden, Lucy’s first impression of Swedes, like Guna’s, was positive, and in contrast with how she viewed her co-nationals’ mentality. She saw Swedes as rich doers and Latvians as poor doubters:

_Lucy:_ […] they (Swedes) were so confident. […] Yes, confidence and bravery. And also, they took things for granted. Like the world was open for them. It was not like, ‘Can I really do this? I cannot do this’. The hesitation I always had was nowhere to be seen. […] That was something that I hadn’t experienced. Not in my family, not in my town.

The “size matters” approach to self-identification for the Latvian interviewees is apparent in how they perceived external identification. In Lauris’ opinion, Latvia’s small area was adequate justification for Swedes’ ignorance
or misconception of Latvia in relation to its neighbouring countries, primarily the other two Baltic States. He even made the comparison in actual size, by comparing the Swedish regions of Skåne and Småland with Estonia and Latvia, in this way stripping the latter of their status as states. The argumentation revolves around the significance of these spaces for individuals who do not have a relationship with them and thus are not expected to have any knowledge about Latvia or Estonia if they are not from these countries, or of Skåne and Småland if they are not Swedes:

Lauris: They (Swedes) mix it up (Latvia) with Russia, or Estonia. It’s normal. I find it normal.

Interviewer: Do you mix up Sweden with Norway?

Lauris: No. I mean, I am Latvian. It is like I had to distinguish between Skåne and Småland. They mix up Latvia with Lithuania or with Russia. It’s ok. I don’t take it as a stereotype, because of the size. It is a small size. It’s ok.

The Latvian and the Swedish national habitus are framed as being in juxtaposition, with the latter working as an example to be followed by the first. The small size of Latvia has been perceived by some informants as a reason for this national mentality of passivity, an outcome of the historical encounters Latvia has had with its larger neighbours. In relation to Sweden, Guna’s recounting of her legal victory in a dispute with the Swedish state, which she felt other Latvians should see as an example, can be called a “David vs. Goliath” or “the underdog phenomenon”, as the “small country” of Latvia had successfully challenged Sweden, a “big guy” with a historical presence as ruler in Latvia. Furthermore, Sweden has been constructed as a successful neighbour, which serves as an example for Latvians who should abandon their mentality of insignificance.

Soviet, post-Soviet and non-Soviet spaces
The informants who spent part of their life under the Soviet regime, but also during the years of political and economic transition towards independence and after the independence, constructed dissimilar images of the space of origin and that of immigration based on their personal experiences. The Soviet space was described in grey colours, as monotonous, with a sense of isolation and with an atmosphere of overall paralysis. However, it had offered a sense of security and stability, in contrast to the early post-
Soviet era, which for some of the Latvian informants was a period of serious economic disparities. On the other side of the Iron Curtain, Sweden was constructed as a space of development, freedom, and well-being. Guna offered an illustrative example by recounting when a Swedish teacher came as a guest to her high school while she was a student in Latvia in 1991. The adjectives related to the teacher are highly positive, in contrast with the post-Soviet reality at that time. The teacher was described as being a representative of Sweden, of another space different to the one Guna had experienced:

**Guna:** Latvia was like the Wild West […] few jobs, low salaries. For the money you couldn’t really buy anything. So, the goods came, but they were imported and expensive […] and I didn’t have any education. And what I could do was to speak Swedish, so I said, well fine, I’ll move to Sweden. […] And suddenly in this grey atmosphere, where everybody really had a hard time, both economically and in other ways, he came along. He was like, he was totally blond, and he was tanned. Come on, where do you get a suntan, during the winter? And he was quite a funny and interested person. So suddenly somebody comes from outside, and asks these questions, “So how are you doing these things? This way, or that way?” And this is quite interesting […] I mean this was a pretty exotic thing you know for us […] like, you have a grey wall and suddenly there is a yellow spark on the wall. That much contrast he was. His personality, he was open, he wanted to teach things, he wanted to discuss. I mean in Latvia, at schools at that time there was no discussion. It was like, here is the book you read it, you come back, I ask you questions and then you get a grade. But with him, it was more discussion. And this opened up the world for me. If you live in one system, which was dictatorship at that time, and suddenly somebody comes from outside and starts asking questions and examines your mind or pushes the limits, it’s like, ok, maybe this is the way things should be.

In the above quote, Guna’s choice of adjectives and metaphors were intended to construct her perception of the conditions existing in an early post-Soviet and non-Soviet space. She also employed binary oppositions to manifest the antithetical reality in Sweden and Latvia, for example “grey” vs. “yellow”, or “outside” and “open” vs. “wall”. Additionally, her use of the word “wall” seems to be related to the Iron Curtain that divided Europe during the Cold War, and with a sense of closure, amplified by her description of the regime as dictatorship. When Guna said that the teacher came from outside, she was pointing out this spatial division, while her references to a more liberal education system, where questions and con-
testation are allowed, were juxtaposed with an illiberal and mentally stagnated atmosphere, which she felt had existed in Soviet and early post-Soviet Latvia. The dichotomy of wealth and deprivation appears in Guna’s contrast between the blond Swede who has a tan during the winter and the generally difficult economic conditions in Latvia. Her first impression of Sweden was also positive, analogous to her description of the guest teacher in Latvia: “It was a cultural shock. Because you see freedom, democracy. People talk. They do whatever they want. And of course, the shops”. However, in a post-migration comparison, Guna concluded that this ideally described teacher “[…] was a regular guy”. This realization on Guna’s part is what constitutes him as a representative figure of the Swedish reality, in juxtaposition with the Latvian one. Thus, Guna’s quotes offer a descriptive overview of the different realities taking place in Latvia, which was one of the most developed areas of the Soviet Union, and Sweden, as well as of the push and pull factors that mobilized the considerable emigration of Latvians during the post-independence era. Elya provided a detailed account of the pull-push factors after a trip to Riga in the 1970s, where she also described conditions of deprivation: “during the Soviet era it was very difficult to get a car or other stuff. They had no products in the shops. They had nothing”, and an atmosphere of constant suspicion and suppression: “we felt we were being watched, and we weren’t allowed to live with our relatives. We had to live in a motel”. However, Guna, Lucy and Dana also depicted the Soviet era in Latvia by referring to positive attributes, mainly related to stability and free education. Guna mentioned that, older people’s adjustment to the new reality of a liberal market was arduous, causing many to nostalgically remember the halcyon days of communism: “During the Soviet time we had basically a pretty good life. It was safe, public order, everything. And then Latvia had to start from the scratch”. Also, for Lucy and Dana, the goal of higher education was hindered in the post-Soviet era, when Latvia decided to follow the free market economic model even in the higher education, imposing considerable fees tied to personal income. Lucy stated: “University education started to cost money, and that was when my parents brought the news to me, like “sorry girl, we cannot afford your education”. Thus, for both Dana and Guna, Sweden was an attractive space of immigration, university studies were free, as in the Soviet era.

Another aspect of the triad Soviet, post-Soviet and non-Soviet spaces is the construction, by some informants, of Latvia as a country contaminated by the Russian or Soviet mentality. In Dana’s case, that was one of the push factors that drove her to immigration. She described a general national
mentality in Latvia, which had its roots in the communist period and which had, as a consequence the stalled progress in Latvia, caused the country’s development to stagnate. For her, migration to Sweden offered an exit out of this reality:

**Dana:** I don’t like the way the Latvians see things, [...] they are very narrow minded, they don’t see outside the box. [...] It was driving me crazy, all this constant suspicion. You still feel the Russian, all this communism everywhere, and I hated it” […] I left all these things behind.

Elya, who travels often to Latvia and has contact with people living there, also criticized her compatriots for having a specific mentality with negative elements, influenced by the Russian presence in the country. In her view, the co-habitation of ethnic Latvians with ethnic Russians has transmitted cultural elements linked to Russians to Latvians of non-Russian origin: “[…] they are lazy. They don’t do things. If they don’t want to do something they say, ‘I don’t have time’ [...] during these many years, they have become like Russians.

The discursive strategies the informants used to recount their experiences during the Soviet and post-Soviet era in Latvia, but also the non-Soviet space of Sweden, are mainly constructive. They created spaces marked by certain characteristics. The space of immigration and the space of origin were constructed in antithetical terms. This goes beyond the space as such and also affects the mentality of the people residing in it. Some of the interviewees used a perpetuation strategy to stress a national Latvian mentality that was created during the Soviet era and has survived into the post-independence period of Latvia. Elya also mentioned the transformation of the Latvian mentality she had experienced into a new national one, affected by the Soviet presence in Latvia.

**Old vs. new migrants**

Another sub-theme emerging throughout the data that has spatial and significant historical dimensions is the “old and new migrants”. Informants who arrived in Sweden at a very young age as refugees and who lived in exile, thus without the option of return migration, may be considered “old migrants”. These informants are Modris, Artis and Elya. The mobility restrictions for people who living in the former Soviet Union created these two defined groups of informants: war refugees in Sweden and post-independence migrants. Furthermore, locating and engaging Latvian war
refugees for this research was a difficult endeavour, as many of the Latvian migrants of that period were seniors, unable or unwilling to participate.

The two main reasons for differentiating old and new migrants are the Swedish and the Soviet experience and their impact on how the Latvian identity is constructed. The old migrants, especially Elya, reported observing a cultural distance between the Latvians who migrated after the 1991 and her group of Latvians. In her view, the reasons the new migrants wish to reside outside Latvia are related mainly to high unemployment, which occurred in the post-independence era, as well as to obtain goods that were lacking during the Soviet period: “after the liberation they (new migrants) saw a possibility to get a car, fashionable clothes”. The post-independence emigration reinforced the Latvian community in Sweden with new members, which, according to Elya, the old migrants favoured. However, this first positive attitude changed to disappointment when the old migrants came to understand the many differences that existed between the old and new Latvian migrants. The spatial isolation and mainly the soviet experience were, as Elya saw it, the two factors that alienated the two groups: “Well somehow we (old migrants) feel that they are like Russians […] we see they have been influenced by the Russian mentality”. She did point out, however, that the self-identification of the new migrants is not related to Russia, though the influence of the latter on their mentality, culture and language is obvious to the “old migrants”. Especially for language, which has been an important element of national identification and belonging, Elya and other old migrants had observed Russian features, which were probably introduced into the Latvian language during the Soviet period, and this had created a certain frustration, as they recognized the Russian influence on the new migrants’ language:

**Elya:** […] we (old migrants) feel that the language in Latvia has changed because of the Russian influence very much and that annoys us a bit. […] expressions too. They (new migrants) can say it in Latvian, but I hear that this is not the Latvian expression […] on the other hand, they (new migrants) think we speak an antique language, and I speak of course the language my parents spoke in 1944.

The differences in language, according to Elya, are also acknowledged by the new Latvians. When I asked her whether this language-related frustration comes from a personal belief that Latvians who lived under the Soviet era should have resisted the Russian influence, she replied that she
finds it normal considering the circumstances. However, she felt that these linguistic differences were problematic for creating a common sense of belonging to the Latvian community in Sweden. She mentioned a newspaper for the Latvian diaspora that was written and produced by Latvian diaspora in Western Europe, saying that this paper was not of any interest to the new migrants, who criticized the language it used as anachronistic: “many of us (old Latvians) write in the newspaper. And then these young Latvians who come here say ‘we don’t want to read the newspaper, it’s old fashioned, antique’”. However, this superannuated language of the old Latvians was of great interest to Anna, who is a new migrant. Anna, who also recognized the language differences between the diasporic and non-diasporic Latvians, stated that she has begun introducing words from the old language into her own vocabulary:

Anna: I found old fashioned words my grandfather used to use. I use them here, because those I interact with are Latvians. But they know the older Latvian and not so much modern words.

Anna, who said she embraces the self-identification of “foreign Latvian”, has a sense of belonging to the Latvian diaspora and differentiates herself from the non-migrant Latvians. Variations in language and mentality, formed by the migration experience, are two significant elements that have forged the identity of the “foreign Latvian” for Anna. Although she belongs to the “new migrants”, this approach to self-identification and belonging places her close to the group of “old Latvians” in Sweden. In the same vein, Guna’s self-identification is relevant to a concept closely related to what Anna described as “foreign Latvian”. For her, there are two main reasons why she has assumed this identification. The first is external identifications in her home country positioning her as the Other: “For them I was an outsider and I was something exotic. I live in Sweden”. The second reason was her former self-definition of the concept “foreign Latvian”. While still residing in Latvia, Anna had viewed the foreign Latvians as the members of

75 Brīvā Latvija, http://www.brivalatvija.lv/index.php?p=12912&lang=1596. The newspaper “Brīvā Latvija” (Free Latvia) is a weekly newspaper for the Latvian diaspora, mainly for Latvians living in Western Europe. It was founded in 1986 after the merger of “Londonas Avīze” (London’s News) founded in 1942 and “Latvija” (Latvia) founded in 1946 in W. Germany. After some inactivity, the printing and editorial board of the newspaper were relocated to Latvia.

76 The “foreign Latvian” self-identification is discussed in the theme “Migrant identifications and national belonging”.

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the diaspora, which mainly included war refugees. Because she now bears a migrant identity, she stated that she belongs to a new generation of “foreign Latvians”: “Those were the foreign Latvians for me, when I grew up in Latvia. But we are the new generation, who lives in Europe and left Latvia of their own free will”. Guna provided another categorization for the “old” and “new migrants” dichotomy, which is “first” and “second generation foreign Latvians”, meaning the 1940 war refugees and the post-independence migrants, respectively.

In Maija’s case, contact with the “old migrants” had caused a detachment from the Latvian community. Besides not wanting to socialize with other Latvians so that she could integrate more quickly into Swedish society, she also mentioned that she did not feel welcomed by the “old migrants”. She said they also wanted to know exactly why she had immigrated to Sweden, putting her in an uncomfortable position: “It was like a police interrogation”. According to Maija, this is related to a hierarchy the old migrants make based on the reasons for relocation to Sweden. In her view, the old migrants believe what forced them to seek refuge in Sweden legitimates their presence here, in comparison to the “new migrants” who are merely economic migrants. Furthermore, Maija by mentioning two historical incidents – the end of WW2 and the restoration of Latvia’s independence – tried to strip them of their refugee status by referring to historical dates and periods related to war or to Latvia’s period of independence: “the war finished in 1945, even if we skip all these soviet things, it ended in 1990s”. Additionally, she wanted to stress that she immigrated to Sweden for reasons that do not categorize her as an economic migrant, illustrating the negative connotation of the term “economic migrant”: “they don’t know the reasons I moved to Sweden. I didn’t move to Sweden because, I didn’t have a job (in Latvia). This treatment by the old migrants had resulted in her isolation from the Latvian community.

Hence, some of the interviewees dismantled the Latvian national identity in a migratory space of Sweden by constructing two different groups: war refugees and post-independence migrants. This construction is based on the different experiences each group had during their lives, but also on the legal grounds on which they resided in Sweden. The old Latvians have been constructed as an outdated national specimen, the “new migrants” as partially “Russified”. The construction of the identity of the “foreign Latvian” was employed to create a new diasporic identity, different from the “old migrants”.
6.2. Elements of national belonging and non-belonging

The Latvian interviewees referred to citizenship, language and national phenotype; they tried to define the meaning of nation in order to position themselves as subjects of migration in the framework of nation-states. Historical incidents and historical memory, as well as current and former geopolitical dynamics, define these elements and the impact each one has on the identifications and belonging of the informants in relation to their germane national spaces.

Citizenship

For the majority of the Latvian informants, initiating the process of naturalization to become Swedish citizens was mainly based on a utilitarian aspect of citizenship, thus citizenship as a means of acquiring additional rights. One aspect was the concern that not having Swedish citizenship would block access to specific work positions. This concern was expressed mainly by highly educated informants, who did not want their career to be hindered by citizenship issues. Guna, for example, recounted an incident in which she had been excluded from a job application based on her citizenship status. Anna also expressed her concern that, in the future, she might want to continue her career in a Swedish public sector organization, where they would hire only Swedish citizens.

Another aspect of naturalization is the relation between the citizen and the state. As migrants, the Latvian informants come in contact with two state entities: Latvia and Sweden. The quality of public services, access to specific benefits and the general aegis of the state over its citizens are reasons that have motivated some of the Latvian informants to apply or intend to apply for naturalization in Sweden. Emma explained that even if she were to stay in Sweden under the status of European citizen, she understands that being a national in Sweden improves the services one receives from the Swedish state. Health issues, which should be treated operationally, have caused her to consider applying for citizenship:

Emma: Yes but people say that you get more respect, more attention like from the clerks or from some administration if you’re a Swedish citizen. And actually, why not apply for it?

In the same vein, Guna justified her decision to become a Swedish citizen on the grounds of the quality services and international protection the
Swedish state can offer in comparison to the Latvian state. She used as an example a natural catastrophe while on foreign soil, explaining that she would receive more immediate and complete protection from the Swedish state than the Latvian one, as the former has both the will and the resources to offer adequate assistance. Guna emphasized the value of holding a Swedish passport in comparison to a Latvian one, as the former offers more and better access to international travel. She also mentioned the practical implications of having dual citizenship: “today I use the Swedish passport for travelling and the Latvian one only in Latvia”. She even specifically referred to the possibility of travelling to the Russian federation. According to Guna, Latvian citizens are discriminated against when they land on Russian soil and that was why she took her first trip to Russia after her naturalization as Swede: “[...]as long as I have only a Latvian passport this will not happen (travelling to Russia) [...] because they treat Latvians very badly”.

Geopolitics and the historical past of not only Latvia but the whole region, including Russia and Sweden, create additional incentives for the Latvian informants to apply for Swedish citizenship. Russian imperialism and hostility towards Latvia have led to feelings of uncertainty among many of the informants. Anna stated specifically that if Russians were to attack Latvia, the latter would have no chance to defend itself. Although Latvia is currently a member of all Western political organizations, the Latvian informants tended to be anxious about Russia regarding their national security. The Russian, Swedish and Latvian relations and their past seem to enhance this anxiety among the Latvian interviewees. Anna, Guna, Modris and Artis mentioned the extradition of Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian soldiers who fled to Sweden after WW2 to the Soviet Union upon the request of the latter. This incident is known in Sweden as “baltutlämningen” (Swedish extradition of Baltic soldiers). This historical event is the basis of the concerns and insecurity of the informants, who reported fearing that, in the event of a crisis, Sweden would comply with Russian demands. Anna, who is only a Latvian citizen, stated that if she had the chance, she would apply for any second citizenship in order to be legally protected:

77 In January 1946, 146 soldiers from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania wearing German uniforms were extradited to the Soviet Union with the ship “Beloostrov” from Trelleborg in Sweden. This incident had been hotly debated in Sweden. Because of its neutrality during WW2, Sweden was not legally obliged by the peace agreements to send the Baltic soldiers to the Soviet Union. According to Kristensen and Burman (1998), the event of “baltutlämningen” was experienced as a national trauma in Sweden and mainly by the Baltic diaspora in Sweden, which perceived it as a lack of solidarity on the part of Sweden towards the occupied by the Soviet Union Baltic States.
Anna: And I do not trust my (Latvian) citizenship or Sweden regarding my Latvian citizenship. Look at what happened in WW2. Sweden sent back people from Latvia and that is why I wouldn’t trust the Swedish government if I have only Latvian citizenship based on what they have done. Things are not stable.\textsuperscript{78}

The second aspect of citizenship acquisition is related to national identifications and to a sense of belonging to the nation. For the Latvian informants, there was an apparent distinction between their national and ethnic identities. They tended to differentiate or to specify when the discussion revolved around national or ethnic identification, showing their knowledge of the difference between the two terms. Maija, for example, related her belonging to Sweden in terms of both ethnic and national belonging in relation to citizenship: “I cannot say that I’m a Swede, because I’m not a Swede, neither ethnically nor nationally, if we take citizenship”. Concerning the issue of socialization in Sweden, Anna asked me to define “Swedish” when I asked her if she has Swedish friends; she herself made a clear distinction between ethnic Swedes and non-ethnic Swedes as two groups with the same citizenship, but with different cultures and mentalities. Lauris attempted to categorize the population in Latvia according to their ethnic origin and legal residency, something he did not do for Sweden, which he appeared to conceive of as an ethnically homogenous country: “In Latvia I would distinguish it. Latvian ethnicity and then another ethnicity and then those who have the citizenship of Latvia”. This conscious differentiation between “ethnic” and “national”, when contextualizing the Latvian case, is probably related to the strong minority of ethnic Russians and Russophones in Latvia and the problem of citizenship many members of the minority faced after Latvia’s second independence in 1991.\textsuperscript{79} Maija referred to the

\textsuperscript{78} The answers of the Latvian interviewees are probably also influenced by the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, as the interviews were conducted after this incident. The name of Vladimir Putin has been mentioned several times during the interviews, depicting him as unpredictably aggressive also in relation to Latvia’s national security.

\textsuperscript{79} The restoration of independence in Latvia in 1991 made many of its residents as non-citizens, because those who had migrated or transferred to Latvian after its occupation by the Soviets did not receive the status of citizen. According to the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “in accordance with the doctrine of state continuity in national and international law, the Republic of Latvia retained the legal personality of the state that, de facto, lost its independence in 1940 as a result of occupation by the USSR, followed by Nazi Germany, and then again by the USSR in 1945”. This is stated as the reason why the residents of Latvia after 1940 did not receive Latvian citizenship after the 1991 independence. The Latvian state created a specific status for the post-1940 new residents
6. LATVIAN MIGRANTS: … BELONGING TO THE NATION

language aspect of ethnicity and nationality in Latvia by mentioning the difference in the term “Latvian” in the Latvian and the Russian language. Maija stressed that while the Latvian language uses one word to refer to the adjective “Latvian, “[…] in Russian there are two different names. They use “Latyshi” or “Latviitsy”. Latyshi are ethnic Latvians and Latviitsy Latvians as a nation. In Latvian, there are no different words”. By referring to this distinction, Maija wished to emphasize that, for the ethnic Latvians, national and ethnic belonging are understood in terms of tautology, in a primordial approach to the nation, perhaps implying that the Latvian nation-state is homologous to the ethnos. On the other hand, she wanted to explain that in the case of Latvia, for the Russians there is a clear distinction between ethnos and nation.

Citizenship policy in Latvia, but also in Sweden, affected the status of Latvian migrants and constrained their options regarding naturalization. Many of the informants stated that they waited until Latvia and Sweden would both allow dual citizenship. Mainly for the post-1991 migrated interviewees, despite having resided in Sweden for a long and sufficient period for naturalization as Swedish citizens, the lack of a dual citizenship provision was an obstacle. Guna stated that she waited until Latvia allowed dual citizenship until she applied for the Swedish one: “because I didn’t want to give up my Latvia citizenship. So, I was waiting for Latvia to pass the new citizenship legislation. Once they did that, I applied for my dual citizenship”. Guna’s statement indicates that, for her, legal belonging to Latvia via citizenship was tied to sentimental belonging to her country of origin, explaining why she did not want to lose her Latvian citizenship in favour of Swedish citizenship. Dana, who was unaware of the consequences of the Latvian citizenship policy before dual citizenship was legislated, lost her Latvian citizenship when she became a Swedish citizen. However, her goal was to re-apply for it. Maija explained that she did not feel Swedish and Swedish citizenship would not change this sentiment, because she would be reminded through external identifications that she is a migrant. “So, Swedish citizenship wouldn’t change anything. If you don’t feel that you belong here. So, what is a nation actually?” Maija was critical of the notion of

titled “‘former citizens of the USSR without the citizenship of the Republic of Latvia or any other country”.
80 Sweden allowed dual citizenship in 2001 and Latvia in 2013.
the nation as a community of people bound by the legal status of citizenship. Her understanding of citizenship shows that naturalization does not necessarily create a sense of belonging to or identification with the national space of immigration. Anna decoupled naturalization and integration. She explained that Swedish citizenship would not help her to integrate into Swedish society. However, because she was fully employed in Sweden only days after her arrival, for her, integration probably has, in addition to employment, cultural and social qualities. This is more apparent when she criticized ethnic Swedes for being socially incomprehensible and by mentioning that co-national socialization through the Latvian community in Sweden would only serve to obstruct her integration into Swedish society: “I will apply for citizenship, it will take a while until I integrate, but I do not think that I would integrate with this strong Latvian community here”.

Guna, on the other hand, despite first mentioning the practical reasons for acquiring Swedish citizenship, also talked about the emotional dimension of this: “it is not the most important aspect, but of course it is (important)”. Guna mentioned a significant moment in her migration history: the day she held her Swedish passport in her hands. This shows that the passport served as a material token of belonging to the space of immigration. Guna said that, despite being fully integrated and even though external identifications do not position her as an alien in Sweden, she will always feel like a migrant: “I will always be an immigrant, yeah. I am. But also, I’m a citizen now, something which gives me a different feeling”. However, it seems that receiving her Swedish passport gave her an actual certificate that minimizes her migrant self-identification:

**Guna:** I remember, I was so emotional when I went there […] And I took the passport, checked it a little bit quickly to see if it’s really mine and put it into my bag and then I left the building, and I was walking down the street with a straight pose and I was thinking, ‘yeah I’m a citizen now; I “have” something’.

It seems that, for Guna, her belonging to the space of immigration started with acquiring a Swedish passport. Her use of the verb “have” declares her acquisition not only of the passport, but also of a sense of belonging to Sweden, realized via her naturalization as Swedish citizen. This legal aspect of belonging was also discussed by Marco Antonsich (2010, 648), who suggested that legal factors are an important dimension of belonging. Thus, the passport ceased to have banal qualities and became an actual symbol,
which attached Guna to Sweden and produced in her a sense of belonging to the country.

In the sub-theme “citizenship”, the Latvian interviewees employed mainly two constructive strategies to justify their acquisition of or intent to acquire Swedish citizenship. Construction of the “Latvian under threat” identity is combined with construction of the “not to be trusted (Swedish) state”. This combination is based on experiences of the joint historical past of Sweden, Latvia and Russia and the presence of Latvians as subjects of migration on Swedish territory. However, these two identities also have perpetuating qualities, as they transcend the historical moment that created them (baltutlämning) and are maintained by the “new migrants”.

Language, integration and the understanding of the nation
For the Latvian informants, language is an important element of national belonging in relation to both the country of residence and the country of origin. The language skills of all of the Latvian informants included at least three languages. This polyglossy reflects not only their migration status, but also Latvians’ historical contacts with the major powers of the region. Many of the interviewees could understand and speak Russian and German, as well as English and Swedish. Even the younger informants, who had lived most of their lives in independent Latvia, had a certain level of understanding of Russian through their interaction with the Russian-speaking minority in their home-country.

The majority of the interviewees felt that knowing the official or state language of the country of residence is not only necessary for practical reasons related to labour and social integration, but also an ethical obligation to the people of the country and to the country as such. The language situation in their home country, with the significant percentage of Russophones, is reflected in the answers the Latvian interviewees provided and in the way they understood and defined the notion of nation.

81 The first two things Artis and his wife asked me when I arrived at their home to conduct the interview was whether I had learned Swedish and if I was a communist. The former question probably reflects their belief that knowing the language of the country of residence is essential to the migrant’s integration into society and the latter their attitude towards Latvian’s occupation by the Soviet Union.

82 In the Latvian context, language and citizenship are directly intertwined. The application for naturalization in Latvia requires the applicant to be fluent in the Latvian language. Furthermore, the Latvian state defines as Latvians those individuals who, among other things, “3) have fluency in the Latvian language (completely understand daily and official information, are able to freely speak,
The comparison of the language reality in Latvia and the migration experience in Sweden frustrated Emma, as she had not yet mastered Swedish. She compared herself with the Russian speakers in Latvia, who do not have knowledge of the Latvian language. Emma said she considered this part of the Latvian population to be migrants, who did not speak Latvia’s official language. However, her decision to move to Sweden and the fact she is a resident who does not know Swedish place her in the same position as the Russian speakers in Latvia. Emma said she felt obliged to learn Swedish, as this is a norm or a rule she has to follow, though she also mentioned several times that she can communicate with the local population in English:

Emma: Yes, I have negative feelings (about herself). Like, I don’t follow the rules for not knowing the language. Like the Russian people who live in Latvia and they watch Russian TV, they don’t watch Latvian TV, and they don’t know the Latvian language.

However, Emma also mentioned that she belongs to Sweden, as she resides in the country and for that reason should learn the language. Hence, in her view, belonging is not a sentiment that evolves, but is a de facto condition linked to the decision about one’s place of residence, as belonging is directly connected to spatial position. It is probably this understanding of belonging – as well as the categorization of non-Latvian-speaking residents of Latvia as migrants – that produces this feeling of obligation to learn Swedish, given that she is spatially established in Sweden. Emma also believed she would be more respected by the locals in Sweden if she could speak Swedish. This is probably also a projection of her thoughts about non-ethnic Latvians in her home country who have learned to speak Latvian. Furthermore, she added that her lack of knowledge of Swedish constrains her communication skills, leading to constant frustration and hampering her ambition to change careers in Sweden. Emma mentioned having had rich experiences of working with art and tourism in Latvia, but she was at present working as a cleaner in Sweden. Her initial migration destination was related to her language skills, as she wanted to move either to the UK or Ireland, as many of her co-nationals had done, especially after the 2008 economic crisis. She even mentioned, like Anna did earlier regarding her integration, that co-
national socialization does not facilitate interaction with locals and thus limits opportunities to practise Swedish. Language and integration have been an issue of interest for other informants, who concluded that despite being able to use English as a lingua franca, knowing the language of the space of immigration leads to full integration. Lauris, who has been residing in Sweden for more than twenty years, stressed that he cannot identify himself with Sweden because he lacks a significant element of the nation: the language.

**Lauris:** [...] language and history would be the key (of the notion of nation) [...] No, (he does not feel Swedish) because my Swedish is bad. In that sense I don’t feel associated with the history, I do not feel like a Swede.

Modris also associated the feeling of being at home with the ability to interact with the locals in their native language, as this creates a sense of familiarity. According to Lucy, language represents an important identification with the space of residence. She stated that, during a second migration, which she realized after her relocation to Sweden, she felt homesick not to Latvia and the Latvian language, but rather to Sweden and Swedish. Similarly, Guna expressed her strong feeling of belonging to Sweden, stronger even that her feeling for her home country. Guna also mentioned that adapting one’s style of speaking to the specific dialect of a place enhances a sense of belonging and softens possible external identifications of othering. Artis, who had had stayed in different places in Sweden, because of relocation in refugee camps during the post-war period and because of his parents’ employment, demonstrated his ability to speak several dialects of Swedish. In his view, this was an intrinsic part of his personal history as a refugee in Sweden linked to different migration experiences.

Furthermore, the Latvian interviewees referred to German and English as the two main languages of communication besides Swedish and as a means of communication upon their arrival and during the first years of migration. Artis, Modris, and Elya mentioned that, during the post-war period, German was a language that allowed refugees to be part of the labour market or communicate with the locals: “Yes he (Elya’s father) had the job already during the winter. He didn’t speak Swedish, but most Swedish people knew German”. Maija also related a regional and historical aspect of the value of German as something that unites Latvia and Sweden historically: “We (Swedes and Latvians) have a common German path as a basis. The Latvian language was created by Germans”. Additionally, Latvian
informants see English not only as the lingua franca of modern Sweden, but they pointed out its significance for native Swedes. Despite recognizing the practicality of English as a tool of immediate integration into Swedish society, they also suggested that this eventually turns out to be an obstacle to complete integration and building relationships with the local population. For example, Kalvis mentioned that English being the lingua franca in Sweden does not facilitate use of Swedish, as socialization and parts of education and employment are realized in English. In his view, language courses are not sufficient for mastering the Swedish language and, to that end, socialization with locals is necessary. Guna, who initially moved to Sweden on an au pair visa already knowing how to speak Swedish, recounted that she was finally dismissed by the family she worked for because the parents preferred someone who spoke English: “They (the family) didn’t have anything to gain”. Thus, as a migrant who was trying to establish herself in the country, Guna felt disappointed that her mastery of Swedish was not appreciated. Similarly, Maija mentioned that, in one job application, the employer eventually opted in favour of a native English speaker, despite the fact that proficiency in Swedish was a prerequisite the English speaker did not have. The status of English in present-day Sweden was condemned by Artis, who criticized Swedes for having lost part of their national identity: “they can’t speak their own language anymore. They cannot sing it. They have to use English the American way, they are anglophiles”.

It is not accidental that Artis mocked the Swedes for creating songs in English. Singing and folk culture were an integral part of the Latvian identity awakening after 1970, during the Soviet regime (Ginkel 2002, 420–421). Eight of the informants were or had been members of a Latvian choir in Latvia or in Sweden.

For the Latvian informants, language is an integral part of their national identity and they expressed concern about the language reality in their country of origin. The Latvian state, since its first establishment in 1918, has always been multi-ethnic, with people speaking a variety of languages. For example, in 1926 ethnic Latvians were approximately 76% of the population in the country, while by 1993 the percentage had fallen to 53.5%, owing to the strong immigration movement, encouraged by the regime, from the rest of the Soviet Union to the Baltic States (Ginkel 2002, 416–419). This ethnic and language development in the country has affected the way the informants approach the issue of language and national identification and belonging.
In the discussion on how the Latvian interviewees understood the notion of nation, language played a prominent role. Maija also understood the nation through the lens of language. She suggested that a nation can be multi-ethnic, as in the case of Latvia, and in that sense, people from Russian-speaking areas such as Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan and others who reside in Latvia should be considered part of the Latvian nation. However, according to her, in a language hierarchy, Latvian should be at the top: “Of course with Latvian as the major language”. Thus, in Maija’s view, nation building in the country should have the Latvian language as its basis. Guna referred to a university course she was once enrolled in where students and the teacher had discussed the concept of nation. There she had expressed her concern about whether Latvia could be considered a nation, as only a small majority of the population had Latvian as their mother tongue: “they are barely half of the nation”. Another indicator of national identification and language came from Anna, who stated that a half-Latvian half-Russian relative of hers who lives in Russia self-identifies as Latvian: “without speaking a word Latvian”. She found it paradoxical that someone would identify as Latvian without being able to speak the language. She thus implied that speaking the official language of the nation gives legitimacy to national self-identifications. The strong link between national identity and language was also described by Lucy, who during a trip to the US was impressed by how third-generation Latvians could speak the language of their parents and grandparents fluently. She felt that perpetuating the Latvian national identity in a migration context could be realized by passing the national language on to future migrant generations. Modris said he understood nation as a group of people who have something in common. He specified the common constitutive elements as language, common heritage and even singing. Based on this definition, he considered Sweden a “strong nation”, implying a certain ethnic and linguistic homogeneity: “A state that is together. Nation has something in common, either heritage or other things. For me (this includes) language, singing. And Sweden is also a strong nation”.

Some informants added time as a factor that should be considered regarding the national reality in Latvia with respect to language distribution. They said that Latvia has been in a transition, since 1991, into a more homogenous country, at least regarding language. For them there are different stages, the Soviet and early post-Soviet situation in Latvia and more recent years. The Latvian interviewees emphasized that the de facto domination of the Russian language in Latvia was a product of the Soviet
regime and its aftermath, affecting the Latvian population during the years after independence. They seemed to suggest a transitional period for the country to construct a more coherent national identity. Spreading the Latvia language to the Russian-speaking part of the population is part of this period. Emma wanted to state that, in contrast to the general impression, the language of instruction in schools in Latvian during the Soviet period was Latvian and not Russian. She wanted to rectify this false general impression that Latvia had lost, among other things, its linguistic autonomy even at that time. During the Soviet period, Guna had accepted the Russophones as co-residents as well as the dominance of the Russian language in Latvia: “Russian wasn’t considered to be a foreign language”. However, she mentioned her frustration when she was greeted in Russian in a common everyday social encounter: “One thing I didn’t like was when at the elevator they would automatically greet you in Russian”. This choice of greeting was probably perceived by Guna as downgrading the Latvian language on Latvian soil. Regarding the early post-independence period, Guna referred to a Swedish company operating in Latvia that had made speaking Russian a prerequisite for its employees:

Guna: But I understood suddenly that we as a country, we gain our independence, we became free, we wanted to speak our language at last. And someone comes from the outside and says, ‘No, you have to speak Russian!’.

Furthermore, the Swedish company, which wanted to invest in Latvia, saw all residents in the country as potential customers, setting as a prerequisite for its employees mastery of the Russian language. During the independence era, an outside actor had stipulated for Guna that to be employed by the specific company, she would have to have knowledge of the language of her country’s former occupier. Despite that, she said this was normal for that period, also expressing her irritation regarding the lack or incomplete recognition of Latvia’s national sovereignty. In Guna’s statement, the pronoun “we” represented an ethnic approach to the understanding of nation, as this included the part of the population that spoke Latvian and during that period this part was mainly the ethnic Latvians. Additionally, she stated that in the immediate post-independence period she did not consider it something strange, but in contemporary Latvia, such an approach would be ill suited to Latvia’s national development as a one-language nation. However, Guna’s approach, which connects language and nation, eventually opens up Latvian national belonging to all residents who
manage to learn the Latvian language. For many of the informants, the transition period and the efforts to promote a more homogenous nation in linguistic terms have transformed the language dynamics in Latvia, as they mentioned that the young Russian-speaking generation is interested in learning Latvian, as shown by their participation in the Latvian-speaking education system of the country. Lucy, who is ethnically half Russian, suggested that though she never experienced any kind of discrimination or negative reaction for her Russian roots, this might happen in today’s Latvia and not in the early post-independence period. This reflects the end of a transition period in which multi-ethnicity was more acceptable than now. Furthermore, Lucy acknowledged that Latvia’s state language, which is Latvian, should be at the top of the language hierarchy: “if you live in a country where the official language is a certain language you should at some point learn it”. Additionally, she justifies the decision of the Latvian state to not recognize Russian as a minority language. She grounded her explanation on the argument of size, especially in comparison to Russia, also linking language to cultural heritage.

Lucy: [...] the Russian language covers such a huge geographic area where you can speak it fluently. There are lots and lots of people who speak Russian, whereas Latvia is so small, and Latvian is such a little language, really. It really needs to be conserved and the heritage needs to be saved.

Lucy framed the Latvian language as being threatened with extinction. Thus, for the Latvian informants, having respect for the status of the Latvian language and its primacy over other languages spoken in the country is a matter of national survival. Guna even said: “I think whoever tries to learn the language and have a normal life without hassle is respected there (Latvia)” . Her statement resembles Emma’s concern about learning Swedish as a means of receiving more respect from the native population in Sweden. Though at present the Russophones in Latvia cannot be considered migrants, it would seem that, for the Latvian informants, there is a relation between the spatial legitimacy of the individual and knowledge of the official state language.

Emma constructed the figure of the non-compliant migrant, as for her and other informants, learning the language of the country of residence is part of the regulatory process migrants should follow, though she had as yet been unable to comply with this. Artis constructed the figure of the “non-patriotic Swede”, owing to the dominance of the English language in
Swedish society and culture, and the significance for the Latvians of their language as an essential symbol of their national identity. This leads to the constructive strategy of “Latvians speak Latvian”, which reflects many of the interviewees’ understanding of nation building in the post-Soviet era as being based on mastery of the Latvian language. However, the post-independence transition period, lasting up to the present, in which the Russo-phone residents of Latvia have tried to approach the national body of Latvia mainly by learning the language reflects a transformative discursive strategy of “Becoming Latvian through language”. Analogously, Latvian national self-identification was dismantled by some of the informants, as mastering the Latvian language is a sine qua non prerequisite for being identified as Latvian. The identification of “Latvian language under threat” was also constructed, and because language is a significant element of the Latvian identity, the latter is also under threat, especially in relation to the large number of Russophones in the country. This apprehension about preservation of the Latvian language and its significance for the national identity is also shared by the Latvian state. On the website of the Latvian “Ministry of Education and Science”, it is stipulated that “Latvian is the official state language and the language for social integration, and an element of national identity”. Furthermore, there are quantitative references to the significance of the Latvian language and its status in the EU as an official language, which also reflect an apprehension about the future of the Latvian language.

Phenotype and language

The stereotypic idea that national identities are framed by a certain phenotype has been a pivotal one for the construction of Sweden as a white nation (Hübinette and Lundström 2014). In this respect, many of the informants described their “whiteness”, similar to the Swedish one, as an element of

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83 The Latvian “Ministry of Education and Science” stipulates that, “Latvian is the official state language of the Republic of Latvia and the language for society integration, basis of national identity and part of the varied cultural heritage of the world. The Latvian language has a standardized literary form already since the 16th century. Among more than 6000 languages of the world, the Latvian language is approximately the 150th largest one, judging by the current number of its users. The number of native Latvian speakers reaches at least 1.5 million across the world. The State Language Law determines regulation of the Latvian language as the official language, and ensures its maintenance, protection and development. Since 2004 when Latvia joined the European Union, it has gained the status of the official language of the European Union”, Ministry of Education and Science: State language: https://izm.gov.lv/en/state-language Accessed, 12-08-2019.
belonging to Sweden, and as a factor that transforms their status as migrants to Swedes through external identifications.

Maija implied that she can be perceived as Swedish because of her physical characteristics, mentioning how this moderates her self-identification as different. However, this identity re-emerges when, according to her, she is reminded of being a migrant. The element that reveals her true identity is her pronunciation in Swedish, which automatically places her in the spectrum of migration: “I moved to Sweden at an adult age, so I cannot hide my accent”. Maija confessed that, on several occasions in order to retain her external identifications of native Swede based on her phenotype, she had remained silent, not wanting to be identified as a migrant by others:

**Maija:** In the beginning everything was difficult. I was scared. I couldn’t talk. Everybody was looking strangely at me. Like, ‘what is wrong with you? You are blonde. Why are you talking like this?’ […] I look like a Swede as long as I keep my mouth shut.

She finally concluded that her stereotypically Swedish phenotype does afford some sense of belonging to Sweden as well as higher status in relation to dark-skinned non-European migrants. Anna also stated that her “Swedish looks” have helped her to feel like she is part of society and not perceived as a foreigner. However, like Maija, her foreign accent is in tension with her “Swedish phenotype”:

**Anna:** Yes your looks help so much. You can feel it changes once you start speaking. Because I was not speaking Swedish. I am learning, but the accent is still there, so they can notice. You might look the same, but you are not really […] there is a language and looks are an issue in this society.

The direct connection between external identification and self-identification is demonstrated by how Kalvis relates to Swedish identification. He stated that he started feeling this way when others categorized him as a native, basing their perception on his appearance. Building on the reasoning of a “Swedish phenotype”, Kalvis justified these external categorizations by arguing that his observable characteristics are more Swedish, even in comparison to people who were born and raised in Sweden by immigrant parents: “probably I look more like a Swede than some people who actually were born in Sweden, but whose parents are not from Sweden”. However, for Kalvis as well, language and especially his accent are what reveal that he is a
non-Swede. Lucy referred to phenotypes that describe what is perceived as being Swedish and non-Swedish, when she tried to explain why she is not considered “exotic” in Sweden. She described herself as a typical “Anna Svensson”. She did not use adjectives to explain the Swedish look, but only nouns because I could see what she looked like or already knew what she was referring to: “The facial expressions, the hair colour, the eye colour. Not really special”. She said that a non-Swedish phenotype was represented by a Georgian friend of hers, who was not as fair skinned, but rather black haired, and who used make-up. To describe the Swedish identity, Lucy also mentioned two cultural attributes, facial expressions and use of “make up”, with the latter categorized as non-Swedish. Yet phenotypical similarities and language competence seem to be insufficient for self-identifications with Sweden. Lucy, who stated that her appearance and her language skills had caused her to be perceived as native, she had difficulties accessing the labour market because of her foreign name, something other informants also reported.

In a discussion on the current refugee issue in Sweden, Elya, a war refugee who has lived in Sweden almost her entire life, argued that the similar physical appearance of Latvians and Swedes has promoted integration of the former into Swedish society: “I don’t think anyone got really disturbed by us. We look the same. It is important in Sweden. Everywhere I suppose”. Elya seemed to be implying that the white Latvians were assimilated through absorption by the white population of Sweden, and thus did not disturb the Swedish national homogeneity. Modris also referred to phenotypical similarity and migrants’ integration. He implied that having “sandy” hair had helped him to fully integrate without experiencing any discrimination, while presuming that things would have been different if he had a darker phenotype: “If I had been totally dark then it would be something else. Sweden had no problem with black people until they got black people”. It is interesting that, by explicitly specifying the degree of darkness of a migrant, Modris essentially suggested that the level of discrimination in Sweden might be based on the level of deviation from “Swedish whiteness”. What Modris stated is similar to the observation of the changing inclusiveness of whiteness in Sweden. Carin Lundström (2017, 85) argued that migrant groups once considered to be part of the Other in relation to Swedish whiteness – groups such as Greeks, Italians and Poles – are now being re-placed in the white part of the population owing to the growing non-white population in Sweden.
The Latvian informants referred to, and some like Kalvis perpetuated, the stereotypical construction of a specific Swedish phenotype. Maija and Anna constructed the identity of the “Swede if silent”, relating phenotype and language. These are two constitutive elements of the Swedish “national aristocracy”, in Hage’s terms, as the former proves to be insufficient without the latter if one is to become part of this kind of “aristocracy”.

Spatial proximity and distance
Spatial proximity between Latvia and Sweden has been a central factor in many informants’ decision to migrate to Sweden. For the war refugees who arrived by boat to the island of Gotland, proximity played a pivotal role in their exodus from occupied Latvia, seeking protection in Sweden. Accessibility to the informants’ country of origin was another pull factor for migration to Sweden, though this applied mainly to the newer Latvian migrants.

Modris, Artis and Elya, the three informants who were war refugees and fled to Sweden with their families, all referred to the close geographic distance between Latvian and Sweden as a facilitating factor for reaching a safe land. Yet Sweden was not only a destination country; it also a country of transit for Latvian war refugees. According to the informants, many of them decided to re-migrate overseas to the US or Canada. That was the initial plan for Elya’s family. However, they ultimately decided to remain in Sweden, as aspirations for an independent Latvia and return migration to the home country caused them to remain in the spatially proximate Sweden.

Ludis, who arrived in Sweden in 2010 after being affected by the 2008 economic crisis in Latvia, stated that for him proximity had several practical advantages, mainly in relation to contacts with his country of origin. Although he had initially immigrated to Norway, he decided to seek employment opportunities in Sweden, stating: “the distance is very big, it is 1000 km from Latvia to Norway, so it is not easy”. The possibility to travel by sea was another important pull factor to Sweden for him, as this would facilitate more frequent and economically sustainable transportation for him and his family across the Baltic Sea. This is also connected to his future migration goal of relocating his entire family to Sweden, as the possibility to retain frequent contacts between the two countries would ease such a relocation. Similarly, for Lauris, the decision about which country he should continue his academic career in was based on spatial proximity, as he wanted to keep continuous contact via frequent visits to his country of origin. Lauris was offered a work position in Germany, a country not considerably farther from Latvia than
Sweden. However, he opted for Sweden because it was or felt close to Latvia and because there was the additional option of travelling by boat. He said: “it (Sweden) was much closer (in comparison to Germany)”. This is indicative of how important geographical proximity was to the Latvian informants regarding their migration plans, but also how they perceived the proximity between Latvia and Sweden, as two neighbouring countries. Anna also decided to continue her academic studies not in the UK, where she had been accepted, but in Sweden. For Anna, as for Ludis, the main reason was not the geographical proximity as such, but also the means of transportation: “the UK was far from home. Connections are rather bad. Sweden is on the other side of the sea”.

However, for some interviewees, the close spatial proximity between their two countries was, through their migration experience and everyday contacts with the Swedish people, a source of grievance towards the latter. The Latvian interviewees expressed their surprise and frustration when they realized that the population of their neighbouring country knew little about Latvia, and more importantly lacked interest in learning more about their home country. Emma observed that while Swedes travel all over the world, they ignore information on Latvia: “They have been everywhere. Everywhere! But they don’t know what is behind their back. They don’t know Latvians”. She mentioned that she gets positive feedback about her home country from Swedes who do know something about Latvia. Yet some are indifferent towards her country, and she suggested that spatial proximity may be a factor that makes this indifference worse: “[...] they don’t know. And why don’t they know? We live just across the sea!”. Lucy who also mentioned that while Swedes take long-distance trips to Asian countries and are well educated, when it comes to geographical knowledge, they ignore basic information about her country of origin. Lucy expressed her disappointment at how Swedes approach Latvia, and shared that she has assume the role of educator, trying to instruct them on Latvia’s geographical whereabouts: “You know were Estonia is? Yes? Ok. So, what is the next country which comes after that?” On the same note, Guna reported that Swedes do not have a specific impression of or stereotype about Latvians, but are rather ignorant about them:
**Guna:** They don’t know their neighbourhood so well. […] And sometimes, when somebody says ‘So, what was the name of the capital of Latvia’. I say, ‘come on, 25 years have passed, and you don’t know what’s going on there, 400 km away?’.

In the quote above, Guna even referred to the independence of Latvia, implying that the country has been a sovereign political entity for a long time, and thus has come out from under the shade of the Soviet Union. For this reason, she suggested that Swedes had no right to ignore a nation so close to them. Generally, regarding this theme, the Latvian informants constructed the figure of the “indifferent” or “ignorant Swede” with regard to their country of origin.

**Cultural proximity and distance**

Among the Latvian participants, common cultural elements between Sweden and Latvia have created a sense of having migrated to a less foreign space. This background facilitates the integration process and produces a sense of belonging to the space of immigration. Kalvis referred to Latvia and Sweden as if he wanted to inform me that they are two spaces with proximate cultures: “And regarding the Swedish culture, Latvian and Swedish are not that different you know”. He felt that, in his case, the common cultural elements between Latvia and Sweden had allowed him to adapt almost directly to the migration country: “it was pretty easy to adjust in the Swedish culture”. He referred to issues of social behaviour, such as social discipline while waiting in queues, or to the aesthetic perception of the Swedes. Similarly, Emma expressed a sense of familiarity when in Swedish society owing to the countries’ common cultural elements and similar national habitus: “their (Swedes’) mentality is similar to Latvian”.

Maija, in response to my question about whether she feels like a Swede, replied by mentioning the common cuisine and eating habits, such the consumption of potatoes, and the festive celebration of midsummer, which she stressed is the most important national holiday both in Latvia and in Sweden. Artis even mentioned that the Swedish writer Johan August Strindberg (1849–1912) was known in Latvia already in the pre-war period.

However, a binary cultural description that separated the Swedes and the Latvians was offered by some informants, with variation in the positive and negative characteristics attributed to each national group. Their evaluation of the national habitus was related to personal experience in the country of residence, in the country of origin, or linked to historical and political
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incidents. In one part of this dichotomy lies the civilized and culturally superior Swede in contrast to the uncultured Latvian, also influenced by the Soviet and post-Soviet experience. Guna created as positive image of Swedes as curious people who are open and want to discover new things. On a similar note, during her pre-migration period Lucy had fantasized about Swedes and assigned them a variety of positive attributes, which her co-patriots were lacking: “Swedes could never do anything wrong in my world”. Beside the cultural profile of the Swedish people, Lucy found an additional pull factor in the perceived economic conditions in Sweden, obvious in Swedes’ appearance: “they were quite well off economically and I was like, I want a piece of that as well”. With these positive thoughts, she envisaged her migration to Sweden. Elya presented Swedes as culturally cultivated, attributing to them positive forms of social behaviour. in contrast to her co-nationals in Latvia whom she described in negative terms. Elya explained these differences in social behaviour between Swedes and Latvians, mainly with reference to their historical basis. In Sweden, the continuous state of peace had paved the way for a more conscious society, offering opportunities to create not only a culture of higher value, but also a culture that bears a pure national Swedish character: “I think it is because Sweden is a country that hasn’t been at war in over 200 years […] they have been able to develop that way of behaviour and values”. On the other hand, Latvia historically being conquered by great powers of the region failed to create a Latvian culture. Rather people who resided in Latvia and experienced these different occupations and invasions by non-Latvians were exposed to foreign domination: “we (the Latvians) were never left alone, they could not have a real Latvian culture, but were always influenced by others”. Elya also stated that the Latvians, who came to Sweden as refugees and have resided in Sweden for many years, have adopted the Swedish norms of social behaviour: “Latvians who have been in Sweden for 70 years, well, they have become more like Swedish”. The different use of the personal pronoun “we” and “they” in the previous two quotes by Elya shows her contradictory and multiple belonging to Sweden and Latvia. This variety of belonging is stipulated either by spatiality, as in “we the Latvians of Sweden” in comparison to they “the Latvians of Latvia”, or by national belonging to “we the Latvians” as nations, with all of these identifications co-existing in contradiction. Generalizations in relation to a Swedish mentality moulded by an extended state of peace were suggested by other Latvian informants as well. Guna depicted Swedes as polite people who avoid conflicts: “Swedes don’t fight”. This attribute, according to Guna, places them in a defensive
position when interacting with other cultures, as the cultural differences may lead to misunderstandings and thus to the possibility of conflict. This has as a result Swedes’ “social closure” towards the “foreign Other”: “So, they are very careful when it comes to foreigners and they are really very strict”. On several occasions during the interview, Artis explained that the Swedish national habitus was affected by the country’s historically long-lasting peace and neutrality. He used again the term “fredsskadade” for this mentality, characterizing the Swedish people as “peace damaged”. In his view, this national habitus, in contrast to Latvians, forged the Swedes as a non-patriotic nation:

**Artis:** I feel respect for the Swedish flag, which the Swedes do not care much about. They are peace damaged. When I see my Latvian flag, I feel it deep in my heart.

Interviewer: You say that Swedes are not that patriotic?

**Artis:** No (they are not). Because they don’t need to be. Because they have lived in peace for so long,

Artis’ explanation of the Swedish national habitus and use of the term “peace damaged” probably reflect a strong grievance he has with Sweden for its foreign policy during the Cold War in relation to the Soviet Union and Latvia’s occupation, a policy that was based on the strategy of neutrality.

Despite the references to cultural distance, the Latvian interviewees alluded to elements of cultural proximity. For example, according to Elya and other informants, belonging to the same religious denomination was a strong source of spatial belonging that connected Latvia as a space of origin and Sweden as a space of immigration:

**Elya:** I don’t think anyone got really disturbed by us [...] we had the same kind of church, despite the fact people don’t care about the church but it is part of the tradition [...] It could be Lutheran or Islam. For everybody religion means something different, it separates people.

What Elya said in the quote above is that Protestantism, as a common cultural element, facilitated the rapid assimilation of Latvian refugees to Swedish society without making them in this process obviously the Other (culturally and phenotypically), as would have been the case if they had come from a Muslim country. In Maija’s view, spatial proximity and
religious sameness were two elements that explained Swedish society’s acceptance of the Latvian migrants: “[…] The Swedes are accepting. You come from a Baltic State. You are close. You have the same religion”. Lucy even complained about the indifference of Swedish colleagues towards her space and culture of origin. According to her, this emerges due to a lack of different attributes between her and them. This similarity is what produces the indifference. Her reference to British, French or American migrants as the exotic Other in Sweden suggests a regional dimension of common space:

Lucy: I’m not exotic enough. I don’t bake all these fantastic cakes or speak with a French accent, or dance like Brits do, or I don’t know. Speak with an American accent. And then, that would be interesting. I’m not interesting enough. I’m not different enough. Most of the time I’m considered one of them.

Their cultural similarity, which one might expect should make the process of integration or assimilation easy, is perceived by Lucy as problematic. This can be explained by the migrant’s striving for belonging to two national spaces and being perceived as such, not only in relation to the space of immigration, but also the space of origin and vice versa.

The claim of a culturally similar national habitus between Swedes and Latvians was a tool some of the informants used to create a cultural link between their country of origin and that of residence. This connected cultural space constitutes the migrant subject as less alien and disassociates it with possible categories of Other in Swedish society. Furthermore, the construction of two antithetical identities – the “cultivated Swede” vs. the “uncultivated Latvian” – is an indication of a hierarchy that exists in the informants’ perceptions of the two countries, mainly justified by the countries’ different historical experiences.

6.3. Migrant identifications

Migrant self- and external identification are related to national identifications both to the country of residence and to that of origin. The length of residence, historical moments, and personal understandings of different categories of migration are factors that create dynamic identifications with and sense of belonging to the Latvian informants’ germane national spaces.

When asked about self-identifications with Sweden in relation to length of residence in the country, Artis answered by juxtaposing external identi-
fications in his country of origin, as the latter defines his own sense of belonging. He acknowledged the spatial and temporal distance to Latvia and his long-term residency in Sweden, stating that this has constituted him as a hybrid of the two cultures:

**Artis:** You see the Latvians don’t see me as Latvian when I go there […] Ok we are half Latvian and half Swede. This is what we are. And because of all the different schools and places I have been with work, 23 places in Sweden. So, I do feel at home nowhere and everywhere.

Furthermore, Artis’ migration experience – which has included multiple locations either during the first years of migration in different refugee camps, or because of family and work relocations, in combination with his hybridization of his national identity – probably makes his identity and belonging puzzle even more complicated. One solution to the puzzle seems to be his reference to the notion of home, which for Artis is both omnipresent and absent. With the pronoun “we”, in the above quote, Artis was referring to the Latvian War refugees who have spent most of their lives in Sweden and whose return migration had always been a dream, already since their first years in exile. Anna did not self-identify as a migrant because of the EU framework, which has provided her with a series of mobility and residency rights. External identification on an everyday scale does not frame her as a migrant. Anna mentioned that she does not identify herself as Swedish and does not have any spatial belonging to Sweden. Her rationale is based on a primordial understanding of spatial belonging that is connected to ethnicity. She argued that if Sweden continues its migrant-friendly policy, this will eventually constitute it as a multi-ethnic nation, using as an example the US and Canada, which would consequently enable her self-identifications with Sweden. In other words, the relatively ethnically homogeneous Sweden does not allow her the self-identification of Swede. According to Anna, the sense of belonging to her space of origin has been disrupted by her migration. With regard to time, migration experience accumulates differentiation with her non-migrant co-nationals and creates a distance to the current reality of Latvia:

**Anna:** I do not know! It’s truly difficult, you no longer feel entirely Latvian, or Swedish, of course not. […] I don’t think I will ever leave my Latvian origins. I think there is something, a foreign Latvian, a concept evolving. […] the foreign Latvian crowd. That could also constitute a nation. But I wouldn’t like to attribute it to a state, because then you get the nation-state
concept, and then definitely you feel then like an outsider. […] The nation-state apart from citizenship would be rather weak. If you wanted to take it to the cluster of Latvians who have something in common hat would be the foreign Latvians.

While mentioning the significant size of the Latvian diaspora (*the foreign Latvian crowd*), Anna fabricated the term “foreign Latvian” as an attempt to solve her identity puzzle. This term signifies a Latvian with multiple but partial spatial belongings, situated in between different places. Being a long-term migrant, she could not categorize herself in relation to bounded spatial belonging, constituted by the territoriality of the nation-state, as she wanted to differentiate herself from her non-migrant co-nationals residing in Latvia. Similarly, Guna stated that when she travels to Latvia, she has the self-identification of “foreign Latvian”. She also recounted her experience of buying a summer house in a small town in Latvia where the locals treated her like a foreigner. Her permanent residence in Sweden constituted her, according to Guna, as “an outsider and I was something exotic”. She even mentioned that, in the locals’ eyes, she was the “rich Swedish lady” acquiring property in Latvia. The culmination of this hostility towards Guna was an attempt to burn her house down. Maija linked the term migrant with that of refugee, as a person who is seeking protection to another country. My question concerning whether she would identify herself as a migrant created frustration for her, and she immediately stressed that she rejects the term: “My move to Sweden was a slow, organic move, it was not that I had to pack my stuff and run”. Kalvis also used the migration typology to differentiate himself from a migrant identification. Nonetheless, he did acknowledge that, as he lives in a country other than that of his origin, he can be placed in the category of migrant: “technically I am a migrant”. However, he preferred to be identified as an “international student”. He associated the notion of migrant with a colleague of his who arrived in Sweden as an asylum seeker from Syria and who belongs to his peer group of international students. His Syrian friend embodies the notion of migrant. Kalvis said the following about his asylum seeker colleague:

**Kalvis**: We were doing movie nights for my group and voting for a movie and everyone’s vote counted except Abdul’s, because he doesn’t have a passport. So, jokes like that. He understands them.
Another type of mover to whom Kalvis attributes the identity of migrant are those individuals who fall under the category of labour migrants. He mentioned that he was a labour migrant when he was working in Sweden, grouping himself with other Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles and Greeks seeking labour for economic reasons: "they can’t earn enough in Latvia to pay loans and they are forced to go to the UK to work in factories". In Kalvis’s view, the word migrant is directly related to deprivation and need, giving it a negative connotation. Kalvis pointed out that, prior to and during his labour migration period, he had felt uncomfortable with the identification as an economic migrant, as he had preconceptions and prejudices about this type of migration. In his view, economic migrants were individuals who are incapable or unwilling to find employment in their home-country: "they were too lazy, and they couldn’t find a job in Latvia". Kalvis reported aspiring to return migration, his goal being to use the accumulated experience of residing in Sweden to promote the development of his country. Similar return migration goals have been mentioned by other informants. Emma stated that her return to Latvia will be linked to personal improvement, educationally and in terms of career, allowing her to better serve Latvian society: “Yes, but I cannot go home. I have to know something. […] I must return home a little bit cleverer”. Lauris also mentioned feeling a certain obligation to serve and contribute his expertise to his country of origin. Lauris was indifferent to issues of self- or external migrant identification, as he was never preoccupied with these kinds of categorizations. He said that his national identification and belonging are mono-national and related to the country of origin, with strong emotional attachments, which enhanced his need to contribute to Latvia: “Because these are your roots, something to give back of course”. For Dana, the word migrant is related to the meaning of “stranger”, and for that reason she does not identify herself as such; she said she felt fully integrated into Swedish society. Furthermore, this strong integration produces stronger self-identifications with the country of residence than towards her country of origin: “I feel more Swedish than Latvian to be honest”. However, this national identification is related more to the national space than to the nation as such, because Dana dissociates herself from any nation, a consequence of her multi-spatial and lengthy migration: “I have lost track of where I belong”. However, at the end of the interview, Dana expressed her national identification with Latvia and not Sweden, like admitting her real belonging and thus also her migrant identity:
Dana: Yeah, come on, I’m Latvian. I know I am, and I don’t want to deny it. I know that I am Latvian. [...] I know that I’m not Swedish. And it’s always gonna be like this. And I don’t wanna be Swedish.

Dana explained that her actual belonging is based on cultural elements that differentiate Swedes from Latvians, such as the social introversion and inclination towards solicitude that Swedes have, in contrast to Latvians’ social habits. Elya, who was a war refugee to Sweden, initially perceived the notions of migrant and refugee as a tautology. She stressed the responsibility society has to assist people who are fleeing war, though she stated that Sweden received an exceptionally large number of asylum seekers without having enough hosting facilities. Elya said Sweden’s reaction during the so-called refugee crisis was based on a certain national mentality the Swedes have as regards assisting people who need help, and she supported this approach. Regarding her self-identification, Elya stated that she had ceased bearing the identification of refugee in 1991 when Latvia became independent from the Soviet Union, as at that time she had the option of returning to her home country: “I mean then I had the possibility to go back [...] and I didn’t want to go back”. She based her migrant identification on the dichotomy economic migrant vs. refugee, something other informants also referred to. In her view, having the free choice to realize return migration or decide to remain in Sweden is what transformed her refugee identity. Additionally, her strong identification with Sweden, as she had spent almost all her life in the country, caused her to reject possible migrant identities. Lucy, who has been living in Sweden for almost fifteen years, stated that her migrant self-identification was permanent: “I will always be an immigrant. Yes, I am”, indicating at the same time that acquisition of Swedish citizenship has transformed her migrant identification. This is related to the problems she had getting a residence and work permit during her first years of migration, which enhanced her migrant identification and sense of non-belonging to Sweden.

Long length of residence in the country of residence as well as the juxtaposition of the migrant subjects’ external and self-identifications in the country of origin has caused Artis to construct the hybrid identity of “half-Swedish, half Latvia”. For newer migrants, the partial dissociation with the country of origin and the sense of belonging to a national Other comprised by the Latvian diaspora enable the construction of a “foreign Latvian” identity. For Elya, the historical collapse of the Soviet Union and the independence of Latvia have transformed her migrant identity into being
“no longer a refugee”, as the option of return migration is now available. An important factor contributing significantly to the sense of belonging is the economy, which provides adequate material conditions for the individual to feel safe in the space of residence (Antonsich 2010, 648). This dimension of belonging was accentuated by Lucy when she expressed her frustration for not having access to Swedish welfare state benefits during a period of difficult economic conditions. She stressed that while she followed all the steps of integration, and she was nonetheless not entitled to any public economic support: “I am really trying here. I have learned the language; I pay my taxes. I worked. I studied. I was one of the best students at school. Nothing helped”. For Lucy, entitlement to social benefits is an indicator of acceptance and belonging to the space of immigration, which would minimize feeling like a migrant, as when she asked rhetorically: “what do I have to do for you to accept me?” Furthermore, having been denied social benefits led to a sense of rejection and non-belonging, and ultimately to Lucy’s decision to immigrate to another European country.

6.4. Gender and social and educational capital

Though it did not appear to be a decisive factor in the Latvian migrants’ spatial identification with their germane nations, gender had some impact on their immigration and integration process. The pre-EU-accession techniques of migration to Sweden, as well as gendered national stereotypes related to the post-Soviet economic deprivation in Latvia, had shaped the migration experience of female participants.

Applying for a work visa through an au pair programme seems to have been a common way of initiating a migration process from Latvia to Sweden. Dana, Guna and Lucy, who arrived in Sweden before Latvia became a member of the EU, used the “au pair” system as a means of employment and migration. As Lucy reported, a considerable number of Latvian women had paved the way for permanent migration through the au pair programme: “[...] many of the girls went away and never came back”. Dana mentioned that, at the time of her migration to Sweden, there was a gendered national stereotype regarding young Latvian females being efficient childminders: “Latvian girls were very popular back then as babysitters

However, according to Dada, the visa rules related to the au pair programme were very strict, and in order to prolong her stay in Sweden, she had applied to and was accepted into a university programme. Similarly, Guna, who had also come to Sweden as a caretaker, implied that it was because of her gender that it was she, among her family members, who had migrated. Guna referred to the national culture in Latvia where women have an administrative role in family issues, mainly due to the high level of alcoholism among the male population there: “I would say that because I am a woman I left. [...] Historically, women have always been in charge. Let’s put it this way. Half of the men in Latvia have a drinking problem”. Guna even mentioned that, for a certain period, she had sent money back to her family in Latvia. Lucy said that, during her first period of migration working as an au pair, she had for the first time in her life approached her gender identity in a positive way: “For me that was the first time that being a female was really an advantage. If I had been a man, I think it would have been harder”. She suggested this was because being a woman was not perceived as a potential threat to the family, on the contrary, she was there to help the family. Additionally, being a caretaker facilitated socialization with the local population: “They would stop, talk to the children, talk to me. If I was a man, not so easy”. In the period of mass emigration from Latvia, especially after the 2008 economic crisis, according to the informants, the male Latvian immigrants were directed to the construction and manufacturing sectors, and they did not participate in the au pair programme. Indicative of the latter is Guna’s statement: “Guys and children doesn’t sound good”.

Another aspect is related to the sexualization of the female Latvian migrants within the framework of national stereotyping. This sexualization was related to the conditions of impoverishment that existed in Latvia during the post-Soviet period. Dana said that one national stereotype Swedes have about Latvian women is that they are more approachable as short-term rather than long-term partners. Dada even mentioned the possibility that some Latvian women might have used the partnership method as a way out of Latvia and a way into Sweden. However, she argued that the existence of this stereotype has negative consequences: “Latvia is such a small country for having such a reputation. Lucy had an experience related to this kind of stereotyping. The incident took place in a bar in Sweden where she was approached by a Swedish male asking her what she
would charge to have sexual intercourse with him. The reason for his ques-
tion was Lucy’s nationality:

Lucy: “He says ‘how much?’ And I was like, ‘how much for what?’ And he is
like ‘Well, you are Latvian, right?’ At that time, it was very popular for
Latvian girls to earn money in prostitution going on the boats from
Stockholm to Latvia, Riga and back and forth. And around that time, I
started asking people around me not to mention that I am Latvian.

This stigmatization resulted in Lucy’s conscious dissociation from her
national identification, as the gendered national stereotyping of female
Latvian migrants in Sweden was related to prostitution. Not referring to or
hiding her Latvian origins was Lucy’s practical solution to this problem.

In relation to the social and educational capital of the Latvian inter-
viewees and their integration and belonging to the national space, it is
apparent and expected that the war refugees who arrived in Sweden at an
early age would be fully integrated into Swedish society and would have
managed to accumulate social and educational capital during their migra-
tion period. Elya and Artis, whose parents were highly educated and
specialized in a certain field, stated that despite the difficulties of the early
migration period and the multiple relocations in different refugee camps,
the social and educational capital they had derived from their parents had
helped the family integrate into Swedish society. Elya mentioned her
father’s exceptional performance in his field: “he was working with hormone
questions. At that time, it was a new science. People didn’t know about
hormones and their importance”. The experience of a relative of Modris in a
Gulag in Siberia had defined his education and future career in the space of
immigration. According to Modris’ mother, the only reason their relative
had survived the Gulag was his training as an engineer: “he was thin and
skinny, but he did come back”. This background was decisive for the kind of
education Modris would pursue in an attempt to facilitate his acceptance in
and integration into Swedish society: “[…] learn something useful, like
engineering. That was the guidance of my mother. It is useful and practical”.

For post-independence migrants with no university degree, accessing
tertiary education was a goal, either in Latvia or in Sweden. For Lucy and
Dana, the high university fees imposed in the post-Soviet period had
prevented them from studying at the university. Thus, for them, migration
to Sweden was a means to earn money in order to proceed with their future
plans in Latvia. However, their gradual integration into the space of immi-
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gration and free access to tertiary education in Sweden were two decisive factors that transformed their migration from temporary to permanent. Anna, Lauris, and Kalvis, who had a university degree, had continued their career in post-graduate education, while Maija reported difficulties in getting her Latvian university studies and working experience in Latvia recognized in Sweden, forcing her to accept non-specialized jobs. For Maija, that was one reason for her alienation from and grievances with Sweden. She stated that she had decided to follow universities studies in Sweden so as to gain the respect and recognition she was lacking: “If you don’t have a paper signed by Swedish authorities you don’t know nothing […] and you are not given the chance to prove that you can!” In Maija’s view, her foreign educational capital, specifically her Latvian one, had lost its value in Sweden. Ludis migrated to Sweden because of his unemployment status in Latvia. He arrived with a vocational education and integrated almost immediately into the labour market, resulting in his rapid integration into Swedish society. Although Ludis stated that he had never attended any Swedish language courses, his immediate socialization with the local population had allowed him to master the Swedish language. Furthermore, better social benefits in comparison to Latvia and the possibility of a free higher education for his children were the pull factors that brought him to Sweden: “my younger children they go to high school right now. They would be eager to go on with their education at university, but in order to do that you need a lot of money in Latvia. Here it’s free of charge”. For Emma, extensive and long work hours and lack of free time had prevented her from attending classes for learning Swedish as a second language, although she emphasized her interest in doing so. Furthermore, the nature of her work, which does not facilitate socialization and contact with Swedes, is an additional factor of isolation from society, leading to socialization only with the Latvian community. According to Emma, one of the reasons she had migrated was to repay a bank loan in Latvia, something she had been unable to do after the 2008 economic crisis and her subsequent unemployment. Furthermore, sending money to family and relatives in Latvia was part of the migration process for some of the informants, resulting in the stagnation of their personal income in Sweden.

In this theme, discursive strategies are mainly realized through external identification that constitutes Latvian women as gendered national subjects with specific attributes. This is realized through a practice of national stereotyping, positioning Latvian women either as efficient “caretakers” or as sexualized objects. It seems that level of education acts as a facilitator in
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specific sectors of the economy, while educational and working skills acquired outside Sweden are not recognized as personal merits. For the low-skill informants, the level of integration into Swedish society seems to be related to the nature of the employment and mainly to the level of socialization during working hours.

6.5. Conclusions

The analysis of the Latvian interviews in relation to national space shows that the informants’ identifications and sense of belonging in relation to their relevant national spaces have various references to history and are defined by elements such as language as well as cultural and spatial proximity. Additionally, personal features, such as phenotype, and characteristics of one’s migration history, such as length of residence, are elements that contribute to the construction, de-construction, transformation, and perpetuation of national identifications. Identity formulation attributes qualities not only to individuals, but also to the national spaces as such. It is also apparent from the analysis that these identifications are created inter-thematically, meaning that the components of creating an identification can be located not only in one relevant theme, but also in others. Furthermore, the informants used all four discursive strategies to employ self- and external identifications and to explain their sense of belonging to the national space. Sweden, as the space of immigration, stimulates comparative associations with their country of origin, but is also employed in attempts to associate with or dissociate from the national space. This becomes possible through the migration reality, which offers the migrant an additional nation for reference.

As with the Greek informants, this part of the analysis contributed to the DHA by revealing the specific discursive strategies the Latvian informants used to define their national identifications and sense of belonging in a migratory context.85

Regarding the informants’ use of deictic elements, the pronouns “we” and “them”, which create groups of belonging or stipulate those that constitute the national Other, represent a variety of mainly antithetical compounds, defined each time by the specific context. These oppositions of inclusiveness and exclusiveness take the form of: “we” the migrants vs. “them” the Swedes, “we” the old Latvian migrants vs. “them” the new

85 See Appendix 4.
Latvian migrants, “we” the refugees vs. “them” the economic migrants, “we” the foreign Latvians vs. “them” the non-migrated Latvians, and “we” the ethnic Latvians (Latyshi) or Latvian speakers vs. “them” the national Latvians (Latviitsy) or Russophones. Regarding the spatial deixis, the references are related mainly to notions of proximity such as “close”, “near”, “over there”, or “on the other side” that express the Latvian informants’ sense of connection, spatial and cultural, to Sweden as their space of immigration.

Furthermore, the factors that initiate or enhance a sense of belonging that Marco Antonsich (2010) discussed – such as cultural, language-related, legal and economical, as well as length-of-residence and relational factors – have been also mentioned by the Latvian informants in relation to their germane national spaces.

Final remarks: the nation according to Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden

The interviews with the participating Latvian and Greek migrants in Sweden revealed a number of similar sub-themes. Elements of belonging – such as language, citizenship, and phenotype – are common to both informant groups, though they are filled with different content. Language has been a dominant element throughout the interviews with the Latvian interviewees, assisting in the construction of a series of identifications. It is a constitutive ingredient of both their ethnic and national identifications. Having Latvian as first language has primordial qualities, as it leads to ethnic belonging, while acquisition of language skills in Latvian might open the door to national belonging within the framework of the Latvian nation-state. It seems that the transition (Soviet Latvia to the independent republic of Latvia) towards national integration, especially via acquisition of the Latvian language by the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, resembles the transition period of a migrant towards social integration in the new country of residence. The official language of the space of immigration is higher in the hierarchy than the migrant’s native language, and acquiring it is a sine qua non for the migrant’s integration into the new society. Similarly, for the Latvians informants, there is a language hierarchy in the space of origin that is crucial to national belonging and identification. The Latvian informants also mentioned perpetuation of the mother tongue to their offspring as an indicator of national identity in the space of immigration. For the Greek interviewees, the Greek language was also employed as an important element of their “Greekness”. Yet with regard to language, the relatively
homogenous population in Greece focused their attention on the space of immigration rather than the space of origin. The former, primarily an alien space, compels the subjects of immigration to perpetuate their Greek national identification for themselves and their offspring via language. However, some of the informants, especially the Greeks, expressed a strong disassociation from the nation of origin. In these cases, in the space of immigration the mother tongue solely acquires qualities of utility rather than stimulating a sense of belonging and perpetuating national identification. For some Latvian informants, there was no critique of the nation as such, but rather doubts about the survival of the Latvian nation, considering its small size. This is also related to the construction of Latvia as a historically “small size” nation among the great powers of the region and an apprehension about its future as a nation-state. Thus, Latvia has been depicted as being “under threat of extinction”, in relation to both its language and population. Regarding Sweden, both groups of informants described acquiring language skills in the space of immigration as an essential dimension of their integration into Swedish society.

The legal aspect of belonging related to citizenship has been framed by the interviewees as an element of belonging, but also as a steppingstone for initiating self-identification with the space of immigration. Acquisition of Swedish citizenship is not only related to the status of migration, but also to the current or historical ordeals of the country of origin. For the Greek informants, this is related to Greece’s current economic crisis and the insecurity created by the possibility of a “Grexit”, which might lead to the abrogation of their EU status in Sweden. The historical incident of “baltutlämning” – a trauma both for the “old” and the “new” Latvian migrants – and the geopolitical dynamics in the region render acquiring Swedish citizenship a spatial and legal barrier to Russian aggression and Sweden’s potential indulgence towards Russia.

A sense of belonging to Sweden, possibly created by acquiring citizenship, can be enhanced or dismantled by the individual’s phenotype, which is related to stereotypically perceived national phenotypes and manifested via external as well as self-identifications. The construction of Sweden as a white nation (Lundström 2013) renders the individual phenotype a constitutive factor of belonging. This is made clear by the fact that the interviewees’ phenotype is only significant in the space of migration. Generally speaking, the physical appearance of Latvians, which has been positioned close to the Swedish whiteness, automatically creates a sense of belonging to the space of residence, while language performance tends to dismantle such
belonging. For the Greek participants, their darker physical characteristics signal a spatial distance to Sweden and, thus, the immediate and perhaps permanent status of migrant.

Both groups constructed Sweden in positive terms and to a great extent as being antithetical to the spaces of origin. According to the Greek informants, Sweden, a country of the European North, represents an economically and politically advanced country in contrast to Greece, which struggles with its economy and with institutional corruption. The Latvian informants, in the same vein, described Sweden in bright colours, and like the Greek informants, juxtaposed its economic and political conditions to those of Latvia. The Greek informants mainly justified this discrepancy in development between the space of origin and that of residence by referring to cultural elements that differentiate the two populations, climate being a decisive symbol of this differentiation. For the Latvians, the difference in development is regionally contextualized, based on the different historical experiences Latvia and Sweden have had. The Soviet occupation is framed as a decisive factor in forging the Latvian national reality, during both the pre- and the post-independence period. Sweden was described as a space of peace, suggesting that peace had facilitated its economic, political, and even cultural progress. At the same time, Latvia and Greece, lying in the periphery, were placed within the framework of troubled spaces, both inflicted by a series of national crises. However, although for the Greeks this state of peace in Sweden has positive connotations, some Latvian informants interpret it negatively. According to the Latvian participants, the close spatial proximity of Latvia and Sweden, which necessarily entails a common historical path, brings with it geopolitical responsibility. Sweden has not fulfilled this responsibility, its only goal being the maintenance of peace and neutrality. This results in disappointment and grievances towards Sweden and creates feelings of dissociation from the space of immigration. This criticism was extended to include the accusation that Swedes are indifferent towards the spatially close Latvians. This issue that was not a matter of discussion among the spatially distant Greeks, who instead referred to a positive external identification on the part of the local population based on their leisure trips to Greece.

Historical experiences and the length of migration create a conjuncture between the old and the new migrants in Sweden, affecting self- and external identifications in the two groups. For the Latvians, the dichotomy has been solidified by history, extending the time division between the old and new Latvians in comparison to the Greek case, where at least for
political refugees return migration could be realized already in 1974, after the fall of the military dictatorship. Among the Greek informants, it was mainly the low-skilled Sofia and Nikos who expressed grievances about the lack of solidarity on the part of the old Greek migrants. For the Latvians, the refugee vs. economic migrant dichotomy is apparent, as are differences in the culture of the two generations (mentality and linguistically). The construction of the “foreign Latvian”, a new diasporic identity, mainly for the new Latvian migrants, helps to disentangle the dichotomy “migrants vs. non-migrants”. For the “new” Greek migrants, the critique is aimed at the old migrants with regard to both their social segregation from the Swedish social and cultural reality and their stagnation in relation to personal development.

It seems that the sense of belonging to the nation, as described by the informants, reflects Anthony Smith’s (1991, 20) definition of ethnic groups as cultural collectivities. However, the migration experience, especially for the old migrants, has created hybrid cultural identities synthesized by their belonging to different cultural collectivities. This might also lead to hybrid national belonging and identification. This becomes more significant in a space of immigration such as Sweden, where discourses of ethnic homogeneity and common ancestry are well-established (Lundström 2013). National belonging for the Latvian informants seems to be connected to a certain territoriality. The Russian speakers who can be acculturated as Latvians, mainly via language, are only those who are subjected to the territoriality of Latvia as a nation-state. The Greek informants, probably owing to the self-perception of an ethnically homogenous country of origin, did not differentiate between national and ethnic belonging. However, another reason might be linguistic. In Latvian, ethnos is “etnoss” and nation is “tauta”, while in Greek there is a tautology of the notions, because nation and ethnos are the same word: “ethnos” (έθνος). This is probably one of the reasons why the Greek informants did not make a clear distinction between the two notions as did the Latvian informants, who translated the “etnoss” and “tauta into the corresponding words in English (for those who did not use an interpreter).
The construction of identity, identifications with and the sense of belonging to Europe

Europe is the second spatial unit for which the Greek and the Latvian interviewees were asked and expressed their identifications and sense belonging. In comparison to the nation-state, as a space of reference for the informants, Europe was a theme during the interview to which the informants showed less interest to talk about, with comparatively longer response-time to the questions. The institutionalised part of Europe, that is the EU, steamed the overall discussion as a more tangible and experiential concept, in relation to the more general term Europe.
7. Greek migrants: identifications with and sense of belonging to Europe

The Greek informants in this study utilized all four discursive strategies that Wodak et al. (2009) and De Cillia et al. (1999) identified when they examined the construction of national identity. The themes and their respective sub-themes – which I discovered throughout the interview data from the Greek migrants in relation to how they understood the European space and their attitudes towards this space – are the following:

- Institutionalization of Space: Europe equals the EU, Europe as a project, economic and political elite, a market vs. people.
- Spatial Division: heterogeneity, similarities rather than homogeneity, economic hierarchy, South vs. North.
- Spatial belonging: free-mobility, migration of third-country nationals, cultural clash, integration.

7.1. Institutionalization of space

Though on some occasions the Greek informants defined Europe only as a geographical entity, the notion of the institutionalization of the European continent via the EU was present in the answers of all of the informants. In response to the question “What does Europe mean for you?”, nine informants offered different versions of how the European space has been institutionalized, having in mind the EU:

Spyros: Europe is the united Europe, as they call it [...]. They tried to make something similar to the United States. A lot of states in one country.

However, even the few informants who asked me to define what I meant by Europe or European, i.e. the geographical or the institutional aspect of the notion, used the two notions throughout their narration and in their answers, also referring to the EU, to EU citizenship or to attributes related to institutional belonging. For example, Lefteris said: “I feel European
because I have a passport that allow free travelling around Europe without any problems”. Here Lefteris showed some ambivalence: “I’m against the EU, but I must admit it has done some good things” and used the collective adjective “European” to define a collective adjective of a lower order. The adjective European encompasses people who do not have the right of free mobility in the Schengen area agreement, but who are Europeans geographically. The Europeanization process that was initiated by the EU with the aim to incorporate the European continent has been successful in overtaking the words “Europe” and “European” in the informants’ language, even of those who were critical of the EU and who explicitly differentiated it from Europe. At the same time, some of the informants who defined Europe via the EU used the adjective “European” in the wider geographical sense. For instance, Spyros said: “To be honest, I feel European, because I live on the old continent”. Furthermore, the notion of Europe, both in its geographical and in its institutional aspects, is entangled with nation-states that have their own internal structure:

**Konstantinos**: Europe is a number of different countries that belong to this specific area.

**Nikos**: Europe is a country, which is divided into different states like Germany, which is not a state but a federation of states.

Konstantinos described Europe as a region composed of distinct countries, and Nikos described it as a country that is “divided” into different states. Use of the word “divide” shows that Nikos regards Europe as a more unified space than Konstantinos does. Only Irini, who found the question insignificant for her, gave a definition of Europe that can be called geographical and that displays neither a sense of belonging nor a sense of non-belonging:

**Interviewer**: What does Europe mean for you?

**Irini**: I don’t know…a place on earth?

All informants, regardless of whether they had a positive or a negative view of the EU, described Europe and the EU as a project under construction or as an attempt to create a spatial and political entity. In their opinion, it is an unfinished project and they are pessimistic as to whether it will eventually complete its integration. Furthermore, for those informants who expressed
some positive views of the EU, a feeling of disappointment was obvious. For them the EU is a space of unfulfilled expectations, which has not provided what it promised. These negative feelings and the general displeasure with the EU, which are clear in the informants’ answers, are connected to the economic and refugee crisis, which reached their respective peaks during the period when the interviews were conducted. All of the Greek informants expressed their disappointment both at how the EU dealt with the Greek case and at the EU’s inability to resolve the increased migration into Europe. The parts of the interviews related to Europe contained mainly dismantling strategies, augmented with derogatory metaphors describing the current state of the EU:

**Spyros:** It’s a bubble this is pretty soon going to burst […]

**Odysseas:** A block of Mafia, Those people Europe allows to get in, allows to enter Europe, it’s not their decision, this is an excuse made by the big guys.

**Magda:** It’s a mosaic, which is really mixed up right now.

One interpretation of why some informants chose metaphors to describe their opinion or frustration might be that the EU is a political entity that is still under development and that the informants find it difficult to blame specific individuals who take decisions concerning economic and political developments. The EU seems to them to be an indecipherable structure that affects their lives in many ways. This might also explain why, in times of trouble, the nation seems to be a safer option, representing a political construction that is more comprehensible for its citizens.

The belief that the EU, alongside the project of creating a European identity, is a top-down project is shared by almost all of the interviewees. The agency for this initiative does not belong to the people of Europe, but to an undefinable Other. The pronoun “they” was used by all of the informants when the discussion concerned Europe, the EU, or European identity. Europe, or the EU, was seen as a project whose construction did not involve the participation of the citizens of Europe. It is “they”, in contrast to a collective “we”, who are responsible for this project as well as for the consequences this project may have for society. The latter becomes clear when some informants referred to the economic crisis as a result of EU policies, as well as EU migration policies and the administration of the refugee crisis. Within this theme also lies the core of the dismantling strategies. The Greek
migrants are critical of a political entity that they interpret as the cause of their national problems and as a factor in losing their sovereignty:

Spyros: They tried to make something similar to the United States.

Konstantinos: They signed some papers which in times of peace are not important but now that we have a crisis these papers are useless [...] So it was never something just for the people.

In the absence of specific agents who represent the elite of the European project, Konstantinos used the discursive tool of anthropomorphization to assign responsibility for the current situation in his home country: “The EU was calling some of its members pigs. So, this shows what the EU really is”. When the generic “they” becomes specific, it is personified to mean an economic elite and impersonal markets, which are prioritized over people in EU politics. In the informants’ view, the EU is a construction whose aim is to serve the interest of the markets. Even the right of free movement is portrayed as an excuse for the political elite to set free the movement of capital. This is a view shared by the informants, regardless of their expressed political sympathies:

Konstantinos: The EU is a union of banks and bankers. [...] free movement is the free cheese in the mousetrap.

Maria: Yes, I did (she voted at the Swedish referendum for the accession of Sweden to the EU), but I was wondering, very much, why should I go to vote? What is this? [...] And actually, that is it. A common market. Nothing else. They do not care about people or unemployment. Only for a common market. Only for the market to operate well. That’s it.

Magda: Look I told you, I’m naive. In the beginning I saw only the nice and positive things. Later I woke up and I saw what it is truly about. But now I’m very happy that Sweden never became part of the MU (Monetary Union).

Konstantinos was referring to the acronym PIIGS, the pejorative term referring to Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain, the countries of the Eurozone that suffered most during the economic crisis.
7.2. Spatial division

Europe is depicted as a united space only when it is described in geographical terms. The institutionalized space of the EU seems to create a negative reaction among the informants, who stressed the heterogeneity of the European space. This is stated either politically, through a definition of what Europe is, focusing on the fact that it is constituted by several nation-states or culturally. The cultural factor might even have a regional aspect based on the spatial division of East and West or South and North. Climate has also been mentioned as a marker that explains cultural differences in national mentalities. When the informants were asked whether there was a common European identity, they once again referred to the undefinable “they” that tried to construct such an identity:

**Sofia:** This, (the European Identity) they tried to impose it on us during the last period, with the EU and all this.

However, despite the fact that the existence of something common unifying all Europeans was rejected, some interviewees did identify similarities, typically framing them as values, such as democracy:

**Interviewer:** So, there is nothing common among the countries?

**Spyros:** And it’s not going to happen, ever. I give you as an example three countries, Germany, Sweden, Greece. What commonality can one find among them? I say nothing. The only thing is the way of thinking about democracy, which of course comes from Greece.

The spatial division was mainly seen as an economic hierarchy, which was linked to how the informants defined Europe and the EU. The existence of a hierarchy inside the European space was unanimously accepted by all informants, who categorized the hierarchy as economic. The North-South division defined this framework, and it was concretized as the rich North and the poorer South. Germany was a central political unit in this division, representing the European North:

**Eleni:** There was always a stereotype, the Greek who is a babbler, the Greek who is always out having fun, the Greek this, the Greek that, and the same goes for the Italians and the Spaniards. But now because of the crisis, it’s become much worse.
**Konstantinos:** The fact that capital started to move freely inside the EU initiated a transfer of wealth from the south to the north and centre, and I’m mainly talking about the banks. That drained some of the countries’ wealth, it destroyed domestic productivity with quotas or fierce competition.

**Magda:** There is one (hierarchy) and it’s crystal clear. The one who has the money gets to take all the decisions. Check the GDP and you have your ranking.

It is plausible that the aforementioned quotes are linked to the recent economic crisis Greece experienced, especially through the austerity measures of the memoranda signed by Greece and the Troika. 87 For the informants, the EU is not merely a space of unfulfilled expectations, but also a space that crushed these expectations.

### 7.3. Spatial belonging

The feeling of being European in a strictly geographical sense is related to the place of residence on the European continent. A small number of the Greek informants made a cultural connection, suggesting that the Hellenic period was the source of European culture. This is discursively expressed through perpetuation and constructive strategies around a European identity, based on common values and cultural belonging. The informants referred to the existence of something common, which historically permeates Europe as a single cultural entity. One example of a commonality would be “democracy”, as mentioned previously. This reference may be a way for the migrants to connect their home-national with their current residence-national space via Europe and the West, thus creating a sense of belonging to Sweden:

**Magda:** It’s something that it was created based on the Greek culture. This is Europe for me.

**Giorgos:** It’s much easier for a Greek to make some small changes in his mentality and become like a Swede, if you’re from Africa it’s a bit more difficult, if you’re from a Muslim country, it might never happen.

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87 The European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.
Natalia: I believe that I’m European by being 110% Greek. Because some people, I see it in educated people, in my peers, when they say, “No, I feel European”. And I tell them, “If you feel ashamed to be Greek, how are you going to feel European?”

Natalia linked western culture with third-country migration to and integration into a European country such as Sweden:

Interviewer: So, if I’ve understood right you do feel European?

Natalia: Well yes. As a bearer of western culture. I think it’s something that we Greeks have. And from what I learn from other teachers from schools, in comparison, to nyanlända (newcomers) […] it’s much easier for children who come from European counties to be integrated.

Eleni explained that she can socialize with non-Europeans when they have been in Sweden for a sufficient period of time, and so their acculturation to Western standards has been successful:

Eleni: I have friends from Iran, from Turkey, I have friends from Morocco. But most of them have been here for fairly many years or they were born here or when they came, they were really young. So, they don’t have the traditional culture of the Iranian, for example.

Third-country migration and the recent increased movement of refugees to Europe are framed as a problem, mainly by the Greek migrants who arrived in Sweden during the 1970s or generally from older migrants. Christianity vs. Islam has also been a dichotomy that defines the cultural, institutional, and geographical borders of the European from the Other. Regarding region, the Middle East and Africa were described a constitutive Other of Europe. In the extracts above, the interviewees were critical of migrants from these regions with respect to their belonging and integration in a European and a Swedish space. Other informants stripped the refugees and migrants of their agency, transferring it to a European elite that “brings them to Europe”. This is probably related to the fact that, during the period of the interviews, Germany and Sweden received a significant number of Syrians refugees. One may assume that if the interviews had been conducted now, when the EU has more restrictive migration policies, this agency might have been returned to the migrants. Some informants pin-pointed the economic dimensions of third-country migration, as Odysseas did,
objectifying third-country migrants as a labour resource for the economy in the hands of the European elite:

**Odysseas:** There are a lot of people coming. We also came as refugees to Sweden, but there are no jobs now. Where do you send him? Can’t they fix Syria? In a blink of an eye they can fix it. But they don’t want to. They just want a labour force now. During the 60s, 70s when we came, Spaniards, from Portugal some French, Italians, Greeks, Turkish, Bulgarians and others. Now the tides have changed, and they come from there. That’s why they want them. Merkel, this one million people she got, she didn’t do it because, come I want to feed you. One day soon she will say, you (referring to himself) have to go. We will replace you with another one for a penny a day not for the fifteen that you get.

In the following extract, Nikos reported seeing a cultural clash between a “we” (Europeans) and the Other (third-country migrants), collectivized as a Muslim mass. Nikos explicitly referred to the dichotomy Christian Europe vs. non-European Islam, reflecting a discourse that is also reproduced by European far-right populists who portray migrants as invaders (Wodak and Boukala, 2015). Nikos expressed a sense of belonging to Sweden through his identity as a Christian, as he called the third-country migrants who come from “below” foreigners. Nikos had also come to Sweden from a geographical “below”, but still from inside the spatial and conceptual boundaries of what he considered Christian Europe:

**Nikos:** They bring from below a lot of foreigners, into France and Germany […] they (Swedes) want to have all these foreigners among them and will have more serious problems in the future. And these problems might be between Christians and Muslims […] the stupid Europeans should bring here only Europeans, Greeks, Italians, French, to deal only with each other. Not bringing Muslims from Pakistan, Iraq, Iran here. All these people are Jihadists, their minds are sick, and they’re going to mess things up.

In the two previous extracts, the deictic elements stipulating a spatial division and Othering are the topical “they come from there” in contrast to those who came from an implied “here” during the 1960s. The spatial preposition “from below” represents a south-north hierarchy on the map, a space that lies separate and below Europe, i.e., the Middle East and Africa.

Cultural belonging and phenotype have also been mentioned as elements that both affect belonging in Europe and might have positive effects on the
integration process in Sweden. Third-country migration has been the theme in which various strategies have been deployed in an attempt to construct some sense of belonging to and identification with Europe and Sweden. A characteristic example comes from Maria, when she described how non-European migration has changed the way she perceives herself as a migrant in Sweden:

**Maria:** But again, we looked like different in the early years, when we came. Now, people have become more mixed. Nowadays, you can’t really see it, but back then we were different. Now people are mixed, but back then we were different. We were the “Blackheads”.

Interviewer: Did you feel weird back then?

**Maria:** Not weird, but it was obvious that we were a different people. [...] comparing to Asian, Chinese for example, I think we (Europeans) are in a better place, and more...how should I put it? More handsome people. This is my perception.

The above extract exemplifies how personal identification has transformed over time. Maria dismantled a common European identity in her first years in Sweden by emphasizing intra-European difference. When other migrants with different stereotypical phenotypes than the European arrived, Maria started to develop feelings of belonging. She used the deictic “we” to refer to Europeans like herself, mentioning a common (European) phenotype.

In the following extract, Lefteris mentioned that his spatial and cultural background were an advantage for his life as a migrant in Sweden, in comparison to other migrant groups who were considered to represent the Other of Europe. He was externally identified and positioned in a favourable category by Swedish society in relation to other migrants in Sweden.

**Lefteris:** I was feeling a little bit better because I’m not a Muslim or a Turk, something I later tried to analyse. Why? Why should I feel superior to a Turk, for example? There is no reason.

Interviewer: And why did you feel like that?

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88 Referring to the term “svartskallar” (see footnote 70).
Lefteris: I was feeling like this because I had less problems. I was not pinpointed like the Turks, Muslims or blacks. I was a migrant, but still, I was white and not a Turk. I was a migrant, but still, I was white but not a Turk.

Interviewer: This superiority it was created by…?

Lefteris: It was an advantage, not superiority.

Interviewer: You felt it like that, and was it Swedish society that was creating it?

Lefteris: Of course! Those were the signals I was getting.

This could be related to the evolution of racist attitudes in Swedish society in relation to “whiteness”, as a Swedish characteristic of belonging, as well as the de-racialization of older ethnic groups of migrants and the racialization of newer ethnic groups, as several studies have shown (Hübinette and Lundström 2014; Mulinari and Neergaard 2017; Lundström 2017). Hübinette and Lundström (2014) discussed a 2013 governmental report that revealed the social and residential segregation of white Swedes and European and North American migrants as compared to migrants of a different colour and space of origin. However, given the spatial division inside Europe, one could raise the question of whether other Europeans (or even North Americans) are more accepted by and well-integrated into Swedish society. The East-West and North-South division might be a factor that defines the social acceptance of European migrants by white Swedes.

The institutionalized right of free mobility and the right of abode are the most significant factors encouraging the Greek informants to adopt some European identification. It is a right that they have practised so that they could move and establish their lives in Sweden. Furthermore, rights and benefits that derive from European citizenship seem to create a sense of belonging to the EU. Some of these rights and benefits are connected to mobility or intra-European migration. Konstantinos, an anti-EU leftist, admitted that he did not have to pay tuition for his master’s degree in Sweden, something that non-EU students were obliged to do. Natalia referred to the EU mobility programme that had facilitated her relocation to another EU country. In particular, the right of free mobility has been referred to several times throughout the interviews as something that enhances belonging, even by the migrants who had both Swedish and Greek citizenship. The right of free mobility, highly attached to citizenship in a
nation-state context, proves to be a significant factor in creating identifications and enhancing belonging:

**Eleni:** I consider myself a citizen of Europe, in the good sense of Europe: the free movement of people. I don’t want to wear the label “migrant”, because as I said, migrant has a negative connotation for me [...] so I think that this European identity that we say, I don’t mean it as identity, but rather that European citizens that they travel inside Europe and they cannot or they don’t want to be part of a certain national identity, they are European citizens.

Vieten (2018, 35), by examining intra-European migrants’ attitudes towards Europe, also concluded that “space and place of Europe are accessible thought individual EU mobility rights”. Confirming this idea, Eleni said she found it difficult to fully embody a European identity, but she acknowledged that the politics of belonging to the EU, through European citizenship, can pave the way to a transnational European cosmopolitan identity.

**7.4. Conclusions**

The paradox of both applying constructive and dismantling strategies shows the ambivalence of the Greek informants in relation to Europe as a potential space of belonging and, at a second level of analysis, in relation to the EU. The Greek intra-European migrants felt uncertain about their identification with and sense of belonging to Europe. Transformation strategies, which were mainly related to how conditions have changed over time and to future developments, showed the interviewees’ sense of disappointment at the institutional aspect of Europe. For the Greek informants, the EU, conceptually incorporating Europe, is a space of expectations that have not yet been met and probably will not be. Perpetuation strategies were used by some of the Greek interviewees to emphasize institutions, values and a cultural basis common inside Europe, characterizing the European space over time. With this strategy, the interviewees found an opportunity to connect the two national spaces, the Greek and the Swedish, via the European space, thus enhancing a sense of belonging to Sweden.

The Europeanization process, which was initiated by the EU over the European continent, seems to have been successful in overtaking discursive elements even in the language of the informants who were critical of the EU and who explicitly differentiated the political project from continental Europe. When the geographical “European” overlapped in different discur-
sive moments with the institutional “European”, one could infer that the EU has gained a certain naturalization in the minds of the informants.

Despite the presence of dismantling strategies, the use of the deictic “we” in reference to “Europe” and “European” indicates that the interviewed Greek migrants discursively constructed a space of belonging that encompasses both their home country and current country of residence. Often this sense of belonging was enhanced by contrasting a “we” to a “them”, represented by non-European migrants. However, the European elite has also been presented as the Other, detached from the mass, not acting in the interest of the people, but rather obsessed with the economy.
8. Latvian migrants: identifications with and sense of belonging to Europe

The Latvian informants used all four kinds of discursive strategies presented by Wodak et al. (2009) and De Cillia et al. (1999). The qualitative thematic analysis of the data from the interviews with the Latvian migrants in Sweden revealed the same themes as emerged from the Greek migrants’ interviews, but with some variation in the sub-themes:

- Institutionalization of Space: Europe equals EU, Europe as an idea, Brexit, national autonomy.
- Spatial Division: West vs. East, old vs. new member states, big vs. small.
- Spatial belonging: free mobility, third-county migration, phenotype, common values.

8.1. Institutionalization of space

When asked about Europe, the Latvian informants made direct associations with the EU. Moreover, in their view, the adjective European might mean something related either to the continent as a wider geographical concept or to the institution that tries to integrate it economically and politically, namely the EU. The element that reveals what Europe or European really corresponds to is the context. Sometimes follow-up clarification questions were posed to the interviewees in an attempt to specify the actual meaning of “Europe” and “European”. The Latvian informants used constructive strategies primarily to express their positive disposition towards Europe, while they used dismantling strategies to emphasize national autonomy.

Interviewer: What does Europe mean for you?

**Ludis:** I haven’t thought so much about it. But for me Europe means nothing more than the EU. Nothing more than the separate countries that make up Europe.
Interviewer: The word Europe for you, does it have any direct connotations to the EU?

Anna: Yes, but then there is…I work inside the EU, I live inside the EU, so it can be related to that.

Interviewer: What does Europe mean for you?

Anna: Internal market, almost a state, not really a state, a great idea, too much bureaucracy.

In the Latvian informants’ view, Europe and the EU are in a process of creation and integration – an “idea” rather than merely a technocratic “project”. The Latvian participants used the word “idea” when prompted to answer to the question “What is Europe for you?” or “What does Europe mean for you?”. This combined with Europe and the EU’s association with various concepts, such as freedom, mobility, human rights, and peace, shows that Europe has been more an “ideal” than an “idea” for Latvians who had been yearning to return to it for a long period of time. The answers from the interviewees who gave a concrete answer to the question of what Europe means showed their emotional involvement in the concept of “Europe” and more specifically in a united Europe realized through the EU:

Lauris: The EU is the same. You are a member of the EU; you definitely feel European. I am for the European Union, but the question is how far and so on, but that’s different. But as an idea as such, for sure.

Maija: Freedom! Maybe because I lacked it during my childhood. Democracy!

Dana: No limits. I like the idea that I can travel wherever I want without papers. There is so much to see there.

Artis: Well, it was a dream, I have a Latvian friend, my best friend, who lives in Germany, he is now 85, […] yes, we talked many times about how we could liberate our country and the Baltic States. And that’s when Europe united, like the US.

Interviewer: And when did you discuss this Artis?

Artis: We talked about this in the 1960s or 1950s.
Interviewer: And what does Europe mean for you?

**Modris:** [...] I think the whole basis of it, starting with the coal-miners’ union, is to avoid wars and conflicts, and that’s a great idea and you shouldn’t forget that [...] 

However, included in this “ideal” is the autonomy and independence each EU member state should have inside the EU. The strategy of transformation was used discursively to express the fear of losing state autonomy and sliding into EU’s hegemony. Latvians’ historic experience of being subjugated under several great powers – such as Sweden, Germany, Russia, and the Soviet Union – has probably created reflexive responses to extra-Latvian authorities. That was explicitly mentioned, but also implied, and efforts towards centralization of power and authority in the EU were criticized. The Latvian informants either stated that each country inside the union should retain its sovereignty or they complained that the EU had already intervened enough in Latvia’s domestic politics. Hence, national autonomy rather than an EU heteronomy is a prerequisite for my informants’ approval of Latvia’s membership in the EU.

**Modris:** [...] I think that as long as we are a group of sovereign states, great, great! [...] 

**Emma:** I feel European but what I do not like is that the EU has its own rules and sometimes the countries need to adjust to those regulations and rules, and I would like each country to retain more of its own standards, own peculiarities. For example, food. We have tasty smoked food in Latvia and smoked fish and then they want standards and standards and standards and some rules and more rules, and then we lost something, which is ours alone. A natural product, very healthy and tasty. That I don’t like. And they want to make everyone more or less alike, in all the countries, but I think that we’re different from each other.

Interviewer: You mentioned Europe. What does Europe mean for you?

**Guna:** (long pause)

Interviewer: Is it just a geographical term or…

**Guna:** It’s cultural as well of course. A place where different nationalities live, and all countries try to do their best for their country, their interests, protect their interests very well. […]
In the above quote from Emma, the third-person plural personal pronoun “they” in the sentence “And they want to make everyone more or less alike” is reminiscent of the use of “they” by some Greek informants when they referred to an unspecified authority, to an impersonal European elite that steers the EU and has its own agenda. Likewise, Emma did not name a specific person or a specific institution whose aim is homogenization of the European continent. Furthermore, the above quote from Maija is a characteristic example of particularizing synecdoche (Wodak et al. 2009, 44), where Brussels replaces the EU. This synecdoche alludes to what other interviewees explicitly said about the EU. They expressed positive attitudes towards the idea of a united Europe, which is accompanied by positive values and ideals. However, they opposed the centralization of authorities and powers, which does take place in the EU, by referring to Brussels as the centre of European institutions in lieu of the EU, which they seemed to perceive in more idealistic and positive terms. Both the pronoun “they” in Emma’s quote and the metaphoric use of Brussels allude to the EU’s democratic deficit, where people feel they cannot exert political control or are uncertain as to who really has power over their lives and home countries.

Although the interviews with the Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden were conducted during the same time period, the latter were much more preoccupied with Brexit and its possible consequences. Brexit came up many times as an issue when the discussion turned to Europe. The mass emigration of Latvians during the post-independence and post-EU-accession period (Hazans 2013), to the UK and Ireland in particular (Lulle 2014), and the possible consequences of Brexit for the free mobility of EU citizens inside the UK were issues that worried the Latvian informants and were perceived to bode ill for the EU’s future and ideals. The malleability of spatial belonging for the member states in relation to the EU brings with it the malleability of belonging of an individual in relation to Europe, as it is also based on the institutionalization of the European continent. The sub-theme “Brexit” included transformative and constructive strategies regarding Europe and the EU with positive historical references. Some informants referred to the EU as a peace project and to Brexit as a malfunction in this project:
Elya: But now of course with this Brexit business they will, maybe they will, want to get rid of people who have come from East Europe. So maybe they'll say “go back to your country! We don’t want you here anymore” (laughing). This Brexit is a very important thing. It will change many things even for Swedish people, and Swedish firms that established themselves in England, because the conditions were different, and maybe they want to return to Sweden.

Modris: Part of the EU now, happy to be within the EU, but not happy about the Brexit at all.

Interviewer: Do you think there is a common European identity that all people inside Europe share with each other? (long pause) There should be peace in that way. But you may wonder about the goals when you have Brexit happening.

Artis: [...] The European idea, yes, we need to get together, we must talk and never fight again. Never, never, a third world war. One day perhaps. Not today. Now Europe, I mean Brexit, and you never known what will happen with the Czechs and the Poles and Hungarians.

In the above quote, Artis use of the pronoun “we” takes on deictic qualities with reference to Europe. However, owing to the macro-regional or international organization of the EU, deictic values may be many in comparison to the national deictic “we”, which refers to the people of the nation (Billig 1995). In a European and EU context, “we” might represent the people of Europe, the countries of Europe or the EU member states, as it is the EU that upholds peace on the continent, according to Artis. In the quote above, Elya, who has been in Sweden most of her life, seemed to be concerned about the consequences of Brexit, not only for her fellow Latvians living in the UK, but also for Sweden. In this way, two instances of spatial belongings are linked to a third instance, under the framework of a political entity that exists on a larger spatial and institutional scale, such as the EU. Furthermore, Elya introduced an additional space in the form of Eastern Europe, placing Latvia in this region. She realized that, in a migratory context, the macro-regional external identification is probably more significant than the national, as the former comes with characteristics that frame perceptions of the latter. Elya’s response is an example of how migration and European mobility create dynamic conjunctions of geographical and institutional spaces when these spaces are realized as spaces of belonging. Personal attachment to various imagined communities and to regions of social
constructive abstraction shows that migration creates multi-spatial positioning of personal belongings in a complex of nested spaces.

Interviewer: Do you feel there is a common European identity?

**Lauris:** (long pause) Yes, I feel European, in a sense, I gave examples, we work together, so we do things together, like a family do things together, identity, we do the same things like any other family. What should I say? I will not identify which quality makes me European compared with someone else who doesn't have this quality. Americans might have the same qualities.

In the above quote, Lauris, who collaborates in joint European projects with other people around Europe, explained that he would identify himself as a European through his sense of belonging to something that is a common European enterprise, rather than to specific and unique attributes that Europeans have and that distinguish them from non-Europeans. In this quote, “we” is accompanied by the metaphor of family, with all its primordial connotations. However, his sense of belonging is not linked to cultural or biological ties, but to collective activities and common projects. Here, “we” is nation neutral and institutionally positioned. It organizes and produces a sense of belonging and eventually a self-identification with something European. This is another example of how the Latvian informants related their perceptions of the European space as a heterogeneous one, connected to a common goal rather than to a homogenous space with shared and unique characteristics.

### 8.2. Spatial division

For the Latvian informants, Europe is not a firmly defined area, but one that can be spatially divided. Geography is a factor that outlines the western borders of the continent in an unambiguous way. The Atlantic Ocean is the geographical marker delineating the western limits of Europe. Less clear is where Europe starts or ends in the east. A significant majority of the Latvian participants saw their border to Russia as the frontier of Europe to the east. In their view, Russia is the constitutive Other of Europe. It may represent a political, a cultural or just a geographical Other. In contrast to the Atlantic, the Eurasian mega-continent to the west does not offer clear dividing lines between east and west. Geography seems to offer more defined borders than does culture or institutions such as the EU. The constructed attributes of
Russia, as the constitutive Other of Europe, have been predominant in almost all of the interviews with the Latvian informants. Interestingly, some of them brought up the issue of Turkey’s accession to the EU, a topic the Greek informants did not address. This indicates that Latvians, for whom Russia is Europe’s Other, may have been more concerned with the questions of where Europe really ends in the east and of whether Eurasian countries, such as Russia and Turkey, should ever be allowed to join the EU. This is also an indicator of the geopolitical dimensions of belonging and spatial positioning in the European periphery.

**Maija:** Well it (Europe) ends at the ocean and west of course.

**Ludis:** Where the vast Russia ends, that is where Europe starts, to the Atlantic Ocean and the other way around.

**Kalvis:** Geographically I wouldn’t include Russia in Europe or Turkey. They are not probably in Europe, but the west coast of Turkey would be in Europe also, but you can’t divide it (Turkey) like that.

Interviewer: So, do you feel European in some way?

**Lucy:** Oh yes. Yes. I feel a lot more European than I feel Russian. But I have Russian blood. But not so much. Do you understand what I mean?

Interviewer: Yes. I’m just wondering what differentiates European from Russian. You said you are more European than Russian. But in what way?

**Lucy:** (Long pause. Finds it difficult to answer). Good question!

Lucy’s quote, above, is an example of the oppositional binarity between the notion of Europe and that of Russia, which many of the informants share. Lucy emphatically positioned her European self-identification antithetically to an alternative Russian one, thus emphasizing the former. This opposition, one could argue, was established almost instinctively or automatically, given that Lucy was unable to clarify the differences between Russia and Europe and considering how she understands the two spatial entities in comparative terms.

The malleability of the European eastern borders also concerns the home country of the Latvian informants, showing the ambiguity of Latvia’s European belonging. Some interviewees stated that Latvia was the western frontier separating the Soviet Union from Europe and not merely in geogra-
According to the informants, Latvia, alongside the other two Baltic States, should be considered the most developed part of the Soviet Union, which in their view is an indication of the European character of the country and region.

**Maija:** Because, even in the Soviet period, we could see very clearly that what was eastern was more authoritarian and more accepted by the Russian part of the population. And all these strange Latvians, we didn’t get any recognition. We were seen as Germans, once we went to Ukraine, for example. We were never recognized as people coming from the same country. Never, ever!

**Lauris:** In Soviet times it was different. Well yes, it was because I was raised during this time, it was the western part of the Soviet Union, and the living conditions were much more developed than in the rest of Russia. I’ve been to many places in Russia, and there’s a big difference. So, then you really also feel the big difference. At those times, for most of Russia, the Baltic countries were also the West.

According to some informants, when Latvia changed its territorial context and regained its independence, it came closer to Europe or was repositioned back inside Europe. However, Latvia, which was considered the most developed part of the old territory, was downgraded from one of the most developed areas to one of the less developed in the new spatial context of Europe. The development disparity inside Europe and especially inside the EU was problematized by the informants. The “old vs. new member states” sub-theme was dwelled on in almost all the interviews, and it was directly linked to the unequal development inside the EU based on a “west-old” and “east-new” binarity.

**Emma:** But what doesn’t satisfy me is that we are part of Europe but at the same time our level is not the European level, as to wages. And the salaries also, how people live. And as to the EU, as part of the European Union, even Latvia needs to pay high taxes and the contribution of the country. But on the other hand, we don’t have as much money as the other countries of the EU.

Regarding European integration, the informants grouped Latvia in the eastern European region, in a cohort with other countries that are expected to work to achieve western European standards. Maija, in the following passage, constructed a collective “we group” by using “us” in the context of
Eastern Europe, as “us” eastern Europeans or as “us” Latvians, part of Eastern Europe, just as Elya did previously. Maija pointed out that eastern European countries have been treated differently in the EU context, in relation to the demands they have to meet in order to achieve western European standards. According to Maija, the Soviet past and the Soviet authoritarian regime constitute the historical disadvantages on which Western Europe bases its requirements for EU accession.

Maija: [...] And then, they were “Ok, the East is always more stupid than western countries because we (i.e. the west) had democracy”, and all these things. But at the same time there are scientific articles showing that there are different demands on the east, central-east side of Europe. When we are talking about human rights and all these institutions, there were no demands on any of the western or south-eastern European countries. So, there are plenty of countries that can’t fulfil these criteria, which they are asking of us. So, you’re asking us to do this, this, and this, when you’re not doing them yourself.

The issue of the EU’s unfair treatment of the new member states as well as economic expansion is a dominant topic. On several occasions, the informants referred to the “size matters” theme. They considered their country too small to be taken into consideration in European politics and generally in negotiations surrounding various issues inside the EU. They were worried and, in a way, had also accepted that Latvia’s interest would not be respected because it is smaller than the other EU member states and is of less economic, population-related and political significance. One solution to this problem, suggested by some of the interviewees, is for the smaller countries, like the three Baltic republics, to join forces. The EU’s big countries, most prominently Germany, are regarded as having substantial influence over the important matters concerning the EU.

Anna: [...] You cannot compare Germany’s (European) parliament members with Lithuania’s, Latvia’s, Estonia’s members of parliament, unless these countries get together and start acting as a block. You can’t achieve much on your own.

Danna: [...] there is nothing left in Latvia anymore. We have no production, we have no export, everything is bought by the Danes, Germans, Swedes…so there’s nothing left really.
Guna: […] and the older Europe, that is the countries that entered the EU first, they have a totally different insight into it (Europe) in comparison to the new countries. Totally. It’s full of contrasts, I think, as well.

However, the EU is also perceived positively as the institution that facilitates economic integration of the European continent and the westernization of Latvia and the rest of Eastern Europe by encouraging the country to adopt a western profile as regards the economy and general development.

Kalvis: […] and then the whole ex-Soviet bloc: the Baltic countries, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, which had to start from scratch after the collapse of the Soviet Union and now they have been playing catch-up for the last 20 years. And that’s why it’s good to be in the EU, since it helps them. They are developed countries, but in a European perspective these countries, I said it before, are still developing countries […]

For the Latvian informants, the spatial division of Europe is based on historical experiences and justifications and is embodied inside the EU by a separation between old and new member states, as well as between big and more powerful and small and thus marginalized countries, such as Latvia.

8.3. Spatial belonging

According to the Latvian informants, the right of free mobility as a result of EU membership was also a factor that enhanced the sense of belonging to Europe. Although the Greeks also mentioned the importance of free mobility, the Latvians described it using more intense language, using linguistic means that showed their emotions and made use of metaphors. Furthermore, free mobility was positioned alongside other values that are shared in and representative of Europe, such as freedom and respect for human rights. The informants used constructive strategies in this theme to stipulate the importance of free mobility to their belonging to Europe. Moreover, they used transformative strategies to pinpoint the difference between then and now, where “then” referred to Latvia’s Soviet and non-EU period, when mobility restrictions were imposed and visa authorization required.

Interviewer: Do you feel European?

Emma: Yes, yes!
Interviewer: In what way?

Emma: Because I lived at a time when we didn’t have all our freedoms and then we got our freedom and now we’re Europeans too.

Interviewer: What does Europe mean to you?

Lucy: It’s an extension of home.

Interviewer: In what way?

Lucy: Because I can go wherever. This is the idea of, you know freedom of movement. And freedom also of…If I want to work somewhere else, I can find work somewhere else and find a job, and find a place to live, and move there and live. There you go. And also, not just the movement. Now the monetary system, but also that the rules are the same. […] The base of rules. It’s like, when I came to Sweden, it was a part of the EU. Latvia was not at that point (part of the EU). So, I kind of escaped the prison. I could travel in Europe, without a visa, which I needed before. Of course, the first thing that I did was to buy a plane ticket to Amsterdam. Because, I couldn’t even dream about this before. Because I didn’t have the money, the means and I was not allowed. All that.

Lucy’s quote, above, reveals the context that makes free mobility so important to the Latvian interviewees. The Soviet experience and the mobility constraints have not only attached great significance to the right of free mobility, but also symbolized the independence of Latvia and its belonging to the western world. The common values mentioned by the informant, which were associated with Europe and the EU, are one criterion that, in Lucy’s opinion, gives a sort of homogeneity to the European region and enhances a sense of belonging to something united. The following passage from Maija’s interview shows the importance of these common values, while it also reveals a more liberal and inclusive approach to European identity, which has the potential to include all people who adopt these common values.

Interviewer: Do you feel European?

Maija: Yeah!

Interviewer: In what way you feel European?
Maija: Just because I can subscribe to all these values.

In the following interview extracts, Maija, Elya and Artis placed the common cultural foundation, which has produced these European values, in ancient Greece and Rome, as well as in Christianity. These common cultural roots are what distinguish Europeans from others and constitute European belonging. In Elya’s quote, the use of deictic “we” and “us” is a tool for the oppositional attempt to position the US as one of Europe’s Others. According to Elya, historical experience is an important source of similarity and grouping of European countries into a “we-group” in contrast to the US, which lacks the historical intensity of Europe. This is interesting, because in this case the constitutive Other is not located in the east and does not reflect anti-Islamic sentiments. Maija also referred to common values that spring from classical antiquity and Christianity. Her responses included metaphors such as “the same roots” and “the same foundation”, which served to emphasize that there is a common basis that unites the European region and operates as a bond for the various elements that constitute European heterogeneity. The explicit reference to the Roman Empire, Sweden and the Baltic States in the same sentence was Maija’s attempt to spatially connect her home country with the country of residence, thus creating a unified space of belonging. This might help her to establish feelings of belonging to Sweden, not only through an institutional framework such as the EU, but also through something more fundamental, such as history and a common culture:

Elya: For instance, my sister married and went to the United States. I’ve been there eight times, but I don’t want to go to America to live. Because they are too different from us. The thing is that I consider America a new country in comparison with, you know walking around in Rome! I mean that is something (laughing). We have this very old culture; it is sort of basic to our lives here. In America they don’t have this. They are a new country, and so many different people live there.

Interviewer: So, Christianity is something that unites Europe, something common…?

Artis: Yes. And all laws are founded on the 10 commandments. Don’t steal and kill.
Maija: It’s not about the geography, it is rather about the culture and ideas that are dominant in the respective countries. I mean, if you look at all these countries, they have been huge countries like kingdoms, steered by some kings or rules from like Greek orthodoxy and Christianity. They come from the same roots. So, if you have the same foundation despite everything that is there in-between today, and then even some layers are different, but there are some common ideas coming through. Some kind of radiation. So that I think. […] Like Grecian democratic ideas, Christianity comes from the Middle East you know, but because it was adopted by the Roman Empire and all these things, it was spread all over, to Sweden and to the Baltic States. So, these are ideas, as we have said, they are Christian, but I don’t think that they just appeared there, they were there already a long time before, even if they weren’t written down (the ideas). Like some old Grecian philosopher.

For some of the Latvian informants, third-country migration, as distinct from free mobility deriving from EU citizenship, and the role of Islam as the constitutive Other of Europe are two more elements, besides Russia, that serve to position Latvia inside Europe. The Element of Islam creates a de facto belonging to Europe, as Latvia is a non-Muslim country and a member state of the EU.

Maija: Because I don’t really believe that all these countries (Muslim countries) would subscribe to the values that are important to Europe. […] it was some (religious) union when they decided that sharia is over human rule which means in western countries Muslim don’t have to apply fully to democratic rights and all this stuff. […] So, if you want to join the EU, you have to skip sharia and become a moderate. Moderate in your religious beliefs, and that’s what I think. Because Turkey is more or less moderate, but in recent years with this Erdogan, they’re becoming more and more Muslim. There is a moderate part and there is an Islamic part and the Islamic part has taken over.

Guna also referred to refugee migration and Latvia’s heteronomy from the EU. According to her, Latvia is being forced by the EU to receive and accommodate asylum seekers while it does not have the economic means to support the local population, pinpointing again a relation of heteronomy between Latvia and the EU:

Guna: […] And Latvia feels it cannot afford to be generous. We can barely pay our pensions, for people who have spent all their life working in our country. Latvia feels that it should be more prioritized. And suddenly the
government, we have to receive a couple of hundred people from Syria. And the government was “no we don’t agree with that”. But I think that money actually comes from Europe, it’s not something Latvia pays for, but anyway.

Anna linked the migration politics of the EU with efforts to establish a common European identity. She found it an oxymoron that the EU is trying to bring together endo-European elements while in parallel allowing exo-European elements to enter the continent. The use of the metaphor “bring them in” and the phrase “third world” construct two different spatial entities. The first is the European one, which is closed and defined, and the second is a space that lies at a distance to the first.

Interviewer: So, the question is if you believe that there’s a common European identity?

Anna: There is an emerging one, but I think the immigration policies are trying to destroy it.

Interviewer: The EU immigration policy?

Anna: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: In what way?

Anna: Well you can’t try to build a society together, right? Which is the EU aspiration. [...] The society will become very diverse, it’s already a challenge. It has added so many different countries, so many different values, different languages, cultures and then you bring something in from the third world. And then the public starts to lose trust in the government and then it starts to perceive everything with suspicion, and then this affects the whole idea of European identity. You can’t work towards integration and then, you know, try to hinder it. But it will be great if there is integration at some point.

In the quote below, Emma used the pronoun “they” to refer to third-country migrants living in Sweden, but also in Latvia. Despite trying to avoid generalizations, she reproduced an anti-migration discourse that could be found in Sweden in connection with earlier migration periods, but that was also predominant during the EU enlargements towards the east. Despite recognizing her own migrant identity, she does not group herself with or feel she belongs to that “they”. Although this is not clear from her first answer, by referring both to Latvia and to Sweden, she created a spatial
link between the two countries under a European framework that is both institutional and cultural and that helps her to establish a sense of belonging to the Sweden: “*The Europeans are already used to some kind of system in comparison to non-Europeans*”. Emma grouped herself and third-country migrants in different immigration regimes (Barbero 2012; Isin 2012): the intra-Europeans and the allochthonous non-Europeans, who are being hosted in an alien space:

**Emma:** Because, and for me, here in Sweden and in Latvia also, if people come, they have to accept the rules of that country. But many people don’t want to do it. They just want to use the system and that I don’t like. Because people want to have a better life. So, I came to Sweden to live better. But if you come to the country you follow the rules. Of course, many people do this. They learn the language, accept the traditions, respect, respect! But some people don’t do that, they just ask, give, give me. Migrants do that, but not all. You can be a migrant, I’m a migrant also, but respect the country. But a lot of people don’t respect the rules and that’s why a lot of Swedish people feel bad.

Interviewer: Is this related to Europe in any way?

**Emma:** Yes, I think it is related.

Interviewer: Are you saying that European migrants respect the rules more than others so?

**Emma:** The Europeans are already used to some kind of system in comparison to non-Europeans. Of course, every person is different. There are many migrants who came, and they just want to have everything served to them. Just to get money without working, stay single because you get better conditions (benefits), and some (extra) social services.

In the following quotes, Maija, Kalvis and Anna explicitly referred to a white phenotype and to certain cultural characteristics as European, differentiating them from the East. Maija’s narrative refers to the Soviet period. In her view, like the other informants in this study, intra-Soviet travelling had revealed the differences between Latvia and the other parts of the Union. The adjective “exotic” attributed to Latvians excluded them from a Soviet context, and the agent for this was a Soviet Other, which imagined them as exotic, denying belonging to something common and emphasizing a spatial distance. One could argue that, as a space of mobility, the Soviet
Union did not generate any kind of sense of belonging for Latvian informants who had experienced living in such a supranational entity.

**Maija:** We even look different. We met once some young soldiers when we were travelling somewhere else. [...] And they were like “Oh, we want to talk to you, exotic girls. You look different, you don’t have so much make up, you dress differently”. Like you are not exaggerating, you are more modest in these things.

In his effort to answer the question of whether he felt European, Kalvis initially offered a biological depiction of the people inhabiting the continent, probably having in mind a white phenotype. However, he soon realized, seemingly because the Greek interviewer was darker than him, that there is phenotypical variation in Europe, it was not reasonable to construct a European identity based on a common phenotype. However, the implication of a racially white Europe is still in the foreground, and this is an indicator of how his blond characteristics serve to establish his belonging to Sweden via a common European belonging.

**Kalvis:** I feel European yes. [...] Probably first would be the looks, but then again, the looks are different. People from Greece look different from people in Sweden or Latvia.

In the following quote, Anna also created a spatial division between West and East by describing an Iranian friend of hers, based on two basic characteristics: attitudes towards religion, more specifically Islam, and a phenotype with “eastern features”. Though she wanted to defend her friend by supporting her spatial belonging, the way she articulated it unintentionally placed her friend almost categorically in another, non-European space of belonging.

**Anna:** A friend of mine [...] she was born in Iran and brought up in Australia, [...] in a bus she was harassed: “Oh you look like an immigrant, you are a Muslim”. And she is not, you know, she is the nicest person on earth. She doesn’t have any religious symbols, she is very nice, [...] she not religious at all [...]  

**Interviewer:** Only because she looks like ....
Anna: Eh, even she doesn’t. […] She does not look like, that foreign. Her skin is very white, she has hazel eyes, you know not very dark, her hair is not black, it’s brownish. There are some eastern features, but they are not super explicit.

Similar to Maija, Anna implied that religiosity is a characteristic that is incompatible with the West and Europe, as spaces of practised secularization. For Anna, her friend was unjustifiably targeted as a Muslim migrant because she did not bear any religious symbols that would reveal her actual Muslim and non-European spatial belonging. Additionally, Anna’s friend’s physical characteristics resemble those of a white person. However, they do not guarantee a western belonging, which was why it was Anna’s friend and not Anna who had experienced a racist assault.

Modris: But we are part of Europe, and even Swedes say, “down in Europe” and they forget they are part of Europe too. You hear that. That Europe is something below Skåne, or Copenhagen, down there. But they forget that we are part of Europe too. Europe is quite big in a sense. The Swedes talk like that. Even now when they are part of the European Union they still refer to, like “I will go down to Europe”. But you are Europe! I mean. But they think that ok the Mediterranean area you go to for the warmer weather. But here also, in Stockholm you are part of Europe. But sometimes you forget that.

Modris’s reasoning, above, exemplifies how a trans-European migrant self-identifies with his current country of residence and Europe, but at the same time how he discursively differentiates himself from his current national space. The deictic dimension of “we” in “they forget that we are part of Europe too” shows how Modris seemed to relate himself to the European and the national space. Using “we”, he included himself in Sweden, while differentiating himself from the Swedish national mass by juxtaposing an exclusive “they” to the inclusive “we”. These deictic antitheses reveal the dynamics of belonging to various national spaces in relation to a space of a larger scale, which in this case is Europe.

8.4. Conclusions

The Latvian informants, who expressed more positive attitudes towards the European integration project than the Greeks did, used comparatively fewer dismantling strategies. Europe has been the space they were longing for and this desire for European belonging is an outcome of their Soviet experience.
Latvia’s spatial repositioning in Europe was eulogized not only by post-independence migrants, but also by those who had arrived in Sweden after WW2. According to the Latvian informants, Europe overlaps cognitively with the EU, and the European project is dismantled when it collides with the national autonomy of Latvia. The Latvian interviewees were concerned about Latvia retaining its institutional and cultural autonomy. This is probably another outcome of their Soviet experience. The Latvian informants supported the European integration project, on the condition of nation-state independence inside the EU institutional framework. The exit of the United Kingdom from this framework was discussed in negative terms, having consequences for both national spaces of belonging: the Latvian and the Swedish.

Clear-cut topography, as compared to socially constructed regions and political entities, is a more substantive component of the definition of Europe. The Atlantic Ocean does not leave much doubt about Europe’s spatial and cultural borders to the west. It seems that for the Latvian informants, Eurasian geography imposes on Europe an institutional and cultural contingency, forcing Europe to be a space – politically, culturally and historically – with multilinear eastern limits. In this contingency, Latvia has been re-placed inside Europe and inside the EU. Transformative discursive strategies were used by the informants to express this transition with reference to both the past and the present. However, the old border still seems to be present inside the united EU space, as it was expressed by the Latvian interviewees in a series of binary oppositions regarding the member states: West/big/developed/democratic vs. East/small/underdeveloped/post-Soviet.

The end of mobility constraints in post-independence Latvia and mainly the beginning of access to the European mobility right served as stimulators of European identity among Latvians. Free mobility alongside other values, such as democracy and peace, created a sense of belonging to Europe. A common historical and cultural past, with references to classical antiquity and Christianity, is considered to be the source of these values, which are “radiated”, as Maija put it, to the present. For some of the informants, Islam functioned as the constitutive Other of Europe, as it has been stereotypically characterized as religious in contrast to the more secular Europe. A European phenotype marked by white characteristics has been mentioned as a shared European attribute that creates a bounded and exclusive space.
Final Remarks: Europe according to the Latvian and Greek migrants in Sweden.

The interviews with the Latvian and Greek migrants in Sweden revealed the same themes regarding the European space but involved different sub-themes. It seems that Europeanization has managed to create a cognitive understanding of the geographical space as an identification of the institutional one, because for both Latvian and Greek informants Europe was a synonym of the EU. Thus, being a member of the institutional space places the individual inside a defined geographical space and vice versa, creating a twofold European belonging. This is important for the informants, as geography seems to provide a more substantial and clearer understanding of what Europe is. A link between the national and the European space was attempted by both Greek and Latvian immigrants. The former found a common cultural and historical foundation deriving from ancient Greece, while the latter used a common European institutional experience found both in Latvia and in Sweden, but not shared by non-European migrants. Some informants referred to a European phenotype that created racial belonging, and this, especially in a migration context, fixes the “we group” and the Other.

The Greek informants mostly referred to Europe and the EU in negative terms as a space of unfulfilled expectations, while the Latvians, who had been longing for Europe after years of Soviet occupation, had more positive attitudes towards Europe and the EU, as a space of ideals.

Use of the deictic “they” with reference to a European authority, which the informants could not really identify or control, was a feature of both national migrant groups. For them it seems that the project was being run without their participation, making them feel like spectators. As Ulrike M. Vieten (2018, 37) wrote in her research paper on trans-European migrants, “unlike the nation-state, the European Union was regarded as an anonymous and abstract institution” in relation to which individuals could not position themselves through a sense of belonging.

The Latvian informants were more concerned with the eastern borders of Europe than the Greek informants were. Interestingly, three Latvians referred to the issue of the spatial belonging of Turkey to Europe, while no Greek interviewees did so. It seems that the recent economic crisis and the memoranda with the Troika had caused the Greek informants to direct their focus west and north. Many of the participants were either labour migrants in Northern Europe during the 1960s and 1970s or economic migrants owing to the 2010 economic crisis in Greece. Thus, for them, it
was the status of Greece in the West that offered the opportunity or, from another perspective that had caused them, to emigrate to some extent. The Soviet experience and presence of Russia to the east had caused the Latvian informants to become preoccupied with trying to define the eastern geographical and cultural borders of Europe.

Free mobility inside the European space is a right that has brought both the Greek and the Latvian informants closer to an identification with Europe. However, the Latvian migrants discursively connected free mobility with other values, such as democracy and peace. Again, the Soviet experience and the late accession of Latvia to the EU, in comparison to Greece, had made free mobility more important for the Latvians. Also, despite the fact that some mentioned the passport and free mobility, none of the informants in this study said anything about the sign of the European flag appearing on the cover page of all EU member states’ passports. This either indicates that the EU flag and the EU symbol have managed to obtain elements of banality, as in the case of banal nationalism, or that the people are still indifferent to these EU symbols.

Third-country migration and Islam function as constitutive Other(s) for many informants, enhancing identification and a sense of belonging to Europe and consequently to Sweden as the new country of residence. Research on non-white intra-European migrants has shown that “space and place of Europe are accessible through individual EU mobility rights, but the symbolic place of Europe is identified with whiteness […] Europe constructs the EU and being European as white” (Vieten 2018, 35 and 40). Lähdesmäski et al. (2016, 236) suggested that much of the research on the spatiality of belonging has focused on “ethnic, racial or national minorities”. However, examining EU migrants – because of their multi-scalar spatial connection which legitimizes them as migratory subjects inside Europe – helps to reveal how they perceive other migrants and to sketch the hierarchy of belongings inside the European space. Generally, what has initiated a sense of belonging among the Greek and Latvian informants is the politics of belonging in the EU, as well as cultural and historical references and a white racialization of Europe. Furthermore, Lähdesmäksi et al. (2016, 236–237) argued that the spatiality of belonging is, therefore, closely intertwined with temporality, materiality and embodiment, combining experiences from the past, notions of the present and expectations for the future. The interviews with the Latvian and Greek informants strongly support this view, as they show how the historical past, recent historical experience,
current European politics as well as expectations for the future have laid out the smorgasbord of belongings to the European space.

The politics of belonging, as a derivative of the institutionalization of the European space, seems to have created a sense of belonging to and identification with Europe among the Greek informants of this study. Additionally, Lefteris’s last quote, in which he explained how his phenotype and country of origin had facilitated his migration experience, indicates that the idea of a defined and separate European space (cultural, political, historical, and even racial) existed in Sweden, as part of Europe, long before the country joined the EU. Politics of belonging are usually accompanied by and become more legitimate through discourses of othering, which have been present on the continent in different articulations and at various moments in history.
The construction of identity, identifications with and sense of belonging to macro regions

The last part of the analysis is devoted to macro regional identifications and sense of belonging of the Greek and Latvian participants in relation to the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea regions respectively. However, it will also discuss other macro-regions mentioned by the informants. The material derived from the interviews related to macro-regions is significantly smaller in comparison to the nation-state and Europe. In some cases, this part of the interview was perceived by the respondents as being a geography test with a correct or wrong answer. The non-country centric questions made them feel insecure for their answers, with one interviewee stating explicitly that “I am not that good in geography”. This is another indication of the dominance of the nation-state even for migrants, since for some of them their knowledge on geography was limited mainly to their country of origin and this of residence. Many informants, both Greeks and Latvians, said that they had not thought of their macro regional belonging before the interview. They had difficulty to answer questions related to a possible macro-regional identity and to reflect on macro-regional geography. Furthermore, there was considerable delay between questions and answers and the informants had much more difficulty to answer to questions related to macro region, even as compared to Europe which was a space that perplexed them in comparison to country related discussion. I avoided specifying the macro-regions of the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea areas, as by naming them in the question I would have influenced the answer of the informants. Some interviewees, with the word “region” immediately associated sub-national entities. I avoided to use the word “macro-region” since this is a technical term, which was likely to further confuse the informants, something that was a conclusion of the pilot study. A solution to this was to try to reformulate the question in order to make the interviewees understand that I was referring to something spatially larger than a sub-national region, something that incorporates several countries. For example, a question could be “with which other countries would you group Latvia [or Greece] together?” However, in some cases, it was unavoidable to use a
leading question or offer some options as possible answers, in order to end the stoppage, facilitating the continuance of the discussion and so get some insights on possible regional identifications. Scandinavia, a well-recognized macro region, was offered as an example in order to specify what I meant with macro-region, but I made even other concrete suggestions to the interviewees. For Greeks the offered options were Mediterranean Sea region, Balkan or Southern Europe, and for the Latvians the Baltic Sea region, Baltic States or Eastern Europe. However, some informants clearly stated that they did not relate themselves to any macro-region and did not let the discussion to be further developed.
9. Greek migrants: macro-regional identifications and belonging

None of the Greek informants, except for Magda, associated their spatial belonging with the Mediterranean Sea region in the absence of suggestions from the interviewer. The informants who directly or indirectly discussed the Mediterranean as a space of some reference to them framed it as a space that contains a population with a similar mentality and common cultural elements. Climate was mentioned as a pivotal factor for construction of the Mediterranean mentality when juxtaposed with the northern part of Europe. Nikos constructed the Greek migrants in Sweden as being ill-suited to Sweden owing to the different climatological conditions, which ultimately define the cultural conditions:

**Nikos:** I believe the reason why Greeks get melancholic is because we are a Mediterranean tribe, and we have become used to living in a different way. We want our cafés, we want our sun [...].

Hence, climate re-emerges as an element of identity construction for the Greek informants, as it was used to construct two opposite national forms of habitus among the Greeks and the Swedes. This deictic spatial antithesis between the European North and the Mediterranean shows that some of the interviewees perceived Southern Europe and the Mediterranean Sea region as a tautology, as references to a joint culture and a common way of thinking mainly concerned southern European countries, such as Italy, Spain, and even Portugal. Only Spyros referred to the non-European part of the Mediterranean Sea region, introducing religion as a factor defining a macro-region and a sense of belonging to it. Having orthodoxy as the basis of this belonging he created a Levantine axis including Cyprus, Syria and Lebanon as well as the southern part of Turkey, explicitly excluding Israel and the rest of the Arabic countries in the region. An example of the spatial division of the Mediterranean into a European and a non-European part comes from Natalia’s negative reaction to the suggestion of a possible Mediterranean identity and self-identification. Natalia – though she refer-
red to a common cultural characteristic among Greeks and other peoples in the region – disclaimed any common identity: “Ok, we eat aubergines and so do the Turks or the Arabs, and so what?” However, she was much more positive to a South European belonging, suggesting that cultural references are meaningful elements of a common regional habitus. At the same time, she dismantled this by addressing the issue of the economy:

**Natalia:** We are spontaneous. We share some similar cultural and social phenomena, like that we, as the Italians also do, stay in our parents’ home until a late age. Or like that the family is a stronger institution, but then you start to think why. If for example a young Greek at the age of 25 had the salary of a 25-year-old Swede, would he choose to cohabitate with his dad or mum?”

The Balkans was the second most important macro-region for the informants. Maria linked the sub-national regional belonging to the macro-regional one. She stated that her northern Greek origins would imply a Balkan belonging instead of a Mediterranean one, as in her view the latter is related to Southern Greece: “We are from Northern Greece. So, it’s Balkan for us. We were never like Athenians”. Thus, Maria spatially divided Greece into a Balkan north part and a Mediterranean southern part. Yet for Sofia, Spyros, and Magda, sub-national regional belonging did not necessarily explain such a pattern, with the latter two acknowledging this discrepancy as they did relate in some way to the Mediterranean despite coming from the mainland of Northern Greece. Sofia, who comes from an Island in the Ionian Sea, stated that her sense of belonging to Eastern Europe is stronger: “We have the same temperament”. However, after some follow-up questions where I proposed several countries with which Greece might belong, it turned out that when she called the region “Eastern Europe” what she actually meant was the Balkan region. Magda tried to explain this discrepancy by drawing on her ethnic ancestry as a Pontic Greek, a group that has always settled around the sea. This is also the explanation that makes her feel connected to the Mediterranean Sea region.

89 Pontic Greeks comprise a Greek ethnic group that has historically lived in the greater area of Pontus. The Pontic Greek diaspora is large globally. Stephane Dufoix (2008, 63) maintained that there are two million Pontic Greeks worldwide, mostly in Russia, Ukraine, Greece, Germany, and Sweden.
Socialization with other migrants from the Mediterranean or the Balkans in the space of immigration constituted to a sense of belonging to the same region. The migration context acts as an enhancer of regional belonging, emphasizing the cultural similarities of people who have arrived in Sweden from both the Mediterranean, mainly the European part, and the Balkans. Magda mentioned that, in her working environment, it is her female colleagues from Spain and Italy with whom she has better and more substantial discussions, as compared to her Swedish colleagues:

**Magda:** We speak the same language (metaphorically). It’s very simple. My boss is a Spanish woman and we don’t even have to talk to each other because we just understand each other, and we haven’t known each other for that long. It’s a different bond.

For Irini and Maria, socialization with migrants from the former Yugoslavia in Sweden was another factor that had caused them to recognize their belonging to the Balkan region, geographically and culturally. Especially for Maria, who only speaks Greek, her discovery of common cultural elements with immigrants outside the Greek diasporic family had made the space of immigration feel less alien. Furthermore, Natalia, who rejected identifications and belonging to the Balkan region, mentioned that while living in a Swedish city within the framework of an EU education programme, with participants from all around Europe, she had expressed her admiration for the architectural beauty of the city to another participant from Bulgaria. Natalia got to hear what she found to be an unpleasant truth, namely that of a common regional belonging to the Balkan region: “I told her ‘Whoa, look at this. We’re not like this!’ and then she replied ‘Yes, we’re Balkans’”. Natalia eventually admitted that, geographically speaking, Greece belongs in the Balkan region, although in her view it does not belong there culturally; she regarded Greece as non-categorizable – as having its own unique culture.
For the Latvian informants, there was no identification with or sense of belonging to the Baltic Sea region. This region was framed as being scattered and divided into different sub-regions. This division was mostly seen in relation to history and economic development. Sentiments about the Baltic Sea as such were related to being part of the Latvian landscape or to a source of national wealth. However, a strong and clear sense of belonging as well as identifications (Baltic) with the Baltic States were expressed. Other types of regional belonging included East Europe and Northern Europe or Norden. The dynamics of belonging to and identification with these different macro-regions indicate a hierarchy among them, indicating preferable and less preferable belonging.

To the Latvians, the Baltic Sea region seemed to be a space consisting of different parts, which made it difficult for the interviewees to recognize a Baltic Sea identity in relation to themselves. Despite this, some common cultural elements might exist around the region, though the differences were what prevailed for the informants. For example, when I explicitly asked Anna about a possible Baltic Sea region identification, she indicated that the sea is a shared element that defines the region geographically and historically: "It unites the area. We have had the same wars". However, she also stressed that "Depending on where you are on the Baltic Sea you may feel differently", adding that Sweden is "a place I can’t conceive of as Baltic". Anna’s perception of the Baltic Sea region is primarily geographical, but also historical, recognizing the possible common elements in the region. Yet she felt it was the differences that had shaped her sense of the region. Her reference to Sweden as non-Baltic and her view that the perspective on what is Baltic depends on the spatial position of the beholder show this intra-regional division. When I asked her to divide the region into appropriate parts, she divided it into Nordic, Baltic (the three Baltic States) and Poland-Germany. A similar view on division of the region, with reference to the relation Sweden has to the Baltic Sea, was expressed by Guna. According to her, the Baltic Sea belongs to the three Baltic States, because, as she stressed,
the sea is called Baltic in Latvian, claiming in this way the linguistic origin of the term. A factor that enhances this claim is the juxtaposition with the Swedish term. Guna implied, almost sarcastically, that the Swedish word for the Baltic Sea, which is the East-sea (Östersjön), signifies indifference:

**Guna:** “Because in Latvia is “Baltijas jūra” and it’s the same word. Baltic. Baltic Sea. Exactly the same. In Sweden it is Östersjön and that means the sea on the east side or whatever. East doesn’t say anything. It could be Baltic. It could be in China”.

The interviewees made more references to the Baltic Sea as an element of the national landscape than to the Baltic Sea as a region. A sense of belonging to the sea was expressed via emotions related to the childhood period and other personal experiences. For Anna and Kalvis, experiences of the sea had partially affected their migration choice, as they preferred that their place of residence be close to water, as it had been during the pre-migration period:

**Anna:** I come from a country with a sea. The first year I wanted to move near the seaside. [...] The sun goes down in the sea. I want to find the same beach here, the smell. I like the water and smell. I want to find it, but you don’t get the sunset here. I went to Visby and there they have it all.

**Kalvis:** Now I’ve made it extreme (living by the sea). Now I live on an island.

Maija said the sea was symbolically important because of her childhood memories and local belonging to her country of origin. She even tried to unify the Baltic Sea region by mentioning elements common to the countries around the basin, such as the fishing villages spread along the coastline. She mentioned common linguistic groups such as the Finno-Ugric, although this is relevant only to part of the Baltic Sea region. However, Maija understood my question about a possible Baltic Sea region identity as a task, and she tried to accomplish it by giving me answers that could lead to such an identity.

Furthermore, the sea was framed as a salient source of national income, but also linked to a national identity, which was mentioned by Guna and Lucy. Guna stressed the importance of the sea for the Latvians and referred to the Latvians’ historical maritime tradition: “*Because we are connected, we depend on the sea. Because we put food on our table that is from the sea. We*
travel. Latvians are historically seamen. Guna even mentioned that, during the inter-war period, Latvia was one of the richest countries in Europe because of its marine activity, also emphasizing this by juxtaposing the example of neighbouring Sweden: “Richer than Sweden”. Artis referred to another aspect of the marine economy, that of tourism, mentioning that, during the inter-war period, Swedes often spent their vacations in the spatially proximate Jūrmala in Latvia rather than: “travelling to Majorca or the Philippines”. Thus, the sea was presented as facilitating the region’s inter-connection. Furthermore, for Lucy, the Baltic Sea, as a geophysical frontier between Scandinavia and Eurasia, makes her feel safer when she is in Sweden, because it acts like an additional barrier to Russian aggression: “it feels safer to at least have the Baltic Sea in between”. She could not enjoy this additional protection while living in Latvia with its borders to Russia, and this is another positive aspect of her immigration to Sweden.

The Baltic States, or “Baltikum” in Swedish, constitute the macro-region to which the informants expressed a clearer and more defined sense of belonging. Many of the informants said they felt connected to the three-nation-state region via their national belonging. Common historical experiences, in particular those with the Soviet Union, seemed to be the most significant factor creating this belonging. Additionally, the interviewees also mentioned common cultural elements, such as linguistic or religious similarities. For example, Kalvis tried to group the countries in the eastern part of the region based in linguistic similarities:

Kalvis: Estonia is pretty close in language with Finland, so in some respect it makes sense that they go together, and Latvia with Lithuania.

However, despite the fact that the region is not linguistically or religiously homogenous, some of the informants tended to overlook this in order to construct a common space of belonging. Elya, although she recognized these differences, also described the Baltic States as one region:

Elya: I would say I come from the Baltic States because I feel that they are, all three, more or less my countries. Because we have so much in common. Latvia and Estonia, they have a lot in common in a historical sense. Not with Lithuania. They (the Lithuanians) have been more with Poland for a couple of years, but nevertheless we the people, we like each other and communicate well together.
Identifications with and belonging to the Baltic States were facilitated through external identifications in the space of immigration. Artis – in a theme similar to that of Swedish indifference to and ignorance of Latvia – said that during his first period as a refugee in Sweden, the Swedish authorities treated asylum seekers from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as if they came from a culturally and linguistically homogenous area. Artis approached the Swedish authorities’ logic with sarcasm and explained it as a form of Scandinavia-centrism:

**Artis:** But the Swedish authorities said ‘they speak languages we don’t understand. So, they must understand each other’. Bloody hell! […] They thought that since Norwegians and Swedes and Danes can understand each other; they should look at the Swedes and Finns (who are neighbours but linguistically distant).

According to Artis, the external identification of the Baltic States as having a common regional habitus, in combination with ignorance of the region, dates back to the beginning of the 20th century in his space of immigration; he stated:

The Swedes mix us up with Estonians. At the beginning of the 1900s, the Swedish encyclopaedia stated that the Balts are lazy and slow. But they didn’t know anything about us.

The interviewees also mentioned other types of regional belonging. The common Soviet experience functions as a unifying and defining factor for the construction of a macro-region and macro-regional belonging. Artis stated that, during the years of Soviet occupation, refugees and other individuals from various countries from Eastern Europe had established in Sweden an organization that opposed Soviet occupation and influence in the region, calling it the “East European Solidarity Committee”. According to Artis, the common Soviet experience had enhanced socialization and mutual understanding among migrants from Eastern Europe living in Sweden. This was depicted as being in contrast to the “peace-damaged” Swedish people, who lacked experience of Soviet reality, Swedes with whom Artis had experienced difficulty developing close relationships:

**Artis:** When we meet people from Czechoslovakia or Poland, we become friends in five seconds. We understand each other. Even without words. We feel the same way, because we have the Soviet experience.
However, it seems that some interviewees, mainly those from a younger generation, preferred a macro-regional belonging different from the Baltic or Eastern European one. The emerging hierarchy is diluted in a sense of belonging or a desire to belong to and identify with Northern Europe. Kalvis explicitly stated that, even though he would prefer to be identified as North European, it would be more appropriate and closer to reality to position his macro-regional belonging in Eastern Europe: “I would like to answer Northern Europe, but the best, the more precise, is Eastern Europe”. Kalvis made this choice for his national belonging in macro-regional terms because of the Soviet era and the different standards of living in Scandinavia or Northern Europe and Eastern Europe: “It’s a better place to be a part of, Northern Europe. But Eastern Europe is the post-Soviet countries. It is geographically and historically more accurate for Latvia”. Regarding her macro-regional belonging, Lucy replied emphatically that she is from Northern Europe, using the word “Nordic” as a synonym. In my follow-up question asking why, she said she preferred this identification to, for example, the Baltic Sea or Baltic States because people tend to mix the Baltic States up. She argued that by placing her macro-regional belonging in Northern Europe, she had a more precise and comprehensible region of origin than the Baltic States, given that the latter is part of Northern Europe. Lucy talked about her self-identification as Nordic with a sense of pride – a self-identification that is also verified and validated by external identifications:

Lucy: Actually, it’s official now. They agreed on this at the Swedish language centre, like last week, I think. It was passed through that the Baltic States are now included in the Nordic region, as a term. So, I’m actually Nordic.

Kalvis recognized that, for the Baltic States, the question of belonging to the Nordic region is controversial, while trying to understand why the Estonians make claims about their Nordic belonging: “I think Estonians are more connected to Finland. I think they’re saying they are a Nordic country along with Finland”. It seems that, for the interviewees, macro-regional belonging to the Nordic countries has a twofold aim. The first is related to an upgrade in their regional status, moving away from Eastern Europe or the “Baltic-related” region, which they saw as connected to the Soviet era. The second is the desire to belong to a region that encompasses both the space of origin and that of immigration. This might mitigate the status of the migrant, which some of the interviewees felt had negative connotations.
Furthermore, Maija reproduced the dipole “Sweden-teacher” vs. “Latvia-student” by referring to Scandinavia vs. the Baltic States, showing an intra-region hierarchy within the Baltic Sea region. She mentioned that, for example, on environmental issues, Scandinavia is the producer of ideas and the Baltics are the receivers. Yet, Maija later generalized this statement, stating that Scandinavia has assumed the role of the knower, of producing knowledge and introducing the western way of thinking to the Baltic States, while the latter have to “shut up and listen”, thus demonstrating the different status of sub-regions in the Baltic Sea region. This approach, which the West had towards the post-Soviet countries, has also been mentioned by Lehti and Smith (2003, 25), who stated that the three Baltic States, “had to be educated to be good citizens of the market economy” and, furthermore, be westernized and democratized.

Finally, Anna and Maija referred to a regional phenotype through self- and external identifications. Maija reported that, at her workplace, some of the customers she has met with have assumed she was “Polish”, probably owing to her physical appearance. Another explanation is that this national categorization is based on her strong foreign accent in Swedish. Anna, on two occasions during the interview, referred to a Baltic (meaning Baltic States) and an eastern European phenotype. Anna had taken a DNA test to discover her ethnic genealogy. She said that her 89% eastern European origin had not surprised her, because she already sensed she belonged to that region because “of the looks, also experiences, thinking, history”. On another occasion, Anna used the phrase “Baltic migrant”, and when I asked for a definition of the term “Baltic”, she clarified this using regional and phenotypical terms: “Baltic looking, yeah Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians. I would not call anyone else Baltic, only them”. Hence, for Anna, there seemed to be two types of regional phenotypes to which she belongs, the Baltic and the eastern European, the former being a sub-category of the latter.

10.1. Conclusions

The informants needed an introductory discussion to move the concept of “region” from the sub-national to the macro-regional scale. To achieve this, in many cases leading questions and specific proposals had to be employed. Generally, there were minor to no identifications with or belongings to the macro-regions of the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea. For the Greeks, the Mediterranean was discussed as Southern Europe, with no reference to the Asian or African countries of the region. Only Spyros made a connection to
the non-European countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, and this connection was based on religion. The Mediterranean climate was thought to be a factor in creating a common mentality in the region, which was suggested to contrast with the North European mentality, as defined by the corresponding climate zone. It is worth noting that the Greeks did not express any feelings for the sea as part of their national landscape, not even those whose hometown was by the sea. One explanation for this could be that the notion of the sea had been replaced by the Mediterranean climate. Their experience as migrants from Southern Europe in Sweden and their understanding of a different Swedish habitus have made it more pertinent for them to stress this antithesis, also in regional terms. The Balkans was another macro-region of belonging for some of the Greek interviewees, based on common cultural elements and mentality. Furthermore, they divided the country into a southern, Mediterranean part and a northern, Balkan part, while stating the inconsistency between their sub-national regional belonging and their macro-regional one.

For the Latvians, there were no identifications with or belongings to the Baltic Sea as a region. The Baltic States as a region constituted the most significant space of belonging for them, accompanied by self-identification (Baltic). The sea as an element of the landscape was mentioned by the Baltic informants, as was maritime economic activity. A sense of belonging to the Baltic Sea was connected to personal memories and experiences. Common historical trajectories, predominantly the Soviet period, were mentioned as a constructive element of the macro-regions of Eastern Europe and the Baltic States, the latter also being defined by common cultural elements, for example language and religion. Auto-biographical factors, such as childhood memories and personal experience, as well as cultural elements are factors Antonsich (2010) identified as producing a sense of belonging.

The interviewees mainly used constructive strategies for defining and explaining their sense of belonging to or identifications with macro-regions. The absence of macro-regional belonging to the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea region was expressed via a dismantling strategy, which involved pointing out heterogeneous fragmented spaces. In the Latvian case, the transformative strategy of status upgrade, from Eastern to Northern Europe, revealed an intra-regional hierarchy, as it was also framed using the binary opposition Balkan vs. Western/Northern Europe, referring to less developed and more developed spaces.
11. Conclusions and discussion

The overall aim of this dissertation was to explore the spatial identifications of migrants beyond the frontiers of the nation-state. In this research, Greek and Latvian intra-European migrants were chosen as two national groups in order to investigate their identifications with and sense of belonging to different types of spaces on the scale of the nation-state, macro-regions and Europe. Specifically, the spaces under study were Greece and Latvia, as the counties of origin, Sweden as the county of residence, Europe or the EU as the institutionally and geographically wider spaces, and the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic Sea regions as intermediate spatial entities of institutional, historical and cultural significance. The aim of the dissertation was to explore three research question that will be discussed in the following three sections. The conclusions end by discussing future research vis-à-vis the main findings of this research.

11.1. Identification of the self and identification of the spaces.

The first question concerned the way in which the informants discursively constructed the three types of spaces and their own identifications in relation to them. Regarding the construction of certain spatial mentalities – reflecting Wodak et al.’s (2009) insights into how national identity in Austria emerges from national characteristics of the “homo Austriacus” – the interviewees created a series of collective characters, which can be named “homo Graecus”, “Homo Letticus”, “Homo Suecicus”, or even a broader, “Homo Europeanis”. The emphasis of belonging and identifications, however, is mostly related to the national space, as opposed to Europe or macro-regions. This finding is similar to what has been derived from Antonsich’s (2009, 281) research: “when viewed ‘from below’, i.e. from the eyes of ordinary citizens, national identity continues to shape the predominant ways in which people make sense of themselves and others”. Balibar (1990, 137) also asserted that the nation reproduces itself as a social formation through a series of apparatuses that establish the individual as a homo nationalis, from cradle to grave. These apparatuses shape the plethora of banal and quotidian practices of nationalism. Tim Enderson (2002, 92–
referred to three categories of such practices. These are “popular competencies”, the everyday knowledge that enables people to perform everyday tasks; “embodied habits”, the way individuals use their body in social interaction; and “synchronized enactions”, which include all those habits people inside the bounded national space perform in synchronized way (meal-times, time to work, days of leisure, etc.). The interviewees mentioned elements related to the three categories in their efforts to construct a *homo nationalis* and to differentiate or associate their country of origin and that of migration.

Thus, most informants synergistically constructed an essentialized idea of spatial identities using the four discursive strategies (constructive, dismantling, transformative, perpetuating), as defined by Wodak et al. (2009). The tables in Appendix 4, which include the different uses of the discursive strategies, are indicative of the manifold ways in which the informants approached and formulated their own identifications and belongings and their germane spaces as such. Furthermore, these tables constitute both a collection and systematization of the data based on the topics derived from the qualitative inquiry.

Regarding the nation, even though it was described in essentialized terms, the participants attempted to open their identifications to both the nation of origin and that of residence. All informants discussed and presented their national identifications in a unique and context-specific way. This concurs with Wodak et al.’s (2009, 187) findings on Austrian national identity, and their conclusions: “discursive national identities should not be perceived as static, but rather as dynamic, vulnerable and rather ambivalent entities”. The interviews with the two national groups showed that there is a constant negotiation going on between the migrants’ self-identifications and their germane national spaces. This leads to three main approaches to national identification. The first is the construction, essentialization and eventually perpetuation of the national identity. This refers to the cases where the migrant identity does not take on an evanescence quality, eventually softening the boundaries between identifications with the country of origin and those with the country of residence. External identifications of the individual as a migrant also contribute to this phenomenon. Moreover, essentializations of the two national spaces as antipodes help to perpetuate monotypic national identities. The second is dismantlement and transformation of the initial national identity into a synthesis of national identities by creating multiple or hybrid identities. One example of this is the quantification of national identities in percentages, the aim of which is to avoid
the tug-of-war of national identity between the country of origin and that of residence. Such multiple national belongings are an outcome of the immigration context and the effort of the subjects of immigration to put their multi-spatial belongings or non-belongings in order. To reveal their true national identity and belonging – and in so doing to position themselves in relation to the country of origin and residence – is a pertinent demand placed on the migrants, especially the long-term migrants. The third is dismantlement of national identity and replacement with another national one or with one of a higher or lower spatial order. For example, mentioning cosmopolitan or European identifications and belongings is a way to manage and transform national and migrant self- and external identifications. Even local identification was strategized by one of the informants as a means of emphasizing an a-national identity.

Furthermore, the migration context and the different generations of migrants, here called “old” and “new migrants”, became the canvas on which to construct hybrid or migrant identities, defined either by the long migration experience or the historico-political conditions of the country of origin. For Latvians, national identifications – with the deictic uses of “we the old migrants” vs. “those living in Latvia” – were transformed, even linguistically, by the Soviet presence in and the Soviet absence from the diasporic reality. For the Greek informants, self-identification was realized though the dichotomy “we” the “new Greek migrants” vs. “the old Greek migrants”, who were portrayed as being mentally stuck in the era of their emigration to Sweden. Both ways of seeing themselves via Othering are examples of this kind of national and migrant essentialization.

With regard to Europe, the informants associated the geographical aspect with the institutional one via the EU. Europe was linked to specific values that unite the people and countries of Europe. The Greek interviewees described the EU as a “space of lost expectations”, mainly owing to the country’s relationships with the EU during the eurozone crisis. For the Latvians, Europe is “a space of expectations”, acting as a medium for the country’s integration back into the West following Latvia’s Soviet experience. The informants’ self-identification with Europe, which lies on a borderline between East and West, depends on the different conceptualizations of Europe. Generally, Europe was described in less essentialized terms as compared to the nation. This is probably related to the understanding of Europe as a space lacking a community with common characteristics that would allow essentialization regarding collective habitus, similar to those of the nation-state. The perspective the majority of the
informants had on Europe and the EU was largely seen through the lense of the nation-state and its interest. Europe or the EU was not seen as an independent entity from the nation-state, but as an organization constructed to serve the goals and interests of its constituent member states.

Regarding the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic Sea regions, the interviewees had not created any clear identities and they did not express any significant self-identification with these macro-regions. Any elements of a common character were related mainly to the regions’ respective climatological or historical profiles.

Furthermore, the concept of nested identities, as used by Herb and Kaplan (1999), denotes the overlapping qualities that a national identity may have in relation to spaces on different scales. This concept reflects the findings of this research as the traces of identification and belonging connecting nation, Europe and macro-regions appeared in the interviews with the informants. The background chapter illustrated that Latvia, Greece, Sweden, Europe, the Mediterranean Sea and Baltic Sea regions have overlapping or nested characteristics with regard to institutionalization, culture and history and, of course, geography. This leads to development of the concept of “nested spaces” as areas of overlapping connecting features. These nested qualities are partially defined by how the informants construct and relate themselves to their germane spaces. There is an institutionalized connection between the nation and Europe based on citizenship and mobility rights. Some informants self-identified as European citizens, which is a term they find preferable to migrant. However, because macro-regions lack major institutionalized attributes, there are hardly any nested qualities with the nation or Europe. The only possibility of an institutionally nested macro-region in terms of mobility would be if Latvia were a full member of the Nordic Council. There would be an institutionalized connection with the Nordic macro-region with attributes similar to that of the EU and European citizens in the form of extra-mobility rights. For Latvians, this would mean additional benefits, in comparison to EU citizens, as regarding moving to and settling down in Sweden as well as becoming Swedish citizens. Nordic membership would institutionally nest the Nordic macro-region with their nation.

However, the insignificance of the macro-regions as possible spaces of identification and belonging for the informants does not reflect how scholars have regarded the “nested-ness” of these three types of spaces. There are elements that penetrate the spaces that are relevant to the informants, mostly the Latvian informants, as Latvia and Sweden are part of
the same macro-regions. The Latvian interviewees tried to connect Latvia, Sweden, Europe and the Baltic Sea historically, with references to their common Germanic past, Christendom, Hansa league, as well as by othering Russia as a non-European element and by presenting Latvia’s occupation as a displacement of the country from its historical and cultural European home. However, the Latvian participants also divided Europe and the Baltic Sea region into an eastern and western part on historical and cultural grounds.

Some of the Greek participants historically linked their nation – the cradle of western civilization – to Europe, also implicitly connecting their space of immigration with that of origin. The spatial distance between Greece and Sweden did not allow for direct expression of nested attributes that might enhance their sense of belonging, but the latter was mediated via Europe. Culturally, Sweden operates as an opposite, and the nested qualities are rather absent. Only one Greek informant attempted to bind Greece and Sweden religiously via Christianity. Furthermore, Europe is divided between north and south, with climate shaping many of the binary oppositions that define the dichotomy. Moreover, the Mediterranean Sea region was attributed characteristics similar to Greece, associating the two spaces climatologically. The Balkan macro-region, which was expressed both as a desirable and a non-desirable space of belonging and identification, might also be nested culturally with Greece, but not with Western Europe. Sweden and Scandinavia, on the other hand, were nested with Western Europe as culturally cohesive spaces.

In conclusion, the participants constructed their identifications and belongings in relation to nation-states, while in relation to Europe, and especially macro-regions, they fabricated them in the sense that their answers typically did not appear to be unintended, automatic and direct, as compared with those related to the nation-state. Hence, Europe and macro-regions offered only partially nested identifications. Many of these nested elements functioned as an attempt to link the space of origin to that of immigration, the aim being to render the latter more inclusive and less alien for the informants, thus enhancing their sense of belonging. It seems that the spaces under study are conceptually fragmented, which hinders identification of complete nested qualities from the nation, to macro-region and Europe. However, the interviewees described particular common elements in the series of divisions and dichotomies, which in the end create a thin line connecting each space, hence resulting in a nested scheme.
11.2. Sense of belonging to the nation, Europe and macro-region

The second research question concerned how the informants expressed their sense of belonging to their germane spaces. Which factors and elements initiate or define the sense of belonging and how are they expressed for each of the spaces? The findings are indicative of the taxonomy of the elements of belongingness suggested by Antonsich (2010, 647–648), involving factors that concern autobiographical, relational, cultural, economic, legal, and length-of-residence aspects. In a migratory context, these factors assume different kinds of dynamics, enriched through the dialogical relationship of the space of origin and that of residence, in which the migrating subject is inevitably engaged. Antonsich (2010, 653) also stated that although the interrelation between the ‘here’ and the ‘there’ of belonging has been largely investigated, no studies have explored the ‘here’ in all its multiple scales and in their connections. This is where the present study makes a contribution. The point of departure of this study is to investigate potential features of belonging when taking into account various levels by not focusing solely on the nation-state.

It is primarily legal factors that make national belonging more important to the migrants than other spaces. The legal framework of belonging – or put differently, the politics of belonging – is immanently connected to institutionalized spaces. The possibility of obtaining legal membership is the most important factor in determining the significance of each space, with this affecting the hierarchy of belonging and identification. As Eva Youkhana (2015, 13) argued, “the most influential political project of belonging remains the nation-state, with nationalism forming the ideological ground, and (state) citizenship relating people to national territories”. Even though many of the informants, both Greeks and Latvians, said that their desire to acquire Swedish citizenship was merely for practical reasons, legal attachment might eventually affect the individual’s sense of belonging. Antonsich (2010, 648) claimed that “to be or not to be a citizen or a subject entitled with rights (to stay, to work, to obtain social benefits, etc.) clearly matters” for one’s sense of belonging. The decision to remigrate to a third country was taken by one of the informants because she was not awarded social welfare benefits and services, despite all her efforts to integrate in Sweden. In other words, and because the level of access to welfare state and social benefits is indicative of the level of belongingness (Crowley 1999), the informant felt she did not belong to Sweden, even though she said she cherished the country.
According to the informants, legal belonging is important and something they aspire to, as they believe that being a naturalized Swedish citizen would improve their relationship to the society and the state. Additionally, the naturalization process in Sweden offers the possibility for symbolic – but also legal – dissociation from the nation of origin. In the application for acquiring Swedish citizenship, the choice to keep or denounce one’s citizenship in the country of origin is a strong indication of how the applicant is related to his initial national space. One Greek informant consciously chose the denounce option as a legal and symbolic act to separate himself from his country of origin. However, for some of the informants, who have been residents in Sweden for decades, acquisition of Swedish citizenship symbolized the end of their migration process. Yet this did not offer them a sense of complete belongingness in the space of immigration, as other factors worked against this outcome. As Antonsich (2010, 650) argued, the role of political institutions is not sufficient if the rest of society fails to ‘grant’ the individual recognition as an equal member of society.

Furthermore, for the informants, acquiring Swedish citizenship comes as a solution to the sense of precariousness they have linked to their national legal belonging. This feeling emerges both from historical experience and from current geopolitical and economic developments. For example, the national and diasporic trauma of the Swedish extradition of Baltic soldiers (“baltutlämningen”), the Swedish-Soviet relationship during the Cold War and the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 have created a sense of insecurity among the Latvian migrants, who therefore feel the need to ensure their residence and status in Sweden as citizens of the country. For the Greek participants, the possibility of a Grexit, and associated visa requirements for Greek citizens traveling and residing within the EU, is one of the reasons they want to be naturalized as Swedish citizens.

However, some interviewees were indifferent both to national identification and to naturalization in relation to their space of residence, with some deciding to acquire Swedish citizenship merely for practical reasons.

Regarding the institutionalized aspect of the European space, hence the EU, the interviewees – particularly the new migrants – acknowledged that legal membership of the union offers certain benefits. As intra-EU migrants with European citizenship, they have enjoyed free mobility and the right of abode as well as free access to tertiary education. The latter was emphasized by contrasting EU citizens and third-country nationals in Sweden, who do not enjoy the same rights. The EU’s politics of belonging seem to have stimulated a sense of belonging to the union, which for many informants
overlaps conceptually with Europe. Regarding Europe as a geographical space, the lack of institutionalization – as compared to the EU – renders invalid the question of belonging on legal grounds.

Cultural factors are important to the sense of belonging. Among them, language is salient for the informants, as it stipulates self- and external identifications, especially in relation to the space of immigration, though for the Latvians also in relation to the space of origin. Three aspects of language affect the informants’ sense of belonging in the Swedish context. The first is Greek or Latvian, in their role as the mother tongue and official language of the countries of origin. The second is Swedish, as the official language of the space of immigration. The third is English, as the lingua franca, which has a strong position in Swedish society in the sense that it facilitates socialization and access to the labour market, primarily for the “new migrants”, but also in the sense that it creates migrant hierarchies, where native English speakers are positioned higher in the rank. Perpetuating the national identity through preservation of the mother tongue to their offspring is one of the roles language plays in a migratory context. Some Greek interviewees explicitly stated that it was important for their children to know their roots, and that language is a means of achieving this. According to Anastasios Tamis (2009, 2), this is a general trend in the Greek diaspora, where Greek remains a strong language among its members. Other Greek informants perceived their mother tongue within the framework of multilingual skills, depicting mastery of it as a merit in today’s globalized world, without further sentiments or references to nation.

For the Latvian informants, the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia and the temporal chasm between “old” and “new migrants”, due to the Soviet occupation, are elements that defined how the informants approached their national identity, with language playing a prominent role in this. A feeling of precariousness regarding the Latvian language and culture emerged in the Latvian informants’ narratives. This finding can be compared with a study on the Latvian diaspora in the US, which concluded in the opposite regarding the importance of the Latvian language. The authors of that study (Saulītis and Mieriņa 2019, 217) indicated that “for many respondents, language is an economic category rather than a cultural one”. The Latvian diaspora in the US felt that putting effort into language propagation to future generations would not give economic gains. These conflicting results on Latvians’ attitudes towards language may be related to differences in the countries of residence, the US and Sweden, as well as to the spatial proxi-
11. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

mity of the country of origin. For Latvians in Sweden, it is easier to maintain actual and regular contact with their country of origin.

Furthermore, for the Latvian informants, the sense of obligation to respect the official state language springs from their insecurity regarding the endangered state of the Latvian language, in combination with the large proportion of Russian speakers in Latvia. Respecting the state language as migrants means learning Swedish. Among the Latvian informants, seeing a parallel between the identifications of migrants in Sweden with no Swedish language skills and the Russophone minority in Latvia that has not learned Latvian had created a sense of non-legitimization of their residence in Sweden. Furthermore, language divides the Latvian community into old and neo-diasporic groups, as the “old migrants” recognized the Russian influence in the colloquial language of the “new migrants”, while the latter regarded the language of the former as outmoded.

For all of the informants, mastering the Swedish language is a sine qua non for full integration into and socialization with the local element, given its status as the official language of the state and the society in the space of immigration. Yet non-native pronunciation of the Swedish language, hence speaking Swedish with a “foreign-sounding” accent, may reveal the individual’s immigration background, triggering external migrant identifications that act as a factor of non-belonging. Questions regarding migrants’ country of origin based on their foreign accent create an immediate sense of non-belonging, especially when the migrant has full self-identification with the country of immigration. For example, “Rinkebysvenska” – an idiom of the Swedish language formed by immigrants residing initially in Rinkeby, a suburb of Stockholm – is a symbol of segregation and non-belonging in Swedish society; it is a product of a migrant ghetto, which today has also evolved into a youth language, though without losing its political and societal connotations.

Furthermore, in transnational urban spaces such as the areas of Stockholm or Gothenburg, English operates as a lingua franca, which according to the informants offers a level of immediate integration for migrants, but eventually hinders their complete inclusion in society because use of the lingua franca does help them learn Swedish. Additionally, the Greek interviewees who did not have other language skills besides their mother tongue, mainly the low-educated ones, also reported de facto co-national socialization accompanied by a sense of alienation in relation to the local society.

Religion is also a cultural factor of belonging, though mainly for the Greeks interviewees in relation to their space of origin. Some Latvian
informants tried to culturally link the space of origin and residence by referring to a common Christian denomination.

In relation to Europe or the EU, the informants made no references to language. Instead, they mentioned cultural elements related to common values such as democracy, freedom, and free mobility. These values were thought to enhance a sense of belonging to something common represented by Europe or the EU. Free mobility, which is part of the EU’s politics of belonging, imparts qualities of internal migration to international migration inside the EU, joining in this way the nation of origin and residence in a unified space. For the Greek informants, free mobility is a critical value related to their construction of Greece as a space of emigration. The personal stories of the “old-migrants” and their experiences of how they managed to reside legally in Sweden put a spotlight on the ease with which relocation to Sweden was realized by the “new migrants”. However, the risk of a Grexit and the fear of place mobility constraints on Greek citizens in the EU has brought these two generations of migrants closer. Additionally, the construction of Greece as a space of corruption, war conflicts, and the overall appeal of Greece for the West (Tsoukalas 2002) are elements that can create either push or pull factors for emigration and that make the right of free mobility a significant European value the Greeks appreciate. For the Latvian informants, it is not only free mobility that is perceived as a cultural and legal value, but also freedom and democracy. The experience of Soviet occupation and the construction of Europe and the West as a space Latvia was longing for are the main factors defining these values, where the Soviet Union and Russia constitute the spatial and cultural Other. In relation to religion, some interviewees from both groups constructed Europe as a continent of Christianity; thus, they were Othering people from different religious groups, predominantly Muslims. The discourse on the recent so-called refugee crisis in Europe has apparently affected how some of the informants approach the issue of third-country migration and the identity of Europe.

The informants constructed the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Sea macro-regions as falling apart into various sub-macro-regions. Hence, there were no cultural elements as such that defined these spaces as macro-regions. Southern Europe, the Balkans, the MENA countries, Scandinavia, the Baltic States, and a division between Catholic and Protestant countries in the Baltic Sea area are sub-regions only a few interviewees mentioned as spaces that share similar cultural characteristics.
What role does the economy play in enhancing belongingness? Sweden is the space that most of the interviewees had chosen as their space of immigration, except for the Latvians who came as war refugees at a young age and one Greek informant who had been politically prosecuted. However, Sweden provided the foundation that had allowed the informants to feel economic security. Almost all of the interviewees had achieved adequate living conditions and integrated into the Swedish economy and labour market, which according to Antonsich (2010, 648) is “a necessary factor in the process of generating a sense of place-belongingness”. Sweden was contrasted to the country of origin, which was seen as a place of economic non-belongingness. For the EU, it is mainly the Greek informants who expressed feelings of dissociation and non-belonging. This was due to the referenda imposed on Greece by the EU, the IMF and the European Central Bank during the recent economic crisis. For many of the Greek participants, Europe or the EU is a space of “lost expectations” and (therefore) non-belonging. For the Latvians, Europe or the EU is the appropriate place in which to develop their personal economy in the post-socialistic era. In relation to macro-regions, two informants mentioned the Baltic Sea, not as constituting a region with specific qualities of community or belonging, but as a value in itself, given its contribution to the national economy via maritime economic activities.

Antonsich (2010, 647) argued that relational factors, or “the personal and social ties that enrich the life of an individual in a given place”, are important. In the spatial matrix of nation, Europe and macro-region, the interviewees understood the society of the nation-state they were residing in as the community they sought to belong to. The nation-state was identified with a certain society and was the reference for their relational factors, which were expressed, inter alia, via cultural essentialization and stereotyping. The way the interviewees approached their social belonging in relation to the nation-state can be described as a sort of “geo-determinism that imagines space as a biophysical container” (Youkhana 2015, 16). In other words, they mainly expressed their social relations in terms of the nation, generalizing the “local” into a “national” and essentializing the latter.

Few Latvian, but most Greek, informants stated their frustration with their non-socialization with and distance from non-migrant locals, something that had prevented them from reaching their goal of complete belonging to the “here”. As Baumeister and Leary (1995, 500) stated, superficial social relationships may promote one’s general well-being, but they can hardly satisfy an individual’s need to feel a sense of belonging. However,
both the Greek and Latvian informants mentioned (although for different reasons) that there was a schism inside the migrant groups between “old” and “new migrants” that was important to their socialization. A similar phenomenon has also been identified among Latvians in the US, Ireland and the UK, where the more recently arrived Latvian migrants tended to avoid socialization with co-nationals, their goal being to hasten integration and lifestyle aspirations in the space of immigration (Saulītis and Mieriņa 2019, 213). In general, Saulītis and Mieriņa (2019, 220) argued that “different waves of migration have created different identities”, a finding supported by the present research as well.

Regarding the European or macro-regional spaces, because they are not perceived as containers of specific communities, they de facto cannot stimulate belongingness linked to relational factors. However, two Greek informants suggested that it was socialization and intimacy with people from the Balkan and the Mediterranean region in Sweden that had awakened a sense of macro-regional belonging.

Autobiographical factors include personal experiences, relations, and memories that attach an individual to a specific place and involve length of residency, which is related to the experiences collected over time (Antonsich 2010, 647). Again, the study shows that such factors generate a sense of belonging solely to the nation-state. Even when childhood or other type of memories are related to the local scale; it is the national space – as the official container – that creates the references of belonging. For example, when the Latvian informants were story-telling their memories from early childhood in their hometown in Latvia, they were referring to their memories from Latvia. Such memories take place in the national space, not in the European or macro-regional one. Regarding the latter, the experiences might be related to the sea as an element of the landscape – not to the Baltic Sea or Mediterranean Sea regions as autonomous spaces, but rather to the sea of Greece or the sea of Latvia.

Factors that defined some informants’ sense of belonging and that are not found in Antonsich’s (2010) list of factors of belonging are history, international relations, and phenotype. Regarding history and international relations, the informants/migrants are related to at least two nation-states, which involves both a past and present in their bilateral relations. Spatial proximity results in more vibrant bilateral relations, as in the case of Sweden and Latvia. Incidents and elements of the historical past, even in a macro-regional context, seem to affect the dynamics of belonging to the space of immigration, but also to that of origin. “Baltutlämning” and the
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Swedish-Soviet relationship during the Cold War, in addition to the effect they have had on legal factors, have also affected how the Latvian immigrants have approached Sweden as their space of immigration and potential belonging. One Latvian informant explained his dissociation from, even anger towards, Sweden because of the aforementioned historical incidents. On the other hand, another Latvian interviewee, referring to the Hanseatic League and to the Germanic past shared by Sweden and Latvia, attempted to connect the national space of origin with that of the current place of residence and to create, perhaps, a more legitimate belonging based on common historical experience, beyond any subjective personal sense of belonging. Furthermore, this common historical experience has generated a sense of belonging even at the regional level, either with the Baltic States or with Eastern Europe.

Although Antonsich (2010) mentioned immigration in his literature review on belonging and referred to scholars who have discussed the question of racial characterisations, he did not include physical characteristics or any similar category in his categorization of factors of belonging. While the informants in this study did not report perceiving their belonging in purely racial terms, they did refer to issues of personal phenotype, which either places them in the national Swedish “we”, thus bringing them closer to the “national aristocracy” to use Hage’s (2000) terms, or excludes them from the national body. Balibar (2002, 82) claimed that “the colour bar” no longer divides the world merely between North and South or a centre and a periphery, but runs through all societies. Thus, the Latvian and Greek participants, aliens but also locals, are located and dislocated in Sweden, which has been perceived as a “white nation”. This has a different effect on belonging depending on the informants’ physical characteristics. It is mainly the external identifications, based on phenotypes, that transform migrants into non-migrants or emphasize their alien identity as migrants and produce a sense of belonging or non-belonging to the space of immigration. However, even the subjects of migration, by essentializing national identities bearing national physical characteristics, might constitute their country of immigration as a space of non-belonging. However, as Carin Lundström (2017, 85) also argued, the boundaries of whiteness in Sweden have been opened to include Greek and Latvian migrants. Similarly, in another national context of a “white nation”, David Block (2006, 49) referred to Kyriacou and Theodorou’s (1993) research on Greek Cypriots who have become an accepted part of London society, though they are ultimately categorized as the “Other White’ in the national census. In relation
to this, the Latvian informants, especially those who came at an early age and managed to master the language, came to fit perfectly into Swedish society and are non-distinguishable, despite being migrants.

It would seem that to achieve complete belonging to the “national aristocracy” in Sweden – or to have a sense that one is not in a precarious position that risks external identification as the Other – two main criteria must be met: native phenotype and language. Other elements, such as gender, education and social class, might facilitate integration and enhance belonging by repelling processes of Othering, but in terms of the stereotypically constructed and imagined Swedish national community, it is still phenotype and language that define absolute belonging. This entails an ethnically based notion of the Swedish nation, formulating the Swedish national identity using racial and linguistic terms. Etienne Balibar (1990, 141) suggested that two main factors produce ethnicity, namely language and race, which typically work in synergy towards this end. However, it would seem that this might not be an intransigent state in Sweden, as the migration inflows started already during the post-WW2 period and even then challenged the “white nation” of Sweden. One Latvian informant characteristically stated that if immigration in Sweden were to continue at the same pace and begin to resemble the situation in Canada, she would find it easier to feel like she was part of society.

Though phenotype is an important element of belonging to and identification with the nation-state, it is also a factor in creating a sense of belonging to Europe and macro-regions. For Europe, this is mainly realized with reference to non-EU immigrants in the space of residence. Regarding the EU, it would seem that, for some informants, the process of Othering and the definition of an inclusive-exclusive space contribute to a sense of belonging to the EU. If for Sweden the “national aristocracy” is based on language and phenotype, it may be the case that a “European aristocracy” would be based on phenotype and religion. However, for other informants, the values associated with free mobility were consistent with their ideological outlook on a policy of open borders for all those who wish to enter the EU.

Regarding macro-regions and a sense of belonging based on a specific phenotype, there was only one reference to a Baltic phenotype, meaning people residing in one of the three Baltic States.

To conclude, each factor of belonging does not affect sense of belonging in isolation, but they all work in synergy, as the empirical analysis showed, the result being, inter alia, the construction of hybrid identities that reflect
the dynamics of belonging and non-belonging. Belonging and non-belonging, self-identifications or dissociation are not one-dimensional with regard to how individuals express their personal relationship to a specific space, but instead they are part of a complex process. Drawing on previous literature, Lähdesmäki et al. (2016, 236) applied the metaphorical image of a rhizome to the notion of belonging, thus implying that it has a multitude of diverse modes. Moreover, Ulf Hedetoft (2004, 7) argued that, in some instances, “belonging” has two components: “being” in one place and “longing” for another. For example, one Greek interviewee reported feeling culturally frustrated and longing for another cultural context while in Greece. It is in cases such as this where the web of belonging starts to get tangled, where simplicity is replaced by complexity, permanence by mutability, clear-cut boundaries by fluid images of the self and the other (Hedetoft 2004, 5). This does not become crystallized in a migration context, however, as other social dimensions are present that re-initiate questions of being in and longing for a place. Starting from Vanessa May’s (2011, 374) argument that belonging as a concept can be used to examine the mutual interaction between social change and the self, we can infer that Swedish society is still enclosed in the autochthones and allochthones dichotomy with specific characteristics that will eventually stipulate who really and fully belongs to the We and not to the Other.

Moreover, many scholars engaged in discussions about the concept of belonging have stated that it is still poorly defined and undertheorized (Antonsich 2010, 644; Halse 2018, 3; Crowley 1999; Lähdesmäki et al. 2016, 243). It would seem that the context and personal aspect of how one experiences the sense of belonging make it difficult to create hard definitions of the concept. Crowley (1999, 2) argued that the term ‘belonging’ is vague and that its vagueness is precisely what makes it useful as an analytical concept, as a sense of belonging cannot be reduced to something that clearly does or does not exist. Furthermore, Lähdesmäki et al. (2016, 242) maintained that the notion of belonging has not been explicitly conceptually discussed vis-a-vis identity. The question of the relation between identification and belonging is indeed complicated, as the presence of one does not necessarily define the other and the absence of the former is not a prerequisite for the absence of the latter. Although many of the informants have fully or partially dissociated themselves from self-identification with the space of immigration, they did feel they belonged to Sweden. Everyday experiences in the space of migration – the landscape, urban architecture, established habits, and familiar faces – create a sense of belonging to this space, even when
migrants do not identify with the national identity of the country of residence. This non-identification might be related to external identifications that perpetuate migrant identities, to a sense of social isolation, or even to the historical relationships between the country of origin and that of residence.

Furthermore, a sense of non-belonging to strict understandings of national identities seems to be the factor causing metamorphosis from the national to something cosmopolitan, as this is a way for confused subjects of migration to explain their ambivalent national self-identifications. As Yuval-Davis et al. (2006, 4) argued, “cosmopolitanism proposes an alternative ideological cluster to the de-legitimized containers of the modern nation-state”, and this is what the older migrants in particular seemed to endorse. Thus, non-belonging can also be useful in producing new types and qualities of identifications.

In general, belonging follows the significance of each space. For macro-regions, belonging is related more to self- and external identifications than to a need to belong to a certain community, because these spaces are not characterized by a community as it is understood in a nation-state context. However, in the EU, the politics of belonging have managed to form a European belonging at an embryonic stage. The national space, as the container of a well-constructed and consistent society, is the one which creates more explicit spatial identifications and it is where the migrants want to feel that they belong. Ulf Hedetoft (2004, 2) argued that belonging is rooted in “place” (rather than space, which is a much more abstract notion), “familiarity”, “sensual experience”, “human interaction” and “local knowledge”. In one respect, this study confirms Hedetoft’s reasoning, because as we move from place to space, this relationship becomes even more fluid. In relation to the three spaces investigated here, it is the bounded nation-state that provides a sense of place or home to the interviewees, because it more rigidly includes “the local”, as compared to Europe or the macro-regions. From this follows that, regarding European and (other) macro-region belonging, there is a lack of the sense of community that can be gained from the nation, even if it is imagined. The elite political project of the EU is at an embryonic stage; it is creating a common sense of community and belonging through its institutionalization, which makes the politics of belonging possible. The Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Sea regions do not seem to create any forms of attachment, even if the informants tried to identify common elements based mainly on culture, history and climate.
11. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

11.3. The three types of spaces and the hierarchy of significance

The third research question asks about the importance of each of the three types of spaces to the informants. The results from the qualitative analysis of the interviews reflect the discussion of previous research presented in the first chapter regarding the significance and construction of different types of spaces; they revealed the hierarchy in which the informants’ sense of belonging was organized and eventually the current dynamics of nationalism, Europeanism and regionalism at the micro-level of the individual. Despite the European integration project, which also involved efforts to institutionalize macro-regions and to promote the creation of macro-regional identities, the interviewees’ sense of belonging to the non-national spaces is relatively insignificant. However, because the informants are also intra-European migrants, the EU becomes an additional political entity defining their migration experience. It offers to intra-European migrants the option of de-identifying themselves with the notion of migrant, which has negative connotations. International migration becomes internal migration, and an intra-European migrant a mobile EU citizen. Thus, the European institutionalized space may be more important to migrated EU citizens than to those staying in their home country. This leads to the conclusion that European identity largely goes through European mobility. Policies aimed at encouraging the mobility of EU member state citizens have good prospects of positively shaping sentiments of belonging and even identification into everyday phenomena. We are far from a Europe that surpasses the nation-state as the prior political unit of belonging, but this does not mean that the steps in the hierarchy cannot become shorter.

Additionally, in an intra-European migration context, the nation-state of origin and that of residence seem, in most cases, to co-exist as spaces of belonging, despite occasional clashes, with Europe acting as a connecting element. With the exception of social integration, the interviewees were well integrated into the country of residence. They reported being satisfied with their level of integration regarding access to the labour market and education as well as enjoying a good standard of living. The interviewees said they aspired to closer social contacts between themselves and the locals, as the lack of such contacts was preventing them from further developing their sense of belonging to the country of residence. If migrants are to achieve better integration results and develop a more complete sense of belonging to the country, future integration policies in Sweden will need to take measure to improve social cohesion between locals and migrants.
Furthermore, attempts on the part of the European political and economic elite to create macro-regional identities via political projects did not have any significant fruitful outcomes, even in the identity fluid space of migration. Most of the interviewees distanced themselves from macro-regional identifications related to the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea regions. Future policies, aimed at promoting macro-regional integration and cooperation in various areas, should take into consideration this weak, if not absent, sense of belonging to a macro-regional space. It would seem that the ambition to construct macro-regional identities, at least in a European context, is based on wishful thinking without significant repercussions on the micro-level. Although even macro-regional branding has been a difficult task, it would seem to be more promising than expecting development of a macro-regional identity, as it is not related to a feeling of belonging.

11.4. Findings and future research

This dissertation focused on three types of spaces – nation, Europe and macro-regions – in an intra-European mobility context and aimed to examine the entanglement of EU migrants’ identifications with and belongings to these spaces. Its main findings are: a) the informants constructed collective spatial identities in an essentialized way through a variety of ways b) in a migratory context, significant factors of belonging are the phenotype of the individual, the history and international relations of the space of origin and that of residence; c) the nation-state remains the most significant space of belonging and identification, even in an intra-European migratory context, as the nation-state continues to incorporate more elements and factors of belonging and identification, in comparison to Europe and regions. This has significant political implications for the future of the EU, in relation to how ambitious the project of European integration can be. For instance, the idea of a European Constitution was not supported by the referenda in France and in the Netherlands in 2005, strongly indicating that citizens’ perceptions, identifications and sense of belonging in relation to the EU project are decisive factors for any future developments. Additionally, the way the EU has reacted to recent pan-European crises (Eurozone, migration) is reflected in how the migrants participating in this research have expressed their views on and attitudes towards Europe. Furthermore, the EU, as a region builder, should consider the endurance of the importance of the nation-state as an entity of collective belonging and identifica-
tion. The EU is also interested in developing and promoting, via a variety of policies, the cooperation of its member states on a macro-regional scale. These policies will be more successful if they take into consideration the lack of significance of macro-regional belonging for EU member state citizens, at least for the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Sea macro-regions.

Furthermore, this dissertation, by exploring different aspects of the migration experience, has offered a significant empirical contribution to our understanding of three phenomena: intra-European migration, in general, and migration in Sweden, in particular, as well as the Greek and Latvian diaspora and migration. Theoretically, the dissertation has developed the notion of belonging by examining it both on a multi-spatial level and in a migration context. Also, it has applied the DHA and its four discursive strategies, showing other potential uses of this theory and method. However, the examined constellation of spaces, i.e. nation, Europe, macro-region, does not constitute the whole matrix of spaces to which individuals relate. There are numerous other spaces – on a micro-, meso- and macro-level – that might be important to both migrants and non-migrants and whose significance might challenge the hegemony of the nation in terms of belonging. One example is the local level, such as a small town, a big city, or a sub-national region. Hence, future research might try to shed light on other complexes of territorial and non-territorial attachments. Furthermore, this study has been Eurocentric in its scope, choosing nested spaces on the European continent and related to the political institution of the EU. Future research in the area might move its geographical focus to other parts of the world, allowing these findings to be compared to results concerning European or other spatial contexts.


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Appendices
# Appendix 1
## Phases of Swedish Immigration History in the 20th and 21st Century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Countries of origin</th>
<th>Mobility in numbers</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End of 19th century–1920</td>
<td>Sweden (mainly) to the US.</td>
<td>1.2 million people</td>
<td>Push and Pull factors: bad economic situation, high unemployment, religious suppression, the 1867–68 famine in Sweden, higher wages in the US.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930–1945</td>
<td>Nordic and Baltic countries.</td>
<td>195,000</td>
<td>Labour migrants and refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945–1950</td>
<td></td>
<td>256,000</td>
<td>Number of foreign workers in Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945–1960</td>
<td></td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>Number of foreign workers in Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Italy, Hungary, Austria.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bilateral agreements for guest workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954–1955</td>
<td>W. Germany, Austria, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complementary labour force in the primary (metal, forestry industry) but also to the secondary (textile industry) and tertiary (hotel and restaurant services) sectors of the economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.7% of the Swedish population were labour migrants from 60 different nations. From the Nordic region (60 %), particularly Finns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle 1960s</td>
<td>Greece, Yugoslavia.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1960s</td>
<td>Turkey.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Turks one of the biggest non-Nordic migrant groups in Sweden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle 1970s–1989</td>
<td>Chile, West Asian Christians (mainly Assyrians), Vietnam, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Rumania,</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mainly asylum seekers and less labour migration. Push factors: Pinochet dictatorship, Indochina War Iran-Iraq War, Lebanon civil war, persecution of minorities in Rumania and Bulgaria.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### European Mobility and Spatial Belongings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Country/Territory</th>
<th>Registrations</th>
<th>Right of Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Bulgaria.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Last time Sweden accepted and gave asylum to all applicants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Yugoslavia, Iraq, Iran, Poland, Rumania, Somalia, former Soviet Union.</td>
<td>26,500 (asylum seekers) 42,250 (individuals received the right of residence).</td>
<td>In 1991, a total of 42,250 individuals received the right of residence in the country for various reasons; only 18,600 were refugees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden joins the European Union. No transitional “restrictions” on the free movement of workers coming from the new accession post-socialist countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 and 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>For the sixth EU enlargement, which included Rumania and Bulgaria, and for the seventh, which included Croatia, Sweden imposed no restrictions on the workers from the EU new accession countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Liberalization of migration policies for third-country nationals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden received the largest number asylum seekers per capita among the OECD countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, and Somalia.</td>
<td>80,000 (asylum applications).</td>
<td>In early 2016, Swedish authorities announced that a significant number of applications would be rejected, around 80,000, for not meeting the criteria for asylum, leaving many Swedes worried about whether it would be possible to deport this many people (Dahl 2016).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 2

**Information on Interviews and Interviewees – Greek Informants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year of arrival/ Total years in Sweden at the time of the interview</th>
<th>Length of the interview</th>
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<tr>
<td>Odysseas</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>Maria</td>
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<td>Magda</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>With her parents in 1970 until 1973, alone 1979 / 37</td>
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<td>Lefteris</td>
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<td>67</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>2011 / 5</td>
<td>1 h 40 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nikos</td>
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<td>Man</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>No university degree</td>
<td>2013 / 3</td>
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<td>Konstantinos</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>Sofia</td>
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<td>Spyros</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>1982 with his parents, 1993 he went to Greece with his parents (11 years old), 2005 he decided to return to Sweden/ 12</td>
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<td>36</td>
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## Information on Interviews and Interviewees – Latvian Informants

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<th>Length of the interview</th>
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<td>Modris</td>
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<td>1 h and 11 min</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Man</td>
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<td>University degree</td>
<td>2011 / 5</td>
<td>1 h 36 min</td>
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<td>1944 / 72</td>
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<td>Woman</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>2002 / 15</td>
<td>1 h 40 min</td>
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</table>
Appendix 3

Questionnaire

General Questions

- What is your age?
- Which is your ethnicity?
- What is or are your citizenships?
- How many and which languages do you speak?
- What education or training do you have?
- Where did you do your studies?
- What is your employment; what do you do for a living?
- Where and as what have you worked in your home country?
- Where and as what have you worked in Sweden?
- What is your marital status?
- Do you have relatives in Sweden?
- Do you have relatives in your home country?
- Which is your exact place/area of origin in your country of origin?
- In what places have you lived until now?

Migration experience

- What does the word migrant mean for you?
- Do you feel like a migrant?
- If not, how would you identify yourself as someone living in country you were not born in?
- Why did you choose to move from your country in the first place? What were the reasons that caused you to move out from your country?
- When did you first come to Sweden?
- Why did you choose Sweden as a new place to live?
- Why did you choose Stockholm as a new city to live in?
- Where do you live now in Stockholm and why have you chosen this specific area?
- Where do you usually go to entertain yourself, have fun?
- Is there any specific area in the city where other Greeks/Latvians tend to live or gather together?
- Do you know if there is any national community in Stockholm? Do you participate in some way in the life of that community?
• How would you describe your social life here in Sweden in relation to the one you had back in your country of origin?
• Do you socialize with locals/ co-patriots/ other nationals?
• Do you feel satisfied with your life here in Sweden?
• What are the main problems/issues/concerns you deal with here in Sweden?
• Are they (the problems) somehow related to the fact that you are a foreigner?
• How well integrated do you feel in Swedish society? Is integration a goal for you?
• Have you felt any kind of discrimination because you are a foreigner? Can you please describe exactly any incidents?
• Have you heard from another co-patriots about incidents they have experienced, some kind of racist behaviour or discrimination?

Nation

• What is a nation for you?
• Do you feel you belong to a certain nation?
• If yes, how strong is this feeling of belonging to this specific nation?
• Do you think there are some stereotypes about the people in your country? Stereotypes can be both positive and negative.
• Do you feel like a Swede at all?
• If yes, why and how strong is this feeling? If no, why not; do you think that in the future (given that you remain a resident in the country) there is any possibility you will start feeling like a Swede?
• Do you have Swedish citizenship and if not, do you want to apply for it in the future?
• How strong are your contacts with your country of origin? For example, how often do you visit Greece/Latvia? Do you keep in touch with friends there, etc.?

Europe

• What does Europe mean for you?
• What does it include geographically, as a region?
• Do you believe there is a common European identity? If yes, why? If no, why not?
• Do you feel European? If yes, why? If no, why not?
• Do you think there are any stereotypes about Europeans?
• How would you divide Europe into regions?
• Do you think there is any kind of hierarchy among European countries (better countries than others in some fields)?
• Where would you position your country of origin in this hierarchy?
• What vocabulary do they use in your home country when they refer to the rest of Europe?
• Do you think that the things were easier for you here because you come from Greece/Latvia and not from another part of the world (Asia, Middle East, Africa, North America, South America etc.)?
• Has the fact that you come from an EU country been helpful for your relocation here in Sweden?

Baltic and Mediterranean

• If somebody asked which region/area of Europe you come from, which region/area would that be?
• In which regions would you group your country?
• Do you identify yourself with the Mediterranean Sea/Baltic Sea region? Do you think there is something common among people who live near this area? If yes, can you describe it?
• Do you think there are some stereotypes about Mediterranean Sea/Baltic Sea people?
• Have you socialized with other migrants from your region during your life as a migrant?
• If yes, why? If no, why not? For example, is there some kind of intimacy, proximity in terms of culture and way of life?
• Has the fact that you come from the Mediterranean Sea/Baltic Sea region ever affected your life as a foreigner in Sweden (discrimination, racism, positive or negative stereotypes)?


Appendix 4
The discursive construction of space and national character of Greece and Sweden in a migratory context: Discursive Strategies

Theme: Dispositional Spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Discursive Strategies</th>
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<th>Perpetuating</th>
<th>Transformative</th>
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<td>Perpetuation of National Habitus in the Space of Immigration: corruption</td>
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<td>Greece: corruption, incompetence, problematic economy, ineffective state, insecurity, backwardness, war.</td>
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<td>Greek identity: Cheaters, fraudsters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Constructing Space as Certain Characteristics:</td>
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<td>Sweden: order, system, stability, progress, peace.</td>
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<td>Swedish identity: naïve, kind</td>
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<td>Society</td>
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<td>Perpetuation of the National Habitus: the Greek national character endures in a</td>
<td>Transforming the National Character: becoming a Swede via acculturation processes</td>
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<td>the Greek national character or the “Ellinaras”</td>
<td>migratory context</td>
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<tr>
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323
## Theme: Migratory Spaces

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Theme: Spaces of Belonging

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<td>Swedish language and social integration</td>
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<td>Sweden as an a-social space, an a-social Swedish national character</td>
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| Understanding the Nation | Constructing National Identities: primordial identifications, non-primordial identifications, cosmopolitan identifications, European identifications  
*Synthetic strategy of national identification* | Dismantling National Identity: dismantling the nation, dismantling the Greek national Identification | Perpetuating National Identity: preservation of national identification in a migratory context | Transforming National Identity: initial national identification is transformed into hybrid and multiple identifications |
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Constructing National Identity via Citizenship: legal and emotional belonging</td>
<td>Dismantling National Identity via Citizenship: dismantling via utility perspective</td>
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| National Phenotype | Constructing National Identity via Phenotype: Sweden: white-skinned blonds  
Greece: dark-skinned, dark hair | Dismantling National Identity via Phenotype: Self- and external identifications of non-belonging |  |  |
| Locality | Constructing the National via Urban: urban space: small for diasporic community, large for migratory experience |  |  |  |
Theme: Social and Educational Capital and Gender

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<th>Transformative</th>
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<td>Dismantling</td>
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The discursive construction of space and national character of Latvia and Sweden in a migratory context

Theme: Spaces of History

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<th>Discursive Strategies</th>
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<td>Common mentality forged in common history</td>
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<td>History defines mentality:</td>
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<td>the peace damaged (fredsskadade)</td>
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<td>Nation of insignificant size:</td>
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<td>“being small”</td>
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</table>

Size matters (Latvia): "being small"
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<th>Nation of significant size: The big brother</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soviet, post-Soviet and non-Soviet spaces (Sweden)</td>
<td>The non-Soviet Space: freedom, freedom of speech, economic well-being</td>
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<td>Old vs. New migrants</td>
<td>Migrant hierarchies and legitimation for belonging: refugees vs. economic migrants, Diaspora as Outdated-historical National Specimen (old Migrants), “New migrants” as representatives of a new national reality: the Russified compatriots</td>
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Theme: Elements of National Belonging and Non-Belonging

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<td>Citizenship</td>
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<td>(Sweden)</td>
<td><strong>Constructive</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Space of immigration as a precarious state for Latvian migrants: the Swedish state is not to be trusted</td>
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<td>Language</td>
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<td>(Latvia)</td>
<td><strong>Constructive</strong></td>
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<td>Language as a factor of Latvian ethnic and national identification: Latvians speak Latvian</td>
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<td>(Sweden)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The non-compliant migrant: acquisition of Swedish language by migrants as a pivotal factor of belonging.</td>
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<td>Phenotype (Sweden)</td>
<td>National Swedish phenotype</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial Proximity and distance</td>
<td>The space of immigration as a space of indifference to the space of origin: the Swedes are indifferent to Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural proximity and distance</td>
<td>Connected cultural spaces: Latvia and Sweden as spaces of common cultural elements, Cultural hierarchies: cultured Swede vs. uncultured Latvian</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Theme: Migrant Identifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discursive Strategies</th>
<th>Dismantling</th>
<th>Perpetuating</th>
<th>Transformative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid identifications: half-Swede half-Latvian, foreign Latvian,</td>
<td>Dismantling national self-identifications via external identifications</td>
<td></td>
<td>History transforms migrant identities: from refugee to citizen</td>
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</tbody>
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Theme: Social and Educational Capital and Gender

### Discursive Strategies

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<tr>
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**Gendered national stereotypes:**
Latvian women as effective caretakers,
Latvian women as sexualized objects

### Greeks for Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constructive</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dismantling</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization of Space</td>
<td>Institutionalized space monopolizes geographical space: EU equals Europe, Level of institutionalization affects identifications: project under construction, Identity under construction, Geographical identifications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial Belonging</td>
<td>Common Values: democracy, mobility, Europe vs. the non-European Other: non-EU migrants and refugees, European mobility</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
enhances belonging, European phenotype

religious and cultural base.

Latvians for Europé

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization of Space</td>
<td>Institutionalized space monopolizes geographical space: EU equals Europe, The idealization of Europe: freedom, peace, human rights, free mobility</td>
<td>National autonomy vs. participation in international organization: Latvia in the EU framework</td>
<td>The EU as a peace project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial Division</td>
<td>Russia as the constitutive Other of Europe, The EU homogenizes-westernizes Europe</td>
<td>East vs. West, Old vs. new member states, Economic and development disparity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial Belonging</td>
<td>free mobility, religion, phenotype, common European culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Common European culture via classical antiquity and Christianity</td>
<td>Soviet and post-Soviet period</td>
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Greeks and Macro-Regional Belonging

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Macro-Regions</th>
<th>Discursive Strategies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean Sea region</td>
<td>Space of common culture and mentality affected by the climate</td>
<td>No macro-regional belonging, Fragmented space: European vs. non-European part</td>
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## Balkans
Space of common culture and mentality

## Southern Europe
Space of common culture and mentality affected by the climate

### Latvians Macro-Regional Belonging

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baltic Sea region</td>
<td>Fragmented into sub-regions, No macro-regional belonging, Fragmented Space: Baltic States, Scandinavia, Nordic, Eastern Europe, German-Polish part</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baltic Sea</td>
<td>The sea of the Baltic States, A space of emotions, National (Latvian) sea, Extra protection against Russian aggression</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baltic States</td>
<td>Space of common historical experience, Space of common cultural elements, Common phenotype</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>Common Historical experience: the Soviet period Space of non-</td>
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<tr>
<td>preferred belonging, Common phenotype</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nordic or Northern Europe</td>
<td>Space of preferred belonging.</td>
<td>Upgrading to higher macro-regional status: from Eastern Europe to Northern Europe/Nordic</td>
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How can we understand the significance of the nation in the current European context? And, how does the idea of a common European identity, as an aggregate based on national and regional affiliation, work in practice?

Through interviews, this study reconstructs the overlapping identifications of Latvian and Greek migrants in Sweden focusing on questions around integration, feelings of belonging and spatial identification of the migrants with their countries of origin and residence.

Furthermore, how migrants position themselves in relation to the Baltic Sea region and the Mediterranean as, but also compared to other, macro regional spaces is also explored. The study of migrants’ narratives about their social and everyday life, and their personal experience of coping with public authorities seeks to improve our understanding of the current phenomenon of internal European migration.

Vasileios Petrogiannis is a social scientist. This doctoral thesis, written within the research area of Politics, Economy and the Organization of Society (PESO), is part of the project “Spaces of Expectation: Mental Mapping and Historical Imagination in the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Region” at the Institute of Contemporary History.

Political Science, Politics, Economy and the Organisation of Society, School of Historical and Contemporary Studies, Södertörn University.