**Language and cultural identity. Cultural identity. Cultural stereotypes**

**Cultural identity** is the [identity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_%28social_science%29) or feeling of belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and self-perception and is related to [nationality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationality), [ethnicity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnicity), [religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion), [social class](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_class), [generation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation), [locality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Locality) or any kind of social group that has its own distinct [culture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture). In this way, cultural identity is both characteristic of the [individual](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individual) but also of the culturally identical group of members sharing the same cultural identity. Cultural identity is similar to and overlaps with [*identity politics*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_politics).

**Description**

Various modern [cultural studies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_studies) and [social theories](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_theories) have investigated cultural identity. In recent decades, a new form of identification has emerged which breaks down the understanding of the individual as a coherent whole subject into a collection of various cultural identifiers. These cultural identifiers may be the result of various conditions including: [location](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Location_%28geography%29), [gender](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender), [race](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Race_%28classification_of_human_beings%29), [history](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History), [nationality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationality), [language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language), [sexuality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_orientation), [religious beliefs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_beliefs), [ethnicity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnicity), [aesthetics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics), and even [food](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity#cite_note-2) As one author writes, recognizing both coherence and fragmentation:

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| **“** | categorizations about identity, even when codified and hardened into clear typologies by processes of colonization, state formation or general modernizing processes, are always full of tensions and contradictions. Sometimes these contradictions are destructive, but they can also be creative and positive.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity#cite_note-3) | **”** |

The divisions between cultures can be very fine in some parts of the world, especially in rapidly changing cities where the population is ethnically diverse and social unity is based primarily on locational contiguity.

As a "historical reservoir," culture is an important factor in shaping identity.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity#cite_note-4) Since one of the main characteristics of a culture is its "historical reservoir," many if not all groups entertain revisions, either consciously or unconsciously, in their historical record in order to either bolster the strength of their cultural identity or to forge one which gives them precedent for actual reform or change.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity#cite_note-5) Some critics of cultural identity argue that the preservation of cultural identity, being based upon difference, is a divisive force in society, and that [cosmopolitanism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmopolitanism) gives individuals a greater sense of shared citizenship.[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity#cite_note-6) When considering practical association in international society, states may share an inherent part of their 'make up' that gives common ground and an alternative means of identifying with each other.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity#cite_note-7) Nations provide the framework for culture identities called external cultural reality, which influences the unique internal cultural realities of the individuals within the nation.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity#cite_note-8)