

Master thesis

Town Twinning and the European Identity

*Evaluation research of the relationship and exchange between Lingen, Germany
and Elbeuf, France, organized within the framework of town twinning in
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Summary

This thesis consists of evaluation research and looks into the twin town relations of the city of Lingen, Germany, and focusses especially on the relationship with the city of Elbeuf, France. One of the main goals of this relationship is to contribute in building a united European Union that preserves freedom and peace and maintains close human and cultural relations, which could be translated into contribute to increasing the European Identity. This thesis therefore combines the theory of European identity with town twinning. The thesis consist of an organization and evaluation aspect which led to the following research question: "Was the twin town relation and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf properly implemented and organized, and what were the results of the exchange in terms of satisfaction of the participants and achieving the intended goal of increasing the European Identity of the participants". The first part of the research question deals with the organization part and analyzes it by the following sub questions: (1) How was the relationship and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf organized? and (2) Was the twin town relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf properly implemented according to the conditions found in literature? The second part of the research question looks at the evaluation side of the relation and especially of the most recent exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf. This has resulted in the following sub questions (3) How was the exchange evaluated by the participants? and (4) To what extent has the European Identity of the participants changed after participating in the exchange? In order to answer the research question, this thesis makes use of a mixed research method with both a quantitative and qualitative research approach. The data has been gathered by conducting interviews and a survey. The first two organizational questions are necessary to make conclusions about the evaluation and will be answered mainly by qualitative data. The third question regarding the evaluation of the exchange uses both qualitative and quantitative data and the last sub question will be answered by carrying out a quasi-experimental design. A pre- and post-test through a questionnaire before and after the treatment, the exchange, is being conducted to test the extent of a European identity being present under the experimental subjects. The experimental group consists of a group of 29 citizens of Lingen that have participated in the exchange to Elbeuf in the framework of the town twinning initiative from September 3rd to 6th, 2015. A non-equivalent control group of 33 citizens of Lingen that is not formally part of the study is in place to provide comparison. The questions in the questionnaire are derived from theory and have been classified into five clusters: knowledge, interest, connectedness, opinion and diversity. The quantitative data has been analyzed with SPSS. A paired samples T-test analyzes, per cluster, if a change in European identity can be identified. Believed is that participation in a French-German exchange, organized within the framework of town twinning, has a positive effect on the European Identity of the participants and should increase the feeling of having a European Identity of these participants. A result can, however, only be found when the relationship and exchange between the two towns have properly been implemented and the exchange has had a positive evaluation. From the analysis it was clear that the relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf has been properly implemented and that the most recent exchange was a great success. There was, however, no significant change in the European identity of the participants of the exchange organized between Lingen and Elbeuf. Factors that could have influenced the result could have to do with the short duration of the exchange, the program and the lack of involvement of the French citizens. The setup of the research may also have influenced the research, i.e. the moment of testing that would have led to a ceiling effect. It would be interesting to test for long term effects of the exchange in the future and instead of measuring the European identity,

look for changes in internationalism, the national or local identities of participants, as they may have changed.

Foreword

In February 2014 I arrived in Muenster for the first time to start my master's degree. The first thing I saw when entering the city was the large sign with the twin towns. After driving through Germany more often I noticed that many German towns had a twin and the corresponding signs. It made me wonder about the whole concept of town twinning. I am the kind of person that wants to cross borders, travel the world, see different countries, cultures, learn languages and get to know people with different ideas, attitudes and lives. I figured out pretty quickly that not everyone thought like this. The idea of town twinning appeals to me, especially because of the fact that it might build a stronger bond than just visiting a country or city as a tourist. Also the fact that some people are so interested in getting to know other cultures and languages, and others that do not have this and prefer to stay in their safe habitat, interests me. Why is it that some want to live in their home town for the rest of their lives, and others want to spend their time in the most exotic places you can imagine?

I would like to thank my supervisors, prof. B. Denters and prof. N. Kersting, who advised me through the whole process of thesis-writing. A special thank you to the city of Lingen, and especially Petra Bayer for their hospitality and giving me the opportunity to conduct my research.

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Abbreviations

CEM Council of European Municipalities

CEMR Council of European Municipalities and Regions

EACEA Executive Agency for Education, Audiovisual and Culture

EC European Commission

ECB European Central Bank

ECSC European Coal and Steel Community

EU European Union

TACIS Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States

UK United Kingdom

1. Introduction

1.1 Subject of investigation

Europe is becoming increasingly interconnected. European cities are transforming into multi-ethnic and multi-cultural entities. We could say that cities in Europe are a “unified network of urban settlements” (Gospodini, 2002, p.21). This idea of a unified network can also be found in the town twinning phenomenon in which cities form partnerships with other cities. Twinning is the pairing up of two cities that work together on their relationship for multiple reasons in the form of a long distance social interaction and international cooperation at the local level or in the words of the European Commission (EC), cooperation to create social and cultural “understanding between towns and citizens” (European Commission II, 2012). The council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) describes twinning as “the coming together of two communities seeking, in this way, to take action with a European perspective and with the aim of facing their problems and developing between themselves closer and closer ties of friendship” (CEMR, 2008). Partly for this reason, there can be a large increase in the establishments of twin towns identified after the Second World War. Since 1950, more than 11,000 twin town agreements have been started in almost 160 different countries (Zelinsky, 1991, p.1). The reasons for entering a town twinning agreement varies from city to city. After the Second World War, a trend can be identified of international friendship and reconciliation between former foes, to increase understanding of each other’s cultures, especially within Europe. The European Union (EU) started supporting town twinning immediately after the Second World War, and is still to this day active in supporting and funding twin town projects. The extent of integration and cooperation of social, political and economic systems of Member States of the EU can nowhere else be found in the world. Even though no official from the EU has stated what the end goal of European Integration is, several scholars have discussed that this would lead to a European identity (Fligstein et al, 2012). The idea behind this is that “those who participate in ‘Europe’ are more likely to develop a European identity, while those whose economic and social horizons are essentially local are more likely to assert nationalist identities” (Fligstein et al, 2012, p. 106). According to the EC, there are four theoretical concepts that drive the study of European identity. These concepts are European identity and identity with Europe, Europeanization, Transnationalism, and Cosmopolitanism. In this thesis the term European Identity is used which can be translated to identification with Europe. This concept has a component of active choice in regards to what group an individual orients him or herself to. Europeanization refers more to the European institutions gaining more ground, transnationalism refers to permanent migration and cross-border living and cosmopolitanism refers to “actively seeking out and appreciating contact with other cultures” (European Commission, 2012, p. 5).

This thesis evaluates the twin town program and discusses to what extent this twinning of towns actually influences this European identity. The city of Lingen (Ems), Germany has been used as a test case. Analyzed is specifically the twin town relationship between the city of Lingen and the city of Elbeuf, France. The city of Lingen is located in Lower Saxony and had around 55,000 inhabitants (Live and Love Lingen, 2012, p. 5). It borders with the Bundesland of North Rhine-Westphalia in the south and the Netherlands in the west. Lingen has a rich history and has been conquered by “the Spaniards, the Dutch, the French and the Prussians, who all leave behind more or less lasting traces which can be seen in the city’s buildings, traditions and customs” (Live and Love Lingen, p. 4). Next to the main mayor, Dieter Krone, the German system also allows for deputy mayors, currently being Heinz Tellmann as

first deputy mayor, and Monika Heinen as second deputy mayor. The first deputy mayor Tellmann is responsible for the twin towns. Lingen is an “economic driving force for the region”, a “cultural metropolis” and the regional “center for healthcare”. Lingen has the goal to be a cosmopolitan city and is actively involved in international and cultural events. One of these activities are the five town twinning partnerships that Lingen manages. Please see table 1 for an overview of the current twin relations of Lingen.

	Twin Town	Country	Date of Signature	Distance
1.	Burton upon Trent	Great-Britain	September 25, 1982	779 km
2.	Bielawa	Poland	March 19, 1993	806 km
3.	Marienberg	Germany	June 21, 1996	606 km
4.	Salt	Spain	January 30, 1998	1.460 km
5.	Elbeuf sur Seine	France	May 15, 2004	756 km

Table 1 - Overview of twin towns

The city sees these twin towns as “unique possibilities to find out more about the everyday life of the citizens in other European countries” and by communicating with these citizens new friendships can be developed (Website Lingen). The main objective of twinning for the city of Lingen is the traditional friendship between cities and to bond the citizens of the European countries. In the guidelines of the city towards town twinning projects the city states clearly that the city tries to actively aim with its projects for an increase of “europäische Einigung” which can be translated to “European unification”. The city tries to connect people from different countries, cultures and backgrounds and this way tries to work on building a European Identity. This is also being restated in the twinning agreement with Elbeuf, which can be found in Appendix I. The relationship with the city of Elbeuf is interesting to study because their goal of twinning, European Unity, is specifically stated. And for this reason the relationship has been chosen to study. Just like the small city of Lingen, many cities in the world have twin town relationships, which have been attempted to track by the CEMR in Europe and the Sister City Movement in the United States. Despite all these twinning relations in the world, the topic has not been as present in literature nor has it been researched thoroughly. Wilbur Zelinsky published an article exploring the pattern of twinning in the world in 1991. An article that was supposed to re-start exploring twinning, but the majority of scholars ignored the topic. More recently, new material has been published, for example about success factors (Baycan-Levent, 2010), models (de Villiers, 2009) or benefits (Cremer et al., 2001; Pfundheller, 2014; Clarke, 2009, 2011). Research that combines twinning, Europeanization and European Integration has been done by Thomas Grunert in 1981, especially focusing on the German and French twin towns, and Bautz (2002) who tried to find out if twins influence EU politics in any way. The largest amount of publications on twin towns can be found in the form of experiences of city partnerships that are sometimes shared in the framework of an anniversary of a partnership (Jürgens, 2006; Woessler, 1991). But research that connects the elements of town twinning with the European identity by evaluating the twinning organization, relationships and goals of a city, cannot be found. This study thus evaluates a program that has as the goal to increase the European Identity. Because similar studies or evaluations have not been done yet, this work hopefully inspires other scholars to dig deeper into the subject.

1.2 Research questions

Because so many different cities participate in the twinning project, it is interesting to see how the partnerships perform. Cities can have different reasons to participate in partnerships and varying goals with the relations. The goal of the city of Lingen is to increase the European integration and with that increase the European identity. The question arises how important European integration and especially the creation of a European Identity is within the framework of twinning. According to Pfundheller (2014), 7.4% of the researched twin towns gave European Integration priority as an objective, which could make us conclude that it is not top priority anymore for most towns as it used to be (p. 124-126). To the city of Lingen European Integration, international friendship and contributing to building a stronger Europe is still high on the agenda. In order to find out if the program is successful for all parties, not only the organization, implementation and achievement of the intended goals should be looked at, but also the participant satisfaction should be included. As per the city's request to research the effectivity of these goals, the following research question has been composed in order to evaluate if the program is performing as intended.

Was the twin town relation and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf properly implemented and organized, and what were the results of the exchange in terms of satisfaction of the participants and achieving the intended goal of increasing the European Identity of the participants?

Several sub questions have been created in order to structurally answer the main research question.

1. How was the relationship and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf organized?
2. Was the twin town relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf properly implemented according to the conditions found in literature?
3. How was the exchange evaluated by the participants?
4. To what extent has the European Identity of the participants changed after participating in the exchange?

The sub questions can be divided into two sections regarding *organization* and *evaluation*. The right implementation is believed to be important to be successful and achieve goals. In the first sub question the implementation and organization of the twinning relationship and exchange is discussed. The second question looks at how properly the relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf has been implemented and examines this on the basis of conditions for adequate implementation found in literature. This question provides a bridge from the organizational part to the evaluation part. The third question examines how the exchange is evaluated by the participants and the last and fourth sub question looks into the achievement of the set goal by the two cities, increasing the European Identity.

1.3 Thesis outline

In order to answer the above stated research questions and corresponding sub questions the thesis has several chapters that follow the structure of the sub questions. The following chapter provides the theoretical framework in which the main concepts will be conceptualized. The chapter starts with an introduction into the twin town phenomenon. It focuses on success conditions and the possible effects of twinning. The second section of the chapter discusses the second main key word of this thesis: the

European identity. The theoretical chapter is the basis for the hypothesis that are given at the end of the second chapter. The third chapter describes the methodological part of this thesis. This chapter describes the research design, data collection method and data analysis method. The subsequent chapter includes the operationalization of the scales and extensively analyzes the gathered quantitative and qualitative data, tests the hypotheses and will answer the sub questions. The fifth and concluding chapter will present the overall results and will answer and discuss the main research question that has been posed at the beginning of the thesis and provide any possible explanations of the findings. Suggestions for future research will be given and recommendations regarding the future of the twin town projects for the city of Lingen and Elbeuf are given in this final chapter.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter describes the theoretical framework of the thesis. The first section of this chapter discusses town twinning and especially the organizational aspect and success conditions of the phenomenon. It then continues with international exchanges and the European Identity, which are used in the evaluative part of this thesis.

2.1 Town twinning

The town twinning section starts with an introduction, discusses EU support, exchanges and provides the main success conditions.

2.1.1 Introduction into twinning

After the Second World War, many countries were devastated, economies collapsed and especially relations between countries were ruined. In order to restore the relations between the broken countries several schemes were used to get countries to connect again. Even though the phenomenon already existed before the Second World War, the objectives of town twinning after the war shifted towards the re-connection of countries and former foes and the promotion of peace, which explain the high number of twinings between France, the UK and Germany. These relations were built through shared experiences from the war or as the results of being ex-enemies (Cremer, 2001). Because town twinning is purely on the local level, there is no need for national governments to get involved. A twin town relation starts with a formal agreement signed by the mayor or any other local official of both towns. Even though the mayor is needed to set up the agreement, the formal aspect of twinning is quite small as only 75% of the twin towns involve less than monthly meetings (Wolters, 1997). Joint decision making and formal board meetings are unusual. The proposal for a city entering a twinning agreement is usually proposed by a local actor, and not a central bureaucracy (Zelinsky, 1991, p. 3). It are often individuals or private contacts that lead to initiatives to start twin towns, however, national and international agencies may encourage cities to enter into agreements. The partnerships are open to all participants, “regardless of age, gender, occupation, social status, religion, or ideology”, and not specifically certain interest groups and the idea behind the town twinning agreement is for it to last indefinitely (Zelinsky, 1991, p. 3). Of course, just as with marriage, this is not always feasible and a divorce between twin towns is possible. This doesn’t happen often, but when it does it is often the result of a “cultural mismatch, incompatibility of corporate culture or personality” and poor communication (De Villiers, 2009, p. 154). It could also happen because one of the cities feels that the other is not putting the same amount of effort in the relationship or the cities are not gaining equally from the twinning agreement. The unwritten understanding after all is that two, often similar, cities should both profit equally from the relationship. This can be in different degrees when one of the countries is less advanced and assistance might flow more towards a certain direction (Zelinsky, 1991, pp. 2-3). Not just one local project should be carried out, but a range of shared events and activities to include as many citizens as possible. Many scholars have discussed a variety of different activities that can be undertaken. Pfundheller (2014), for example, distinguishes between the following seven categories in which activities can be allocated to: religion, science, education, sports, arts, culture and business. Seen all the different categories of activities, a twin town has a lot of options and can therefore have several reasons and motives to start a twinning agreement with another city.

According to Zelinsky (1991), twinning is not a random process but is a phenomenon that is based on several different factors and cities should have certain conditions before entering in any agreement. Zelinsky points out that many relations between cities can be found as a result of historic connections, such as experiences from the war or having a large amount of emigrants. Some cities, such as Salem or Calais, are twinned with another city based on just similar, sometimes identical, names (Zelinsky, 1991, p. 22). Additionally, other reasons such as the presence of archaeological sites, educational and universities, political ideologies, local associations, existing linkages, philanthropic reasons, or universities can be identified (Zelinsky, 1991; de Villiers, 2009; Pfundheller, 2014; Cremer, 2001). Despite this, the main reason is often still the idea of participating in international friendship and learning to understand each other's culture. Also, European integration is an argument for many cities to pursue twin town relations, especially the European friendship and understanding. In more recent times, however, we can distinguish a trend for starting new partnerships that are focusing on economic, business and investment relations between towns (Cremer, 2001, p. 383; Baycan-Levent, 2011, p. 1188). Ramasamy and Cremer (1998) describe the new objectives as the idea of having a marketplace for cities, where traditional roles of cities as a gathering place for economic activities is being reclaimed (p. 449). Economic reasons could help in improving business connections, investments, tourist activities, trade and personal contacts and can be seen especially in major port cities to promote economic activity (Baycan-Levent, 2010, p.1190; Cremer, 2001, p. 378). Most scholars and even twin towns themselves argue, however, that a relationship driven solely by economic interests will not be successful and to date the most known and used activity in town twinning projects are social and cultural exchanges, 82% according to Wolters, between youth groups, which are not directly linked to any business objectives (Cremer, 2001, p. 385; Wolters, 1997). There are also reasons why a city chooses to not twin, when for example the connection or willingness to twin is lacking. Sometimes, even though the willingness is there, still certain factors might influence the cities to say so no to a possible partnership or to even abort a relationship. Reconciliation can on the one hand be a reason to twin, but at the same time it can also be an obstacle in constructing the partnerships. This is visible in the enormous delay in the development of the partnership between American and Iranian cities or the lack of twinning with countries such as Cuba, North Korea, Libya, Syria, South Yemen (Zelinsky, 1991). Grudges held between towns, official restrictions such as the distribution of visas or the finances and funding of the projects can interfere with possible partnerships. It is important that local authorities provide support, especially financial. Even though city officials are crucial in setting up the twin town, the majority of people working on twin towns are unpaid volunteers. But without funding almost no twin town can function (Cremer, 2001; De Villiers, 2005). The amounts of spending are different for each relationship. In a study of Cremer the average spending in 1995 was 12,000 USD per twin town (p. 388). Often this amount is not sufficient to preserve a healthy relationship and twin towns need to rely on community support or self-funding, next to local government contributions. Sometimes a city might decide that the costs outweigh the benefits and it might be a reason to not start, or to abort existing partnerships. European partnerships might in certain cases be eligible for an EU grant in order to support the twinning.

During the World Wars the political center of gravity was mainly on a national level. Local authorities were not as important and nobody was thinking of strengthening them. After the wars, however, municipalism arose and an increase of local government was pursued. Local institutions came together to discuss different issues which was the start of an international movement. But even though after the Second World War twinning may have been used as a tool to gain more power for local authorities,

nowadays we can see that the agreement is mostly made up of cultural exchanges and that the political side of twinning not as visible as is perhaps expected. Despite this, the World Bank called the twin town initiative “small but potentially a powerful element in the quiet revolution in local governance” (The World Bank, 2000, pp. 154-155). In the last 20 years, the town twinning initiative has stopped growing as fast as it did before. The most common explanation by scholars is the saturation of twin agreements (Falkenhain et al., 2012; de Villiers, 2009). Cities cannot have an unlimited amount of twins because of different reasons but we also see that cities are starting to get more involved in other transnational and international networks. Eurocities for example is mostly popular under larger cities, twinning on the other hand is popular in towns of all sizes.

2.1.2 Success conditions

The participation in twinning has diverse well-documented advantages and just as in any other agreement or relationship, there are certain factors that can influence the twinning relationship (Castells, 1996; van den Berg et al., 2001; Nijkamp, 1999). Unfortunately, studies in regards to critical success factors that determine successfulness are scarce. Some authors did investigate the issue, such as De Villiers. He composed a management and planning model for cities to use which consists of six steps. De Villiers (2001) argues that the application of this model can effectively increase relationship success at the local level. Another study confirms and summarizes a successful relation by three factors: people, resources and plans (Cohen, 2010). Table 2 shows an overview and summary of the factors found in literature that influence the successfulness of a twin town relationship. The conditions are based on healthy twin town relationships that for example do not end up in a divorce. The success conditions will be further discussed below.

	Success conditions
1.	Strategy
2.	Management and commitment
3.	Community awareness and involvement
4.	Communication
5.	Finances
6.	Evaluation

Table 2 – Success conditions

1. *Strategy* - Many failures can be tackled from the start, before a city even starts searching for a partner, they should set criteria for partner selection, goals, vision, guidelines and strategies (Gomes-Casseres, 1994). Once the city knows what it wants, it can start and search for twin towns that would be a good match. This can be done by approaching cities themselves, by responding to queries from other cities or involving an organization or consultant specialized in international matchmaking. Any possible partners needs to be investigated in depth. An easy pitfall can also be the amount of partners that a city has (De Villiers, 2009). A city needs to remember that twinning relationships cost time and money. By limiting the number of partners and concentrating on a smaller amount the partnership may be more effective. O’Toole (1999) has argued that the development of partnerships can be divided into three different stages: the so-called “associative phase”, “reciprocatve phase” and “commercial phase”. Within the associative and usually first stage, the partners are focusing on international bonding, cultural exchange and general international awareness of the community. The reciprocative

stage deals with a further deepening and expansion of educational exchange systems. Over time, partner cities could start to focus more on the commercial phase that is characterized by economic goals and for example prioritizes creating job opportunities and other economic activities. Cremer concludes that “the successful operation of sister-city programs will not occur when the individuals involved act with nothing more than economic self-interest” (Cremer, 2001, p. 384). Twin towns should not move to the next phase until the earlier phase can be seen as successful.

2. *Management and commitment* - In order to start and preserve a twinning relationship, support and commitment from the council is necessary. The quality of the management is extremely important. Just as in a business, good organizational structures and functioning staff increase the chance of success (De Villiers, 2009). Even though, twinning will be structured differently in every country, the CEMR states that a local body should be in charge of the relationship and that both local elected representatives and citizens should be involved in a twinning committee (CEMR, 2008). When structured similarly this may also help overcoming possible cultural and language barriers. Important to the management of a twin town is also the twinning agreement that needs to be made up and signed by both parties. The agreement functions as a business plan spelling out vision, goals, objectives, strategies and actions to be taken. But also the duration of the agreement and possible divorce conditions should be discussed. Ideally the business plan should be reviewed yearly. The agreement provides a starting point but is an ineffective tool for resolving problems.

3. *Community awareness and involvement* - Community awareness has a significant positive correlation with success and argued is that citizen participation leads to a higher degree of sustainability of the twin town relationship (De Villiers, 2005). A theory is that population size also influences the visibility and knowledge of citizens of twin towns. It is believed that in larger cities, less citizens are actively aware of or involved in twin town activities (Zelinsky, 1991). In, according to Grunert (1981), smaller Western European towns with less than a thousand citizens, more than 75% of the population attends twinning ceremonies (p. 164). Foreigners visiting a small town might be more known and spoken about in comparison to a larger town where this seems to be a more common thing, because of for example tourists and business exchanges. Awareness leads to participation. Which is extremely important as the twinning initiative should not just be an exchange between mayors but should involve as many citizens as possible.

4. *Communication* - Most scholars agree that communication is key in a healthy relationship. Not just during the relationship but also before the twinning agreement has been drafted. In this stage good communication should be set up to continue the relationship with. Due to language barriers and cultural differences this might sometimes be troublesome. In this case the advice is to stay patient and continue to work on the relationship and in some cases to revise the twinning agreement.

5. *Finances* - In a study on South African twin towns, only 13% of the twin towns were rated as successful. More than 50% of the partnerships that were identified in 2004 were abandoned in 2006. The reason for this was often that costs outweighed the benefits (De Villiers, 2009). Finances play an important role and money is necessary to have a healthy relationship. Ideally, the local government has a generous budget to maintain the relationships but often enough, the local authoritative support is not enough to keep the relationship running. It is not uncommon for participating citizens to make a contribution. It might be interesting for towns to consider applying for EU funding. Towns, municipalities, twinning committees or other non-profit organizations representing local authorities

can apply for grants. Projects with a maximum duration of 21 days can get EU funding up to €25.000. A project must involve municipalities of at least two eligible countries and one of them must be an EU member state. Besides this, there must be “sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activities for the duration of the proposed action” and the professional competences and motivation must be shown to execute the project. Since the late 1990s the EC has also become much stricter in terms of only supporting those projects which meet all set conditions. The application procedure has been labeled with a high degree of complexity (Grosspietsch, 2010).

6. *Evaluation* - As any other organization or project, a review is ideal to assess if the goals set at the beginning of the twin town relation and noted in the agreement are being met. Ideally, the twin town relation is being reviewed every 3 to 6 months (Segil, 1996). This can be done by confidential team-assessment, when each team member evaluates his or her perception of the relationship and how it is or isn't working, or by alliance benchmarking where successful alliances are being researched and compared with (De Villiers, 2009). Regular evaluation and revision of the agreement and relationship is important and it is also advised to have an evaluation among participants of events in order to get an understanding of the opinions of the citizens of both towns.

2.1.3 Exchange Programs

Successful partnerships organize a range of activities. Language and cultural exchanges remain the most undertaken events within town twinning and seem to be the most important to twin towns (Baycan-Levent, 2001, p. 1198). Learning a language is often a very important reason to twin or to organize an exchange. In contrast to being a regular tourist, it is understood that exchange participants stay as visitors in private homes and have a more intensive experience (Cremer, 2001, p. 381). This kind of hospitality has become one of the key aspects in the town twinning phenomenon (Jayne et al., 2011). The success of an exchange is not always an easy subject to measure. Just as with twin towns, every person will have different expectations and these should always be taken into account when evaluating an exchange. Already in 1984, Detweiler concluded that international exchanges have a positive effect on internationalism and still it is believed that exchanges have a positive effect on the participant including: “increased international perspective, greater knowledge of the world, increased personal maturity, improved interpersonal and learning skills, higher foreign language proficiency, and a greater reluctance to perpetuate inaccurate stereotypes and distortions of other cultures” (Bachener & Zeutschel, 2005, p. 2). The research of Bachener & Zeutschel on the long-term effect of exchange involved students that went on an exchange in the 1950, 60s, 70s and 80s and they conclude that intercultural experiences indeed have a positive effect on the international perspective of the participant. The contact between exchange participant and members of the host culture is one of most important aspects of the exchange and for the exchange to have a positive influence on the internationalization of the student (2005, pp. 10-13). Especially the host family, where the participant is staying during the exchange period, is essential to the outcome of the exchange. When the contact with the host family is negative in nature, it might result in a complete negative experience of the exchange (Bachener & Zeutschel, 2005, p. 14). The respondents in this research confirmed that the exchange resulted in significant and positive personal changes. The research also finds out that “involvement with the (youth) exchange after the sojourn is not typical” (p. 15). But the overall conclusion is that a positive international perspective and increase in internationalism or world mindedness is one of the results of the exchange, especially at the high school level (p. 15). The majority of respondents had an increased respect for other nations, a higher desire to interact with

foreigners and more interest in international affairs (p. 15). Even when there were certain problems, this did not automatically have a negative effect on the success of the exchange.

2.2 The European Identity

The goal of the exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf, and the twin town relation of the city of Lingen in general is to increase the European identity of the participants. The next section will therefore go further into this possible effects of twin town exchanges, the comprehensive concept of European identity. Before moving on to the concept of European identity, identity in general, citizenship and multiple identities will be discussed. In this section different clusters of European Identity will be identified in order to make the assessment of the European Identity more feasible.

2.2.1 Talking about identities

Identity is a topic that is discussed by many scholars as it seems to be “an inescapable issue” (Giddens, 1991). Because what is and what does identity mean to a person? According to the Oxford dictionaries, identity is “the characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is”. Instead of just leaving the definition of identity to what a person is, we could, to make it even more complicated, also include what a person wants to be. According to Jacobs and Maier (1998), this in combination with “an assessment of the conditions, means and capacities to realize the future projects” is what identity really is (p. 14). Ultimately, everybody seems to have its own ideas on the concept of identity and it is therefore hard to define due to its many different aspects. Anthony Giddens puts (self-) identity into the following words:

“What to do? How to act? Who to be? These are focal questions for everyone living in circumstances of late modernity - and ones which, on some level or another, all of us answer, either discursively or through day-to-day social behaviour.” (1991, p.70).

Giddens’ quote shows that the identity issue is mostly one of the late modernity, which suggests that the concept has changed over time. According to Jacobs and Maier, this can be explained through the historic processes the world has gone through (1998, pp. 14-15). Social roles and traditions have been subject to extreme changes. Earlier societies, for example, were based on tradition. The man at work bringing the money in, and the women at home, in the kitchen, taking care of the family. In modern societies, we can see that this pattern is slowly changing. Especially in Western modern societies everyone has to find their own role in society which theoretically would lead to an increasing amount of people starting to think about their identity. The concept of identity or cultural identity can be described through many different factors. The culture that one is brought up in determines for a large part identities. To what group a person belongs or feels like it belongs to, can for example be explained by their generation, religion, social class or nationality. The family surroundings and local community of a person or where a person was born into, have a great say in the identity of that individual and how connected a person feels towards this identity. Several aspects are determined right from the start, thinking of ethnicity, race, gender and generation. These are not aspects that can be easily changed, or changed at all for that matter. Also how an individual is raised, referring to ideals, ideas, religion and social class, is all reflecting on their identity. All of this can be traced back to the culture and cultural traditions that a person grows up in. But not only the “how” and “when” questions discussed above are important, also the “where” question, as to the geographical location, should be included. In what part of the world a person grows up has a significant influence on their culture and their identity. Many

people see themselves not only as a member of their family, of a sports club, company or church, but also as a citizen or member of the town or state, the province or the Bundesland they live in. Some people refer to the nation state or even to being a European or world citizen. According to Lehning (2001), "citizenship is not only a legal status, defined by a set of rights and responsibilities. It is also an identity, an expression of one's membership in a political community" (p.242). National identities may be related to the citizenship status that one has but do not necessarily have to define the connectedness. Nationalism, however, emphasizes the identification to the nation state and these feelings are even more emphasized during sport events such as Football World Cups or Olympic Games. Even though nationalism may be defined as "the cohesive force that holds nation states together", there can also be negative side effects identified such as xenophobia and the further differentiation between "them" and "us" (Kersting, 2007, p. 282, 288). Nationalism, national pride and patriotism are often seen as synonyms and especially when the national identity turns into aggressive nationalism it can be a problem that is clearly demarcated by borders (Kersting, 2007, p. 281). Identity and citizenship are therefore closely related.

2.2.2 Citizenship and multiple identities

European citizenship is mainly viewed as citizenship of the EU, and thus demarcated by the borders of the Union. If we were to include the complete European continent this would be problematic, because where does the European continent start and end? Where to draw the boundaries? Most inhabitants of the European continent do not even know where the exact geographical boundaries lay, not to mention where to the distribution of languages or cultures go (Haarmann, 2011, p. 1-3). European citizenship is therefore usually referred to citizens from different nation states, being members of the EU that have the same overarching, legal rights on a European level. This questions if for example Switzerland and Norway, both not part of the EU but certainly located in the continent of Europe, could have a European identity. This shows clearly that just as it is difficult to define the borders of Europe, it is also difficult to define the concept of the European identity and the concept needs to be understood as flexible. The concept of citizenship "seen as immediate bearers of EU citizenship, as sharing a common identity, a common responsibility and the excitement and anticipation of future common endeavor" is much debated (Lehning, 2001, p. 3). The concept of European citizenship refers to individuals being citizens of the EU. But before the European citizenship, many citizens might firstly feel more related to being Spanish, German or French. Without these national identities there would not even be a European identity (Jacobs and Maier, 1998, p. 14). Jacobs and Maier explain that the current European identity is built from several different national identities on which the European identity depends:

"Through the national identity, individuals can participate in the pool of European identity, but there is no other way to participate in it effectively. Nobody can become European without first acquiring a national identity, thus excluding significant numbers of migrant groups not wanting or not allowed to take up one of the state citizenships" (Jacobs and Maier, 1998, p. 11).

These different national identities can also be seen in the current slogan of the EU "United in Diversity", that is not excluding them and opens up the debate of being able to have multiple identities. A political community and nation state that sees itself as a democratic entity has to set boundaries and subsequently differentiate between members and non-members (Habermas, 1998). Social borders result in certain individuals being excluded. These individuals have their own individual identity, but

are excluded from the collective identity. These individual identities, however, do have their place within society. There can only be spoken of a collective identity in a democratic community if there are certain groups excluded. Habermas refers to this as “autonomous self-determination on a collective level” (1998, p. 161). He also argues that a collective identity, on a nation state level for example, needs another collective identity. According to Tinnevelt (2008), this argument is “not very convincing” (p. 20). It is partially referring to Carl Schmitt’s idea of the political friend-enemy distinction through which political actions can be explained (Schmitt, 1996, p. 26). Citizenship as a shared identity that excludes and includes certain groups, this idea of “us and them” is being confirmed by several authors as necessary. For example Barbalet (1988) writes that citizenship “defines those who are, and who are not, members of a common society” (p. 1). Also Beiner (1995) confirms that membership and identity determine to which society grouping someone is connected. Formation of an identity is therefore strongly attached with boundaries and national borders. The self-identity of a community happens on the base of national or cultural ties that define the boundaries between members and non-members (Tinnevelt, 2008, pp. 19-21). Differences between members and non-members have been institutionalized in the fact that we differentiate between citizens, members of a nation state, and foreigners, the non-members of a nation state, these principles have been transformed to constitutional ones (Tinnevelt, 2008, p. 23). But nonetheless, the European identity seems to be just one of the identities a person in Europe can have. This concept of having multiple identities “implies that different attitudes and value systems may become predominant in different contexts” (Kersting, 2007, p. 282). The European Identity is like an extra layer on top of the national and local identities a person already has. The question is what identity a person sees as most important or most present.

2.2.3 European identity

Just like identity in general, the European identity means different things to different people and everyone has its own view on the European identity. Some view it as a cultural identity, others as a political and economic one. Rawls, on the other side, argued that everyone has a double identity, existing of a personal or private identity and a political or public identity (Lehning, 2001, p. 249). According to Rawls, citizens do not all share the same language or historical heritage, but do understand that they are politically and economically interwoven (Lehning, 2001, p. 250). This is a different view than the European Identity just based on shared traditions, languages, and values. But when speaking of cultural values, citizens often refer to their own national histories. The EU is based on plurality as a basis of unity but at the same time this plurality of national and regional traditions is one of the reasons why European identity lacks coherence. The importance and survival of Europe’s national cultural diversity can be traced back to the way children are raised and their education. History is differently interpreted in every school in different member states of the EU. In England, students study William Shakespeare’s work, in Germany they are especially interested in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and the Spaniards take pride in Miguel de Cervantes. Many have seen the continuation of teaching national histories and thus the preservation of national European cultures and traditions as a defense to the upcoming, most of all American, cultures (Floud, 2006, p. 9). This national pride and diversity makes that not many Europeans are advocating for a homogenous Europe. However, Floud (2006) argues that diversity does not necessarily bring strength and that diversity should be balanced with cooperation. On the one hand this diversity is and has been a strength for Europe and the EU because it reflects different ideas, on the other hand it can be seen as a step back into working towards a European Identity. It has been argued by many scholars that European citizenship and the blurring

of nationality lines would contribute to an enhanced experience of the European identity. Lehning (2001) for example asks if it would be useful to use the concepts of citizenship and identity outside of these national borders (p. 239). This would then be related to European citizenship or even world citizenship. According to Habermas (1992; 1998), the latter one is not achievable nor favorable because the political culture of the world society will never have the ethical-political base that is necessary for political world society and world citizenship and the associated global identity of these global citizens (pp. 4-6). Martha Nussbaum (2007) writes that there are three abilities essential for becoming a “citizen of the world” (p.38). Firstly, she emphasizes the capacity for Socratic self-criticism and critical thought or evaluation of own traditions, thinking for themselves rather than following authority. Secondly, the ability to view yourself as member of a heterogeneous nation and world which means that citizens need to have understanding of the world, but next to that also have their own traditions. In this thought process, it would be necessary to learn foreign languages to be able to communicate with the rest of the world, but local languages should not be forgotten about. Young citizens need to be able to stand above their local environment and dare to step away from their comfort. Lastly, one needs to have the ability to imagine lives of different people which she refers to as narrative imagination. Nussbaum says that “we may become powerful by knowledge, but we attain fullness by sympathy” (2007, p. 39). These factors are mostly in regards to the world citizenship debate but also closely related to the EU’s slogan “United in Diversity” and not completely insignificant to the European Identity debate. Within this debate it has been argued that a common European identity may provide “the moral or emotional force lacking elsewhere” (Todorov and Bracher, 2008, p. 3). The EU has been set up with mainly economic and monetary intentions, to get out of the economic malaise, create stability and eventually become a stronger economic force in the world. Todorov and Bracher argue that next to the old pillar system with economic, legal and political institutions, there could’ve been a fourth pillar added with social intensions existing of social programs (Todorov and Bracher, 2008, p. 3). This would lead to a more commonly shared cultural European Identity and, so has been argued, an increased European Identity could work towards a stronger political and economic EU. The creation of a European Identity and “euro-patriotism” was and is seen by many as an important factor in the survival of the EU and to bond the citizens of the EU (Jacobs and Maier, 1998, p. 10). Big events or crises such as Auschwitz, Srebrenica and Kosovo or the more recent downing of flight MH17 contribute to some extent in creating a stronger identity, but at the same time show continued importance of national identities. European symbolism has also not really taken off. Despite the efforts of creating a European flag and a national anthem, it has not become a touristic attraction or souvenir. In a survey in 1997, less than 25% of the European citizens was proud of its flag (Jacobs and Maier, 1998, p. 8). A tangible example of political and economic interwovenness is the euro. According to Rawls, Europeans understand the importance of this economical connection but if this is also showing in the identity remains the question as only 15% of Dutch citizens felt like the euro changed their way of feeling more or less European (de Heij, 2012, p. 8). Also language is seen as one of the main determinators in creating an identity as it is a symbol of belonging. In the EU, linguistic diversity is very present and the EU has been aware of these linguistic differences (Haarman, 2011, p. 1). Despite these issues, the EU has started using the concept of European identity from 1949 on. In 1973, the EEG published for the first time about the European Identity with a deeper meaning to look forward instead of looking backwards. From 2000 on, the EC started using “United in Diversity” as the motto of the EU (Europe, 2015). Jean Claude Trichet, the president of the European Central Bank (ECB), named the following components of the European Identity as important: diversity, unity and universality (Trichet, 2009).

The EU determined that citizens should be aware of their duties as a citizen of the EU and is trying to get them more and more involved in the processes of European integration, which eventually should lead to a sense of belonging to the EU and creating a European identity. By letting citizens of different nation states of Europe interact with each other they should come closer to each other despite their cultural diversity. It should create mutual understanding and respect and contribute to an intercultural dialogue. One example of this effort to connect Europeans is the Town Twinning project. It can be seen as an instrument to advertise European citizenship and make citizens aware of their duties and get them involved in the processes of European integration and identity.

The European identity itself can be seen as a shared identity made up of from different clusters. From the theory above we can identify five different clusters. The first cluster, *knowledge*, deals with the fact that, as also Martha Nussbaum mentioned and the EU promotes, the citizens should have a certain amount of knowledge of the EU. This is, for example, similar to having knowledge of your local or national identity, where you know who your mayor or president is. The second cluster has to do with *interest* and is closely connected to this knowledge cluster. A person that is interested in and feels connected to the EU may be more interested and therefore know more about the Union. The third cluster, *connectedness*, is related to how connected a person feels towards the EU and feels part of it. It poses the question to what extent someone is flexible in moving away from the EU. The fourth cluster, *opinion*, is in regards to the fact that having an opinion about your environment, in this case the EU, is quite important in order to form an opinion. The last cluster, *diversity*, deals with the fact that one should not only have knowledge of the EU, knowledge of their own cultural identity but also at the same time have understanding of different cultures and diversity within the European identity.

The clusters have been summarized in table 3.

	Cluster	Description
1.	Knowledge	To what extent someone has knowledge of the EU
2.	Interest	To what extent someone is interested in the EU
3.	Connectedness	To what extent someone feels connected to the EU
4.	Opinion	How someone evaluates the working of the EU
5.	Diversity	To what extent someone understands and respects the diversity in the EU

Table 3 – Theoretic clusters of European Identity

2.3 Twin towns and the European Identity

Interdependency has been growing in all aspects of life, and all citizens of the world are becoming more similar, more interconnected and interdependent (Zelinsky, 1991). Cities and local bodies are becoming more important in the world and those that are interconnected can turn into “financial and political centers of the world system” (Baycan-Levent, 2010, p. 1188). This interconnectivity and internationalization gives international cities many opportunities. An instrument to achieve this can be twinning. According to Villiers (2001), town twinning should be seen as an alliance as it “implies a much stronger relationship than mere cooperation” (pp. 149-150). Because of the increasing exchange of actors on different international levels, cities have the possibility to develop an identity on an

international level (Pfundheller, 2014). Even though, twin town arrangements are still mainly used for cultural exchanges, the growing emphasis on globalization makes cities and the local more significant (Cremer, 2001, p. 377). This glocalization, the local becoming more important on global level can be seen in all aspects of life. Local football teams such as Borussia Dortmund and FC Bayern Munich banners and scarves are for sale all over the world. The emphasis of the local on global scale continues to increase showing a trend of local cities becoming international players. Not just twin towns have the goal of increasing European integration and the European identity of their citizens, also the EU supports twin town activities for the same reasons. In Europe several organizations have shown support to town twinning and the EU has a history of supporting these local initiatives. In 1951, a group of European mayors founded the Council of European Municipalities (CEM, currently known as CEMR). In this same year also the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established. The aim of the CEM was to politically unite Europe to create a front against communism and defend Christian civilization (Clarke, 2011, p. 117). It tried to do this in a political way by uniting political officials which can be seen as a direct response to the aims of the ECSC. The institution has clearly been in favor of implementing common EU policies and strengthening the institutions. It wanted to bond and construct a real Union and also started creating standard twinning contracts to help get towns started (Weyreter, 2003). Twinning started to get more popular and the EU became more powerful which resulted in binding treaties and legislative agreements proposed by the EU. This formal integration by the EU has a large impact on local and national governments. Because it was believed that economic prosperity would have a spillover effect into the European identity, it was not until 1980 that the priority of the EC started to be more on culture and the awareness of a common heritage of ideas and values (Shore, 2000). Europeanizing was investigated by an Ad hoc committee that was set up in 1984 with the aim to find out how to enhance the EU identity among citizens. A year later. The committee concluded in a report that twin towns could contribute to mutual understanding between EU member states and EU citizens and that it is advisable to promote these partnerships by “creating favorable conditions for their development” (Addonino, 1985). In 1989, the EC came with the first funding possibilities for twinning and launched a scheme, Community Aid for Twinning, to promote awareness for European institutions among EU citizens. From 1995 on, the twin town program became an actual part of the EU agenda (Clarke, 2011, p. 118). More recently, the EU is supporting town twinning through the Europe for Citizens program with the goal to bridge the gaps between citizens of the EU. The first program, Citizens for Europe, ran from 2007 to 2013. The program has been renewed until 2017 under the name Europe for Citizens. The project is implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) but supervised by the EC. The two main aims of the program are to “contribute to citizens’ understanding of the EU, its history and diversity” and to “foster European citizenship and improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at EU level” (Falkenhain et al., 2012; Kuhn, 2015; European Commission II, 2012). This program does not only include town twinning, but also networks of towns and civil society projects all with the aim to promote EU citizenship and identity (Clarke, 2011, p. 118). From the Annual Activity Report of 2011 for the DG of Communication it becomes clear that twinning is used as one of the measuring points for European Identity, in order to measure how citizens perceive the EU (European Commission, 2012). Some studies showed that the objective of creating a European identity and fostering European citizenship is not as important or relevant anymore as to when the twin relationships first started after the Second World War but town twinning can possibly help Europe get out of its identity crisis. This, partly, because twin town exchanges could provide European citizens that participate with an “us” feeling and create a bond.

According to Grosspietsch “town twinning exchanges have the potential to affect citizens’ awareness of the EU and solidarity towards other European citizens” (2010). On the one hand Falkenhain (2012) argues that such initiatives or exchanges can instead of increase internationalism, strengthen the affiliations to the national or local level, but he concludes that “increased interaction with people from other countries is positively correlated with the development of a European identity and support for European integration” (Falkenhain et al., 2012, p. 212, 230). Jayne et al. (2011) describe town twinning as “a mechanism that creates empathy across borders”, which is important also according to Martha Nussbaum, but Jayne et al. conclude that the European identity does not necessarily replace the national identities but will rather both interact, shaping people’s life-worlds in different ways” and perhaps creating another layer of identity instead of replacing another.

2.4 Hypothesis

The hypothesis used in this thesis is based on the ideas of Bachener & Zeuschel that participating in an international exchange has a positive effect on the international perspective of the participant. The hypothesis therefore is that: the participation in a French-German exchange, organized within the framework of town twinning, has a positive effect on the European Identity of the participants and should increase the feeling of having a European Identity of these participants. A result can, however, only be found when the relationship and exchange between the two towns have properly been implemented and the exchange has had a positive evaluation. This hypothesis has been translated into the research sub questions that will be answered chapter four.

3. Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology and explains how the theoretical expectations will be empirically tested. It starts out with the research design, then discusses per research sub question how the answer will be found, and lastly discusses data collection and analysis.

3.1 Research design

This thesis consists of evaluation research. Social scientific experiments can occur in the course of normal social events, outside controlled settings. Evaluation research is “research undertaken for the purpose of determining the impact of some social intervention” (Babbie, 2007, p. 349). This type of research is also referred to as program evaluation or outcome assessment. The objective is to determine if a social intervention is producing the intended result and what we can learn from the results. In this case the objective is to find out if the intended effect of the twin town exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf, an increase in European identity, is achieved. Next to this also the exchange and relationship in general will be evaluated. In research we can distinguish between quantitative and qualitative research approaches, mainly a distinct difference through numerical and non-numerical data (Babbie, 2007, p. 23-24). Because every method has its own strengths and challenges, this thesis makes use of a mixed research approach in order to answer the research question. With this approach both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected and analyzed in statistical and textual ways. This research can be divided into an organization and evaluation aspect. In the following sections explained will be per sub research question how they will be answered and why the chosen methodology is used.

3.2 Research plan

The first two sub questions refer to the organization aspect of this thesis. This part is necessary for the second, evaluation part of the thesis because knowing how the relationship and exchange is organized is important in the evaluation. This is being illustrated in the organogram below.

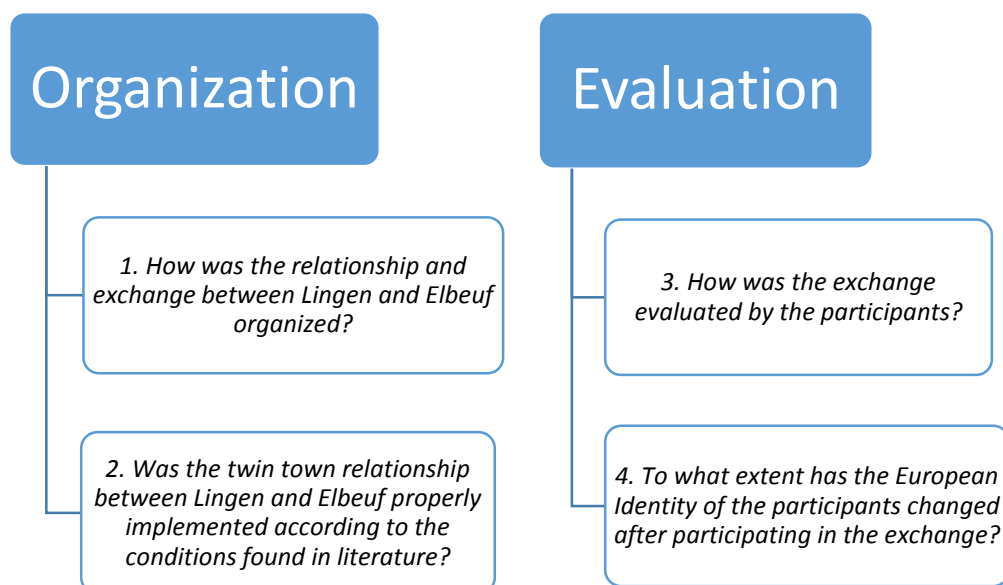


Figure 1 –
Research plan
overview

In order to find out how the relationship and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf is organized, and to later evaluate it, data about the current situation of Lingen's twin town program will be mostly gathered in the form of qualitative data. Interviews with the main actors in the organization should give further insights into the goals of the partnerships, what successful partnership look like according to the people working on the programs and to what extent they think the partnerships contribute to the internationalization of the city and citizens of Lingen. It would also give a better understanding of how and why these partnerships have been established, what actors are involved, the management, finances, and any problems, failures or successes the organization has identified.

After it is clear how the project is organized, the second sub question will determine if the relationship can be seen as properly implemented by carrying out a qualitative analysis. This is being done in the second sub question. An overview of the conditions that contribute to a successful and healthy relationship have been identified in the theoretical framework. These conditions will be compared with the current situation of Lingen's twin town relationship with Elbeuf.

The third sub question goes deeper into the evaluation of the exchange. Participants of the exchange received questions in questionnaire form before and after the exchange. Before the exchange they received questions in which they could express the expectations they had of the exchange. After the exchange questions have been asked regarding the evaluation of the exchange. The results will be compared and will give information about the exchange and what can be improved for the future. The French participants have received similar questions in order to compare the evaluating results from the German guests and the French hosts.

By answering the fourth sub question, found out will be if there is a change in the set goal of the exchange, the European Identity of the participants. This will be measured by means of quasi-experimental research. In this quasi-experiment the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable is examined. The independent variable takes the form of an experimental stimulus, which is either present or absent and is thus a dichotomous variable, having two attributes, present or absent. In this experiment compared will be what happens when the stimulus is present to what happens when it is not. The goal is to find out if the independent variable "participating in the twin town exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf" has the intended effect on the dependent variable "European identity". Any differences between the first and last measurements on the dependent variable are attributed to the independent variable.

Independent variable: Participation in twin town activities (Exchange) Dependent variable: European identity

The pre- and post-testing will be done by means of a questionnaire to test the extent of a European identity being present under the experimental subjects. Using a questionnaire asking about attitudes towards Europe, both the extent of European identity exhibited by each individual subject and the average European identity level of the whole group will be measured. After exposing the subjects to the town twinning exchange, the treatment, the respondents became the same questionnaire again. Responses in this posttest permit to measure the later extent of European identity for each subject and the average European identity level of the group as a whole. The results of the two tests can be compared with each other to determine any differences in attitude. As this will be in a social setting, the control over the experimental group is limited. There is also lack of random assignment of subjects

to an experimental as the subjects in the experimental group have already been decided beforehand, i.e. the participants that signed themselves up for the event. This experiment is therefore called a quasi-experiment as there is a lack of random assignment of subjects to experimental and control groups. It is possible, however, to find a non-equivalent control group, a group that appears similar in demographics, in for example age, education, city, to the experimental group (Babbie, 2007, p. 359). This group provides comparison even though it is not formally part of the study. This group will also get the pre- and posttest questionnaire in order to compare answers. The answers will be compared with the responses from the people that did not participate in the event but have comparable demographics. A pre- and posttest will be performed on the experimental and control group. The research results are supposed to give insight into the attitudes of the experimental group towards Europe, town twinning and internationalization, and especially if they have altered after participating in the event. The data of the control group will be used to compare and confirm that there is or is not indeed a significant difference between the pre and posttest in which the European identity will be measured.

The main unit of analysis is the exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf. The observation objects are the interviewees that will also be discussed further in section 3.3.1 and the group of 29 citizens of Lingen that have participated in the exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf from September 3rd to 6th, 2015, organized within the framework of the town twinning framework. The group of participants has been compiled of 16 students of the Emsland Schule in Lingen and 13 private citizens of Lingen. Many of these private citizens had travelled to Elbeuf before. This group of 29 individuals will be called the experimental group from now on. The control group has a total of 33 people and consists of 23 students of the Emsland College in Lingen and 10 private citizens of Lingen. The group of students attends the same school as the students that are part of the experimental group and fall within the same age category and education level in school. The private citizens have been picked by random and have been approached in person or through the internet. Also here, made sure is that the demographics such as age are comparable with the experimental group. Despite the size of the experimental and control group being less than desired, the response rate of the experimental group will still be interesting to look at. The basic experimental design is illustrated and summarized in Figure 2.

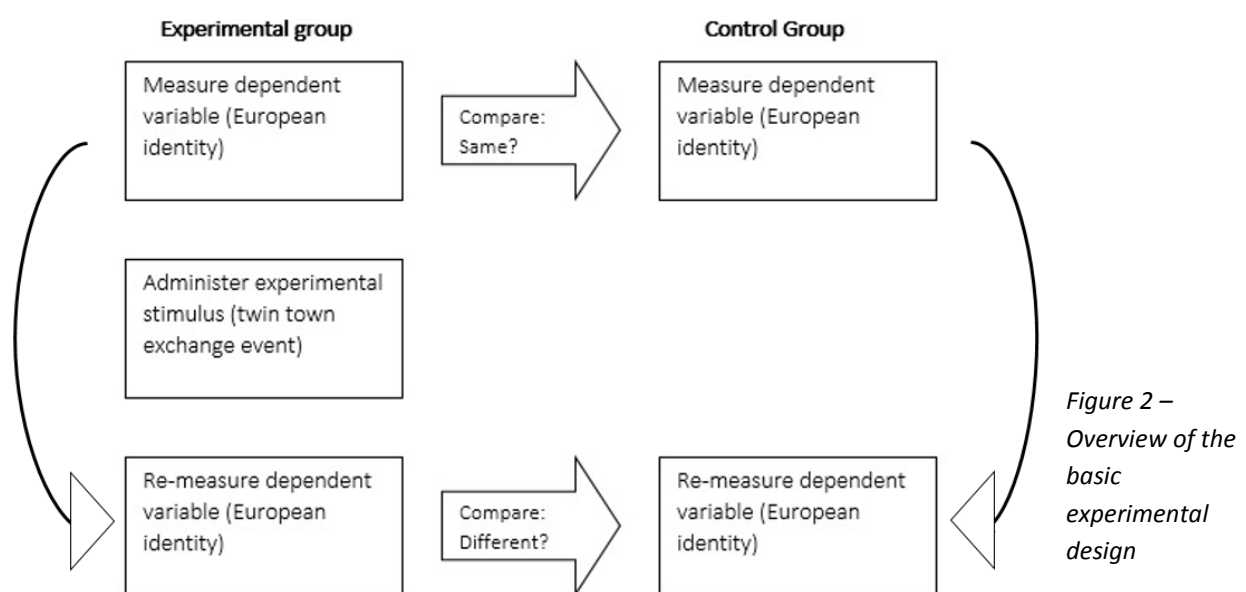


Figure 2 –
Overview of the
basic
experimental
design

3.3 Data collection

This section has been divided in two parts to discuss the quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection in order to answer the research question.

3.3.1 Qualitative data collection

Qualitative data will be mainly collected by conducting interviews. Interviewing is a method of collecting survey data and is one of the most flexible and widely used methods for gaining information about experiences, views and feelings. In order to get a deeper understanding of the project, the organization and the effects and motives behind the organization and participation, multiple people have been interviewed. Different styles of interviews have been used, not always by choice but also because of time limitation and language barriers. An overview of the different styles and interviewees can be found in table 4 and will be further discussed below.

	(1) Problem-centered interview	(2) Short interview	(3) Short questions
1.	German organization		
2.		Mayor	
3.		German participants	
4.			French organization
5.			French participants

Table 4 – Overview of interview styles

A problem-centered interview has been held with the responsible person for the German organization and communication, Petra Bayer. This interview had the aim to gain a good image of the organization and the twinning relations of Lingen, and especially the relation with Elbeuf. The structure of the interview was semi-structured. Questions had been prepared to guide the interview, but over the course of the interview several different topics have been touched. Variables such as general features of the partnerships, main actors, views and goals, criteria, budget, activities and of course the European identity have been discussed. The interview was held in English and a full transcript can be found in appendix IV. Short interviews, due to time limitation, were conducted with the first deputy mayor of Lingen and four German participants. Again, a semi-structure was used with these interviews. The questions asked to the mayor were to find out how important town twinning is for the city of Lingen, municipal views and aims, and why it is important from an official perspective. The four German participants were asked further information about their engagement in the event, motives to participate and to get a more thorough evaluation of the event. These interviews can possibly, to some extent, help explain the answers given in the questionnaire. The short interviews with the participants were originally held in German, translated versions of the interview can be found in appendix IV. Lastly, short questions were asked to the French organization and French participants. Sylvia Brunet, responsible for the organization of the program and activities in Elbeuf was not available for a problem-centered interview but she was able to answer a couple short questions via e-mail after the event. The questions asked were in regards to finding out what the ideas behind the activities were and also to get an idea of the time spent organizing this event from the hosting side. Next to this, the French

participants were also sent an e-mail with short questions. This was done mainly because of the language barrier, as it appeared to be very difficult to conduct an interview with the French speakers. In order to get some information from the hosting side, a short questionnaire consisting of five open-ended questions in French, was sent to all participating host families, 21 in total. The questions asked to them have mostly to do with their motivation and experiences. In total, 8 responses were received. These responses and the translations can be found in appendix IV.

3.3.2 Quantitative data collection

Quantitative data will be collected by means of a survey. Surveys are a useful instrument to measure attitudes, opinions and orientations and are one of the best methods to collect standardized and comparable information (Babbie, 2007). Measuring the dependent variable can be challenging and is in this case particularly difficult as identity and especially the European identity are not solid concepts. In chapter two, the theory of the European Identity has been discussed and different clusters have been derived from the theory. The survey questions are based on the theory that has been compiled in the theoretical framework and questions from the Eurobarometer and the ISSP: National Identity surveys. The questionnaire is used to measure differences between first and second measurement of the groups. The first questionnaire has therefore been handed out during the bus trip to France, the post test was filled out in the last 30 minutes of the bus trip back to Germany. The questionnaire is structured and has mainly closed-ended questions as they provide the greatest uniformity of responses and are more easily to process (Babbie, 2007). In the pre-test the experimental and control subjects have been asked about their attitudes towards Europe and the EU. The majority of questions have been answered on a Likert scale of five and an option to choose "I don't know". With this questionnaire mostly quantitative data is being collected, but also qualitative data has been gathered. Some of the open-ended questions may be useful in explaining certain answers given in and outcomes of the questionnaire. Better explanations, however, may come from the interviews, discussed in the previous section, as this information is more in depth. The pre- and post-test questionnaires of the control group and the experimental group are identical. A sheet with extra questions has been added for the experimental groups' pre- and post-test questionnaire in order to get information about their expectations (pre) and assessment (post) of the exchange. This second part of the questionnaire consists mainly of open-ended questions. All pre- and posttests of the respondents had an identifying number to make sure the answers of the two tests can be compared. The questionnaire was originally created in English but has been translated into German for the convenience of the respondents. A copy of the questionnaires can be found in appendix II.

3.4 Data analysis method

Because this thesis uses a mixed method design, there are different ways of data analysis. Both the analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data will be discussed below.

3.4.1 Qualitative data analysis

As it is not always possible to count results, sometimes a qualitative assessment is more appropriate. In this method social research is being analyzed without converting them to a numerical format. The second sub question tries to find out how successful the relationship between the two twin towns is. In this question a case-oriented analysis is being used that has the goal to understand this particular case. It involves an interplay between data collection and theory (Babbie, 2007, p. 378). Success factors

are being closely compared with the data gathered from the interviews with the French and German organization. Qualitative analysis is also used in order to find the answer to the third research question in regards to the evaluation of the exchange. In the analysis of qualitative data the interview data and open-ended questions from the questionnaires will be analyzed and in the qualitative data analysis the data will be discussed and compared. When examining this data looked will be for patterns that appear across different data that has been collected. It is impossible to predict every individual's behavior or even to explain any ones motivation in full. Sometimes it is however useful to have a partial explanation of overall orientations and actions. Together it might, roughly, give an idea of what could be possible explanations for certain quantitative answers. In the analysis, sought is to find answers and explanations for patterns found in the quantitative data. The interviews will be briefly summarized and important cases will be highlighted. The data analysis approach used is a descriptive and interpretative approach.

3.4.2 Quantitative data analysis

The computer program IBM SPSS Statistics has been used to analyze the data. Because a Likert scale has been used, assumed was that the distances between each item are equal. Therefore, parametrical tests have been chosen. First the questionnaire has been translated and scales have been created to measure the European Identity. From the theoretical framework, the following 5 clusters which make up European identity have been derived: knowledge, interest, connectedness, opinion and diversity. Within these clusters a principal component analysis will be held to find out what variables will be interesting to look at and if certain questions can be bundled to reduce the amount of variables and increase the reliability. A principal component analysis is being used to find out if certain variables can be combined into one factor and in that way reduce the different factors. The analysis looks at underlying patterns and correlations between different items. Items that have similar patterns can be put together as one factor. As the questionnaire consist of more than 40 questions, the principal component analysis will bundle the questions that have a high correlation and therefore make the reliability higher as more data is included on the scale. This will be determined by Cronbach Alpha. The Alpha depends on the average inter-item correlation. Once the groups have been determined a paired samples T-test will be performed on the pretest in order to find out if any significant differences can be identified. The posttest functions as a double check to make sure the difference can actually be appointed to the treatment. Once a significant difference is found, the T-test will also be held on the control group to confirm that the difference is not spurious. In general we look at a probability of 0.05, but because the experimental and control groups are relatively small, also 0.10 will be taken into account. In that case still 90% of the future tests should give the same results. Such an outcome will not be considered as significant, but as tendential. The quantitative data will be analyzed, compared and conclusions will be drawn.

4. Data analysis

This chapter will discuss the gathered data and analyze them in depth. Sub questions will be discussed per section.

4.1 Organization of the relationship and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf

The twinning agreement between Lingen and Elbeuf was signed in the town hall of Elbeuf by the then mayors Heiner Pott (Lingen) and Francoise Guillotin (Elbeuf) on the 15th of May, 2004. The statement states that the two cities feel like they have to contribute to uniting the EU, which can be seen in Figure 3. The full twinning agreement between Lingen and Elbeuf can be found in Appendix I. This has been confirmed by the Petra Bayer, responsible for the German organization and Lingen's mayor Heinz Tellmann.

We, the French city of Elbeuf sur Seine in Normandy (France) and the German city of Lingen (Ems) in Lower Saxony (Germany), express the desire to establish partnership relations and friendship.

It reflects our mutual desire to assert this commitment

We feel compelled to work together in mutual trust, to contribute in building a united European Union that preserves freedom and peace and maintains close human and cultural relations.

Figure 3 – Translated excerpt from twinning agreement Lingen - Elbeuf

The twinning relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf is currently managed by Petra Bayer for the German side. The city of Lingen has a budget of €30,000 per year for five twin towns and organizes and financially supports international twinning projects that consists of at least five participants. Table 5 shows the available subsidies that can be granted for groups of twenty or more participants per twin town. For smaller groups, the subsidy is reduced in proportion to the number of participants. Petra Bayer works part time and has an assistant that assists with the twin relations. There is also a twinning committee that supports Bayer in making the most important decisions. The head of the twinning committee is Heinz Tellmann, second mayor of Lingen.

	Twin Town	Group of Adults (25+)	Youth groups (under 25 years)
1.	Burton upon Trent	€1.000,-	€1.500,-
2.	Bielawa	€1.200,-	€1.800,-
3.	Marienberg	€800,-	€1.200,-
4.	Salt	€1.500,-	€2.000,-
5.	Elbeuf sur Seine	€1.000,-	€1.500,-

Table 5 - Overview of financial support per twin town

The city of Elbeuf only has one twin town and has a budget of €8,000 per year for the twinning relation with Lingen. The program is managed by Silvia Brunet, for the French side. She is a full time university professor and manages the twin towns in her spare time. She reports to the mayor of Elbeuf and has a large amount of volunteers helping with the twin town exchanges.

The program of the exchange organized from September 3rd to 6th, in Elbeuf can be found in Appendix IV. The exchange started on Thursday the 3rd of September when the bus departed Lingen at 6:00 AM. During the trip, a stop was made of two hours in Ghent, Belgium. The bus with participants arrived before 7:00 PM in Elbeuf where the French citizens were waiting for the group at the town hall. Here welcome speeches were given by Silvia Brunet and the deputy mayor, Heinz Tellmann. After this, all participants returned home with their French host families. On the second day, a day trip to Rouen was planned. This included a visit to the Panorama XXL and the Jean d'Arc museum. For the students of the Emsland schule there was an additional visit to the university where they had a tour. At the end of the day, 6:00 PM, the German participants returned to Elbeuf where they spent the night with their host family. During the trip to Rouen, no French participants, accompanied the German group. The third day started out with a voluntary visit to a church in Elbeuf to enjoy an organ concert in the morning. During this activity 6 French participants showed up and 11 German participants took part. In the afternoon, at 3 PM, the official opening of the yearly fair in the French town was scheduled. Following were theatrical and musical performances of French citizens and German high school students. At night the French and German participants all enjoyed dinner together. The next day, the German participants left Elbeuf at 8:00 AM where the French participants were also present to say goodbye. It was very notable that the French participants were not involved in all activities and on the first full day in France, the German participants discovered a city with each other.

4.2 The relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf analyzed

This section looks at the second sub question "Has the twin town relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf been properly implemented according to the conditions found in literature?". In the theoretical framework, several factors have been identified that may have an influence on the successfulness of a twin town relationship. Below the conditions from literature will be compared with the current relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf and will be determined if the relationship has been properly implemented. The relationship is viewed with an emphasis on the side of Lingen.

1. Strategy - De Villiers states that before a twin town starts getting involved with any towns, the city itself has to know what it wants. Petra Bayer explained that Lingen started searching for a French twin town in 2004 and that it got in touch with the organizations "Verbund Deutsche Gemeinden" in order to find the right partner (Appendices booklet, p.14). This is, according to de Villiers (2001) a good idea as they are specialized in international matchmaking. According to Petra Bayer, both parties visited each other multiple times before signing an official agreement. However, from the interview with Petra Bayer and the second mayor it is not completely clear why a French partner was wanted, this may have been a personal wish of the former mayor who set it up according to Petra Bayer (Appendices booklet, p. 14). The amount of partners may also influence the successfulness. Too many partners may result in a lack of contact and eventual divorce of the relationship. Lingen has five partners and a part-time employee to manage the twin town relationships. This seems to be enough, especially in comparison with other twin towns where there are no responsible persons that focus 100% on the twinning. It also shows that Lingen takes twin towns very serious. According to Petra Bayer it can still be difficult to

manage the twin towns and if any more twins would be added somebody in a full time job would be necessary (Appendices booklet, p. 15). From the different development phases described by O'Toole, we could say Lingen is currently in the first, associative phase, which means that they are mainly focusing on international bonding, cultural exchange and general international awareness of the community. In order to move on to the next phase a deepening and expansion of the educational exchange systems is necessary. The last stage has to do with the commercial and economic goals that a twin town can have. According to Cremer, it will not be successful to only focus on economic self-interest. From the interview with Petra Bayer it became clear that Lingen had tried to implement economic activities with the twin town Burton upon Trent in England, but this did not work out the way intended. It was not clear what the exact plan of approach was in these economic expansion as it was "a long time ago" but as it is not advisable to move from the first, associative stage to the third, commercial stage of O'Toole's model, this might be used as an explanation of the failure of economic activities between Lingen and the twin town (Appendices booklet, pp. 13-14). Petra Bayer did not rule out the possibility of implementing economic objectives in the future but for now there are no concrete plans. The strategy of Lingen to mainly have European twin towns, to make it affordable and realistic, seems to be a good one. Of course also a small city of Lingen can have future aspirations and Petra Bayer has revealed that they will try and intensify the already existing relationship with China, not for twinning purposes but to increase the international approach of the city. This is in compliance with the trend of cities starting to get involved with international projects other than twinning. Eurocities was named as a possibility in the future but for the direct future there is contact with the US and the focus will be mostly on the twin town relationship with Poland that will be tried and deepened in the coming years.

2. Management and Commitment - Support and commitment from the council is necessary according to De Villiers (2001). There is supposed to be a high quality of management, and it should be treated just like a business organizational structure in order to increase the successfulness. In order to have the best management, an agreement should be made up and signed by both parties. The agreement should be like a business plan spelling out vision, goals and objectives, strategies and actions (De Villiers, 2009). The city of Lingen and Elbeuf have an agreement, but it is not used as a business plan. The plan has been set up to make the relations official, but there is a lack of set rules and it comes in the most basic form only stating the main goals (Appendices booklet, p. 3). The plan should also ideally be reviewed yearly, this is not being done on an official basis. The city of Lingen does not do this with any of their twin towns.

Commitment is important in any relationship and is required from all parties. A lot of time is being used to organize activities and manage the relationships. Petra Bayer explains that time is evenly divided over the twin towns, but when an exchange is coming up, more time is put in the relationship (Appendices booklet, p. 14). Heinz Tellmann confirms this as well. He says also that all relationships are equal but that the relationship with Elbeuf extra special is. "Mostly because of the people who are involved. Over the last years such close relationships have been established. The relationship with Elbeuf is special. Not just because of the long history between France and Germany" (Appendices booklet, p. 23).

A twinning committee of ten persons assist Bayer and her assistant. This is just as the CEMR suggests. The head of the committee is the first deputy mayor, Heinz Tellmann. Two to three times a year this

committee comes together and discusses all topics related to the twin towns of Lingen. It is a committee of politicians, which is different than De Villiers and the CEMR as they suggest that both local elected representatives and citizens should be involved in a twinning committee (CEMR, 2008; de Villiers, 2009). The meetings are open for the public. The head of the committee, Tellmann, is very dedicated to the twinning project and finds it important as “it enriches a city like Lingen. It keeps it moving and it keeps its citizens moving” (Appendices booklet, p. 23). An important aspect according to the first deputy mayor is the twin town relationship to “continue talking to each other to avoid making mistakes again” (Appendices booklet, p. 23). With this he refers to the Second World War.

3. Community awareness and involvement - Believed is that, the more the community is aware and involved in the twin town relation, the more successful the relation will be. The population size may have an influence on this. Lingen has approximately 52.000 citizens and can be considered a relatively small city in Germany. It is, however, not officially known how aware the citizens are of the twin town relationships of the city. When asking the city officials about this, Petra Bayer says that there are no numbers available on visibility of the twin towns but she assumes most citizens would know. A lot of messages are being published on the website of the city, the Lingener Tagespost (local newspaper) and there are signs at the main roundabout in the city center and main entrance roads into Lingen (Appendices booklet, p. 17).

In the questionnaire also questions regarding awareness were asked. To the question “have you ever heard of the town twinning phenomenon in general?” 26 respondents of the experimental group chose to answer “yes”. Only three respondents, students, chose for the option “no” or “I don’t know” and after this exchange these answers were changed to a “yes”. Also the control group was very aware of twin towns. 26 respondents of the control group answered this question with a “yes”. To the questions how the respondents heard about town twinning the answers were mixed. Most students answered this question with “through the school” and as “part of our education”. The non-students said they knew about twin towns through friends, because of articles in the (local) newspaper, by participating and also the signs when entering the city and on the main roundabout in the city were named.

More specifically in regards to the city of Lingen, 26 respondents of the experimental group said in the pre-test that they knew that Lingen had twin towns. Four respondents said they were not aware of this. In the post test this changed to 25 respondents knowing about the twin, and three not being aware. The majority of the control group was aware that Lingen has twin towns. In the pre-test 27 out of 33 answered this question with “yes”, in the posttest 26 respondents answered with “yes”. The question how many twin towns Lingen in total has and what the names are of these towns, the respondents had less knowledge. 16 respondents of the experimental group knew the correct answer in the pretest, and 15 knew the correct answer in the post test. The other answers varied between one and eight. Many respondents did not answer this question. Of the experimental group, 11 respondents knew at the pretest and posttest what the names are of the twin towns of Lingen. All these respondents were private citizens that travelled. Interesting is that, especially under the students the amount of twin towns is not known. Only one student in the experimental group knew at both pre- and posttest that Lingen has five twin towns. When asked to write down the names of the towns, only Elbeuf was answered. This was the answer for most students who did give an answer to this question. This difference might have to do with the fact that for the students it was a compulsory exchange. The private citizens, however, chose themselves to come and might have had more interest in the

exchange and the twinning phenomenon in the city of Lingen. Also of the control group, most respondents are aware of the fact that Lingen has twin towns. They were, however, not all able to provide the names of the twin towns. Only two respondents were able to do this.

It is important to include as many citizens as possible, and not just mayors or other officials. Petra Bayer says about this:

“If you install a twinning, if something is new, to get in on the way these official people have to be involved. The people of town hall need to be there to install the thing, to start it up but that can’t be the main thing. Of course you have special events, memorial days for example, where politicians would exchange. But the main thing of a twinning must be that the private citizens, a great variety of people from the town, are involved and not just politicians. Of course, on several points it is important and alright, but the most important is that the people exchange and of all ages - seniors, juniors, etc.” (Appendices booklet, p. 16).

It depends from year to year how many people are travelling to one of the twin towns but Petra Bayer estimates that between 300 and 500 people are being supported yearly for the travel (Appendices booklet, p. 16). She notes that there might also be more people travelling to one of the twin towns that she doesn’t know about. She says “We install the contact and then it’s often up to them” (p. 16). The idea for Lingen is to set up the relationship between two groups, help them organize the first exchange and financially support them. The city then hopes that the groups will continue the relationship by themselves. They can still be financially sponsored but the aim is to make them independent organization wise. Petra Bayer: “Our aim is to finance it, to give young people the opportunity to go abroad and experience something new” (p. 15). According to Petra Bayer it is not difficult to get people involved in twinning. There are always people in Lingen who want to go on exchanges and also it is not difficult to find host families for foreign guests. The questionnaire also concerned the question if respondents had ever participated in a twin town event or if they had any interest in participating in the future. To the first question, if respondents had ever participated before, the pre-test of the experimental group was answered 22 times with “Yes, more than twice”, five times with “yes, once or twice, and 12 times with “I don’t know. In the post-test of the experimental group these answers changed to 11 times “yes more than twice”, 13 times “Yes, once or twice” and four times “I don’t know. We can see that the majority switched from answering not knowing if they’ve participated in the past to participating at least once. The control group answered to this question in the pretest mostly with “Yes, once or twice” or “No”, 14 respondents chose “Yes, once or twice, and 14 respondents chose “No”. In the posttest 15 respondents answered with “No”, 12 with “Yes, once or twice” and 4 with “Yes, multiple times”. Also about the interest in participating in an event organized within the twinning framework in the future was asked. 17 respondents said “yes”, 10 said “maybe”, two said “I don’t know” and nobody answered with a “no”. In the post-test 21 respondents said “yes”, seven people said “maybe”, and one respondent answered with a “no”. In comparison with the control group we can see that here the answers remain more or less the same and there is not a switch to more respondents choosing the answer willing to participate. The kind of events are mainly cultural events and exchanges. Even though, the city tries to involve citizens of all ages, it seems that the majority of participants are youngsters that are part of a school or sports club exchange.

4. *Communication* - Most scholars agree that communication is key in a healthy relationship. Due to language barriers and cultural differences, this may, however, sometimes be troublesome. Petra Bayer said that all twin towns are equal and she tries to stay in touch with all of them as much as possible. She does mention that with some cities things run more smoothly as contacts may be a bit closer (Appendices booklet, p. 17). In Elbeuf, for example, there is a lot of personal contact between the organizations but also between participants of exchanges. This has partly to do with the fact that the participants stay with host families when visiting the twin town. In Poland, school children exchange as well and stay in host families, however, for private citizens this type of exchange is not in place yet and the goal is to install that in the future to improve relations. That doesn't mean that there are no challenges in regards to the communication side of twinning for the city of Lingen. Not every town has a dedicated person who focuses only on twinning as it is done in Lingen. In Elbeuf for example the person responsible for the twinning is also a university professor. Petra Bayer mentions the sometimes long wait for responses and frustration that this results in as certain things have to be decided by both towns and she says that the information doesn't flow and slows down all the processes. This is confirmed by Silvia Brunet, the organizer of the French side who confirms she is very busy and it is difficult to do all of the work without any assistance (Appendices booklet, p. 19). The mentality towards twinning or in general may have something to do with this. According to Petra Bayer, "Germans plan things very much and often (...) and everybody has their own style" of managing twin towns (p. 17). The contact with twins are different each year and it depends on what is being organized and how much contact is necessary for that. The language barrier may be a challenge but according to Petra Bayer is that hardly ever a real problem. The main language used is English, but there are also many German speakers abroad.

5. *Finances* - Finances play an important role and money is necessary to have a healthy relationship. In total the city of Lingen has a budget of €30.000 per year for the five twin towns (Appendices booklet, p. 16). In comparison, the city of Elbeuf has a budget of €8.000 per year for one twin town, Lingen (Appendices booklet, p. 19). In the first chapter, a short introduction into the twinning in Lingen has been given and the basic financing has been discussed. Petra Bayer explained that the differences in price mainly have to do with the distance. She confirms that she always wants to see proof and programs of the exchanges. The circumstances, such as 50% of the time has to be spent in the twin town, is critical for her. They can "not go to Spain and lie on the beach for a week. That could be one day of a journey, but the main idea is that the citizens get in contact with each other" (Appendices Booklet, p. 15). An option for European twin towns is to get subsidy from the EU. In the last organized exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf, this option was not used. Petra Bayer said she once applied for EU support in 2007 and received a €15.000 grant for a project that involved all five twin towns and had the topic of environmental protections. After this time, the city has not applied for it again because "the application procedure was horrible, really horrible" (Appendices booklet, p. 16). It took a lot of time, was a lot of work and very complicated. Because of the large budget of the city, the support would be welcome but is not seen as vital to keep the twinning relations alive. This is just as Grosspietsch (2010) also describes the EU support procedures. Nearly every person that travels to the twin towns and that has applied for financial support, has received it. Petra Bayer hardly ever has to reject anyone because of the large budget. Also the first deputy mayor sees the benefits over the costs: "Yes, it costs. When a city is in the position to financially support, why not? It costs money, but when it goes well. I think it is a good investment" (Appendices booklet, p. 23).

6. *Evaluation* - Ideally a business plan or twin town agreement should be reviewed yearly and the twin town relationships in general every three to six months (Segil, 1996). The twinning committee comes together two to three times a year, but does not do any review or assessment under the participants and the review is only being done between the members of the twinning committee, which are politicians. There are no confidential team-assessment or alliance benchmarking evaluation processes in place. From the above conditions, Lingen matches most of them but there are improvements that can be made.

4.3 Evaluation of the exchange

This section discusses the third sub question to what extent the exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf in September 2015 has been evaluated positively by the participants. Petra Bayer explains when an exchange is successful in the quote below.

“A variety of people taking part, the idea of it, common activities with the partners and the towns and of course accommodation in host families to see how they live and not in a hotel, that is completely different. In a foreign country, spending in a hotel as a tourist, what do you see? If you live in a family that is completely different and that is very important” (Appendices booklet, pp. 17-18).

Bayer also gave her opinion on the exchange and said she had a positive feeling about the exchange. The questionnaire revealed that 72% of the respondents evaluated the exchange in general as very positive. 21% was positive and 7% was neutral. The option to choose “negative” or “very negative” were not used and the majority is therefore very positive about the exchange. This is also depicted in the diagram below.

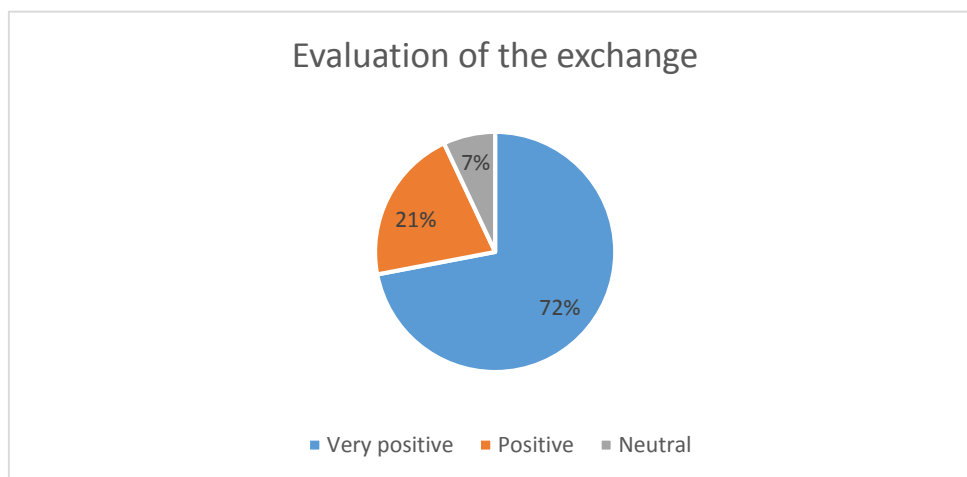


Figure 4 –
Evaluation of
the exchange

To the question what the expectation to the exchange were most respondents replied they were looking forward to a new experience, get to know how the French live, their culture and meet old and new friends in a different country. Also the visit of tourist attractions and using foreign languages was mentioned. From the feedback after the exchange it became clear that the majority (76%) of the respondents saw their expectations being completely fulfilled, 14% was somewhat fulfilled and 10% was neutral about the exchange. The activities were also overall rated as very positive (58%) or positive (28%). The rest of the respondents felt neutral about the activities.

To the question what was positive about the exchange and what was experienced as negative, conflicting answers were given. A positive review was given to having contact with the French people, to see how they live, experience their culture, and their food habits. Cultural activities such as visiting the museum were positive to some and also the visit to the fair and the performance by the German music students. Negative points, on the other hand, were that not that many French citizens were involved in the activities and that they would have liked it to spend more time with them. Furthermore, the long visit to the fair, the cultural activities, such as the museum, and the performance by the music students, the bus journey, and the weather were chosen as negative points. It is interesting to see that negative answers were mostly given by the high school students. To the questions if any activities were missing also conflicting answers were given. A couple of respondents mentioned that they would like to see more activities and especially together with the French host family and French citizens. Other respondents said they would want more freedom and not be so stuck to a schedule, they would like to use this time to go shopping. Most respondents, however, did not miss any activities. When asking the German participants if they would be interested in participating again in the future a vast majority of 64% responded they definitely would. Only one person answered this questions with a “No” after the exchange.

Also the French participants have been asked their opinion of the exchange. The organizer from the French side, Silvia Brunet believes that the exchanges between the citizens go well as every year people travel (Appendices booklet, p. 18). All French respondents were positive about the exchange as well. Most of them are involved because they want to create new international friendships and experiences. Things that could be improved were mainly the amount of exchanges being organized (more), to involve younger people in the exchanges and have a longer duration of the exchanges, as many found two days too short and maybe include a family day to spend more time within the host family. None of the Germans on the other hand mentioned this which might be explained by the fact that they also had two days of travel within the exchange. One French respondent said: “My main disappointment is that the inhabitants of Elbeuf are very difficult to open up to the outside and that we must spend so much energy to make them join our projects” (Appendices booklet, p. 27). The respondent thinks this may have to do with the language barrier and the different mentality. This problem was also discussed with Petra Bayer in regards to organizational style and seems to be an ongoing problem. Overall the exchange was rated very positively.

4.4 Effects of twinning on the European identity

This section will discuss the sub question "Has the European Identity of the participants changed after participating in the exchange?" and will report mainly on the results of the questionnaire. Before the effects can be measured, scales need to be constructed. The first section will therefore discuss the operationalization of the variables, the second section will go into the effects measured.

4.4.1 Scale construction

When questionnaires consist of many questions, scales can bundle the questions that have a high correlation and therefore reduces the amount of variables and increase the reliability as more data is included on the scale. Scales are composite measures of variables, based on more than one data item (Babbie, 2007, p. 154). As this questionnaire consists of more than 40 questions, a principal component analysis has been used as a tool in the construction of scales, in order to find out if certain questions

can be combined in one factor. Per theoretic cluster, questions were assigned that were thought to have strong correlation with the cluster. The principal component analysis has been used to confirm if these corresponding questions can be used within the cluster. Cronbach's alpha is being used to determine reliability if multiple items can be used on one scale. The type of rotation used is Varimax. The variables have been reduced according to the five clusters of European Identity, knowledge, interest, connectedness, opinion and diversity that have been discussed in the theoretical framework. The questions from the questionnaire have been created according to these clusters and all relate to one of the cluster of the European identity. In order to measure the effects of European identity, below will be explained which questions have been used in the clusters in order to make them measurable.

The cluster "Knowledge" deals with the questions to what extent respondents have knowledge of and are educated about the European Union. The cluster exists of the following five questions. Beside every question is the corresponding question number relating to the questionnaire and variable in SPSS.

- How many member states does the European Union have at the moment? (10/K1)
- Is the number of countries that has the euro, larger than, equal to, or smaller than the amount of EU Member States? (11/K2)
- Which of the following countries are member states of the EU? (12/K3)
- What is the current position of Jean-Claude Juncker? (13/K4)
- In which of the following areas does the EU not have any competence? (14/K5)

When combining the above variables Cronbach Alpha is .378. K3 could be removed and it would be .330 Cronbach's Alpha, but as questions that are as different as possible are wanted decided is to keep all five different knowledge questions. These different questions also have different degree of difficulty which resulted in certain questions having a higher difficulty level than others.

In the following clusters there was no right or wrong answer possible to the questions in the questionnaire as these questions refer to opinions or feelings. The *interest* cluster, for example, approaches the question in how far respondents are interested in the European Union from a political perspective. Even though a principal component analysis is not necessary here, as there are only two variables involved, when used the Cronbach alpha results in .653.

- I would like to know more about my rights as a EU citizen (8c/S_c)
- How interested are you in European politics? (9c/I_EU)

These questions have been chosen as they show to what extent the respondents have interest in the EU or would like to know more about the EU. The cluster *connectedness* is being discussed as to what extent respondents feel connected or attached to their surroundings and especially the European Union and how easy it would be for the respondents to move away to a different area. The cluster exists of the following two questions.

- How close do you feel to the EU? (2e/R_Europe)
- I feel like a citizen of the EU (8a/S_EU)

The third cluster *opinion* is being discussed in relation to the EU's goal of involving citizens into the debate and evaluation on European integration and the EU. The questions focus on the opinion on the

EU of the respondents. The cluster exists of the following three questions and has a reliability of .681 Cronbach's Alpha.

- My country benefits from being a member of the EU (8d/S_d)
- My city benefits from being in the EU (8e/S_e)
- I am very optimistic about the future of the EU (8f/S_f)

Another question from the questionnaire seemed to fit in this cluster. Question 7 of the questionnaire regarding to the opinion of the respondents on the general image of the EU could have been added to the cluster but decided has been to not do this as the reliability would decrease (.643). The last cluster *diversity* is being used to discuss the so-called strength of the EU and its slogan "Unity in Diversity" and looks at how far respondents are aware of diversity within the EU. After the principal component analysis, the cluster exists of the following four questions and has a reliability of .724 Cronbach's Alpha.

- I am aware what we have in common with other European countries (20b/S_i)
- I have respect for people from different European countries (20c/S_j)
- I am aware that people from different European countries may face certain difficulties (20e/S_l)
- I am aware of different perspectives of people from different European countries (20g/S_n)

The questions from the last four clusters have been answered on a Likert scale, the highest possible score is 5, the lowest 1. A high score means that the respondent agrees, likes, or is interested in something, a low score means the opposite. The knowledge questions were not asked on a Likert scale as these study the know-how of the respondents. In these questions there is either a correct answer or a wrong answer. Because there are 5 questions, the respondents can have 5 points, which means that all questions were correct, or a 1, which mean that one question was correct. The missing data and "I don't know" answers have not been analyzed in SPSS.

4.4.2 Effects of the twin town exchange on the European identity

The hypothesis that is going to be tested is that participation in a successful international (French-German) exchange organized within the framework of town twinning has a positive effect on the European Identity of the participants and should increase the feelings of having a European Identity. Per cluster the effects will be discussed below. In the *knowledge* cluster, the experimental group went from an average score of 1.38 ± 0.65 to 1.51 ± 0.71 . The Paired Sample T-test also concluded that $t(28) = -1.768$, $p = .088$ ($p > 0.05$), which is not a significant difference. But if taking in account a .10 probability, the outcome could be considered as tendential. The control group measured $t(31) = -2.625$, $p = .013$ ($p < 0.05$), which would mean that a significant difference has been measured and the respondents gave more correct answers in the post-test. The results of the knowledge clusters including average scores can be found in figure 5. These results may have had something to do with the level of difficulty of the questions.

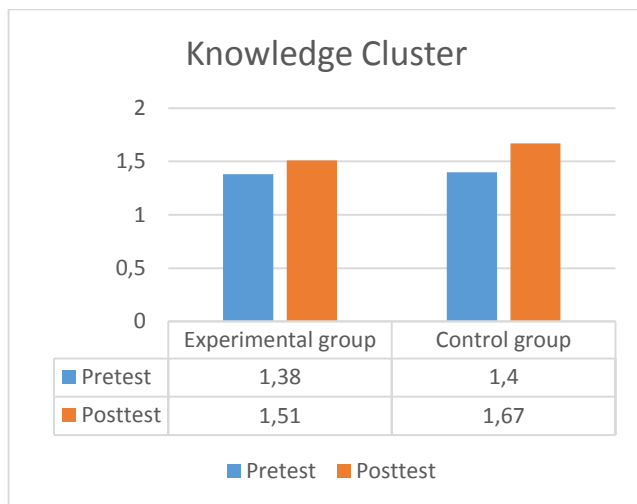


Figure 5 – The knowledge cluster pre and post test

As discussed before, the knowledge question came with different degrees of difficulty. Figure 6 depicts the difficulty of the different questions. K2 was answered correctly by 48% in the pretest and 59% in the post test. Question K4 wasn't too difficult for the respondents either, with 52% in the pretest finding the correct answer and 45% in the post test. Which is interesting as less respondents chose the right answer. K1 and K4 saw a slight increase in answers. The third knowledge question, however, was probably a bit too difficult for the respondents. In this question the respondents were supposed to pick from a list the countries that are part of the EU. There were 5 correct options and 5 wrong options. Figure 5 shows that in the pretest only one respondent crossed the correct answers, and in the post test none of the respondents was able to choose the five correct answers. The respondent who had it right in the pretest seems to have chosen these answers accidentally. Because the control group showed an increase in correct answers we have to mention that the control group had a better chance of looking up answers than the experimental group had. After the pretest, the experimental group was in a foreign country and may not have had internet. This combined with the busy schedule of the exchange it is assumed that the participants did not look up the answers. The control group, however, would have better opportunities to look up the correct answers.

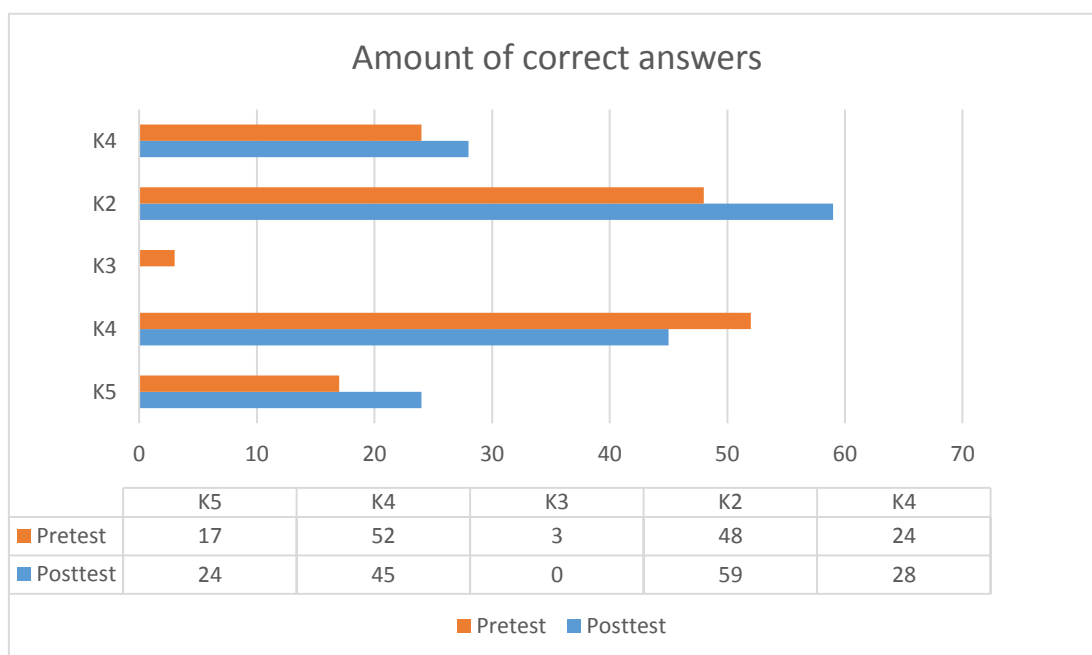


Figure 6 - Answers to the knowledge questions of experimental group in percentages

Also looked has been at the amount of people who made one mistake or forgot to cross one correct EU country. The results can be found in figure 7. It becomes clear that many respondents of the experimental group chose 4 correct countries and 1 country that is not a member of the EU. A common mistake is for example that respondents thought that Norway or Switzerland were part of the EU. They often forgot to cross Croatia, who is a member of the EU.

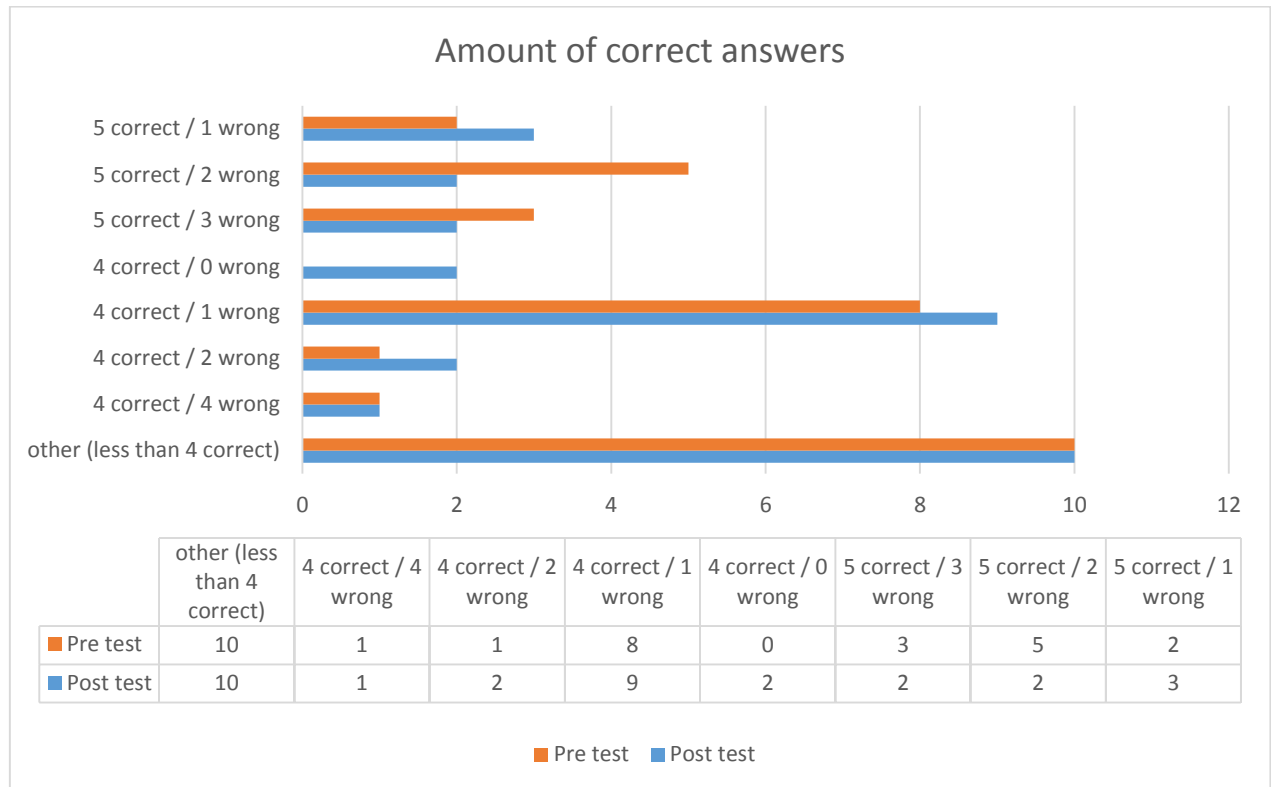


Figure 7 – Answers to the 3rd knowledge question

Concerning the *interest* cluster that approaches the interest of the respondents in the EU, we can conclude that no significant difference can be found. The results, which can be found in figure 8, show a change from an average of 3.72 ± 0.93 to 3.66 ± 0.88 and $t(28) = .420$, $p = .677$ ($p > 0.05$). The average went up, but not enough to be significant. The control group showed similar results ($p = .447$) and also didn't show a significant difference. Within the cluster of *connectedness*, the scores changed from 4.03 ± 0.72 to 3.95 ± 0.74 , which could mean that the feeling might have decreased and the respondents of the experimental group feel less connected to the EU. However, there is no statistically significant improvement in the way the respondents feel connected to the European Union as $t(28) = .708$, $p = .485$ and $p > 0.05$. The control group went from an average of 3,67 to 3,52 and also did not show a significant change ($p = .077$). The results can be seen in figure 9.

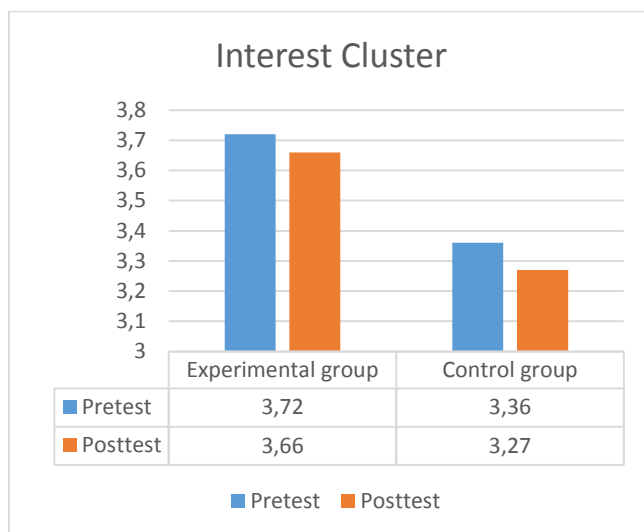


Figure 8 – The Interest cluster pre and post test

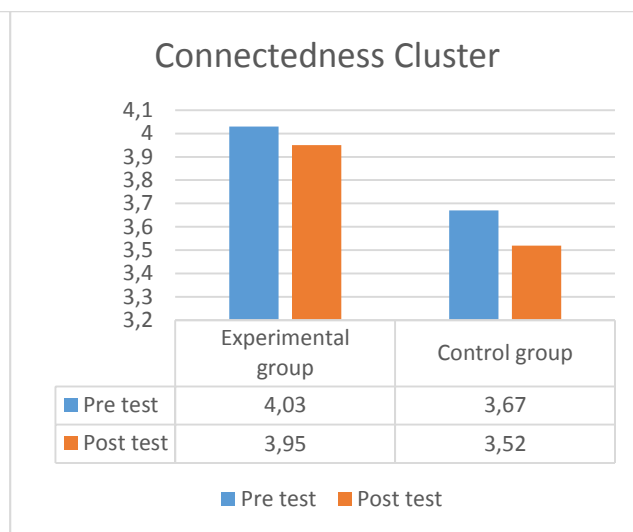


Figure 9 – The connectedness cluster pre and post test

The cluster *opinion* is being discussed in relation to the EU's goal of involving citizens into the debate and evaluation on European integration and the EU. The mean went up from 3.62 ± 0.67 to 3.76 ± 0.81 , but as $t(28) = -.830$, $p = .414$ ($p > 0.05$), it is not a significant difference. The control group measured similar results ($p = .796$) which has been, just as the results from the experimental group, depicted in figure 10.

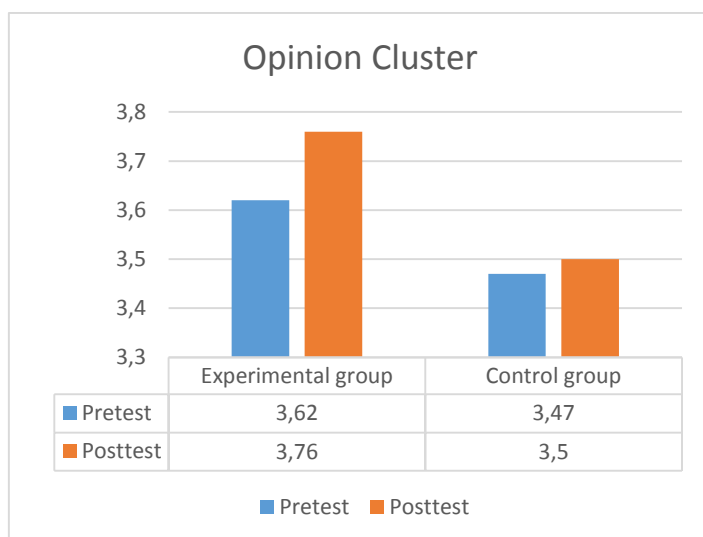


Figure 10 – The opinion cluster pre and post test

The question regarding the image of the EU was not incorporated in the cluster as it would decrease reliability. When we look at these answers, however, we can see that with this question also an increase can be found. On average respondents either chose the same score in the post test or increased the score, what would mean that they have a more positive image of the EU. Only two respondents changed their score in a negative way. Nobody chose the option of negative or very negative. Table 6 below shows the percentages of answers given, the real amount of respondents who chose this answer is between brackets.

	Pre test	Post test
1 – Very positive	10% (3)	17% (5)
2 – Positive	52% (15)	55% (16)
3 – Neutral	38% (11)	28% (8)
4 – Negative	0	0
5 – Very negative	0	0

Table 6 – responses to question regarding image of EU

The last cluster, *diversity*, is being used to discuss the so-called strength of the EU of “unity in diversity” and looks at how far respondents are aware of diversity within the EU. A difference from 4.35 ± 0.53 to 4.30 ± 0.61 was measured, but also in this cluster, no significant difference was measured $t(28) = -.590$, $p = .560$ ($p > 0.05$). The control group also did not measure a significant difference ($p = .856$), as the average changed from 3.84 to 3.86. This can also be seen in figure 11.

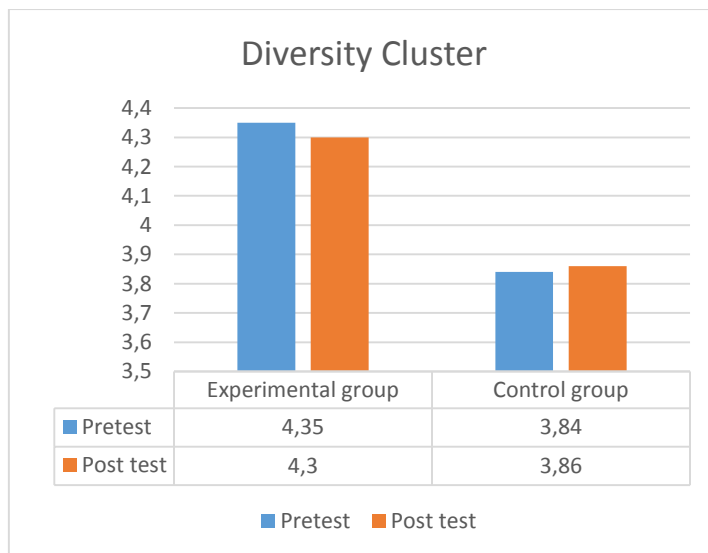


Figure 11 – The diversity cluster pre and post test

Figure 12 shows an overview of the results and confirms that none of the clusters discussed above show a significant change in the European Identity of the participants of the exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf.

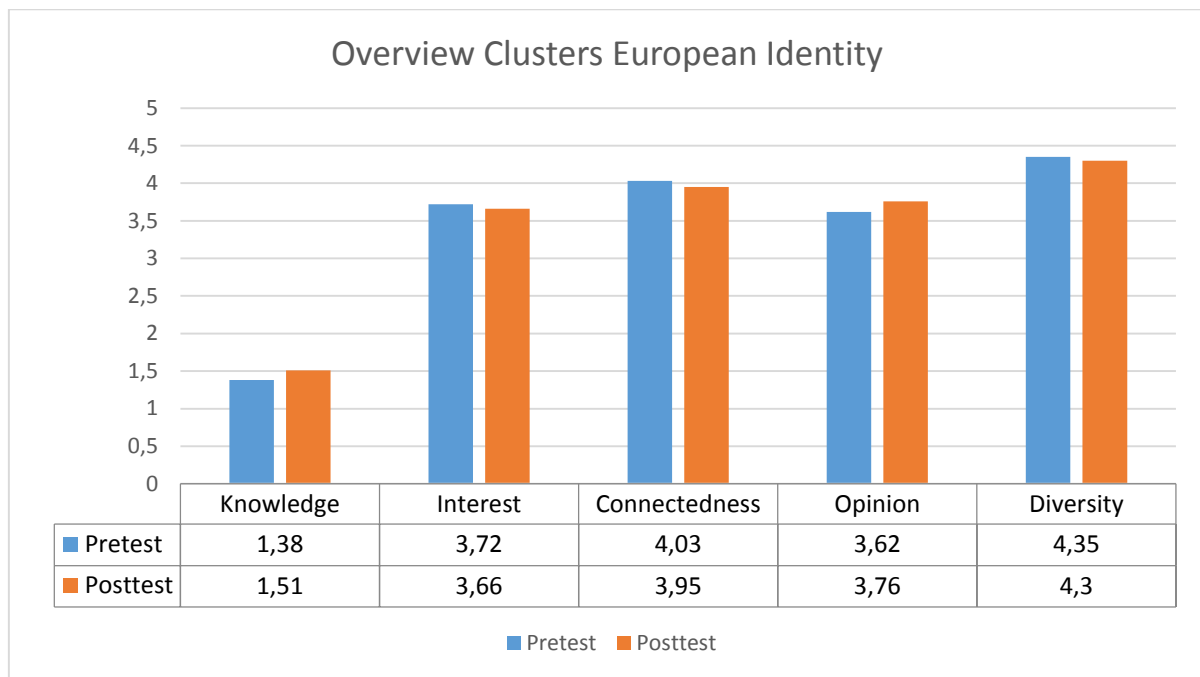


Figure 12 – Overview of change in pre- and posttest European identity clusters of the

Also the possibility of a difference of the answers between the two groups within the treatment group has been investigated. When the group is being divided into two age categories, a result can be found that shows that the student responses are, on average, lower than the responses of the private citizens. In the knowledge cluster, for example, the students score much lower in both the pre and the posttest than the private citizens do. We can see this in all the clusters. Interesting to see as well is that the scores mostly go down. In the clusters interest, connectedness and diversity, the scores have decreased. Only the student's knowledge has increased from .90 to .98. Their opinion on the EU and Europe stayed the same. This is depicted in figure 13 on the next page.

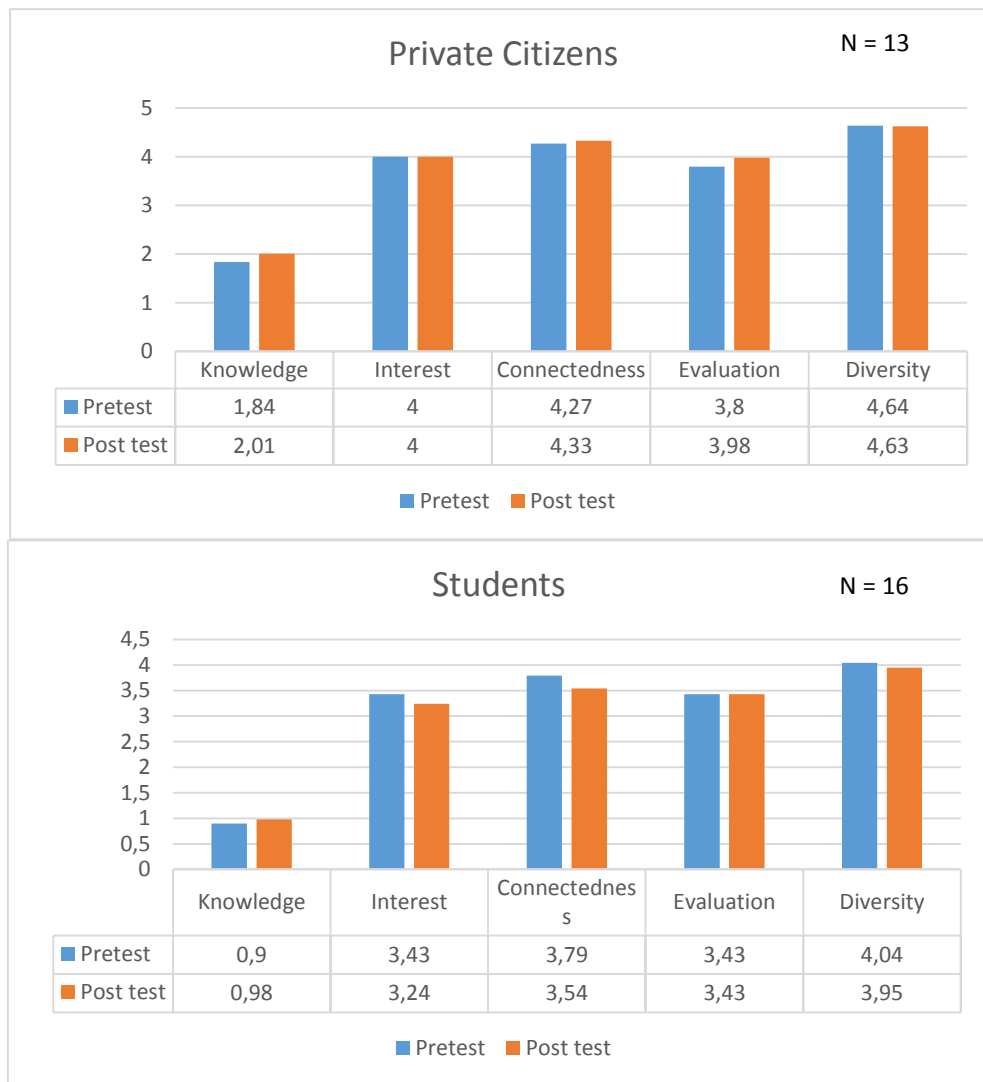


Figure 13 - Change in pre- and posttest European identity clusters separated in students and private citizens group

5. Conclusions

This chapter will answer the main research question “has the twin town relation and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf been properly implemented and organized, and what were the results of the exchange in terms of satisfaction of the participants and achieving the intended goal of increasing the European Identity of the participants?”. It starts with an overview of the results, then discusses the results, provides recommendations and lastly, looks into the research quality and what future research can be done.

5.1 Results

This evaluation research in regards to the twin town relationship and exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf, consists of an organizational and evaluation part. In order to answer the main research question, sub research questions had been created that have been analyzed and answered in chapter four. The first two sub questions deal with the organizational aspect of the twinning relation, the second two are in regards to the evaluation of the exchange. In the first sub question it became clear how the twin town relationship and exchange has been organized. This information was necessary for the second sub question in which investigated was if the relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf had been properly implemented. It is believed that when the conditions identified in literature are present in a relationship, the relationship has been properly implemented. From the qualitative analysis in which the situation of Lingen was compared with the six different success conditions, strategy, management and commitment, awareness and involvement, communication, finances, and evaluation, it became clear that Lingen matches most of the conditions and has implemented the twin town relationship properly. The second part of the thesis looks further into the evaluation of the exchange. Firstly, looked was at how the participants evaluated the exchange. Section 4.3 revealed that the exchange was assessed as very positive by 72 percent of the German participants. Also the organizers and French participants were positive about the exchange. Lastly, looked was at the question if the European Identity of the German participants had changed after participating in the exchange. In section 4.4 it was demonstrated that there wasn't a significant change in any of the clusters of European Identity of the participants of the exchange organized between Lingen and Elbeuf. Also when looked at different age groups and dividing the group in high school students and private citizens who are mostly older, no significant change could be identified.

Even though the twin town relationship has been properly implemented and the exchange has been positively rated by the participants, the hypothesis, that participation in a French-German exchange event organized within the framework of town twinning has a positive effect on the European identity and should increase the feeling of having a European Identity, is rejected. In the following section, possible explanations of the results will be discussed.

5.2 Discussion

Several factors may have had an influence on the results and the lack of a significant change or increase of European Identity of the participants. The first possible reason that can be identified is the minimum amount of time spent with the French citizens. Many respondents indicated in the pretest that they would like to spend a lot of time with the citizens of the French twin town. Feedback after the exchange was that respondents would have liked more interaction with the host families and French participants. Most of the time was spent with fellow German participants, for example when

discovering the city of Rouen during a day trip. None of the French participants joined this trip. There is a possibility that if time would have been spent more intensively with people from different nationalities, especially the French, the results would have been different. This is just as in Bachner and Zeutschel's (2009) research, in which they conclude that the time spent with the host family is critical for the outcome of the exchange. Related to this may also be the duration of the exchange. A short exchange of four days in total, of which two days were spent travelling in a bus, may not have a large impact as a longer exchange, where more time is spent with an international group for a longer time, might have had. The feedback from the French participants also showed that the exchange was very short. The combination of the duration and the time spent might have had an effect on the European identity of the participants.

When looking at the activities organized there seems to be quite some educative elements missing that concern the EU or Europe. When trying to increase the European identity or trying to unify the EU, one has to have a certain knowledge and be actively involved with this. Such elements were missing and this in combination with lack of interaction with citizens from a different European country had an impact on the results. It also shows that Lingen is in O'Toole's associative stage as there are not enough educational aspects to move on to the reciprocative stage. It somehow explains the failure with the economic ties that the city tried to set up with Burton upon Trent. A city should not skip any of the phases and these economic goals came too early. Besides the activities lacking a European character, they might have also been too focused on the adult private citizens of the group. The most negative feedback regarding the activities of the exchange came from the high school students. This might also have to do with the reasons of participation. The private citizens, mostly older, voluntary chose to go on this trip. Some of them had already travelled to Elbeuf or other twin towns in the past. Many of them knew people in Elbeuf and looked forward to seeing these acquaintances or friends again. The high school students, however, travelled as part of a mandatory course and some of them may have not chosen this for themselves. Perhaps the private citizens had a better idea of what to expect and had more interest in participating. Some of the students may have never chosen to go on a trip like this. But because they didn't have another choice, they were forced to go as part of the school course.

This might have also had an effect on the results in the European Identity clusters. The private citizens had for example more correct answers in the knowledge questions and showed more interest in the EU in comparison with the high school students. Another possible explanation can be the fact that the high school students were around 16 years old and feel more local than the private citizens in the sense that these students do not have to vote in European elections and there is a chance that they are less interested in European and national affairs. But on the other hand, these students are young and it is not unimaginable that it would be the other way around and that these young students actually have more interest in the world. Of course, all of this is speculation and because the small sample size that is almost too small for statistical analysis, these conclusions can only be taken lightly. Conclusions can only be made about this specific group that travelled to Elbeuf as there was a 100% response rate, however, no conclusions can be generalized for any other exchanges. Both the experimental group and control group are small. Even though the control group was not officially part of the study, the control group was in place to increase validity. The control group was too small to make conclusions about and definitely cannot be seen as a representation of citizens of the city of Lingen that have not participated in a twin town exchange. The control group also had more chance in altering their

answers, especially in regards to the knowledge questions. The control group showed an increase in answering the correct answers and there is a large chance that the control group looked up what the correct answers were after making the first questionnaire. The experimental group had a limited chance to do so as it might not have had internet abroad and also a busy schedule.

Perhaps, there is a ceiling effect in this research. Because the scores are so high in the pretest, the scores couldn't have increased a lot in the posttest. An actual possible significant change would probably mean that the respondents would have to lower their scores significantly. The moment of testing, as in when the questionnaires were filled out, may have had an influence on this. When the first questionnaire was handed out, the candidates were ready to go on the trip and may have already had a certain attitude that was more European or international than on other days. They might have been excited about the trip or have the opposite feelings. The post test was filled out straight after the trip. The questionnaires were completed without a lot of time between them and have therefore only measured short-term effects.

The idea was that when a group of people goes abroad and spends time in a different European country this should in theory increase their European Identity. This thesis shows that this is not necessarily the case and shows that the hypothesis cannot be confirmed. But this also doesn't mean that it is the other way around, that it does the opposite as some scholars have argued (Falkenhain, 2012). There is also no significant proof that shows that it decreases the European feeling of participants of the exchange. Because of participants having multiple identities, it might be possible to measure a difference in one of the other identities, such as the national or local. Even though, the two cities agreed, when drafting the twin town agreement, to help create and build a united Europe, this may also reflect in other ways and not just the European identity. There is no statistical data that confirms that an exchange increases the European Identity of the participants and as this thesis mainly focused on the European identity and did not measure any other possible effects of the exchange, it doesn't mean that this might not have happened. Perhaps not just the European identity should have been tested but internationalization in general. From this research it is still unknown if the respondents maybe feel more international, cosmopolitan or global after participating instead of just European. Twin town programs may be more an instrument to enhance mutual understanding of local and national cultures, in this case of French and German culture, instead of creating a joint European common identity. Even if a program doesn't show an increase in European identity, it might still contribute to the idea of participating in international friendship and have a positive impact on learning to understand each other's cultures.

5.3 Recommendations

Even though the twin town relations are well managed in Lingen, the relationship between Lingen and Elbeuf is good and the latest exchange was a success, there are always things that can be improved. A goal of the city of Lingen is to include as many citizens as possible in the town twinning. It became clear that many of the private citizens that travelled to Elbeuf in 2015 were returning participants, and had already joined the trip at least once before. It is recommended that Lingen starts involving more new citizens and gives them a chance to also build a relation with Elbeuf. A theory mentioned by De Villiers (2005), is that awareness leads to more participation. Assumed is that most citizens know about the twin towns of Lingen by the town hall officials. However, this is not based on concrete data and are just assumptions. It is recommended that the city of Lingen does research into the awareness of their

citizens. When there is more insight into the awareness, a marketing plan to include more private citizens can be set up accordingly. A way to reach a lot of people at the same time, and which is lacking at the moment is social media. This could be a modern way to get in contact with citizens and get new participants involved with the twinning project. Further in regards to the organization, the agreement may be used more as a business plan as suggested by De Villiers (2009), to have clear rules and regulations between the twin towns. Also a yearly evaluation is advised with every twin town in order to have a moment and discuss the state of affairs.

Regarding the exchange, also an evaluation is recommended to find out what participants enjoy, and what activities less successful were. Even though people participate and travel every year to the twin towns, it is not advisable to assume that the evaluation is positive and not to look at aspects that can be improved. More educative elements could help and make sure that the participants learn more about each other's countries and the EU and might be a way in order to let the French and the German participants interact. The possibility of German participants spending more time with the French would definitely be desirable. A whole day spent without any interaction with the French hosts does not seem to have a positive impact on the goal of the exchange.

5.4 Research quality and future research

Measuring the dependent variable can be challenging and is in this case particularly difficult as identity and especially the European identity are not solid concepts. Because this thesis measures for a large part attitudes, practical problems relating to validity are easily identified. The quasi-experimental research uses a pre- and posttest questionnaire that are identical. There is a possibility that the respondents respond differently to the posttest even if their attitude remained unchanged. During the first administration the subject may be unaware of the purpose of the questionnaire, but by the second questionnaire they might have found out what the purpose of the survey and researcher was. This problem has been tried to avoid by adding a control group that can guard against effects from outside of the experiment itself. The control group increases validity by providing comparison data to find out if the change in attitude is definitely caused by the treatment. Unfortunately, both the experimental and control group are very small which makes it rather difficult to draw conclusions about a larger audience. The experimental group, however, has been made up of all participants of the exchange which would give it a 100% response rate but the control group has to be seen as not officially part of the study. In regards to reliability, this thesis makes use of a mixed design, including both quantitative and qualitative data in order to limit the chance that the relationship found between the variables is spurious or caused by third variables. Qualitative data can help by explaining why the relationship exists between the variables or what causes the conflict when the relationship between the variables is absent. Important is to note that this research cannot be generalized. The conclusions of this thesis can only be used for this particular study and cannot be copied to other exchanges organized in the twinning framework.

The aim of this thesis was, next to evaluating the twin town exchange between Lingen and Elbeuf, mainly to help and create new possibilities for future research. In this thesis the theory of the European identity was tried to connect to town twinning, which had not been done before. Even though, the hypothesis was rejected, several reasons have been identified above that may have influenced the results and show that further research can be done into this topic. It would be especially interesting to see if there are more effects to measure on a longer term. Also the idea that half of the participants,

the school group, did not go voluntary on the exchange but went as part of a compulsory school course, as it was the case in the research of Bachner & Zeuschel (2009), might be interested to further look at. Probably most interesting would be to look if the internationalism or world-mindedness, the degree to which people are open-mindedness to other cultures and countries, has changed after such an exchange. Even though there was no significant change in the European Identity, not forgotten should be that the European identity is only part of the multiple identities a person can have, and we do not know where the European identity stands in relation to the other identities that the participants may have had, such as a local or national identity and how it has changed. Hopefully, this thesis inspires others to continue doing research into these topics.

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Appendices

Please see appendices booklet.