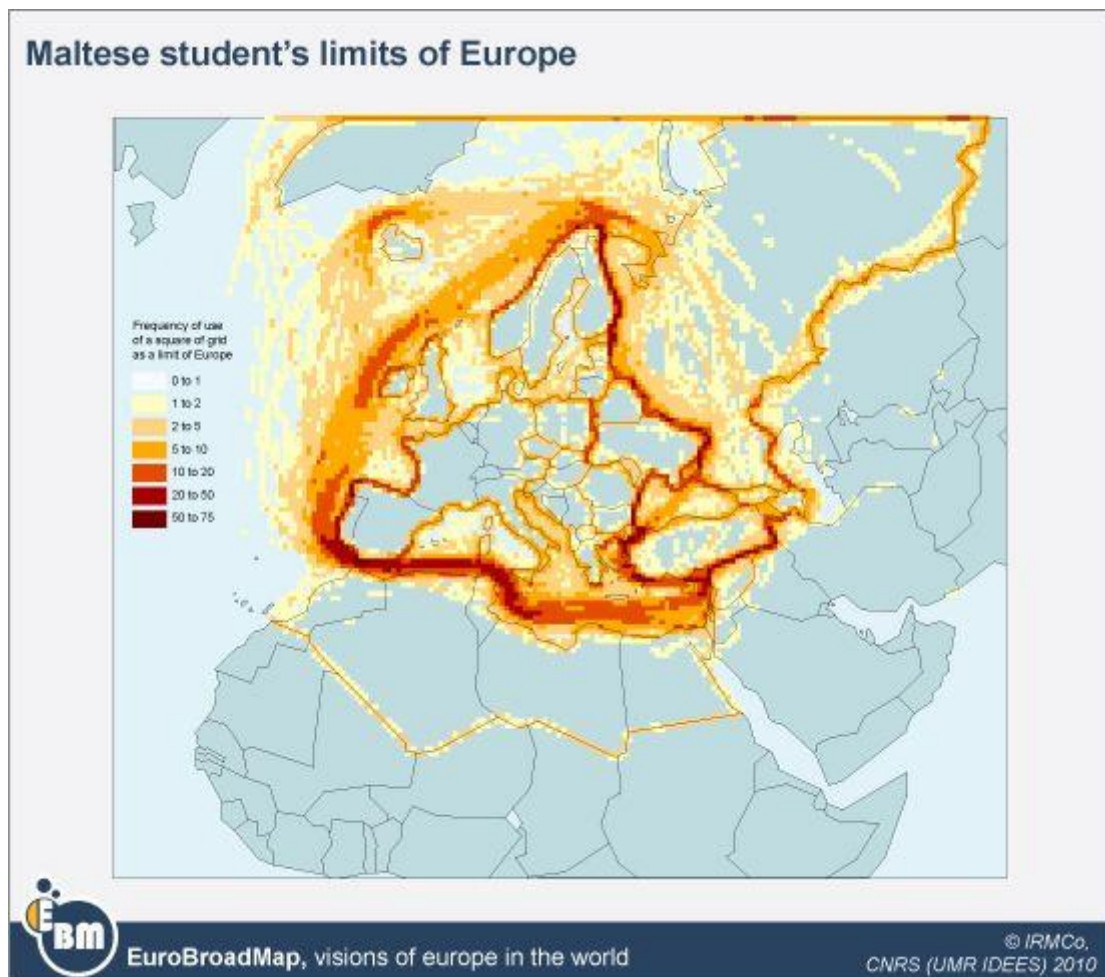


EuroBroadMap

VISIONS OF EUROPE IN THE WORLD



This is an extract from:

MENTAL MAPS OF MALTESE STUDENTS

2010

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PART I: MENTAL MAPS OF MALTESE STUDENTS

Analysis of questions A and B

ABSTRACT

This report presents the main findings of a survey carried out with Maltese undergraduate students to analyse their perceptions about Europe and the World. The study was undertaken as part of a larger world wide survey organised under the FP7 EU funded EuroBroadMap project. The survey was carried out in October and November of 2009 at the University of Malta, the only University in Malta. This analysis draws on the response from 211 students to build an understanding of their vision, perceptions and experiences about Europe and the World.

The findings show that Maltese students seem to have a strong sense of belonging towards the National (36%) and Local (34%) dimensions. Only 23% considered the Global and Supranational levels. This seems to indicate that although students have a fairly good knowledge of the world and its global and regional dimensions, they feel attached to their country and their culture.

Although the family spatial history of the students questioned appears very limited, this does not completely reflect on their experience of the world. Most students speak three or more languages and they are well travelled with only 6% declaring to never leaving Malta. However, this experience seems to be concentrated around the Mediterranean region, and other countries with strong emigrant links with Malta, such as the UK, USA, Canada and Australia.

Similarly, in relation to where students would 'LIKE' or 'NOT LIKE' to live, the responses seem to indicate that preferences reflect the students' perceptions and experiences. The most known and positively associated countries reflect the findings above, in that the countries most positively perceived include those that are geographically or culturally close to Malta, such as Italy, France, Spain and UK. Other northern European countries are well perceived but less mentioned. Interestingly, the Mediterranean influence and geographical proximity is also reflected in those countries where students would not like to live. The negatively perceived countries include North African countries like Libya, Egypt and Tunisia, but also politically unstable countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Israel. These findings are similarly reflected in the students' responses with regards to cities where they would like, or not like to live.

The 'Words associated with Europe' analysis indicates that Maltese students perceive Europe primarily as a cultural, political and economic space. The twenty most frequent words are all positive, indicating that the students consider Europe in a positive perspective.

PART II: EUROPE SEEN BY MALTESE STUDENTS

Analysis of questions C and D

ABSTRACT

This report presents the main findings of a survey carried out with Maltese undergraduate students to analyse their perceptions about Europe and the World. The study was undertaken as part of a larger world wide survey organised under the FP7 EU funded EuroBroadMap project. The survey was carried out in October and November of 2009 at the University of Malta, the only University in Malta. This analysis draws on the response from 211 students to build an understanding of their vision, perceptions and experiences about Europe and the World.

This is the second report on the main findings of the survey and deals with maps drawn by students, as well as tables indicating the words students use in association with Europe. The map denoting the limits of Europe clearly shows that the Maltese students' perception of Europe is determined by the EU member states. An emphasis is placed on the separation of the EU member states and Africa, and on including Malta within the limits of the European space. With reference to the maps of the limits of Europe and the extension of Europe, there is a clear indication of which countries are excluded and which are included, an aspect which mirrors the Maltese tendency to emphasise the difference between the 'us' and the 'Other' (Mitchell 2002). The choice of countries in both situations reflects the choice of countries Maltese students would most like to live in and those they would least like to live in.

In the map comparing perceptions of Maltese students to those of students in the overall sample, the key difference lies in the position of other countries' perceptions of Malta's place in Europe. While it is clear that Maltese students view themselves as being a part of Europe, other countries differ in their perception. This ambiguity reflects the ambiguous geo-political position Malta holds in the Mediterranean and further emphasises the ambivalent political role it plays as the bridge between the 'North' and the 'South'.

With reference to the map on inclusion of countries in Europe by field of study, the results generally run parallel, with the slight exception of Health and Art students. This may be due yet again to Malta's geo-political position in the Mediterranean and the political, social and economic importance attributed to the latter. Thus, in saying so it may be assumed that the countries bordering the Mediterranean may be included as part of Europe as a result of the interconnecting exchange of socio-political relations.

The table outlining gendered representations of words associated with Europe also displays a degree of parallelism. Although the words are essentially different between men and women they may be linked to a vision of Europe as an area of security (both social and economic), and consequently of mutual respect.