Workplace Diversity and European Enlargement: A Qualitative Study within the International Civil Service

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities.

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Workplace Diversity and European Enlargement:  
A Qualitative Study within the International Civil Service

Abstract
The European Parliament (EP) and the Council of Europe (CoE) are two internationally renowned organisations sharing a common goal of progressing human rights action and social cohesion within their respective member states. At the point of data collection (early 2007) both organisations were undergoing a period of significant change. Various Southern and Eastern European nations had been given their first opportunity to participate in the official European bodies thus increasing the member states of the EP to 25 and the CoE to 46. Access to the large secretariats of these organisations provided a unique opportunity to explore the organizational and individual implications of European Enlargement amongst employees from the widest possible range of European nations. With a firm grounding in the Diversity Management literature, this research also examines how the public discourse from official representatives of the EP and CoE on the topic of European Enlargement relates to individual and collective experiences within the organisation’s own workforce.

The impact of European Enlargement on day-to-day workplace experiences of employees within the secretariats was explored through two studies that were sequentially linked. The first study involved semi-structured interviews with key Human Resource personnel in each organisation (n = 20). The interview data was subjected to thematic analysis and the emergent themes were used to form the basis of the questions for the second study, which consisted of 22 focus groups (n = 88). Thematic analysis was again used to analyse the data, and a matrix analysis indicated that there were differences in experiences according to employees’ gender, European region of origin and level within the organizational hierarchy. There were also differences between the two organizations.

A third study involved the analysis of press articles on the topic of European Enlargement written by representatives of each organization; these were selected from the same time period as the interview and focus group data collection phases. The underlying assumptions and values about European Enlargement were explored through a critical discourse analysis
of these texts. Discourses identified included: a) a discourse of power and subordination in which the position of the supranational organisations is assumed to be a part of the “natural” order; b) a discourse of difference which betrays the assumption that “west-is-best” and that inclusion is commensurate with dissolving rather than valuing difference and c) a discourse of paternalism in which the CoE and the EU are conceptualized as “families”, with Member States positioned as offspring who need to be kept under control by their authoritarian fathers, the institutional authorities.

A comparison of the way in which the discourses identified were reflected in the organizational experiences related in studies 1 and 2 revealed that there was a high degree of overlap between the external discourse and internal experiences, though some notable differences were also identified.

It is clear that the findings have major organizational and individual implications. Firstly, a division in women’s equality agenda is indicated; whilst Western women press for more equality initiatives and Eastern women argue for fewer, the competing needs of these two groups are not going to be simultaneously met. Secondly, competition is created between men, with Eastern men aspiring to reach the envious position enjoyed by Western men. Furthermore, the backlash against gender equality initiatives, previously seen in the UK and other western nations in the 1980s, is given a new, Eastern European voice. It is also apparent that the content of an organizations publicly available discourse may well impact on employees’ experiences within that organization. This leads to the conclusion that organizations have a responsibility to explore the assumptions and values that they are consciously and unconsciously promoting, not only for the benefit of the wider public but for the wellbeing of their own employees.
Declaration

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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Introduction
This thesis presents the details of qualitative research relating to workplace diversity in the post-Enlargement era in Europe. This chapter offers an introduction to the thesis in terms of its conceptual background, research objectives, philosophical foundations and methodology. The potential contributions of the thesis are briefly described and finally, the structure of the thesis is outlined, with an introduction to the contents of each chapter.

1.2 Background to the research
The end of the 20th Century saw significant political changes in Europe, including the disintegration of communist regimes, the unification of Germany and the ethnic division of Yugoslavia (Pettigrew, 1998). This paved the way for advances in European unity and the expansion of the European Union at the beginning of the 21st Century.

Both the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE) have been undergoing a period of significant change within the last two decades. At the point at which this research was conceived (2005), Southern and Eastern European nations were being given their first opportunity to participate in the official European bodies as displayed in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Accession to the EU and CoE (up to 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries admitted to the EU, 2004</th>
<th>Countries admitted to the CoE, 1995-2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia</td>
<td>Latvia, Albania, Moldova, Ukraine, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Russian Federation, Croatia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Monaco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of Member States: 25</td>
<td>Total number of Member States: 46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The EU and the CoE have separate political identities and different constituent members, although the Member States of the EU are a subset of those of the CoE. The institutions work together in areas such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law, intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity in European countries (Junker, 2006). Both organisations are committed to representing their Member States through their parliamentary and secretariat (administration) personnel. The EU has 3 main institutions, the European Parliament, the
European Commission and the European Council (not to be confused with the Council of Europe, which is a separate, non-EU institution). The organisations participating in this research are the General Secretariats of the European Parliament (EP) and the Council of Europe.

Access to these large secretariats of two of the most well recognised faces of Europe provides a unique opportunity to explore the working lives of employees from the widest possible range of European nations. Furthermore, this research offers a perspective on how the public personae of these organisations at a critical point in European history might relate to the internal experiences of its employees; it also debates issues relating to gender and cultural diversity in this context.

Preliminary stages of the research process involved a review of relevant literature and previously published studies; this indicated two distinct, though related, topic areas. The first relates to the issues of diversity in organisations; this includes large bodies of literature in the field of gender and cultural diversity and social identity processes in the workplace. The second topic area relates to the geo-political development of differing notions of “Europe” and the inter-related issues of the role of language and the construction of identity in Europe. These topics formed the basis for the literature reviews presented in Chapters 2 and 3.

1.3 Research objectives

Based on the literature reviews presented in Chapters 2 (Gender, Diversity and Identity at Work) and 3 (European Enlargement, Language and Identity), three primary research objectives were developed; these will be presented in turn below.

Research Objective 1: To explore the ways in which gender and nationality affect the working lives of employees of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in Post-Enlargement Europe.

At this crucial time of increasing European participation it is vital that equality of opportunity between New and established Member States is addressed. Given the newness of the political landscape it is unsurprising that this is an area which is currently under-represented in academic research. As a unique opportunity to fill a particular gap in diversity research, this study facilitates a comparison of male and female employees from New versus Established Member States in terms of their day-to-day workplace experiences.
**Research Objective 2:** To explore the relationship between public communications of the International Civil Service and the internal organisational experiences of its employees, in relation to European Enlargement.

The European Parliament and the Council of Europe are two internationally renowned organisations sharing a common goal of progressing human rights action and social cohesion within their respective Member States. These aims feature significantly in the publically expressed accounts of the international-level work of the two organisations. By exploring such accounts the aim is to further an understanding of the way in which Enlargement is discussed within the public domain by representatives of the participating organisations. The exploration of the discourses surrounding Enlargement is then used to shed light on experiences of equality and discrimination as described by employees of the participating organisations.

**Research Objective 3:** To explore the organisational and individual implications of Enlargement.

Since enlargement has increased the possibilities for transnational working amongst nationals from the largest pool of nations to date it could be argued that this presents a hitherto unexplored challenge to the management of diversity in organisations within the regions of both the European Union and Council of Europe. This research aims to offer an insight into the implications of Enlargement for both organisations and employees, for the purpose of minimising the potential for negative outcomes and maximising the likelihood that the more positive outcomes of effective diversity management can be achieved.

**Research Questions**

1. How do gender and nationality affect the working lives of employees within the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in the post-enlargement era?
2. What are the underlying assumptions and values about European Enlargement that are conveyed within public communications by representatives of the EP and the CoE?
3. What is the relationship between the public communications of the organisations and the internal organisational experiences of employees, with respect to Enlargement?
1.4 Research methodology

The thesis is located within a social constructionist framework. Social constructionism suggests that the social nature of the self cannot be ignored when considering personal attitudes and behaviour, since the means by which the self develops is socialisation, a process that necessarily involves the inculcation of values and beliefs that have historical and cultural significance. This epistemological perspective suggests that the psychology of individual identity and motivation is intrinsically enmeshed with collective assumptions and beliefs (Wetherell & Maybin, 2002). Given that organisations are comprised of individuals that interact within and across groups, approaching organisational research from a social constructionist viewpoint enables the researcher to expose the implicit organisational values that help to form and either maintain or challenge power structures in the workplace (Cassell & Symon, 2006).

The role of language is an important feature of social constructionism. By exploring the use of language in social exchange, it is possible to explore collective assumptions underpinning the cultural values that inform individual attitudes and behaviour. On this basis, three different forms of language exchange (interviews, focus groups and written texts) have been selected for exploration in light of the research questions.

Qualitative methods are used throughout the research process as they are entirely appropriate for an in-depth exploration of the contextual complexities surrounding the current research questions and are in keeping with a social constructionist philosophy (Parker, 1996). In order to address the research questions, three separate studies were conceived each using different qualitative methods of data collection. Study 1 involves semi-structured interviews with senior managers and human resource professionals from the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Study 2 involves focus groups with employees from differing hierarchical positions within each of the participating organisations. Study 3 is a discourse analysis of two publicly available texts, written by representatives of each of the institutions.

It should be noted that Studies 1 and 2 are sequentially linked (Cresswell, 2003) in that the findings from the analysis of Study 1 data were used in the construction of the Study 2 investigation. Study 3 was designed separately.
1.5 Contributions of the Thesis
This thesis contributes to the debate surrounding the process of European integration by exploring experiences of Enlargement(s) from a social constructionist perspective. This research therefore has the potential to contribute to a greater understanding of social processes on several levels. On a micro-level the research seeks to extend the literature in terms of individual relational experiences at work, whilst on a meso-level it advances the debate on the role of organisational policies and practices in shaping organisational culture and contributes to the diversity management literature. On a macro-level the thesis contributes to discourses surrounding social processes in European society at large, by exposing hegemonic power relations between differing factions within notions of Europe.

This thesis also contributes in a practical way, by considering the implications of the research findings for organisational practice, particularly in light of managing diversity and supporting expatriate workers in multinational organisations.

1.6 Thesis Structure
Presented below are the details of the thesis structure, with the content of each chapter being outlined in turn.

Chapter 2 is the first of two literature reviews that form the foundations of the research. This chapter reviews existing theories and empirical studies relating to diversity in the workplace. The purpose of the review is to explore the factors that might differentially impact on the working lives of men and women and those that affect the success or otherwise of expatriate working. Perspectives on the two paradigms of Equal Opportunities and Managing Diversity will be compared and there is also a review of social processes in the workplace, including theories surrounding social identity and intergroup processes.

Chapter 3 is the second of the literature reviews; this chapter provides a historical background to the contemporary issue of European Enlargement. There is an outline of the social and political development of Europe since attempts to form a collective supranational entity in the region began in the early 20th Century. There is specific focus on the development (or lack thereof) of a specifically “European” identity and the relationship between national and supranational identity is explored. The role of language as a means of communication, expression and cultural differentiation will also be debated alongside a discussion of the social construction of notions of European-ness. The development of two of the main European Institutions, the Council of Europe and the European Union is outlined.
and there is an introduction to their respective administrative bodies (their secretariats), who provide a primary source of data collection in the research.

Presented in Chapter 4 are the overall objectives of the research; these are followed by an explanation of the specific research questions driving the conceptualisation of this study. The methodological rationale is explored alongside an exposition of the philosophical and epistemological assumptions that form the foundation of the research enquiry. The research design is then detailed, offering an account of the operation of each of the three qualitative studies included in the research project.

Chapter 5 is the first of the three analysis chapters, and presents the findings relating to the thematic analysis of the data collected in the interviews from Study 1. Findings are presented in light of the first research question.

In Chapter 6 the findings from the thematic analysis of the focus group data from Study 2 are presented. These findings are also presented in light of the first research question, and inferences regarding the similarity and differences between the findings from the interviews and focus groups are explored.

Chapter 7 is the last of the three analysis chapters and presents a discourse analysis of the selected texts that was performed with the aim of addressing the second research question. The three main discourses that were identified are explored in turn, with an analysis of the linguistic techniques that help to construct both explicit and implicit meaning within each text. In so doing, the underlying assumptions about European Enlargement within the texts will be exposed, for the purpose of addressing the second research question.

Chapter 8, the discussion, draws on the findings from the three studies for the purpose of addressing each of the research questions. The findings of Study 1 (interviews) and Study 2 (focus groups) are combined to address the first research question, whilst the findings of Study 3 (discourse analysis) address the second research question. The third research question is addressed by integrating the findings of all three studies.

In the conclusion, Chapter 9, I consider the implications of the research findings for organisational practice, which may have resonance for the participating organisations and on a wider scale. I then reflect on the limitations of this research and include a reflexive analysis. Finally, I conclude by making some recommendations for future research.
1.7 Research Framework
By way of a summary, a research framework has been devised in order to illustrate how the literature in these areas is integrated to form the basis of the research aims and questions for this study - see Figure 1.2 below.

**Figure 1.2 Research Framework**

- **Literature Review 1:**
  - Gender, Diversity & Identity at Work

- **Literature Review 2:**
  - European Enlargement, Language & Identity

**Research Process:**
Formation of Research Aims, Questions, Research Design & Operation

**Research Output:**
An understanding of the influences on the working lives of employees in the International Civil Service in the post-Enlargement era and the role of language in shaping perspectives on Europe and Enlargement.
Chapter 2

Literature Review 1: Gender, Diversity and Identity at Work

2.1 Introduction

Organisations may be thought of as “social systems that co-ordinate people’s behaviour by means of roles, norms and values” (Haslam, 2006, p1) in the pursuit of a particular goal. It may be said that members of this social system are differentiated on the basis of their specific role or responsibility in pursuit of the stated goal. But individuals are not only differentiated by their individual roles, but by and within the groups to which they belong inside the organisation. Haslam (2006) further argues that there is an internal relationship between groups within all organisations and that these groups are not merely defined by functional roles, but by their relative power and status. Although organisations might have their own internal culture, organisations do not exist in a cultural vacuum, which is to say that they are subject to external cultural influences. Exploring factors that affect the degree to which social norms and stereotypes that exist in society at large are replicated or challenged within organisations is the subject of much research in the field of diversity management (Brief, 2008).

This chapter reviews existing theories and empirical studies relating to diversity in the workplace. The purpose of the review is to explore the factors that might differentially impact the working lives of men and women and those that affect the success or otherwise of expatriate working. Organisational values and practices relevant to the management of diversity will also be reviewed. The present study is predicated on a social constructionist epistemology (Wetherell & Maybin, 2002) and on this basis, an exploration of the construction of “self” and others” at work is also considered significant to the understanding of day-to-day workplace experiences. To this end, there are four main sections within the chapter:

1. Gender in the Workplace
2. Cultural Diversity at Work
3. The Management of Workplace Diversity
2.2 Gender and work

It has long been acknowledged that organisations are domains that both reflect and maintain the gender inequalities that exist in society at large (Priola & Brannan, 2009). There has been a significant body of research that has sought to explore this from the perspective that gender is socially constructed and is in some way actively “performed” in the workplace (eg. Gherardi & Poggio, 2007; Poggio, 2006; Martin, 2006; Wharton, 2005). This perspective suggests that “in the workplace, jobs and positions are not disembodied, gender-free slots. Jobs are associated with culturally produced, known and accepted behaviours and practices viewed as masculine or feminine” (Priola & Brannan, 2009). Whilst the notion of masculinity is associated with agentic qualities such as competence, intelligence and assertiveness, femininity is associated with communal qualities such as helping, empathy and selflessness. As a result, job roles are constructed as being “men’s work” or “women’s work” on the basis of the degree to which agentic or communal skills appear to be required within the role.

However, it has been argued that not only are gender roles socially constructed, but the way in which job roles themselves are portrayed and perceived is also a result of social constructionism. In other words, all job roles could be argued to require a combination of both agentic and communal qualities, but that one or other type will receive more emphasis in the portrayal of the role depending on whether the role itself is more populated by males or females. Wilson (2002) suggests that this process is somewhat cyclical, in that professions and roles that are more heavily populated by men are more likely to be construed as requiring agentic skills, which in turn constructs the ideal job-holder as male. This not only affects the gender balance of the applicant pool, but also impacts on the way in which applicants for the role are evaluated. A woman applying for a job in a role that is largely populated by men may indeed be able to demonstrate sufficient agentic skills to perform the role competently, but in order to demonstrate those skills, she will necessarily be contravening the stereotype of women as communal. Research has demonstrated that individuals who violate expected norms will be evaluated more negatively, and that this will have an impact on hiring, promotion and reward decisions at work (Bernard & Correll, 2010). These researchers suggest this is due to the construction of an “either-or” dichotomy surrounding masculine and feminine characteristics, in which women displaying agentic qualities will be assumed to have a corresponding deficit of communal qualities, and thus despite a lack of evidence, will be constructed as “cold, deceitful, bitter, selfish, devious and personally disliked” (p620).
The way in which this masculine-feminine binary is maintained and reinforced in the workplace has been the subject of a considerable body of research, with particular emphasis on how it functions to support persistent areas of inequality such as the segregation of work-roles, the gender pay-gap, differential take-up of flexible working and the “glass ceiling” effect (Kelan, 2010). These areas will be explored in turn here and will be accompanied by a discussion of the way in which the maintenance of normative gender roles both in the workplace and in domestic relationships contribute to each area of inequality.

The Glass Ceiling and the Social Construction of Management

There is consistent evidence that the “glass ceiling” effect prevents women from progressing beyond a certain level in organisations, despite successful promotion to middle management and being suitably competent and qualified to progress further (Davidson & Burke, 2004). For example, the proportion of women on the boards of the top European companies was only 12% in 2010; this proportion has grown at a rate of less than 1% per year since 2004 where the proportion was 8% (Eurostat, 2011). Further evidence of women’s under-representation in senior management within selected European countries is provided by the statistics in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1 Directors & Chief Executives**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of men and women in director and chief executive positions across selected European countries](source: ILO, 2010)

Even in industries where women form the majority of the workforce, men still dominate management positions. For example, in the retail and service industry, which have been shown to be populated primarily by women, men still outnumber women at management
level (ILO, 2010). I suggest that two of the most powerful contributors to this situation are the social construction of “management” and the maintenance of normative gender roles within domestic relationships.

It has been said that management consists of a series of highly gendered practices, one of which is management discourse (Knights & Kerfoot, 2004). Katila and Eriksson (2011) consider management as a discourse that both reflects and constructs hegemonic power relations between men and women. They argue that the way in which management is discussed serves to underline the gendering of management identity. For example, women are characterised as lacking in relation to the skills and qualities required for a managerial role and this is demonstrated by references to “managers” and “female managers”. It is suggested that the term female is used as a qualifier, that is to say that the norm associated with management is a male norm thus the qualifier “female” is required to indicate difference and deviation from that norm (Katila & Eriksson, 2011). These authors further suggest that the way in which we use language can result in “multiple and competing interpretations of social situations” (p301) and on that basis, discourse itself contributes to the complexity of individual experiences in the workplace.

It has been argued that management discourse is historically and politically situated within particular professional groupings and that these may be subject to cultural differences (Gherardi, 1994). On this basis, an analysis of workplace experiences cannot be removed from the social context in which they occur. Categories of gender, manager and leader consist of a range of normative beliefs and expectations and these are used as standards by which individuals may be judged. Thus individual managers may be held accountable for their actions both as representatives of their gender and of their particular professional role. Katila & Erricsson (2011) argue that the valence of these evaluations will be determined by the moral positioning of the observer relative to the manager. For instance, a female manager can be credited for an aggressive strategy if it has business benefits, but might be simultaneously derogated as a female for not conforming to the feminine stereotype.

There have been several recent studies (e.g. Katila & Erricsson, 2011; Devine, Grummell & Lynch, 2011) that have outlined the components of corporate gender stereotypes, but Maier’s (1997) work is arguably the most comprehensive and still relevant 15 years on. Maier (1997) argues that “corporate masculinity has been unconsciously assumed and largely uncritically accepted as the organisational behaviour standard” (p227) and the values
of this corporate masculinity are presented alongside their contrasting feminine values in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Stereotypical Masculine and Feminine Workplace Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Values</th>
<th>Masculine Values</th>
<th>Feminine Values</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hierarchy</td>
<td>Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Intimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competition/winning</td>
<td>Collaboration/sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Image of Power</td>
<td>Rigid</td>
<td>Adaptive</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Authoritarian father</td>
<td>Nurturing mother</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Engaging</td>
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<td>Win-lose</td>
<td>Win-win</td>
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<td>Exclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
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<td>Process-focussed</td>
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<td>Demanding</td>
<td>Responding</td>
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<td>Dissent = loyal opposition</td>
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<td>Metaphors</td>
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Adapted from Maier (1997)

One of Maier’s central points is that it is a particular, somewhat stereotyped form of masculinity that is valued, against which all other masculinities are measured and classified as inferior. In support of this, more recent research has demonstrated that in exploring discourses of identity and difference in management, whilst women might position themselves in opposition to male managers, the discourse of male managers suggests that they construct their own position in opposition or contrast to other males (Olsson & Walker, 2003). Thus the dominance of masculinity is sufficient to allow for competing forms, whilst making the position of those women irrelevant. This clearly has implications for all individuals whether male or female, who do not appear to endorse stereotypical masculine values. The
standard of the “white, heterosexual, male” is used as a yardstick against which others are measured and potentially rejected as candidates for managerial positions (Maier, 1997). Olsson and Walker (2003) point out that whilst white males are considered competent workers unless proven otherwise, the opposite applies to women and ethnic minority workers, who are expected to prove their competence before being taken seriously.

Imbued within the notion of corporate masculinity is the way in which such a culture not only constructs itself but achieves serial reproduction. Research consistently demonstrates that promotion decisions in many organisations are made on the basis of informal interviews (EOC, 2005). Often, candidates are identified through personal connections, whilst the decision process is highly subjective and lacking in transparency. The role of networking is suggested to be highly crucial to the selection process. Brief (2008) suggests that men, unlike women, are highly adept at exploiting the opportunities offered by networking. However, the forging of allegiances and cliques with other men has both cultural and individual consequences. Not only do such connections serve to reinforce the dominance of the culture of corporate masculinity, but they establish a pool of favoured employees from which promotional candidates may be drawn (Wolff & Moser, 2009). It is suggested that women are excluded from such groups by the behaviour of those on the “inside”. Some of the factors significant to women’s exclusion from such networks are discussions in “the men’s room”, connections due to education in common (single-sex public schools) and business conducted in male-focused locations (e.g. all-male sporting events) (Forret & O’Dougherty, 2004).

Olsson (2006) suggests that one of the most powerful ways in which the culture of corporate masculinity is maintained is through story-telling and myth-making in organisations. She argues that the conception of senior executives as distant and bureaucratic has been replaced by narratives that position leaders as heroes constantly engaged in battle in order to “save” the company. Her central point is that discourses surrounding management currently focus on notions of overcoming the enemy, of endurance, personal sacrifice and resisting the intrusions of domestic life and that this constructs images of senior managers as heroic and transformational leaders. Olsson suggests that the narrative process involves the “continuing honouring of past and present leaders, within the ongoing stories of executive identity” (p134) and serves to gender the hierarchy of organisations. She argues that in so doing, women executives are either ignored or positioned as “other”.
It has been suggested that female managers have to meet the challenge of managing this “otherness” in order to succeed in their careers (Probert, 2005). Against a backdrop of a masculinised organisational culture in which corporate decisions of all types (policy, promotion, selection etc) are made on the basis of informal discussions amongst well-connected male colleagues, it is argued that women are required to manage their “otherness” in order to achieve equal treatment. This process involves minimising their gender difference whilst simultaneously retaining a sufficient measure of femaleness so as not to be ridiculed or criticised for appearing overly masculine (Bailyn, 2003). This notion is supported by research into the experiences of those women who have managed to break through the glass ceiling; rather than suggesting that their success is part of a programme of change, their experience implies that they are an exception to normal practice although the presence of a “token” can often be used to give the illusion of progress (Brief, 2008; Kanter, 1977). Women executives often find difficulties with their position as “tokens”, pointing out the paradox in their situation in which they are made acutely aware of their minority status whilst simultaneously trying to minimise this difference in order to “fit in” (Gustafson, 2008).

An important factor in encouraging the development of less experienced employees is the existence of appropriate role models (Bakken, 2005). The presence of high profile individuals with whom others can identify helps employees to create a “vision” of their own potential career-path. A role model offers specific examples of attitudes and behaviour which can literally be “modelled”, whilst more generally providing an image of success which generates inspiration and motivation (Fielden & Davidson, 2004). The fact that there are few female role models in senior management and even fewer who have children has consequences for female employees lower down the organisational hierarchy (Catalyst, 2002). An absence of role models reinforces the social construction of senior positions as unlikely to be obtained by women and even less likely to be obtained by women with children.

Empirical research has demonstrated that the stereotyping of mothers results in a credibility gap for female parents. In a study by Correll, Bernard and Paik (2007) participants evaluated pairs of job applicants who differed only on parental status and rated mothers as less competent and less committed, whilst also recommending that mothers received lower salaries and rewards. When submitting the applications to real-world job vacancies, mothers generated half as much interest in their applications compared to non-mothers. Although it might be said that combining work with motherhood is no longer considered unusual, achieving career successes and salaries commensurate with non-mothers is still
counternormative and might potentially invoke discrimination on the basis of norm-violation as previously discussed (Bernard & Correll, 2010).

However, the opposite is said to be the case for fathers. Coltrane and Adams (2008) demonstrated that men with children are construed as kinder and more “expressive” without any concomitant loss of masculinity. Furthermore, professional men tend to be viewed as more mature and stable when they become fathers and thus more suited for upper-level management positions (Coltrane, 2004). In sum, motherhood presents a barrier to positive workplace evaluation: mothers are stereotyped as less competent and committed, but where these attributes cannot be disputed, successful mothers are viewed as less likeable. Meanwhile, fatherhood is associated with more positive evaluations for men, both in terms of their suitability for employment and their interpersonal qualities.

Flexible Working and Domestic Gender-roles
The perpetuation of normative gender roles within heterosexual relationships and within society as a whole has been suggested to be instrumental in limiting women’s career advancement. For instance, Rubery et al (1998) argue that despite progress in the gender balance of the EU workforce, in most countries there is an unwritten “social contract” which locates financial responsibility with men and domestic responsibility with women. Moreover, this social contract offers men continuous and advancing careers whilst women are designated “second earners”, taking career breaks and part-time work to meet family commitments. It is significant that a lack of continuity in full-time work can have a major impact on career progression for women (Wirth, 2001).

The existence of flexible working arrangements is considered to be one of the major factors in increasing women’s workplace participation (Sheridan, 2004). Such arrangements include home-based or tele-working, flexi-hours and part-time working and are often taken up by women who are combining paid work with family commitments (Sheridan, 2004). However, the existence of part-time working arrangements varies widely throughout the different European countries. Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Moldova have the smallest proportion of part-time work at 1% of total national employment, whilst the Netherlands has the largest, at 30% (UNECE, 2007). Within European Regions, part-time working is most prevalent in Western Europe, where women make up approximately 75% of the part-time workforce in most countries (UNECE, 2007).
However, the unequal distribution of part-time working between the sexes is an additional factor that helps to reinforce the social construction of gender-roles, once again positioning women as carers and men as breadwinners (Bernard & Correll, 2010). The reasons why many women adopt flexible working-patterns are not difficult to understand; many see part-time work as a positive option, facilitating the balancing of work and family commitments. And although there has been evidence since the early 1990s that many men would like to work shorter hours (and take a consequential drop in income) in order to spend more time with family (Lewis & Cooper, 1995), this has not translated into practice. Sheridan (2004) suggests that a major factor in the unequal take-up of part-time work is the way in which masculine and feminine identities are constructed. She suggests that the binary poles of masculine versus feminine (and the associated breadwinner versus carer) have a major impact on the development of personal identity and that as most men will have been parented primarily by women, they will have developed a sense of self which does not incorporate such caring responsibilities. Furthermore, this constructed self-hood is very likely to contain the perception that to be a man is to be a “provider”; thus to relinquish this identity could be potentially destabilising (Sheridan, 2004).

It is ironic that the increased availability of part-time work is accompanied by a development in the widespread acceptance of long working hours cultures, particularly in management positions (Wilson, 2002). Increasingly, commitment is being measured in terms of hours served rather than quantifiable outcomes. Liff and Ward (2001) report that even those organisations with formal equal opportunities policies are not immune to informal cultures of long working hours. The majority of male managers in their study expressed the opinion that female managers were scoring “own goals by leaving at 5pm” (p27). Not only does this expose a discrepancy between official policies and informal attitudes, it demonstrates that “in such organisations this willingness to work long hours is frequently taken as a major indicator of ambition and commitment.” (p23) This clearly disadvantages all those with caring responsibilities, though whilst women retain the majority share of these, they will face greater occupational disadvantage.

It should be noted that unequal sharing of domestic responsibilities is not only related to child rearing; marriage itself heralds more domestic chores for women but less for men (Gupta, 2007). However, neither men nor women perceive this situation as unfair. Liff and Ward (2001) point out that both parties perceive fairness in the division of domestic duties when women are doing approximately twice as much as men. It would appear that these social contracts are embedded in the psyche of the heterosexual relationship and are not
simply practical considerations about the division of labour. The significance of this reality on women’s career progression is conveyed by the statistics that show that women managers are less likely to be married than men, and if they are married, they are less likely to have children than men (Burke & Cast, 1997).

**Unequal Pay and Gender-based Expectations**

The recent EU Annual Report on equality between men and women demonstrates that the average hourly pay-gap between men and women amongst Member States has barely changed in the last 5 years and is currently 18%; the range is from 4.9% in Italy to 30% in Estonia (Meade, 2010). Whilst some may seek to explain this as a result of women choosing lower paid work with less responsibility in order to balance family commitments, research has shown that the pay-gap materialises well before marriage and childbirth become salient factors. For instance, Purcell and Elias (2004) report a gendered pay disparity of 10% for 20 year-old graduates in the UK, rising to 25 percent by the time graduates reach the age of 40.

Wilson (2002) points out that the lower social status of communal skills relative to agentic skills means that both employers and employees expect that roles with more emphasis on communal skills will command lower wages. Wilson (2002) used the example of occupations that are differentially gendered in different countries to highlight this practice. She points out that in the UK the role of physician is socially constructed as requiring agentic qualities, and is thus dominated by men, has a consequently high-status and is well paid; meanwhile in the Russian Federation, the emphasis on the role is more communal and as such is populated by women, is low-status and poorly paid. Furthermore, the very act of negotiating with an employer for a higher salary is more easily located within traditionally male characteristics and is therefore more likely to be perceived as acceptable behaviour (Maier, 1997).

It has also been suggested that women themselves have lower salary expectations and are less proactive than men at negotiating pay increases (Stevens, 1993). This is likely to be a product of a complex interaction between the social construction of gender-appropriate behaviour and roles with both organisations and domestic relationships. For instance, the perception of the main breadwinner as male is still prevalent amongst both men and women; therefore within the heterosexual couple, women’s employment is still viewed as generating a “secondary” income (Stone, 2007). On this basis women are more likely to be offered and to accept lower salaries than men. This situation has far-reaching consequences. Whilst market forces determine the rate of pay for individual jobs, employers will pay what they
think they need to pay in order to secure the appropriate staff. Thus in sectors dominated by women, the rate of pay will be lower since women are prepared to work for less than men.

It may be argued that it is the responsibility of individual couples to divide the financial and domestic burdens equally. However, Rubery et al (1998) point out that whilst women are paid lower wages for equal work and are likely to be clustered in lower ranks of occupations, labour market conditions are likely to perpetuate the status of women as secondary earners and consequently, primary carers.

**Section Summary**

By exploring the performance of gender at work and within domestic relationships, assumptions underpinning normative gender roles and the social construction of management and notions of flexible working can be exposed. This enables us to understand and therefore address areas of persistent gender inequality in the workplace. Whilst there is a growing body of research that approaches gender in the workplace from a social constructionist perspective, most of the European research in this area takes the perspective of Western Europeans; considerations of culturally diverse perspectives of “doing gender” at work are notably absent.

**2.3 Cultural diversity in the workplace**

Increased integration of European nations has broken down the legal constraints on Europe-wide mobility and transnational working. This brings the challenge of cross-cultural adaptation to more organisations and employees than ever before. Much of the research in this field has focussed on the general (non-culturally specific) challenges of expatriate working or has sought to highlight comparisons between two very different cultural entities, typically very specific “home versus host” cultures (Schnieder & Barsoux, 2003). The organisations participating in this research draw their workforces from the widest possible range of European countries and the majority of these individuals work outside of their home nation. It is likely therefore that some of the factors affecting the day-to-day working lives of the participants in this study relate to their roles as expatriate workers. On this basis, I present below a review of findings relating to the individual, social and organisational factors that help or hinder successful expatriate working.

**Individual factors associated with expatriate success**

Multinational companies work in dynamic and competitive environments, within which it is not acceptable merely to be able to perform well when things go as expected; instead
individuals, teams, and organisations must be able to continuously adapt their knowledge, skills and abilities in order to remain effective and competitive. In other words, adaptability is becoming a feature of effective performance at all levels and types or organisations. This requires individuals that can tolerate uncertainty, are learning-oriented and demonstrate adaptability across a multitude of cultures and the physical environments (Schnieder & Barsoux, 2003).

The commonly researched domains of task and contextual performance do not capture these requirements of continuous change sufficiently enough (Campbell, 1999). Actions and responses that were appropriate in the past or in one context may not be universally or continuously applicable and on that basis the performance domain has been extended to include adaptive performance (Griffin & Hesketh, 2003). Adaptive performance refers to those aspects of performance related to changing job requirements.

Adaptive performance is a relatively new concept and some research on the topic in regard to stereotyping, career adjustment, and conscientiousness has been undertaken (DeArmond, Tye, Chen, Krauss, Rogers & Sintek, 2006). Furthermore, a taxonomy has been developed that delineates 8 separate dimensions of adaptive performance (Pulakos, Schmitt, Dorsey, Arad, Borman & Hedge, 2002). This model was formed on the basis of reviewing previous literature on the topic and was then tested in a military environment. However, research findings only found minimal support for these 8 dimensions and it is suggested that this might be a feature of the dissimilarity between the environments that contributed to the development of the taxonomy (civilian workplaces) and the testing environment (DeArmond et al., 2006).

In an international environment intercultural sensitivity and skills have been thought to play an important role in the adaptation process, but empirical research on intercultural effectiveness has been limited on this topic, especially in relation to work performance. In the early 1980’s, Tung (1981) highlighted the importance of selecting expatriates who exhibit tolerance toward differences in race, creed, culture, customs and values, and described this phenomenon as expressing cultural empathy. Since then literature has consistently highlighted the need for acculturation (e.g. Dyne & Ang, 2009) and the need to adapt managerial styles via intercultural adaptation (Hammer et al., 1998). The skills used in the home country may be more effective when used in culturally similar countries than when they are used in culturally distant countries (Stahl & Caligiuri, 2005). It could also be that the cultural context does not allow the use of some cross-cultural skills, and therefore the need
to develop cross-cultural competencies in expatriates is even greater where the gap between home and host nation cultures is very wide (Hutchings, 2002). In short, intercultural competencies refer to the capacity to function effectively in culturally diverse settings, which may be described as any situation involving cross-cultural interaction that involves differences in race, ethnicity or nationality (Ang, 2008).

Senior managers in multinational companies are gradually beginning to realize that that intercultural competencies involves more than ‘a series of country statistics and cultural gimmicks learned in a short, pre-departure training session’ and that ‘awareness does not necessarily bring competence in the host culture’ (Sanchez, Spector & Cooper, 2000). This has brought a recent shift in focus from adjustment to a more comprehensive conceptualisation of expatriate effectiveness and makes it possible to differentiate outcomes of the effectiveness of intercultural competencies. Adaptive performance can be seen as a type of expatriate effectiveness. There is some literature to suggest that higher intercultural effectiveness should lead to more adaptive workers and thus performance. Hutchings (2002) suggests in her review of Australian expatriates in China that a lack of cultural sensitivity of the expatriate has led to failure to adapt on business and social levels. Stone-Romero, Stone and Salas (2003) argue that the lack of intercultural understanding leads to poor performance evaluations as role expectations are not understood. Performance that does not conform to the role expectations is generally seen as less adaptive performance.

Organisational and social factors associated with expatriate success
As transnational working has increased, there has been a growing awareness of the need to plan for success in terms of overseas assignments. The overt failure (i.e. early termination) rate of such assignments is said to be between 16 and 40 percent and it is reported that many of those remaining expatriates are ineffective in their roles (Bolino & Feldman, 2000). The high personal and organisational costs associated with such failures have prompted a significant body of research into the reasons for failure and ways in which the chances of failure can be minimised.

A major feature of overseas failure is a lack of fit between the expatriate's skills, particularly in terms of cross-cultural awareness and language skills, and the requirement of the new role. As a consequence, much research has focussed on how best to prepare individuals for their assignment and many organisations invest in pre-departure cultural awareness programmes (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). However, a major criticism of these programmes
is that they are usually only offer basic information on the new culture. Tantamount to stereotyping, this can create more problems than it solves.

Expatriate workers need time in the new culture to adjust and to become socialised into their new role. This involves gaining insights into the tasks within their role as well as adapting to the attitudes and behaviours of the host culture; where organisations recognise the need for a settling in period and plan for this in terms of the length of time allocated to the assignment, the success of the assignment is likely to be higher (Shaffer et al, 2006).

A study by Bolino and Felman (2000) into expatriate underemployment makes various salient points about important but under-researched features of expatriate working. Underemployment is conceptualised by the researchers as a situation in which an individual is overqualified and/or underutilized for the role they are currently undertaking. They point out that in organisations where overseas assignments are seen as a “perk of the job” or even generally endorsed as a “development opportunity”, there is the possibility that individuals will seize upon an opportunity to work abroad without due consideration for the actual job-content of the new role. They argue that this can lead to frustration with unchallenging work, particularly once the experience of working within a new culture becomes less exciting and novel and more routine and mundane. With a participant sample of 268 expatriates from over 30 countries, this study found a negative correlation between expatriate underemployment and a) job attitudes, b) general mental health and c) a self-report measure of job performance. Practical suggestions offered to attenuate this negative relationship include the allocation of specific goals to expatriate assignments, giving employees a free choice about undertaking an overseas role, and on-site mentoring within the organisation in the host country.

Social isolation for expatriate workers is well documented (e.g. Schneider & Barsoux, 2003) and focuses on the dual pressures of difficulty in adjusting to the new culture, whilst experiencing separation from the home culture. In addition, expatriate workers may experience increased work-life conflict when they bring spouses or families to the new country. Such workers may feel responsible for the adjustment of their families, whilst struggling to adjust themselves.

**Female expatriate managers & normative gender roles in domestic relationships**

It has been suggested that there are compounding factors such as level of seniority and gender that influence the experiences of expatriates. Although research into the glass
ceiling effect has been extensive, it has generally focussed on specific or comparative national experience; there is a paucity of research into the experience of female expatriate managers. This might be attributed to the small percentage of overseas assignments undertaken by women; recently the number of female expatriates has been increasing, but in 2006 they still made up only 13% of expatriates, which was up from 8% in 2001 (Amble, 2006). Companies in Europe now trail other regions in this respect, with females accounting for only 10% of their expatriates (Mercer, 2006).

The scarcity of female expatriate managers contributes to the process of adjustment for many workers. The problem of “difference” is two-fold for the female expatriate manager; women experience stress and isolation on the basis of their gender as well as their nationality: “because female managers are frequently the sole female in an otherwise all-male environment, they face increased stereotyping, visibility and performance pressure.” (Linehan & Scullion, 2001, p411)

The assumption of normative gender roles creates a further challenge for female expatriate managers with partners, regarding the management of their relationship during the assignment. The construction of the notion of the “trailing spouse” (Shimoni, Ronen & Roziner, 2005) is highly gendered which results in both practical and emotional difficulties. Since partnering an expatriate worker is assumed to be a female role, support groups are highly gendered and appear inaccessible to men, resulting in increased isolation and exclusion for male partners (Linehan & Scullion, 2001). Furthermore, the violation of normative gender roles brings criticism of male partners of expatriates, as they are more likely than female partners to receive negative social judgements for prioritising their partner’s career above their own (Linehan & Scullion, 2001). The same research also demonstrated that though this situation might cause strain in a relationship, a mitigating factor was the degree to which the female expatriate manager maintained the relational or communal aspect of the normative feminine role within her domestic relationship. Thus though a male partner might be breaking out of the traditional mould in terms of the gendering of the trailing spouse, it appears that such males do not simply reverse normative gender roles in all respects, since the female expatriate manager was more likely than the male equivalent to perform the role of the emotional caretaker. Whilst the female expatriate manager is allegedly more able to resolve the unmet needs of her partner, her male counterpart might find that the unmet needs of his female partner precipitates a termination of the project. On this basis, Altman and Shortland (2008) surmise that whilst international assignments by female managers are relatively rare, their success rate is high because a
premature return to the home country is prevented. However, an additional factor to consider here is the double burden this places on the female expatriate manager, with the expectation that normative gender roles will be maintained within the domestic relationship whilst challenging role-norms in the workplace.

The lack of formal criteria for senior appointments is a factor that specifically affects the allocation of female executives to international assignments. Linehan and Scullion (2001) suggest that women managers may be less likely to be appointed to overseas assignments due to role confusion. It is thought that the role of expatriate manager may be conflated with the role of expatriate partner. One of the reasons cited for failure of international assignments is the inability of spouses (usually female) to adapt; therefore role conflation may create a false association between women and overseas failure.

**Section Summary**

Much of the research in the area of expatriate working has focussed on the individual and organisational predictors of successful expatriate assignments. To this end, various practical considerations surrounding notions of inter-cultural adaptation and competencies have been explored, primarily from a quantitative perspective. Partly due to the relatively small proportion of overseas assignments undertaken by women, there is a paucity of research considering culturally diverse perspectives on the role of gender in expatriate assignments and little in the way of qualitative research in the area.

**2.4 Managing Diversity at Work**

Various social processes such as increasing globalisation and women’s increasing workplace participation have resulted in greater sociological and psychological diversity within contemporary workforces (Harrison & Sin, 2006). Within the last three decades, there has been increasing emphasis amongst both academics and practitioners on constructing the notion of “difference” within workforce as something that needs to be “managed”, apparently for the benefit of both employees and organisations (Harzig, Juteau & Schmitt, 2010).

Early approaches to dealing with workforce differences developed in the context of the social and political climate of the 1960s and ’70s and were predicated on the moral imperative of addressing inequalities (Doherty, 2004). Thus the notion of “Equal Opportunities” (EO) was conceived. In Europe the EO agenda has been driven by the founding of the European Economic Community Treaty of Rome (1957), and its main objective was gender equality.
Article 2 of the Treaty states that achieving gender equality is one of the Community’s primary goals; Article 3(2) recognises the need to advance gender equality throughout all EEC activities, whilst Article 13 sanctions the use of legal action against sex discrimination and has been operationalised at both European and national level (Europa, 2005).

More recently, The EU Gender Equality Action Programme 2001-2005 outlines the following three objectives:

1) “To promote and disseminate the values and practice underlying gender equality”. Relevant activities include international conferences and campaigns, the use of publications and the internet.
2) “To improve the understanding of issues related to gender equality by evaluating the effectiveness of policies and practice”. Funding is available for the statistical and policy analysis, research and an EU Gender Equality Annual Report.
3) “To develop the capacity and effectiveness of key players”. Here, national and international networking is activated for the purpose of promoting gender equality throughout the European Community.

(CEC, 2004)

In general terms, equality for other disadvantaged groups was gradually incorporated into the concept of Equal Opportunities as it gained social and political support. However, whilst the oratory on equality of opportunity at national and international level is loud and clear, the reality is that inequality persists for many workers and EO measures have been considered to contribute to the problem rather than resolve it. There has been a considerable “backlash” against equal opportunities programmes within many organisations. Workers from the privileged majority (usually white males) resented what they saw as “special treatment” for minorities (Doherty, 2004). Meanwhile, some individuals became vulnerable to accusations of being rewarded solely on the basis of their minority status rather than on merit (Kalev, Kelly & Dobbin, 2006). Furthermore, the EO paradigm has been criticised for confusing the concept of “equal to” with “the same as” in personnel terms. This discourse encourages all groups to adopt traditional values and compete within existing patriarchal cultures rather than challenging such cultures (Smithson & Stockoe, 2005).

Partly in response to the failings of EO, a new paradigm of “Managing Diversity” (MD) developed in the 1990s in the US (Wilson & Iles, 1999). Whilst EO was intent on preventing discrimination, the new paradigm of MD had a more positive focus and an overarching goal of promoting inclusive working practices that would be relevant to all workers. Unlike the EO
emphasis on dissolving differences, the MD philosophy not only acknowledges difference but emphasises it as a positive factor. Assessing the relevance of the new paradigm to public sector working environments, Wilson and Iles (1999) outline the differences between the old and new paradigms. These are summarised in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 Equal Opportunities versus Managing Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>MANAGING DIVERSITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Externally driven</td>
<td>Internally driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Moral / legal obligations</td>
<td>• Rests on business case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• EO = cost</td>
<td>• MD = investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational basis</td>
<td>Strategic basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Concerned with statistics</td>
<td>• Concerned with experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Piecemeal interventions</td>
<td>• Holistic culture change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Focussed</td>
<td>Individual focussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Group initiatives</td>
<td>• Individual development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family friendly policies</td>
<td>• Employee friendly policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference = other</td>
<td>Difference = asset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deficit model</td>
<td>• Model of plenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ethnocentric &amp; heterosexist</td>
<td>• Celebrate difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assimilation advocated</td>
<td>• Organisational adaptation advocated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discrimination focussed</td>
<td>• Development focussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Harassment = individual issue</td>
<td>• Harassment = organisational culture issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported by narrow positivist knowledge base</td>
<td>Supported by wider pluralistic knowledge base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wilson & Iles, 1999
The first point that Wilson and Iles (1999) make relates to different motivations for adopting either EO or MD. Whilst the driver for promoting EO rested on an externally driven moral philosophy that people should not be treated unequally, the motivation for adopting the MD ethos is a business case for diversity which has an internal economic focus. This business case suggests firstly, that the performance of excluded workers is likely to decrease whilst absenteeism and turnover costs are likely to increase. Secondly, it is argued that a diverse workforce enhances creativity and productivity, and can be more responsive to the needs of its client or customer base.

However, though the business case for diversity has intuitive appeal, there are inevitable complexities that make the reality less than ideal. The MD emphasis on valuing difference creates a situation where difference itself becomes the focus of attention. By endorsing the specific skills that minority groups may bring to the workplace, such skills are inevitably conceived as “alternative” rather than “mainstream”. Although attempts at elevating the status of these characteristics may be viewed as progressive, the predictable side effect is that the association between minority groups and non-mainstream skills has the potential to reinforce and perpetuate existing stereotypes (Zanoni & Janssens, 2004). Furthermore, a 2005 benchmarking survey (Personnel Today, ‘05) found that although 91% of 113 organisations identified a business case for diversity, only 35% could quantify the benefits. Therefore, if a rational economic stance is taken, it could be argued that for the 65% of businesses not finding any quantifiable benefits, focus on Managing Diversity is merely a cost. This implies that in these cases, a return to the moral argument of the Equal Opportunities ethos is necessary in order to drive action for equality.

There are still other criticisms of the Managing Diversity paradigm. Overell (1996) suggests that there is little real difference between the old and new paradigms and that MD is simply EO repackaged to be more attractive to commercial enterprises. Indeed there is significant evidence to suggest that the term “diversity” evokes the same negative response from majority-group employees. Though the intention of the MD paradigm is to move away from the concept of equality at work being about assistance for disadvantaged groups only, the label “diversity” is still taken to imply a minority agenda and is thus still threatening to “mainstream” workers (Ocon, 2006). Other views take an even stronger critical stance regarding the use of the term “diversity”. The term is used differently in different cultural or national contexts; in the US it generally refers to race and gender only, whilst within Europe there are differing uses depending on national guidelines, referring variously to race, religion,
colour, national origin, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law (Holton, 2005).

Despite the criticisms of the MD paradigm, I am suggesting that the concept of organisational inclusion, central to the MD ethos, is a useful starting point for exploring minority groups’ experiences at work. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), the significance of workplace inclusion is rooted in the survival instinct. Historically, the supply of basic resources required inter-dependence and co-operation within social groupings in order to survive and prosper. However, within contemporary organisational settings, inter-cultural and intergroup dynamics exist that limit access to resources and opportunities for minority workers. Fields of exclusion typically include career progression, social and information networks and non-contractual activities (Kalev, Kelly & Dobbin, 2006). Following Wilson (2000), organisational inclusion will be defined here as the extent to which organisational culture facilitates integration, participation and commitment amongst minority groups.

The concept of inclusion-exclusion is conceived by Mor Barak (2005) as a continuum as opposed to a dichotomy. This continuum is made visible within her conceptual model for the inclusive workplace that incorporates both the fundamental values and practical applications that engender inclusion. Figure 2.3 shows Mor Barak’s (2000) definition of the inclusive workplace.

**Figure 2.3 Definition of the inclusive workplace**

*The inclusive workplace is defined as one that:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Micro</th>
<th>Macro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Values and utilises individual and intergroup differences</td>
<td>- Collaborates with individuals, groups and organisations across national cultural boundaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cooperates with and contributes to, its surrounding community</td>
<td>- Alleviates the needs of disadvantaged groups in its wider national environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mor Barak (2000)

I am suggesting that the main problem with this definition is that the emphasis on national and international participation implies that for organisations that do not operate in such a
global sphere, a truly inclusive workplace is not possible. Whilst this definition might be a useful point of departure for further consideration, Mor Barak’s perspective is rooted in the experience of multinational US organisations and does not consider the relevance of the model to smaller scale, non-US and non-commercial workforces. Nevertheless, the aspect of Mor Barak’s (2005) work that is of relevance here is her conception of the inclusion-exclusion continuum and this will be explored here (see Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.4. A Value Base for the Inclusive Workplace**

The important point about conceiving inclusion and exclusion on a continuum is that organisations are perceived not as solely inclusive or exclusive, but somewhere along the scale. Even within organisations, some practices may be more inclusive than others, certain of which may be more significant in determining perceptions of inclusivity than others. This matter will shortly be explored further in relation to creating positive climates for diversity. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the concept of the continuum approach allows for differences in personal perceptions of inclusivity. This is important because majority-group and minority-group members may have different perceptions of how their organisation
performs along the continuum and indeed, individuals from different minority groups may also have differing perceptions. This is entirely in keeping with the ethos of Managing Diversity in which a plurality of views is accommodated.

Whilst establishing a value base such as that proposed by Mor Barak (2005) above, may be a useful starting point from which to operationalise diversity management, there is a considerable body of empirical evidence that suggests that this is not sufficient to ensure equality or inclusion. Schein’s (1992) work on organisational culture, though almost two decades old, is still highly relevant to understanding the gap between “what is said” and “what is done” in organisations. Schein refers to this gap as a problem of espoused values versus values in action, and states that where these two sets of values are manifestly different, inclusivity will not be achieved. For instance, Wilson (2000) cites the example of an organisation in which senior managers verbally endorse fatherhood as important (the espoused value) whilst refusing to offer more paternity leave than the minimum legal requirement (the value in action that is different to the espoused value). In another example from the same study, an organisation had good maternity pay but still had poor retention of qualified women following childbirth as the attitudes of colleagues betrayed negative stereotyping of mothers. Wilson (2000) points out that the way to resolve this conundrum is to focus on exploring and challenging the organisational culture on a holistic basis, as opposed to taking an uncritical, surface-level approach to value formation. In other words, “it is no use tinkering with HR policies if the organisational culture is antipathetic to what HR strategy demands” (Wilson, 2000, p299).

Hickes-Clarke and Iles (2000) take a more detailed look at the relationship between inclusion and organisational culture, and have developed the concept called a “positive climate for diversity”. Firstly, they make a distinction between culture and climate as follows:

- Culture is defined as “a common set of shared meaning or understanding about the organisation and its problems, goals and practices”.
- Climate is defined as “the atmosphere that employees perceive is created in their organisation by practices, procedures and rewards”

(Hickes-Clarke & Iles, 2000, p325).

Thus “climate” is the atmosphere perceived by employees and is a result of the overarching organisational culture. Regardless of whether this distinction between culture and climate is seen to be a matter of theoretical semantics or practical applicability, the researchers’ work
on defining and creating an affirmative atmosphere (whether referred to as culture or climate) for diversity, definitely has applied relevance to the workplace. Their “positive climate for diversity” (PCFD) refers to “the degree to which there is an organisational climate in which human resource diversity is valued and in which employees’ from diverse backgrounds feel welcomed and included” (p326). The findings of their study from a sample primarily drawn from NHS Trusts, indicated that the factors predicting of perceptions of a PCFD were perceptions of policy support, organisational justice, support for diversity and recognition of the need for diversity. However, these results should be treated with caution. The researchers acknowledge their small and somewhat unbalanced participant sample; their study involved 273 participants, almost 90 percent of whom were employed in the NHS, whilst the remainder were employed in the retail sector. Furthermore, the small sample size meant that potential differences between minority groups could not be statistically explored.

In a more recent study with a large participant sample (p = 3,578) across 163 organisations in the hotel industry, Herdman and McMillan-Capehart (2009) explored organisational level predictors of perceptions of diversity climate. They found that there was a positive relationship between existence of diversity programmes and a PCFD, but that this relationship was moderated by several variables, including the “actual diversity and the collective relational values of the management teams”. In other words, diversity initiatives in themselves were taken to indicate a PCFD, but this relationship was much stronger where the management team itself consisted of a high level of ethnically diverse individuals and where those individuals were perceived as taking an investment or “relational” approach to employees. The explanation is that individuals utilise multiple cues in perceiving their environment; therefore organisations with diversity programmes but no diversity within the management team would send inconsistent cues regarding the organisations actual commitment to diversity. Relating this to Scheins’ (1992) work, it could be said that the espoused values were not consistent with the values in action and employees were able to discern this from organisational cues. Furthermore, the Herdman and McMillan-Capehart (2009) study makes explicit the association between the managerial attitude that employees are of strategic importance and worthy of investment and the establishment of diversity programmes designed to optimise their people-assets. These findings have a very practical application in that where organisations are planning diversity programmes, there is a need to attend to the aforementioned contextual factors in order to ensure that the programme itself makes maximum impact.
In addition to exploring predictors of a PCFD, Hickes-Clarke and Iles (2000) also demonstrated a link between a PCFD and outcomes on both individual and organisational levels. A PCFD was significantly correlated with organisational commitment and satisfaction and also with career satisfaction and satisfaction with one's line manager. However, there are other findings from the same study that indicate that these results should be interpreted with caution. It was shown that women were more likely than men to perceive a need for diversity within the workforce, but less likely to perceive that their organisation supported diversity. This could indicate that whilst women value diversity more than men, in comparison to men, they have higher expectations that the organisation is less likely to meet regarding the level of organisational support for diversity. So it could be that Hickes-Clarke and Iles (2000) findings imply that those with higher perceptions of PCFD (i.e. men) are also those that are more satisfied with their career in the organisation and that the two factors are not causally linked in any way.

An alternative view is offered by Morrison, Plaut and Ybarra (2010), who makes the point that minority groups are more likely to value diversity whilst majority members are more likely to value homogeneity; therefore where minority employees do perceive a PCFD there is likely to be a greater impact on their other positive perceptions of the working environment than for majority members for whom a PCFD is seen as less relevant. Indeed, there is research to demonstrate that policies that are identity-conscious (as opposed to identity-blind), that seek to value as opposed to dissolve difference, result in a more positive attitude towards the organisation, but only for women & minorities, (Konrad & Linehan, 1995). Similarly, it has been demonstrated that white men are more likely to show organisational commitment in less diverse situations (Tsui et al, 1992). These findings are consistent with the view that “diversity” indicates a minority agenda; it is unsurprising that a PCFD is more beneficial to those who perceive it to be personally relevant. This indicates a need to address the organisational culture within which diversity programmes are located, to ensure that the inclusivity of the programme is highlighted. Where majority group employees perceive benefits of diversity programmes on the same level as minority group employees, more positive outcomes for more people could be expected. This is a currently under-researched area of diversity research and needs further exploration in order to develop both theoretical and practical understanding of how to maximise the impact of a PCFD for both minority and majority groups.
Section Summary
The social mores of contemporary Western society construct the notion of difference amongst employees as something that needs “managing”. To this end, a large body of literature has developed that generally either explores minority group workplace experiences or focuses on practical organisational actions that might assist or impede successful diversity management. Very little research explores intercultural perspectives on workplace diversity and there is little on this matter in the way of qualitative research.

One of the topics featuring heavily in the literature reviewed in this section surrounds the role of employee perceptions. On this basis, it is considered important to explore how perceptions of “difference” by the majority-group and perceptions of discrimination by the minority group might arise. The following section addresses these issues from a social identity perspective.

2.5 Social Processes and Identity in the Workplace
Social psychological theories are also a useful context within which to explore experiences of inclusion and exclusion. Social identity theory suggests that our personal identity is formed through association with social groups based on common characteristics such as gender or ethnic origin (Tajfel, 1982). Significance and value is attributed to group membership, which is maintained by devaluing other groups; this can lead to conflict and competition. In closely linked processes, stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination may come into force; these are related but conceptually distinct processes. This section will define each one and explore the relationship between the three concepts. The evolution of discrimination from traditional overt forms to more modern, covert forms will also be debated. Finally, the antecedents and consequences of perceptions that discrimination has occurred will be explored.

Stereotyping
The term “stereotype” was coined by a US journalist, Walter Lippmann, in his book entitled “Public Opinion” that was published in 1922. He referred to stereotypes as “pictures in our head” and used the concept to refer to a process of impression formation (Stangor, 2000). A stereotype may be defined as a set of widely held beliefs about the characteristics of an individual based on perceived membership of a social group (Brief, 2008). Stereotyping may be described as a form of cognitive shorthand and thus in some ways can be viewed as adaptive; it is an information-processing method that purports to make judgment of a situation manageable. In other words, a stereotype is a cognitive schema or prototype that is
used to assess and categorise other people without having to undertake a lengthy assessment process.

Brewer’s (1999) “Dual Model of Impression Formation” may help to elucidate the procedures by which we process information about other people. This dual model juxtaposes two alternative means of information processing: bottom-up or attribute-based processing versus top-down or stereotype-based processing. The former process is described as effortful and requires motivation, for instance, we have to actively engage with the individual and have some reason for wanting to know about their personal characteristics. We might be more motivated therefore to learn about individuating characteristics of people with whom we are working in close proximity than with others who are more distant. Brewer suggests there is also a goal-directed element to this process; we are motivated to discover information about another individual that has personal relevance; for instance, this might be information that is salient to the context of interaction, such as that which is relevant to the individual’s ability to complete their part of a shared task.

By contrast, top-down or stereotype based processing is much quicker and is more automatic and Brewer suggests that this is the default mode for most individuals, unless the motivation outlined above comes into play, in which case the top-down process can be overridden. The top-down process involves impressions that have been formed as a result of previous social, cultural and political influences being holistically and automatically activated by a target individual or group. That is, where a stereotype has been formed on the basis of racial categorisation, Brewer suggests that all the associations relevant to that stereotype are activated, regardless of the salience to that individual. Brewer emphasises the possibility that stereotypes might have a valence that could be positive (black people are good at sprinting), negative (women are not cut out for management) or neutral (professors wear glasses). However, I am questioning the concept of “neutrality” with reference to stereotypes; even within the example given is an image imbued with notions of authority, knowledge and studiousness which might all be valued differently depending on the perspective of the perceiver and the attendant social context. However, regardless of the valence attached and subsequent judgments of a stereotype relevant individual (Blair, 2002), other research has indicated such factors as motivation and attentional resources as influential.

A number of studies have shown that where individuals are motivated to suppress stereotypes, results vary depending on the type of motivation. Where participants perceive
some personal gain, such as financial reward by co-operating with another person about whom stereotype judgements would usually be made, such judgements can be suppressed though this was effective in the short term only and in fact induced a “rebound effect” (Zhang & Hunt, 2008); those participants who had suppressed any activated stereotypes for the duration of a particular study then displayed more stereotyped judgments in subsequent studies than those of whom suppression had not been requested. Nevertheless, it has been suggested by Blair (2002) that there are some stereotypes that are less socially acceptable, such as those relating to gender and race, which individuals may therefore be highly motivated to reject. Their findings would support the notion that internal motivation to consider individuating (stereotype disconfirming) information is a more successful mechanism for stereotype correction than external motivation. This factor suggests that a successful organisational strategy for promoting inclusion would be to raise awareness rather than impose sanctions or rewards.

Prejudice and Discrimination

The term prejudice means literally to pre-judge, but whilst the concept of stereotyping may have a positive, negative or neutral valence, a prejudice may be said to be a hostile attitude towards an individual or group formed on the basis of supposed characteristics, or stereotypes (Brief, 2008). Thus it may be said that negative stereotyping leads to prejudice. Meanwhile, discrimination may be defined as prejudice plus action (Brief, 2008). In other words, discrimination is the enactment of a negative attitude towards an individual based on negative stereotyping of a particular social group to which that individual belongs. Discrimination might be described as either blatant and overt, which is the more traditional form of discrimination, or it might take a more modern form, which might be subtle or covert. (Benokraitis, 1997).

The notion of traditional discrimination refers to the practice of unequal treatment of individuals on the basis of their group membership where prejudice is blatant and visible. Examples relevant to the workplace include using sexist or racist language, making sexist or racist jokes, or deliberately restricting minority-group access to resources such as promotion opportunities. Such discrimination has generally been made illegal in the Developed World, but may still be practiced where there is little chance of being prosecuted. Indeed, evidence has shown that most individuals perceiving they have been the victim of even the most blatant discrimination do not make official complaints (Schmitt and Branscombe, 2002).
However, the development of anti-discrimination legislation alongside changing social values has meant that overt prejudice and discrimination are no longer socially acceptable; for instance, very few white Americans still support racial segregation or openly express negative views about the IQ of Blacks (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). However, it is argued that an awareness that discrimination is “bad” does not necessarily lead to an absence of discrimination; instead, it can lead to attempts to justify discriminatory practices (Brief et al, 2000). This new need for justification of racist practices in particular, has been noted in many parts of Western Europe and has been variously described as “the new racism” (in Britain); “under-the-skin racism” (in France) “latent prejudice” (in Germany) “everyday racism” (in the Netherlands) (Pettigrew and Meertens, 1995).

Referring specifically to sexism, Benocratis and Feagin (1995) suggest that individuals conscious of the socially unacceptable nature of their prejudice but who nevertheless refuse to abandon their prejudicial views, will practice a more covert form of discrimination in order to avoid being caught out. They offer the example of employers who are aware of laws protecting against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy, but who, on the basis of the prejudice that mothers are ineffective workers, concoct alternative “excuses” to dismiss a good employee.

Meanwhile, subtle discrimination refers to the unequal treatment of women or minority group members that is less visible than blatant discrimination; overtly prejudicial attitudes are not present and there may be no obvious motivation to effect a negative outcome. Indeed Benokraitis and Feagin (1995) offer examples of behaviour, such as condescending chivalry, that “seems friendly at face value but has pernicious consequences” (p83).

To further elucidate the difference between the three types of discrimination outlined by behavioural examples that are relevant to the workplace are offered in Table 2.2.
Table 2.2 Workplace behavioural examples of discrimination types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of discrimination</th>
<th>Behavioural Descriptors</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blatant</td>
<td>Role segregation</td>
<td>Designating tasks or roles as “men’s work” and “women’s work”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pay disparity</td>
<td>Paying women less than men for equal work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual Harrassment</td>
<td>Any non-reciprocal sexual advances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtle</td>
<td>Condescending chivalry</td>
<td>Using belittling terms for women “young lady”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supportive discouragement</td>
<td>Sending mixed messages minority-group members’ achievements, for instance, giving verbal encouragement to succeed, but not rewarding success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Friendly” harassment</td>
<td>Flattery, particularly in terms of physical attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liberated sexism</td>
<td>The expectation that women will work as well as take on the majority of domestic responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert</td>
<td>Tokenism</td>
<td>A very small number of women or minority group-members are appointed to high profile positions in order to give the illusion that discrimination does not occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manipulation</td>
<td>Giving a woman or minority-group member a job without allocating them sufficient resources in order to deliberately provoke failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabotage</td>
<td>Giving falsely poor references to a woman or minority-group member in order to prevent promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignoring merit</td>
<td>Giving promotion on the basis of “who you know” as opposed to suitability for the role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Brief (2005), Brief et al. (2000) & Benocratis and Feagin (1995)

It should be noted that Benocratis and Feagin (1995) acknowledge there to be considerable overlap between the categories of discrimination, and that it is not always possible to allocate any particular behaviour to a discrete category. They also acknowledge that the degree of harm to the victim of any form of discrimination is not possible to predict in an abstract conceptualisation; the extent to which harm would be done would be determined entirely by contextual realities. A notable aspect of their theory is that the degree to which discrimination can be tackled is predicted by the degree to which it is visible and can be documented in some way. On this basis, covert discrimination is the most pernicious, in that it is deliberately concealed, hard to expose and therefore impossible to challenge. Characteristics of each form of discrimination that are outlined by Benocratis and Feagin (1995) are summarised in Table 2.3
Table 2.3 Discrimination typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF DISCRIMINATION</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blatant</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtle</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert</td>
<td>Very low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Benocratis and Feagin (1995)

A feature of these less visible forms of discrimination is that they allow organisations to disguise the fact that unequal policies and practices are commonplace. For instance, many organisations are reluctant to admit the existence of sex discrimination, rationalising a gender imbalance in senior positions as a historical hangover or mere coincidence (Wilson, 2002). Furthermore, many workplace cultures shroud inequality with tokenism and responsibility displacement, in which women themselves are blamed for their lack of progress. This denial of discrimination has been described as a “mirage of equality” (Arber & Ginn, 1995) and it would seem that both women and men are susceptible to the illusion.

Qualitative findings from a study on women’s career progression in the International Civil Service (Gavin & Davidson, 2007) revealed that despite the absence of overt discrimination, more subtle negative attitudes towards gender equality from both men and women were common. The study identified three primary methods by which the sexist element of such attitudes was disguised:

1. **Rationalisation** was the most frequently encountered method, in which reasons offered for the existing gender imbalance appear to be motivated by the underlying cognition that the situation is unfortunate but unavoidable. Thus the gender imbalance in the organisational hierarchy is rationalized as a) a historical anomaly that will inevitably change with the mere passage of time and b) the result of women’s choices not to pursue career enhancing options.
2. **Justification**, a more extreme method than the first, in which reasons that seek to explain the gender imbalance betray an underlying belief that the situation is a natural and fair consequence of women’s own actions. For instance, women’s lack of career progress may be justified as fair, by endorsing a culture that values the number of hours worked above quality of work, or by offering flexible working practices, but viewing the use of it as a sign of lesser job commitment, which could be a justifiable reason for not being promoted.

3. **Denial**, in which individuals present evidence as though it proves the absence of gender inequality even though a rational appraisal of the same evidence would suggest the opposite view. This operates through citing “exceptions” as though they were norms and mistaking improvements towards gender equality for actual equality. For instance, in this study, the association between maleness & management is so implicitly accepted that almost any representation of women is perceived as evidence of gender equality.

These three methods of attitude-disguise can be plotted along the Benocratis and Feagin (1995) continuum of visibility, in which the presenting views, if taken at face value, would be more or less likely to be perceived as discriminatory, depending on the method of disguise used (Figure 2.5).

**Figure 2.5. Methods of Attitude-Disguise and the Visibility Continuum**

Source: Gavin and Davidson (2007)
There are serious consequences of disguising discrimination. Firstly, such a veneer of acceptability is sufficient to ensure that prejudice and discrimination will be propagated on a wider scale unless the underlying attitudes are made explicit. Secondly, the invisibility of the underlying attitude means that it is very hard to challenge; without challenge there will be no change. Where organisations are merely paying lip-service to anti-discriminatory practices, an invisible barrier to equality initiatives is erected; it has already been demonstrated that such initiatives require contextual support in order to be successful and this will be absent where prejudice remains an underlying cultural factor. As a corollary, responsibility for ameliorative action is transferred from the organisation to women themselves, and where women appear to opt out of career enhancing activities, the reasons underlying those choices go unquestioned.

One of the explanations for the refusal to acknowledge that discrimination exists might be offered by the concept of “System-Justifying Beliefs” (SJBs) (Brief, 2008). This concept is predicated on the notion that human societies tend to be structured hierarchically and that individuals at all levels of the hierarchy have a need to see their world as fair (Lerner, 1980). Cultural beliefs are created to justify the system and these beliefs locate the cause of events internally; individuals are viewed as responsible for their own position. Those at the top of the hierarchy want to believe that the system by which they obtained their position is fair – for instance, in a work context people need to believe they obtained an appointment or promotion based on merit. However, when disadvantaged groups claim discrimination this is contrary to a belief in a fair society and presents a challenge to SJBs. As a result of this conflict, discrimination claimants are viewed as a) holding a different value system, thereby reinforcing inter-group differences and b) threatening to the world view of strong endorsers of fair society beliefs. As a corollary, the world view that incorporates SJBs may be protected by the denial of discrimination as responsibility for differential outcomes is pushed back onto the individual (Kaiser, Dyrenforth & Hagiawara, 2006).

The notion of discrimination as a social construction is interesting to consider. Given the assertion that discrimination results from social perceptions, actions and interactions (Brief, 2008) it would be noted that there are variations in the perceptions surrounding the existence and extent of discrimination, even amongst individuals who are on the receiving end of evaluations based on stereotypes (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). Reasons for this are explored in the next section; meanwhile, it is important to note that one of the consequences of the individual variation in the construction of experiences as discriminatory is the inhibition of social change. Brief (2008) points out that it is only by highlighting discrimination, that awareness is increased and prejudices can be challenged. Indeed one of
the great drivers of social change is the mobilization of minority group members against perceived “wrongs” (Major, 1994); therefore unless the “wrongs” are identified, there is no motivation to challenge the status quo.

Antecedents and consequences of perceiving discrimination
There has been considerable debate surrounding the psychological consequences of attributing negative outcomes to prejudice as opposed to personal failings (e.g. Kaiser & Miller, 2003; Major, Quinton & Schmader, 2003; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). The central concern of this debate is the possibility that an individual’s self esteem might be protected by attributing such outcomes to an external source. This viewpoint is evaluated here alongside alternative viewpoints which have been subsequently developed. It is contended that the ‘self-protection’ or ‘discounting’ hypothesis is limited due to its restricted focus on attributions to external causes. It is suggested that it is the complex interplay between multiple moderating factors, in a given context, that determines the meaning that individuals attach to negative outcomes and the consequences these have on self-esteem.

The self-protection hypothesis (Crocker and Major, 1989) is founded on the assumption that when faced with multiple plausible explanations for outcomes, some are more likely to be adopted than others. It is suggested that when faced with attributional ambiguity a minority group member might attribute a negative outcome, such as failure to achieve promotion at work, to other people’s reactions to their stigmatised condition, thereby dismissing personal characteristics as explanations. When faced with the possibility that a negative outcome might be the result of personal failings, self-esteem might be protected by evading personal responsibility for the outcome.

This hypothesis has become highly controversial for suggesting that minority group members are a) unwilling to take responsibility for their own failings and b) unjustly claiming discrimination. Furthermore, in a more general sense, the hypothesis could be seen to as an attempt to deny the reality of discrimination and push responsibility for all negative outcomes back onto the minority group member. Despite this, the results of numerous studies are at least to some degree, supportive of this hypothesis (e.g. Crocker et al. 1991, Major, Kaiser, McCoy, 2003, Major et al., 2003). In Major, Kaiser and McCoy’s (2003) study, for example, male and female participants were asked to picture that they were rejected from a course either due to sexism, personal deservingness, or an external cause. According to results, both men and women in the first condition (sexism) made more attributions to prejudice and anticipated feeling less depressed than participants in the personal deservingness condition.
Similarly, a different study conducted by Major, Quinton and Schmader (2003) supports the view that attributions to prejudice can protect self-esteem. In this study, women took a creativity test and received an overall grade of D from a male evaluator with a comment that their imagination, creativity and intellectual inventiveness were below average. During the study, participants were either given no prejudice cues, ambiguous cues, or overt prejudice cues. Results indicate that the more women attributed negative outcomes to prejudice, no matter what cues they were given, the higher their self-esteem.

Even though both studies provide valuable evidence in support of the self-protection hypothesis, it is important to mention that they are not without limitations. Because the number of participants used in both studies was relatively low (less than 100) and only one stigmatized group (women) was studied, there is a question of generalizability of the findings to other stigmatized groups. Furthermore, the validity of the Major, Kaiser and McCoy (2003) study might have been affected by the methodological factors. The study used a vignette design which involved imagining how one would perceive the situation and conjecture about future emotional consequences. Had an experimental design been used in which participants were actually exposed to prejudice, and where actual feelings were recorded, the results might have been different, albeit that there might have been ethical concerns about actual exposure to prejudice with this method.

Schmitt and Branscombe (2002) argue that, to a great extent, the self-protection hypothesis overestimates the self-protective properties of attributions to prejudice. Assuming that attributions to prejudice involve exclusively external causes, as proposed by Crocker and Major (1989), is not correct. They argue that the stigmatized individuals’ own group membership represents a significant internal aspect of attributions to prejudice. Because these attributions involve the self, they have potential for negative self-evaluation. According to the paradigm that Schmitt and Branscombe (2002) initiated, “for disadvantaged groups, attributions to prejudice will be harmful, because they implicate an aspect of the self that can result in uncontrollable negative treatment across a wide variety of situations” (p. 174). They dispute the self-protection hypothesis by claiming that the frequency of disadvantaged groups’ experience with prejudice makes such attributions especially painful. This hypothesis offers an explanation for the phenomenon discussed above where members of minority groups might persistently refuse attribute negative outcomes to discrimination, even in the face of incontrovertible evidence.

A number of studies offer support for Schmitt and Branscombe’s theory. For instance, Kaiser
and Miller (2003) found that participants devalued an African American man who attributed his failure on a test to prejudice regardless of how much prejudice he had experienced. Participants viewed him as hypersensitive, emotional, irritating, and complaining. On the basis of these findings, the researchers argue that making attributions to prejudice is socially disadvantageous due to the attendant criticism it invites. Even when objectively justified, attributions to prejudice can lead to negative evaluations and as a corollary, the fear of being negatively evaluated can prevent stigmatized individuals from blaming poor results on the prejudice of others.

It might be logical to assume that where an individual perceives that they have been the victim of prejudice on the grounds of their minority group status, the individual might wish to distance themselves from that group in order to minimize the receipt of prejudice. However, empirical evidence suggests that the opposite is the case. Branscome at al (1999) have demonstrated that those individuals attributing negative outcomes to prejudice are likely to strengthen their affiliation with the relevant minority group. It is suggested that whilst attribution to prejudice has a negative effect on self-esteem, this effect can be attenuated by group-identification (see Figure 2.6). It is thought that this process might operate as a coping strategy in that other group members might be able to offer insight and understanding, practical suggestions and social support with the prejudice-relevant event. Furthermore, it is possible that strengthened group-affiliation might counter feelings of rejection and devaluation by offering acceptance.

**Figure 2.6 The rejection-identification model**
It is interesting to link these findings with the aforementioned study by Kaiser and Miller (2003), where participants reacted negatively to an individual who claimed a negative outcome of a test was due to prejudice, regardless of whether participants were from a similar minority group as the individual or not. It seems that whilst the apparent target of prejudice might wish to increase affiliation with the relevant social group, there is the unfortunate possibility that the relevant social group might not be as receptive to such an individual, precisely because they are claiming to have been a victim of prejudice. The very action of this group-member claiming prejudice highlights the stigmatized nature of the whole group’s identity which may be uncomfortable for other group members as well as the target individual. Garcia et al (2003) summarise the situation by stating that taking personal responsibility is a trait with high social value, therefore individuals want to believe their own group possesses this value. A claim of discrimination by an in-group member might expose the whole group to devaluation, because the discrimination claim is at odds with this.

Relating these findings to a workplace context, it is interesting to consider whether a need for increased identification with the minority group might have a negative relationship with the degree to which an individual is inclined to identify with the organisation as a whole, particularly where the organisation might be held responsible for the prejudice suffered.

Social identity and Organisational Identification

An individual’s identity is formed in part through association with groups, which include those based on demographic characteristics such as gender, race, age etcetera, and also other affiliations such as social activity groups and organisations (Bartels, Pruyn, de Jong & Joustra, 2007). Tajfel (1982), in his seminal work on social identity theory, points out that group membership in itself does not necessarily lead to incorporating that membership into ones personal identity unless there is an element of emotional significance of that membership. Key to group identification is the likelihood that individuals will achieve enhanced self-esteem through identification with groups that they appraise in a more positive light than others (Haslam, 2006).

Research into the process of social identity development has brought about greater understanding of the way in which individuals perceive themselves in relation to others. Tajfel and Turner (1986) offer self-categorisation theory as a means of explicating the cognitive basis for group formation. It is suggested that individuals categorise themselves and others into in-group and out-group categories based on perceived similarity (in-group) or dissimilarity (out-group) of salient characteristics. In so doing, the perceived similarity
between the individual and the in-group is emphasised. Terry, Hogg and White (1999) suggest that this process is to some extent a circular one, in which the group, originally formed on the basis of perceived similarity, then serves to regulate individuals’ behaviour through the establishment of group norms to which the individual is motivated to conform in order to enhance their sense of belonging. Take, for example, Sharpe’s (2005) explication of the development of group identity at a national level:

“...The nation is created not through an originary moment or culturally distinct essence but through the repetition of symbols that come to represent the nation’s origin and its uniqueness. National culture and character are ritualistic so that every repetition of its symbols serves to reinforce national identity...Each drawing of maps of nation-state territory, each playing of the national anthem or laying of wreaths at war memorials, every spectatorship of national sports events and so on represents this daily affirmation of national identification. Traditions of ceremony, monument and national celebration have instilled national identity into the calendar and the landscape. National identity therefore becomes naturalized, its creation is hidden so that it becomes an unquestioned facet of everyday life” (p98).

Thus the development of group identity may be seen as a social process in which each performance of a behavioural norm, each reference to a group-salient symbol or historical reference serves to reinforce group cohesiveness and distinguish it from other groups (out-groups) or non-group members.

As identity processes have become more understood, research has provided insights into the motivations underlying the formation of social identity. Haslam (2006) highlights the need for individuals to enhance their self-esteem and suggests that one of the ways to do this might be to identify with social groupings that they evaluate in a positive light, thereby acquiring a measure of this positive evaluation for themselves. One of the adjuncts to this is that group members are then further motivated to maintain a positive view of their group in order to maintain a positive self-view. This can lead to intergroup conflict where groups position themselves not only as distinct from each other, but in opposition to each other; appearing superior to other groups is one way to boost group status and consequently to promote individual self-esteem (Hogg & Terry 2000).
Organisational identification

The social aspect of identity formation has led researchers to explore the significance of organisational membership with respect to identity formation. Organisations are just one of the many possible groups to which an individual might belong and the extent to which personal identity is defined by membership of an organisation is reflected in the notion of “organisational identification” (Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). This concept may be defined as “the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organisation, where the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organisation(s) in which he or she is a member” (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, p104). Linking this definition to the social process of group identity formation outlined above, it is suggested that the perceived degree of external prestige of an organisation is a significant factor in inculcating organisational identification amongst employees due to the potential impact that this will have on the individuals’ self-concept (Van Riel, 2001). Other antecedents of organisational identification include perceived distinctiveness of the organisation (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), the level of communication between hierarchical levels in the organisation (Bartels et al, 2007) and the degree to which the organisation’s goals, norms and values are perceived to be aligned with those of the individual (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Interest in ways to increase organisational identification has gained ground with the realisation that there might be significant benefits for the organisation to be obtained from employees who are high in organisational identification. Certainly there is intuitive logic in the suggestion that the more an employee’s own values and norms are aligned with those of the organisation, the more likely they are to behave in a manner consistent with organisational values and norms. More specifically, it has been suggested that such employees might be less likely to leave the organisation and more likely to expend energy in pursuit of organisational goals (Edwards, 2005). A recent study by the same author (Edwards, 2009) has demonstrated that one of the key determinants of organisational identification is perceived organisational support, the most significant features of which are HR practices relating to promotion opportunities, open communications and procedural justice.

Traditionally, research on organisational identification focused on the organisation as a unitary construct, that is, the degree to which employees identify with the organisation as a whole. However, more recently there has been an interest in the possibility of multiple organisational identities, or the degree to which individuals identify with sub-groups within organisations as well as the organisation as a whole. Van Knippenberg and Sleebos (2006) argue that identities can operate vertically and horizontally across organisations; they
suggest that whilst perceived external prestige is the most important factor for identification with the organisation as a whole, the salient factor for identification with localised sub-groups is the degree of communication amongst members (for example, departmental work-groups or multi-level project teams).

In a critical view of traditional social identity theory, Rink and Ellemers (2007) argue that “the salience of a common identity is not based on cognitive perceptions of similarity alone; it can also be fostered by the conviction that group members are reliant on each other in order to achieve a common goal”, which they further argue is often the case in organisation. This would allow for the inclusion of minority group members within the group or organisational identity without threatening the identity of the group at large. It is argued that this should be particularly the case within relatively small work groups because the group typically develops its identity precisely through the individual contributions of its members on behalf of the team. Furthermore, Postmes and Jetten (2006) have demonstrated that group identity can be formed on the basis of many different types of group norm, one of which might be the endorsement of diversity.

However, despite the possibility that minority groups need not necessarily have more difficulty embodying group norms, Hogg and Terry (2000) have considered some of the reasons why minority groups might have difficulty in reaching the upper tiers of an organisation’s hierarchy. They argue that leaders of groups are selected according to the extent to which they represent the group prototype, or in other words, the degree to which they appear to embody the values, behavioural norms and aspirations of the group. If organisational or group prototypes (for instance in relation to appearance and style of interpersonal interaction) are socially constructed so that minority groups do not appear to match them well, then a minority group member is unlikely to be selected into a senior role. Thus where organisational or sub-group identification and cohesion are very high there is less likely to be a prevalence of minority leaders.

Section Summary

As organisations are highly social entities involving multiple, cross-cutting group memberships, an understanding of the way in which social identities in organisations develop salience is crucial to understanding individual and collective workplace experiences. Exploring the way in which individuals position themselves relative to their different workgroups and the way in which groups position themselves in relation to other groups can reveal assumptions underpinning the construction of notions of self and other. This is critical
to understanding intergroup conflict and power-relations in the workplace. Much of the research in this area focuses on theory building and refinement, whilst it is my intention here to use this body of literature to form the basis of exploring interactions and positioning between individuals with multiple intersecting identities that include gender, national and international identity as well as hierarchical identity and organisation identification.

2.6 Chapter Summary
This chapter has provided a review of empirical evidence relating to the role of gender, cultural background and the interaction of these two factors, with reference to workplace inclusion and exclusion. Inevitably, where cultural diversity is relevant to workplace experiences, matters relating to expatriate working come to the fore and matters considered significant to the successful management of overseas assignments have been reviewed, alongside a consideration of gender differences in expatriate working and factors affecting expatriate adjustment. Social processes surrounding the formation of workplace identities and group affiliations have been explored, with particular reference to minority group experiences and organisational identification. As the present study seeks to explore the workplace experiences of men and women from differing European nationalities the issue of identity formation will be further explored in the next chapter, which maps the social and political development of Europe in the 20th Century and considers the construction of European identities and their juxtaposition with notions of nationhood.
Chapter 3

Literature Review 2: European Enlargement, Language & Identity

3.1 Introduction
This chapter will outline the social and political development of Europe since attempts to form a collective supranational entity in the region began in the early 20th Century. Particular emphasis will be placed on the development of European identity – or rather identities – and the relationship between national and European identity will be explored. The role of language as a means of communication, expression and cultural differentiation will also be debated. Finally there will be an exposition of the development of two of the main European Institutions, the Council of Europe and the European Union. The administrative bodies (the Secretariats) of these institutions are the focal point of data collection for the current research project; therefore salient aspects of these organisations will also be outlined.

3.2 Defining Europe
The very term Europe has several meanings and is subject to confusion. Europe as simply a geographical entity is defined as one of the 7 continents of the world. However, even the delineation of the European border is often disputed and the designation of nations as “European” is not entirely achieved by the logic of geographical location (UN, 2011). For instance, the border dividing Asia and Europe is under question, although by one commonly used definition, the eastern border follows the Ural Mountains, Ural River and Caspian Sea, whilst in the south, it follows the Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea, Bosphorus and Dardanelles. If that delineation is accepted, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkey have some land located within European borders and some in Asia. Meanwhile, Armenia is located solely in Western Asia but has membership of certain European organisations.

Although the Mediterranean Sea offers an obvious division between Africa and Europe, some of the islands that are commonly labelled “European” could not fit this definition based on the geographical location. For instance, Malta and Sicily are situated on the African continental plate and Iceland is part of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, spanning the Eurasian and the North American Plates.

As a consequence of the geographical ambiguity surrounding some of its constituents, Europe does not have a unified geographical identity. Whilst the geographical location of
many of its member countries designates them as unambiguously European, there is debate and disagreement about the degree to which certain other countries might be similarly labelled. This immediately constructs inequalities and oppositions within in Europe, in which some member countries may be perceived as more European than others.

The “institutionalisation of Europe” began between the two World Wars, and was driven by a desire amongst certain nations to form a supra-national body that could promote co-operation and reduce conflict between European nations (Athanassopoulou, 2008). This goal precipitated the formation of the Council of Europe and the European Union in Western Europe, both of which subsequently expanded, initially including Scandinavian and Central European nations, then accepting various Southern European nations and latterly Eastern European nations since the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. The term “Europe” is often used in a geopolitically exclusive manner (Böröcz, 2006) referring only to the nations within the European Union. However, the Council of Europe has 47 Member States, only 27 of which are in the EU. In addition, people living in outlying “self-contained” areas of Europe, such as the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom may routinely refer to mainland Europe simply as “Europe” as if they were not part of that entity themselves (OED, 2011). Table 3.1 lists the nations that are widely accepted as part of the Continent of Europe, indicating which of these are currently Member States of The Council of Europe and of the European Union.
Table 3.1. Countries of Europe and its principal institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries widely acknowledged to be part of the European Continent</th>
<th>Council of Europe Member States</th>
<th>European Union Member States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
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<tr>
<th>Countries widely acknowledged to be part of the European Continent</th>
<th>Council of Europe Member States</th>
<th>European Union Member States</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Monaco</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Montenegro</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vatican City</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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The table indicates three of the possible “Europes”; the EU, the CoE and the continent of Europe. The relationship between these three entities is worthy of note; the States within the EU are a nested subset of those within the CoE, which in turn are a large subset of those within the continent of Europe. See figure 3.1
The existence of these three “layers” of Europe, in addition to the geographical ambiguity surrounding its constituent members, increases the divisions within Europe, with the creation of oppositional “in-groups” and “out-groups”. Although this issue is discussed further in relation to European identity below, it should be said here that the current review of existing literature revealed a lack of research into the relationship between these different layers of “European-ness” or whether indeed these layers are even relevant within individual and collective consciousness as salient group categories.

3.3 Europe and Identity

The European idea was predicated on the conception of a federation of nations in which cultural diversity is recognised and valued, but which moves away from the sovereignty of the nation-state. The interwar period saw three attempts at institutionalising Europe: firstly, the "Pan-European Project" conceived by Coudenhove-Kalergi in 1923; secondly, the "United States of Europe" project in 1929, and "Society of Nations" offered by Aristide Briande in 1929. Despite early enthusiasm for creating a European society, the development of a concept of “European-ness”, the development of a European identity, has faltered significantly since these early beginnings. Given the ambiguities surrounding the definition of the concept of “Europe” outlined above, it is not difficult to understand Kraus’s (2008) assertion that “adding the adjective ‘European’ to the identity concept does not seem to help very much in clarifying terms in a discursive field which is in any case permeated by all kinds of semantic ambiguities” (p37). The main issues and contentions will be outlined here.
Kraus (2008) suggests that the purpose of institutionalising Europe is to make political, cultural and geographical borders congruent with each other. That is to say that the development of political and cultural norms that are supra-national would be bonds that strengthen Europe as a community. Since Coudenhove-Kalergie and the pan-European movement in the interwar period, attempts to form a European identity have been central to attempts to institutionalise Europe. The cultural roots of European identity have been frequently cited as the Judeo-Christian tradition, Hellenism and the Enlightenment*. Kraus (2008) suggests that to endorse this “cultural triad” indicates a rejection of alternative possibilities, and specifically denies the contribution of Islam, the Roman influence and the significance of Romanticism** in the development of the modern European self-concept.

Both the Council of Europe and the European Union have been concerned with the development of a “European identity” since the early 1970s (Kraus, 2008), formally beginning in 1973 since the EC Copenhagen summit where a Declaration on European Identity was developed and endorsed. The principles enshrined therein are listed as:

- Representative democracy
- The rule of law
- Social justice
- Respect for human rights
- Preservation of diversity of national cultures.

The role of religion in defining “European-ness” is evident in the reflection of “Christian values” in the founding structures of the EU. Fundamental disagreements arose during the development of the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty, with references to God and Christianity being hotly debated. Agreement was eventually reached by using a compromise phrase referring to the "cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe."

*Enlightenment is the C18th era in Western philosophical, intellectual, scientific and cultural life, in which reason is promoted as the primary basis for legitimacy and authority.
** Romanticism is the C18th artistic, literary and intellectual movement that endorsed strong emotion as an authentic source of aesthetic experience and as such, was partly a reaction to the social and political norms of “Enlightenment” i.e. the rationalisation of nature.
Poland and France are the two EU countries that have most vociferously debated the references to Christianity in the EU Constitution. In 2005, Poland's Law and Justice Party criticised the above amendment to the proposed Constitutional Treaty, because “it negated the role of Christianity in shaping the moral and cultural face of our continent” and “it introduced a specific anti-Christian censure to the European constitutional practice”. (EurActiv, 2006). In support of this view, representatives of the Catholic Church have been vocal in debates on the role of religion in forming a European identity. In his 2006 address to the European People's Party, Pope Benedict XVI argued that “Europe needed to value its Christian roots and strengthen its awareness of belonging to a common civilisation to better meet the challenges it faces”.

Taking an opposing position, Michel Barnier, French foreign minister from 2004-2005, reinforced the French position regarding the importance of preserving a secular stance for the EU. The potential for Turkey, an essentially Muslim state, to gain EU membership, alongside such contentious matters such as globalisation and immigration, have added to the debate surrounding a European identity. The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, suggested that if Turkish membership were granted, the EU would be making a firm commitment that "it is not really a Christian club, but a place where civilisations meet” (Toggenburg, 2004).

Notwithstanding the conflict about religion, the main components of European identity have remained consistent within official discourse; the principles outlined are still fundamental to contemporary identity discourses of various European institutions (Kraus, 2008). However, to date, the identity of the EU has primarily been characterised in terms of its political existence. Wording of the Treaties asserts that the EU is founded upon "the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law". If any Member State demonstrates a serious failure to adhere to these principles, suspension of selected membership rights can be enforced, as seen in 2006 when restrictions were imposed on the Austrian membership when a political party with extreme right-wing views joined the coalition government (EurActiv, 2006).

Schimmelfennig (2001) argues that the expansion of the EU was generated by the drive from existing Member States to widen adoption of its liberal values and norms by non-Member States. The membership rules of the EU now focus on adoption of the above values rather than any material contribution; in other words, the Enlargement of the EU was not a rationalist, cost-benefit consideration. That said, there were differences between the “drivers”
and the “brakemen” of Enlargement. The drivers were largely those countries that bordered on the potential accession countries – the more remote countries were generally the brakemen. If Enlargement can be seen as means by which Central and Eastern Europe could be socially and economically stabilised, then the principle of international interdependence may account for the different stances on Enlargement, since geographical proximity increases economic and social interdependence. It is noteworthy that the British preference deviated from this geographical pattern; the UK was initially a strong supporter of Central and Eastern Enlargement despite lacking in geographical or economic ties to these regions. The suggestion is (Schimmelfennig, 2001) that the UK position resulted from a fear of deepening the ties between existing Member States and the EU as a governing institution; the inclusion of further Member States was thought to dilute the potential level of integration and weaken the power of the Institution over each individual Member State. Schimmelfennig concludes that the differing state positions on Enlargement are essentially self-serving at a state level, that is to say that considerations of national, rather than European, interests are the main determinants of attitudes towards integration and ultimately Enlargement.

However, there are critics of this cost-benefit argument, suggesting that it accounts for only 10% of the variance in support for European integration and that matters of personal and collective identity need to be taken into account to explain the overall picture (Madorran, 2008). Furthermore, de Vries and van Kersbergen (2007) suggest that the two issues of national self-interest and identity should not be viewed as mutually exclusive concepts and are instead two sides of the same coin; both economic and psychosocial wellbeing are fundamental aspects of quality of life, therefore the perception of threats to either are likely to reduce support for European integration.

3.4 The Social Construction of Europe

Towards the end of the last millennium social constructionists began arguing that the role of discourse in the construction of notions of “Europe” and “European-ness” was a neglected issue (Christiansen, Jørgensen & Weiner, 1999). Seeking to highlight the need to close this gap, Diez (1999) argues that various attempts to define Europe and more specifically the EU are not merely neutral descriptive acts, but in fact have a major role in the construction of the entities themselves.

Schmitter (1996) suggests that considering some of the various terms used in the process of institutionalising Europe can shed light on the complexities within the integration process. He firstly identifies a language of “Euro-speak” which he says is a way of discussing integration
that is barely comprehensible to the general public, instead being a political language that has changed over time as various versions of an integrated European entity have become more or less fashionable. For instance, it is argued that the term “United States of Europe” (Reid, 2004), indicates a mirroring of the US model, in which a federation of states is created within a single nation, whilst the term "supranational organisation" (Schmitter, 1996) indicates the maintenance of national sovereignty with the addition of a super-ordinate entity that has power to govern through being democratically constituted. Alternatively, the notion of “multi-level governance” (Christiansen, Jorgensen & Weiner, 1999) indicates several layers of decision-making bodies that might have different spheres of influence on local, regional, national and international bases. Schmitter’s (1996) argument is that these terms might appear to the uninitiated to be interchangeable, but in fact they reveal much about the underlying assumptions that govern the power relations between the different stakeholders.

Diez (1999) suggests several main benefits of considering the role of language in shaping the varying perspectives on European integration. Firstly, European institutions do not exist separately from discourse, so an understanding of discourses would lead to a greater understanding of the institutions themselves. Secondly, the focus on European integration being based on a rationalist cost-benefit consideration might be challenged through an analysis of the unconscious assumptions within European power-relations and that discourse analysis allows for differing explanations of the differing desires, challenges and conflicts surrounding integration. Thus in considering the role of discourse, we can gain a greater understanding of the process of integration and Enlargement and also of the way that those of us who discuss these processes have a part to play in its construction, by the very way in which we use language.

3.5 National versus Supra-national Identity

According to a large Europe-wide survey (Eurobarometer, 2008), EU citizens identify much more strongly with their own country than with the EU; 91% of participants felt attachment to their nation-state and only 49% to the EU. Those identifying most strongly with the EU were Belgians (65%) and Poles (63%), whilst those with the lowest level of EU identification were geographically diverse: Finland (27%), the UK (27%) and Cyprus (25%). Low levels of identification were demonstrated amongst both founding countries, such as the Netherlands (32%), and New Member States, such as Estonia (34%).

Carey (2002) empirically explored the relationship between national identity and support for the EU at the level of the individual and at state level. He found that across the EU, a sense
of “national pride” had a negative relationship to support for the EU. Thus individuals who mistrusted their national institutions and had a low level of satisfaction with their nation state had more positive perceptions of the EU. This is explained by the suggestion that those with low trust at a national level look to a supranational level to provide guidance and support that they feel their own country lacks. Meanwhile, support for the EU is also negatively correlated with national identity; across the EU, individuals that are more attached to their own country are less likely to view membership of the EU in a positive light. There are interesting findings surrounding the relationship between sub-national regional identity and support for the EU; Carey chose to explore the situation in the UK in particular detail given the reasonably well differentiated regional identities of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Findings suggested that people who identify as Scottish, Welsh, Irish or Northern Irish were more likely to view membership of the EU in a positive light. However, those identifying as English, are less likely to support the EU than those with a regional identity. Carey (2002) posits that the English perceive membership of the EU as detrimental to their identity, whilst those with a regional identity view EU membership as a means of protecting or even enhancing their identity.

Hooghe and Marks (2004) have extended the work of Carey outlined above and demonstrated that there is a difference between those with exclusive versus inclusive national identities and support for the EU. An exclusive national identity is defined as one in which the individual identifies solely with their nation-state as opposed to their region or any supra-national identity. Meanwhile, those with an inclusive national identity allow for attachment to multiple geographical territories. Findings suggest that those with an inclusive national identity, for instance individuals who identify as Belgian and Flemish, Catalan and Spanish, Scottish and British, are much more likely to support European integration. Where individuals hold an exclusive national identity, support for the EU is much lower. However, there is variation in the degree to which even those with an exclusive national identity support the EU. For instance, Portuguese nationalists are more likely to support the EU than English or British nationalists; Risse (2006) explains this by suggesting that for the Portuguese, their concept of their national identity already contains more of a sense of being “European” than that of the British.

Beck (2004) suggests that the early conceptions of the European idea were based on a dualistic logic of "us" versus "them"; "national" versus "international", in other words, the logic of "either-or". Later attempts at institutionalising Europe were founded on the more cosmopolitan logic of "both-and", in which power gained at a supra-national (i.e. European)
level does not result in a weaker nation-state. It is not difficult to see how the logic of “both-and” can allow for multiple cross-cutting identities that are not mutually exclusive. Thus one can be both Scottish and British, both British and European, both European and a non-EU member. As a consequence, one can also be both citizen (at a European level) and immigrant (at a state level). Therefore, by embracing the logic of “both-and”, we can speak of networks of realities and explore their complex interconnection without threatening any particular aspect of individual or collective identity (Burgess, 2008).

One of the main barriers to creating a supra-national European identity is the problem that although the official rhetoric of the EU Member States is one of valuing equality and diversity amongst Member States, the newer Member States are required to accept an inferior status in a number of key areas (Bickerton, 2007). Firstly, in the lead up to the 2004 Enlargement, the EU was perceived as having reneged on the scale of economic support that had been previously promised to the New Member States. Secondly, following Enlargement, the right to free movement throughout the EU without passport checks was not offered as a complete package; there were several states that continued to place restrictions on migration, employment opportunities and access to welfare support by nationals from New Member States. Another source of inequality is perceived in the approach to monetary union. For the established EU-15, adoption of the euro was optional – Sweden, Denmark and the UK currently do not use this currency. However, all of the newer Member States are required to adopt the euro and were given target dates to do so, regardless of whether this was of national economic benefit or not (Bickerton, 2007).

There would seem to be an ideological barrier to European integration in that the term “Eastern Europe” is still for many, synonymous with communism, despite its demise a couple of decades ago (Strath, 2002). In the pre-Cold War period, Western construction of the “East versus West” dichotomy presented Eastern Europe in a primarily negative light, with binary oppositions between capitalism and communism, democracy and dictatorship being emphasised. Although communism and Eastern dictatorships are no longer operational, it would appear that the East-West divide remains alive and well in the consciousness of many Europeans. Strath (2002) argues that whilst the West may view Eastern Europe as a homogenous body characterised by “otherness”, each Eastern country has in fact followed its own post-communist cultural development. She suggests that instead of viewing these countries as impoverished communist legacies, it is important to consider what the notion of “Europe” means within each of these countries from a unique national perspective.
Not only is it important to allow for the possibilities of differences between nations of conceptions and experience of Europe, it is important to consider that there might be gender differences in terms of experiencing Europeanisation too. Under communism the private sphere of the family was constructed as the location of resistance to state control (Sharpe, 2005). During the period of state control, the only place for open political discussion was the domestic sphere, which was thus positioned in opposition to the public space of the state. Whilst in the West, the domestic sphere has connotations of oppression and gender inequality for women, in the East, it is viewed as the location of freedom from state control (Pollert, 2003). Thus the opposition between domestic and state spheres has no parallel in Western Europe, where the binary opposition is between work and home and corresponds to male versus female spheres of influence.

The East-West differences in the positioning of social spheres have two major consequences. Firstly, whilst women’s ability to leave the domestic sphere and enter the world of work is a symbol of women’s emancipation and freedom of choice in the West, the same cannot be said for the perspectives within the former communist states (Sharpe, 2005). Under communism, working outside the home was an economic necessity not a “right” (Döllling, 1991). Furthermore, entering the workplace did not reduce women’s domestic burden; instead, the notion of the “worker-mother” contract was embedded in the gender identity of Eastern women (Metcalf & Afanassieva, 2005). Secondly, because the home was located as oppositional to the state, any challenges to family roles were necessarily viewed as collusion with the state (Sharpe, 2005). As a result, Eastern European women have rejected the language of gender equality because of its association with the rhetoric surrounding notions of equality that pervaded communist discourses. Thus, unlike many women’s movements in the West, women in post-communist nations are reluctant to demand state intervention and legislation in relation to domestic matters (Sharpe, 2005). Feminism is thus rejected on the basis that it is constructed as either leftist and therefore associated with the old regimes, or representative of unconditional acceptance of Western values.

Sharpe (2005) argues that Eastern women have additional complexities surrounding the potential development of a European identity in comparison to their male counterparts. Whilst the maintenance of national identity might in some way rely on the rejection of Western feminism on the aforementioned grounds, the endorsement of a European identity might rest on the ability to adopt the values inherent within Institutional policies surrounding gender equality. There is little evidence that these complexities are considered within either
the academic or political debates surrounding European Enlargement and the development of European identities.

One of the problems with identity research is that artefacts of study design can lead respondents to indicate a negative perception of a concept when in reality they simply find that concept irrelevant. The very act of being questioned about an issue can prompt individuals to “conjure up” a response when they actually have very little interest in the matter at all (Oppenheim, 2000). This may be seen in relation to the conclusions that are drawn as a result of low voter turnout for European Parliamentary elections. It has been suggested that low turnout might reflect a lack of interest in an integrated and/or institutionalised Europe; the lowest turnout to date was recorded in 2004, when only 45.6% of the electorate participated (Eurobarometer, 2008). However, there are confounding factors which might be disguising the bigger picture; there have been low voter turnouts in most forms of political elections in large parts of Europe over the last 20 years and this might indicate a decline in interest in politics in general, rather than a specific opposition to the European political project (Kaletsky, 2005).

Regardless of the underlying reasons, low levels of political engagement and personal attachment both present the EU with a problem of credibility. However, there is little agreement on how identification can be strengthened. Indeed it could be argued that the existence of the various institution-led attempts to generate consensus regarding European identity is a testament to the failure of normative social processes to generate this identity through the usual process of socialisation. It is tautological to suggest that identity is a social construct; it is formed through the process of socialisation in which dynamic social exchanges endorse the acceptance and rejection of various cultural components. It is important therefore to question the mechanisms by which each identity is constructed in order to understand the relative values placed on these component parts (see Chapter 2 for further information on the social processes involved in identity formation). Of course, sharing a culture may not indicate consensus of values; it may simply imply a commonality of historical, and an acknowledgement of current cultural components, without endorsement of either.

Despite the problems inherent in identity research, it is still surprising that there is such a lack of enquiry into comparative experiences and conceptions of identity in Europe particularly given that men and women from differing regions might have different relationships with and perspectives on national and international identities. It should be said
that in this post-Enlargement era, new combinations of Member States have been brought together within the aforementioned different “layers” of Europe and this provides an interesting foundation for the exploration of the roles of gender and nationality in shaping conceptions of and relationships with “Europe”.

3.6 Language and Identity in Europe

It may be argued that the lack of a specifically European identity is precisely because individuals do not perceive the possibility of “both-and” in terms of embracing both national and supra-national identities. Acknowledging the fear of losing national identity, there has been a recent attempt within the European institutions to emphasize the need for a community that is “united in diversity” (Athanassopoulu, 2008). Given that language is one of the primary means of cultural differentiation (Kraus, 2008), the emphasis on respecting cultural diversity within the various European institutions must mean respect for linguistic diversity also. The scale of the challenge of preserving linguistic identity whilst facilitating communication across Europe can be understood when the linguistic diversity of Europe is considered in detail. There are 41 European mother-tongue languages spoken in Europe, which does not include the vast array of local dialects (CoE, 011). In addition, there are sizeable minority groups within some European countries whose mother-tongue is a language from outside of Europe, such as Arabic in France and Kurdish in Germany; the UK is cited as the nation with the widest range of mother-tongue languages, some of the most established of which are Bengali, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujarati and Cantonese (BBC, 2011).

Within the EU, there are 23 officially recognised languages and a Europe-wide survey in 2006 suggested that 56% of citizens in the Member States are able to speak a second language well enough to hold a conversation in at least one other language apart from their mother tongue (Eurobarometer, 2006). This figure represents a 9% increase since a similar survey in 2001; however, this masks the likelihood that that communication amongst multinational groups would still be a challenge due to the lack of a language in common. According to this survey, the language that is most widely known apart from the mother-tongue is English, with 38% of EU citizens stating that they have sufficient skills in English as a foreign language to hold a conversion. In 19 out of 29 countries polled, English is the most widely learned language apart from the mother tongue. When combined with figures for those speaking English as a mother-tongue, it may be estimated that 51% of the EU population speak English either as their mother tongue or as a foreign language. However, there are still countries within which the majority of their citizens speak no other language than their mother-tongue; indeed, there are six Member States where the majority of citizens
fall into this category: Republic of Ireland (66%), the UK (62%), Italy (59%), Hungary (58%), Portugal (58%) and Spain (56%).

It should be noted that there is an anomaly with respect to languages used in the EU; in Latvia and Estonia a significant proportion of citizens speak Russian as their mother-tongue (26% and 17% respectively), due to their geographical positions and historical association with the former USSR. Russian is also spoken widely in Slavic countries such as Poland, Czech Republic, and Bulgaria, resulting in the situation in which Russian is the 5th most commonly spoken language in the EU, but is not actually an official language as Russia itself is not part of the EU. The notion of “official status” for languages might largely be viewed as a piece of bureaucracy that has little relevance to ordinary citizens. The “official status” simply bestows two rights. The first is that documents may be sent to EU institutions and a reply received in any of these languages and the second is that EU regulations and other legislative documents are published in the official and working languages (Europa, 2011). However, “official status” has symbolic power; bestowing the seal of approval by a supranational organisation constructs a sense of socio-political legitimacy surrounding the official languages and conveys a message about the relative importance of languages according to the authorities. Kraus (2008) emphasises that respect for the mother-tongue is not about preservation of the language itself, but a means of recognising the legitimacy of diverse linguistic communities and the individual speakers therein.

It may be said that language has both expressive and instrumental components (Kraus, 2008). Instrumentally language allows information exchange which is the backbone of social bonds and employment opportunities and this is the means by which individuals and communities can develop social capital and economic stability. As a means of communication, our competence with language ties us to a specific cultural community – i.e. that community that shares that particular language (Kraus, 2008). Support networks are formed via language as a means of communication; employment likewise generally relies on a shared language. Our life-chances rely to a large extent on our competence with language. And since the opportunity to learn non-mother-tongue languages is limited, “the right to use our mother tongue in as many social domains as possible has an instrumental character” (Kraus, 2008, p78).

As an expressive dimension, language makes a fundamental contribution to how we develop our self-concept and our understanding of others (Kraus, 2008). Language evolves with use; humans, as active participants, create and develop the language we need for self-
expression and communication – we cannot understand what we cannot name – the naming of objects and concepts becomes the vehicle by which we educate ourselves and each other (Vygotsky, 1978). It follows then that the use of language might differ from culture to culture – meaning cannot always be neatly translated from one language to another by simply converting word-for-word. The expressive dimension of language embeds social norms and temporal priorities within it and according to Kraus (2008) “learning a new language is equivalent to acquiring a new standpoint from which to view the world” (p79).

Furthermore, Gergen and Thatchenkery (2004) suggest that language is not simply a reflection of our private observations or perceptions, but is a form of social action. They assert that any attempt to establish a single language, or reduce the array of languages, is “disastrous in implication”. To reduce diversity in ways of speaking would be to reduce the idioms, metaphors, accounts and expressions available, which would undermine the shared experiences of many communities.

In autumn 2007 the European Commission undertook an online consultation, inviting organisations and individuals to express their views about language learning and linguistic diversity, with the intention of developing a language policy to address citizens' needs as efficiently as possible. The results of the consultation were used to generate a group discussion amongst Commissioners, which concluded that an approach to multilingualism must be developed that is “entrenched in intercultural awareness and interaction” (Brotto, 2008). There was a general consensus that though international communication needed to be facilitated in order to maintain co-operation between nations, that individual national and sub-national languages should be valued and preserved. Furthermore, there was significant resistance to the possibility that English might become a “lingua franca”, or in other words, the common language of communication within Europe. It is interesting that the main objection offered was that increasing the international use of English would give more power to the US, as the most powerful English-speaking nation (Brotto, 2008).

Brotto (2008) outlines the fundamental issue of the debate to be a matter of “voice” and how to facilitate and endorse value of that voice. In relation to this, four main factors were identified. These have been outlined as:

1. **Entitlement to voice.** Exercising voice is not just a case of having the linguistic tools to express oneself effectively; it is more a perception of social entitlement to have and express a voice that feels authentic. It is suggested that the sense of legitimacy
of voice might be even more significant for migrants, or speakers of minority or regional languages;

2. *Enablement of voice.* It should be a fundamental right to have adequate access to language-learning opportunities, resources and tools;

3. *Self-empowerment and development of voice.* Individuals and communities should be enabled to widen the domains in which they are confident in expressing themselves, through engaging in intercultural experiences, social inclusion and employment opportunities.

4. *Engagement and contribution through voice.* Active citizenship and participation in intercultural dialogue should be facilitated for both individuals and communities on the basis that this will enable “the building of social capital out of human capital”.

It may be argued that the expressive and instrumental dimensions of language serve to reinforce each other. Where the importance of being able to communicate in one's mother-tongue is recognised, national policies have helped to preserve languages previously in decline – this in itself has increased the instrumental aspect of such languages. For instance, the emphasis on preserving the Welsh language has resulted in the increased use of that language in educational, healthcare, social and transport networks (WLS, 2011). Likewise, the practical application of language entitles communities to have a voice and express themselves in an authentic manner. However, in multilingual communities the need for both the instrumental and expressive dimensions of language is met by conflict.

A dramatic example of this is the train crash in Belgium in 2001 where 8 people died due to a lack of a common language between signalmen at adjacent stations. The crash occurred when a train driver failed to stop at a red light and the train then collided with an oncoming passenger train. Attempts to contact the driver who had failed to stop had been hampered by the fact that signalmen at stations either side of the track where the crash occurred could not understand each other. Both French and Flemish are official languages in Belgium and the signalmen were not obliged to speak both. Officials subsequently admitted that if the two had been able to communicate, the accident might have been avoided (BBC, 2001).

Whilst the above is an extreme situation, it does highlight the tension between the functionality of language and the need for authenticity of expression. I am suggesting here that the need to explore and understand this tension is increasingly important in this post-Enlargement era as hitherto disparate nations are being increasingly required to
communicate and co-operate. Thus there is a need for research into the competing needs of intercultural communication and the maintenance of separate cultural identities.

3.7 The Development of European Institutions

Outlined below is the historical development of the Council of Europe and the European Union. The details are presented in terms of key dates and events that have shaped the process of development of each institution and as such, have been gathered variously from the official websites of each organisation (www.coe.int and www.europa.eu respectively), supplemented by information from more independent online sources (www.historiasiglo20.org/europe/cronologia.htm and www.civitas.org.uk/eufacts/FSINST/IN7.htm).

The Council of Europe

The historical roots of an institutionalised Europe lie in the outcome of the Second World War. As Europe was segregated into East and West and the 40-year-long Cold War began, some European countries began talks about how such conflict and destruction could be minimised going forwards. The first European institution to be formed, the Council of Europe, was founded on 5 May 1949 by Belgium, Denmark, France, the Republic of Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Just three months later, Greece and Turkey, with Iceland and West Germany joining the next year. It currently has 47 Member States, with Montenegro being the newest member. The intention underpinning the founding of the CoE is stated in Chapter I of its Statute: “The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its Members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, and facilitating their economic and social progress.”

Article 4 of the Council of Europe Statute states that any "European" nation may apply for membership. From the outset there was a liberal interpretation of this statement (particularly with respect to the admission of Turkey) which included any Eurasian state with a connection within Europe. Consequently, 47 of the 50 European nations have joined the Council of Europe, the exceptions being Belarus (denied due to human rights concerns), Kazakhstan (denied due to human rights concerns and insufficient democratization) and Vatican City (which is a theocracy rather than a democracy). In addition to the status of full member, the Council of Europe has created other types of status for co-operation and participation of non-Member States: observer, applicant, special guest and partner for democracy.
The Council’s first sessions were held in Strasbourg, which subsequently became its permanent base. In 1950 the first major convention was drawn up, which was the European Convention on Human Rights; it came into force 3 years later and is still the guiding legislation to which European states are obliged to adhere regarding the human rights of their citizens.

Between its inception in 1949 and 1970, eight new countries joined the CoE: in order of accession these were Greece, Iceland, Turkey, Germany, Austria, Cyprus, Switzerland and Malta. During this period, the structure of the organisation was gradually established as well as a subset of institutions with specialised briefs. For instance, the first public hearing of the European Court of Human Rights took place in 1960. Then in 1961, the European Social Charter was signed in Rome, a document viewed by the Council as the social-domain equivalent to the European Convention on Human Rights. The Charter came into force in 1965 and is still in force today; it outlines 19 rights, including the right to strike and the right to social protection. However, it is not supported by such stringent legal imperatives as the Human Rights Convention.

The 20 years or so from the late 1960s to the late 1980s saw the Council of Europe deal with a number of political crises relating to transgressions by certain Member States. For instance, in 1967 the democratic government in Greece was overthrown and replaced by an authoritarian regime. This overtly contravened the principle of democracy advocated by the CoE. Anticipating the potential to be excluded from the Council, the new government in Greece announced its own withdrawal from the Council of Europe. Greece was not reinstated until 1974 when democracy returned to the nation. Furthermore, Turkey was excluded in 1981 for similar reasons, only returning when free elections resumed in 1984.

Another critical stage in the development of the Council of Europe began in early 1985 with the first attempts to introduce democracy to Central and Eastern Europe. At that time, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, instigated an extraordinary session on the relationship between Eastern and Western Europe. It is from this process of reflection that emerged a preoccupation with a European cultural identity; this became the subject of a resolution in April 1985. Acknowledging that “unity in diversity” was a founding principle of Europe, the Council of Europe declared that European identity did not stop at the boundaries between the various political systems and it stressed the advantage of promoting inter-cultural co-operation. This paved the way for expansion into Central and Eastern
Europe. As Eastern European countries began to embrace the principles of democracy and human rights, the CoE became a kind of “gateway to Europe”, in which nations hopeful of accession were supported in making the transition from dictatorship to democracy, as had previously been the case with Portugal and Spain.

More recently, the Council has revised its priorities and has refocused on matters relating to terrorism, organised crime, money laundering and human trafficking. Its sphere of responsibility also includes issues such as education, the environment, health and culture. It is funded by its Member States; each contribution is determined by relative wealth and population (see Table 3.2). The outcome of the calculations on the basis of the data presented in table is that the top five contributors are The Russian Federation, the largest contributor, followed by Germany, France, the UK and Italy.

Table 3.2. Basis for Member States Contributions to the CoE in 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
<th>GDP (US$ - Millions)</th>
<th>Population (Millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andorra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</td>
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### Member State GDP (US$ - Millions) Population (Millions)

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<th>Population</th>
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<td>Switzerland</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: CoE, 2006

**The European Union**

Following the creation of the Council of Europe in 1949, certain nations wanted deeper co-operation than was offered by the new institution. In 1950 six countries (Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg) signed a treaty to run their coal and steel industries under a common management, thus ensuring that none of these states could make weapons independently, thereby reducing the likelihood of war between these states.

Following the success of the co-operation brought about by the Coal and Steel Treaty, the same six nations decided to expand co-operation to other economic spheres. In signing the Treaty of Rome, the European Economic Community (EEC), or ‘common market’ was born; this enabled the free movement of individuals, goods and services across borders.

The UK, the Republic of Ireland and Denmark joined in the early 1970s and Greece became the 10th Member of the EU in 1981, with Spain and Portugal acceding five years later. In 1987 the “Single European Act” was signed; this is the treaty that created the “Single Market” allowing a free-flow of trade across EU borders. Not long after this (November 1989) a significant socio-political drama was created when the Berlin Wall was destroyed, leading to the reunification of East and West Germany. This event was fundamental to the diminution of communism across Central and Eastern Europe, facilitating greater co-operation between hitherto divided European neighbours.
In 1995 three new members, Austria, Finland and Sweden, acceded to the EU. In 1997 the “Schengen” agreement was incorporated into EU law. This agreement was first signed by a small number of EU countries in 1985 in a small village called Schengen in Luxembourg and allowed individuals to travel within the “common travel area” without passport checks at the national borders. It did not have widespread endorsement until 1997, by which time, 25 of the 27 Member States had signed the agreement; only the Republic of Ireland and the UK remain non-signatories.

On 1st January 1999 there was the international launch of the euro as an accounting currency, although euro coins and banknotes were not introduced until 1 January 2002. 17 of the 27 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, the Republic of Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain) now use the euro and they collectively form what is termed the “eurozone”. The euro is also the currency used by a further 6 European countries (Montenegro, Andorra, Monaco, San Marino, Kosovo and Vatican City) and is consequently used daily by some 327 million Europeans.

Eastern European nations made a major impact on the EU in 2004 when eight Eastern nations (Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia) were granted accession. Cyprus and Malta also joined the EU at the same time. In 2007 the 25 EU countries signed a Treaty establishing a European Constitution, which was intended to make democratic decision-making and management more efficient in the EU. However, in order to come into force the Treaty had to be ratified by all 25 countries; in 2005, citizens in both France and the Netherlands voted ‘No’ to the Constitution in national referendums. As these had been the countries thought to be most supportive of the Treaty, EU leaders put the plans to introduce a constitution on hold and announced a "period of reflection". On the 1st January 2007, two more Eastern European nations, Bulgaria and Romania acceded to the EU, bringing the total number of Member States to 27. Like the CoE, the EU is funded by contributions from its Member States, with contributions again being based on size of GPD and population (see Table 3.3). It may be seen that Germany, France, Italy, and the UK are the only countries contributing more than 100 billion euro, with Spain being the fifth largest contributor with 76 billion euro.

Table 3.3. Estimated EU Budget* 2007–2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Estimated EU Budget* 2007–2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>&gt;100 billion euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>&gt;100 billion euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>&gt;100 billion euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>&gt;100 billion euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>76 billion euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member State</td>
<td>Money to EU (€ billions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. of Ireland</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Open Europe (2007)

Regarding the potential EU membership of new states, any "European state" can apply to accede, although in acknowledgement of the aforementioned confusion about the definition of "Europe", European borders remain undefined in the EU Treaties (Article 49, TEU). The requirements for accession are that states must have stable and democratic institutions, a functioning market economy and adequate administrative structures. They must also accept the aims and principles of the EU. These criteria were drawn up in 1993 by the European Council in Copenhagen and are consequently often referred to as the ‘Copenhagen criteria’.

**Relationship between the CoE and EU**
“The Council of Europe and the European Union were products of the same idea, the same spirit and the same ambition. They mobilised the energy and commitment of the same founding fathers of Europe. Both the Council and the Union adopted as their watchword the maxim coined by Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi between the wars: ‘A divided Europe leads to war, oppression and hardship; a united Europe leads to peace and prosperity’.”

(Junker, 2006)

The official line about the relationship between the European Union and the Council of Europe is that they work together in areas such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law, intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity in European countries (Junker, 2006). The framework for the relationship between the two bodies was defined during several exchanges of letters between the two organisations, beginning in 1992. Joint activities are developed and reviewed formally at twice-yearly meetings between the EU Presidency, the European Commission, the Chairman and Secretary General of the Council of Europe. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2007 confirming that guidelines laid down by the Council of Europe from the European benchmark for human rights, democracy and the rule of law; it also addresses the need for consistency between the two institutions in these areas.

However, there are those that point to flaws in the relationship between the EU and CoE. For instance, it was argued that the very need for an agreement to increase the legal consistency and congruence surrounding human rights actually highlighted the differences between these institutions and served to increase the confusion surrounding “European” norms and practices (BBC, 2010). Whilst the EU has traditionally been more focused on economic concerns and trade between Member States, its more recent focus on anti-racism and human rights abuses has led to the criticism that this work overlaps with that of the CoE, making the CoE a redundant organisation. Even a Secretary-General has described the work of the CoE as "low key and gentle; it does not make headlines" (BBC, 2010). Critics accuse the Council of being merely a” talking shop" on the grounds that though it may apply diplomatic pressure to achieve its goals, it has no legal power or standing with which to enforce its principles.

On the global stage, the CoE is viewed as relatively insignificant compared to the EU, with its views carrying relatively little weight in other continents (Lithander, 2003). This perception, together with the less stringent accession requirements of the CoE compared to the EU, might account for the relative differences in public interest regarding membership of
these two institutions. Whilst there will always be those who view any connection with a European institution as undesirable (Madorran, 2008), there is considerably more debate at national and sub-national level about the benefits and threats of belonging to the EU than the CoE. Membership of the EU is evaluated in terms of national economic outcomes and personal and collective identity, either of which might be threatened or enhanced as a result of European integration. Given that 47 of the 50 European nations are now part of the CoE, I suggest that the impact on identity of membership is almost neutralised, since to be a CoE Member State is practically tantamount to belonging to the more geographical entity designated as the continent called “Europe”.

As two of the most well recognised faces of Europe, the EU and the CoE have undoubtedly undergone a period of significant change in the last two decades, with increasing numbers of Southern and Eastern European nations being given opportunities to participate in the official European bodies. At this crucial time of increasing European participation it is vital that equality of opportunity between New and Established Member States is addressed. Given the newness of the political landscape it is unsurprising that this is an area which is currently under-represented in academic research. As a unique opportunity to fill a particular gap in diversity research, this study facilitates a comparison of the day-to-day workplace experiences of men and women from New versus Established Member States from within the secretariats of both the Council of Europe and the European Parliament (the latter being one of the principal administrative bodies of the EU).

3.8 Profile of the Participating Organisations: The Secretariats of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament.
This research focuses on experiences of staff within the secretariats (administrative bodies) of the European Parliament (EP) and the Council of Europe (CoE). Both organisations are committed to representing their Member States through their parliamentary and secretariat personnel. Therefore, access to the secretariats off these organisations in this post-Enlargement era provides a unique opportunity to examine the day-to-day experiences of male and female employees from the widest possible range of European nations.
The Secretariat of the CoE: Organisational Profile*

*information is relevant to the point of data collection (2007) unless otherwise stated

The Secretariat General of the Council of Europe is located in Strasbourg and is divided into 10 directorates. It is headed by the Secretary General who is currently Thorbjørn Jagland of Norway, whose term of office is September 1st 2009 until August 31st 2014. The Secretary General at the time of the data collection in this study (2007) was Terry Davis whose term of office was September 1st 2004 to August 31st 2009.

The Secretariat employs around 1800 staff on permanent contracts with a further 600 or so on temporary contracts. Of the permanent staff, 65% are women. Of the temporary staff, 75% are women; of those on part-time contracts, 92% are women. There is also evidence of a gender pyramid of staff distribution in the Organisation; 80% of those in administrative assistant posts are women, whilst only 40% of those in management posts are women. Meanwhile, if management posts are explored further, it may be seen that those in the lowest management positions are 41% female, whilst the proportion of women in middle management posts is 22% and likewise, the proportion of those in upper management posts is also 22% female.

The CoE is committed to representing its 47 Member States (46 at the time of data collection) through its Secretariat personnel. This means that with each new state acceding to the CoE, a round of recruitment takes place to recruit employees from the acceded state. The working languages of the Secretariat of CoE are French and English, with all staff, regardless of nationality, are required to be fluent speakers of one of these languages and have a working knowledge of the other. However, the Europe-wide activities of the organisation require the translation unit to employ individuals with a wide range of mother-tongue languages from across Europe.

The most senior post in the CoE is that of the Secretary General. The post holder has an overarching responsibility for the CoEs budget, the strategic development and operation of its activity programme and the functioning of the Organisation and Secretariat. Of the 13 Secretaries General (SsG) to date, all but one have been male, and all have been nationals from Established (Western) Member States. The nations most frequently represented in this post are France and Austria (3 post holders each), followed by the UK (2 post holders). The remaining SsG were nationals of Italy, Germany, Spain, Norway and Sweden.
The Secretariat of the EP: Organisational Profile*

*information is relevant to the point of data collection (2007) unless otherwise stated

The location of the Secretariat General of the European Parliament split between its primary administrative seat in Luxembourg City and its political supporting seat in the centre of Brussels. It is headed by the Secretary General who is currently Klaus Welle of Germany, who was appointed in 2009. During the period of data collection in this study (2007) the post of the Secretary General was undergoing transition from Julian Priestley of the UK (in post 1997 to 2007) to Harald Rømer of Denmark (in post from 2007 to 2009).

Like the Secretariat of the CoE, the EP Secretariat is divided into 10 Directorates General; it employs over 2600 staff on permanent contracts with a further 540 or so on temporary contracts. Of the permanent staff, the portion of all posts held by women is 57%. Of the temporary staff, 79% are women; of those on permanent contracts the proportion choosing to work part-time are 83% women. In a similar vein to the situation in the CoE, there is a gender pyramid of staff distribution in the EP; 62% of those in administrative assistant posts are women, whilst 50% of those in management posts are women. Meanwhile, the gender pyramid becomes more pronounced when management posts are explored further; it may be seen that 41% of those in the lowest management positions are female, whilst the proportion of women in middle management posts is 20% and the proportion of women in upper management posts is 24%.

The EP is committed to representing the 27 EU Member States (25 at the time of data collection) through the personnel of its Secretariat. Just as was the case with the CoE, each round of Enlargement has required a recruitment drive to appoint employees from the newly acceded states. The working languages of the Secretariat of CoE are officially French, English and German, but there is great emphasis on all staff, being required to be fluent speakers of either French or English – the use of German is gradually being resigned to a peripheral role in the day-to-day operation of the EP. However, the EU policies surrounding the notion of “official languages” (of which there have been 23 since Bulgarian was accepted as an official language in January 2007), required the Secretariat of the EP to employ translators with mother-tongue status in each of these languages.

Like the CoE, the most senior post in the EP is that of the Secretary General. The post-holder maintains responsibility for assisting the President and MEPs of the Parliament and also manages the day-to-day running of EP business and oversees reports for budget
estimates. The Secretary General, alongside the EP President, has to sign all acts adopted by the Parliament and Council of the European Union. Since the post was established in 1958, all of the SGs have been male, and all have been nationals from Established (Western) Member States.

3.9 Chapter Summary
This chapter has discussed the various complexities surrounding the notion of Europe, from geographical anomalies to its various historical, political and sociological conceptions. The tensions between national and “European” identity have been discussed and the role of language in relation to identity and the construction of notions of “European-ness” have been explored. The literature reviewed in this chapter is integrated with the literature from Chapter One to form the basis of the research questions that are outlined in the next chapter. The research framework for the current study is illustrated in Figure 3.2 below.
The following chapter presents the research questions alongside an introduction to social constructionism, as the philosophical foundation of the research. The research design, methodological rational and research process will all be presented.
Chapter 4
Method

4.1 Introduction
Presented here are the overall objectives of the research, followed by an explanation of the specific research questions driving the conceptualisation of this study. The methodological rationale will then be explored, including the philosophical and epistemological assumptions that form the foundation of the research enquiry. There will then be an exposition of the research design, which will include a detailed account of the operation of each phase of the research process, including sampling methods, participants, materials and procedures. It should be noted that all phases of this research were conducted in accordance with the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (2006).

4.2 Research Objectives
Based on the extensive literature reviews presented in Chapters 1 and 2, three primary research objectives were developed as follows:

**Research Objective 1:** To explore the ways in which gender and nationality affect working lives of employees of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in Post-Enlargement Europe.

At this crucial time of increasing European participation it is vital that equality of opportunity between New and Established Member States is addressed. Given the newness of the political landscape it is unsurprising that this is an area which is currently under-represented in academic research. As a unique opportunity to fill a particular gap in diversity research, this study facilitates a comparison of foreign nationals from New versus Established Member States in terms of organisational integration and inclusion.

If the exploration of the role of European nationality in the workplace is a neglected area, the same cannot be said for the study of gender equality at work. Research on the latter topic has a long and established history, including the phenomenon of women’s increasing participation in the workplace, as well as areas of persistent inequality, such as the gender segregation of work, the pay disparity between men and women, differential take-up of flexible working and the “glass ceiling” effect.
The present study utilises established research findings regarding gender equality (these are previously discussed in Chapter 2, for example, Brief, 2005; Davidson & Burke, 2004) as a basis for exploring the potential for different organisational experiences between men and women of different European nationalities.

**Research Objective 2:** To explore the relationship between public communications of the International Civil Service and the internal organisational experiences of its employees, in relation to European Enlargement.

The culture and climate of an organisation are necessarily social constructions, that is, they are constructed through the social practices, interconnections and divisions within the organisation itself. Culture is defined as a set of shared norms and values (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006) whilst climate is a similar concept but said to be more transient in nature. An organisation may have its own "micro climate", in which shared norms and values deviate in some way from those found in society at large, or alternatively, organisational culture may merely replicate and endorse those norms and values that are more widely held.

The European Parliament and the Council of Europe are two internationally renowned organisations sharing a common goal of progressing human rights action and social cohesion within their respective Member States. These aims feature significantly in the publically expressed accounts of the international-level work of the two organisations. However, from an internal-workforce perspective, in order to maintain staff engagement and workplace satisfaction, it is important to guard against any discrepancy between "espoused values" and "values in use" (Schein, 1992). Where the reputation of an organisation raises expectations of a high level of inclusivity and respect for diversity, should these expectations subsequently not be met, individual and organisational-level outcomes are likely to be more negative than they would have been had a lower level of expectation been created (Chrobot-Mason, 2003).

At this critical point in European history, this research aims to compare the way in which European Enlargement is discussed in the public arena by official representatives of the EP and CoE and how this might relate to individual and collective experiences within the organisation’s own workforce.
Research Objective 3: To explore the organisational and individual implications of Enlargement.

Since Enlargement has increased the possibilities for transnational working amongst nationals from the largest pool of nations to date it could be argued that this presents a hitherto unexplored challenge to the management of diversity in organisations within the regions of both the European Union and Council of Europe. This research aims to offer an insight into the implications of Enlargement for both organisations and employees, for the purpose of minimising the potential for negative outcomes and maximising the likelihood that the more positive outcomes of effective diversity management can be achieved.

Research Questions

1. How do gender and nationality affect the working lives of employees within the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in the post-Enlargement era?
2. What are the underlying assumptions and values about European Enlargement that are conveyed within public communications by representatives of the EP and the CoE?
3. What is the relationship between the public communications of the organisations and the internal organisational experiences of employees, with respect to Enlargement?

4.3 Methodological Rationale

Philosophical Foundations of the Research

Traditional scientific research is rooted in a positivist philosophy, which decrees that an objectively verifiable “truth” exists and it is the responsibility of scientists to expose and explore such “truths”. Psychology, as a social science, has struggled to gain acceptance as a scientific discipline primarily because it relies on a measure of interpretation of realities; the very term “interpretation” is a departure from traditional scientific tenets such as reliability and validity as it implies a level of subjectivity. Not only is subjectivity itself antithetical to traditional scientific enquiry, but the concept of subjectivity invokes a significant “other” – i.e. the psychologist, the investigator, the “interpreter”, who brings their own subjective realities to the process of enquiry and therefore has a role to play, not only in choosing what questions to ask, but also in constructing, interpreting and presenting the results of such enquiry. Natural scientists typically deny that the role of the researcher plays a part in creating the output of enquiry, emphasising objectivity and replicability in research as
fundamental components, suggesting that any researcher following the same procedure would obtain the same findings and reach the same conclusions.

Within the current research context and an exploration of the experiences employees of different nationalities and different genders, it is difficult to omit my own personal experiences, values and interests from this line of enquiry. Indeed it could be argued that these personal factors have had a very large impact on the research process and therefore should be acknowledged and explored as independent variables affecting the research output:

‘To make unexamined metatheoretical commitments, and remain unaware of their origins, amounts to an abdication of intellectual responsibility which results in poor research practices’ (Johnson & Duberley, 2003).

The practice of reflexivity enables researchers to achieve this, by critically evaluating our own work in terms of why and how we formulate our research questions, specify the data to collect, select our analytical techniques and form particular conclusions and recommendations. A commitment to reflexivity requires us to reflect on our own practice and its underlying assumptions for the purpose of better understanding the research output.

It is important to acknowledge that a commitment to reflexive practice is not necessarily a corollary of a commitment to any particular epistemological perspective (Johnson & Duberley, 2003); indeed, it could be argued that even research conducted from a positivist standpoint would benefit from exploration of the researcher as an additional variable that warrants consideration. However, if the importance of reflexivity is recognised, it does imply an acceptance of constructionism and social processes in research.

Constructionism is a theory of learning and understanding that is based on an assumption that individuals make sense of the world around them by constructing mental models and forming associations, conjunctions and disjunctions based on their own perceptions (Papert & Harel, 1991). Thus a researcher makes sense of their data by constructing mental models of the relationships between the variables under scrutiny and these models are in part generated by previously held views and value systems of the individual conducting the enquiry.
It is also important to acknowledge social processes in research, particularly where there is direct contact between researcher and participants. Researcher effects have long been acknowledged; evaluation of the “Hawthorne Effect” and “demand effects”, in which participants change their behaviour simply because they are being observed, continue today (e.g. Kohli et al., 2009).

Acknowledgement of the need for reflexivity, the role of the researcher in constructing meaning and the social processes involved in research, leads to consideration of a social constructionist epistemology as the philosophical foundation of the current study.

Social constructionism suggests that the social nature of the self cannot be ignored when considering personal attitudes and behaviour, since the means by which the self develops is socialisation, a process that necessarily involves the inculcation of values and beliefs that have historical and cultural significance. This epistemological perspective suggests that the psychology of individual identity and motivation is intrinsically enmeshed with collective assumptions and beliefs (Wetherell & Maybin, 2002). Whilst a positivist construction of the individual emphasises personal autonomy and agency and the unitary nature of the self, the socially constructed self is said to be contextual, relational and continually evolving. That individuals develop a sense of their own identity by relating to significant others is a long established principle of psychological development, supported by well recognised theories including Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986) and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (Brewer, 1993) amongst others.

Despite the linguistically unitary nature of the word “organisation”, an organisation is in fact comprised of individuals that interact within and across groups; meanwhile, the groups themselves are constantly evolving in terms of their membership and their constituent knowledge and skills base (Cassell & Symon, 2006). On this basis, approaching organisational research from a social constructionist viewpoint enables the researcher to expose the implicit organisational values that help to form and either maintain or challenge power structures in the workplace.

The role of language is an important feature of social constructionism. Communication, by definition, is a social process that is a vehicle for both the creation of meaning and the reflection of meaning (van Dijk, 2006). Language and discourse are amongst the means through which we are socialised and they therefore inform our understanding of ourselves in social contexts; they are also the means through which we present ourselves and thereby
construct our own internal and external representations of ourselves (Vygotsky, 1978). By exploring the use of language in social exchange, it is possible to explore collective assumptions underpinning the cultural values that inform individual attitudes and behaviour. On this basis, three different forms of language exchange (interviews, focus groups and written texts) have been selected for exploration in light of the research questions.

In summary then, it should be said that a social constructionist epistemology informed the selection of the methods for both data collection and analysis and I am committed to maintaining an awareness of my own influence on the development of the research project and remaining reflexive throughout the reporting of the process.

4.4 Research Design
Qualitative methods are used throughout the research process as they are entirely appropriate for an in-depth exploration of the contextual complexities surrounding the current research questions and are in keeping with a social constructionist philosophy (Parker, 1996).

In order to address the research questions, three separate studies were conceived each using different qualitative methods of data collection; the details of these are outlined below and displayed in Figure 4.1. It should be noted that Studies 1 and 2 are sequentially linked (Cresswell, 2003) in that the findings from the analysis of Study 1 data were used in the construction of the Study 2 investigation. Study 3 was designed separately.
Figure 4.1
Research Methodology

Preliminary Research
Literature review & initial visit to participating organisations; document inspection & familiarisation with organisational structure & processes

Study 1
Preparation of interview questions based on literature review & organisational knowledge to date.

Semi-structured interviews with key staff.
(n = 20)

Thematic analysis of interview data; use of findings to create discussion topics for focus groups.

Study 2
22 Focus groups
total n = 88

Thematic analysis of focus group data.

Themes subjected to matrix analysis in order to reduce data & facilitate between-group comparisons.

Study 3
Identification of 2 publicly available texts (one relating to each participating organisation)

Discourse analysis of texts

Study Interface: –
Combining the findings of all three studies
4.5 Study 1 – Semi Structured Interviews

In order to begin the exploration of each organisational context, semi-structured interviews were selected as the most appropriate method. This decision was based on the view that the semi-structured nature of the process permits the researcher to guide the course of the interview, whilst also allowing the respondent considerable freedom of expression (Robson, 2002). The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour and the participants were senior managers and key Human Resource staff from the participating organisations.

Sampling and Participants.

The research was supported by the Heads of the Equal Opportunities Units (HoEOU) in each organisation. During preliminary discussions with these individuals regarding the scope and nature of the research, their expectations regarding their involvement in the project were discussed at length. Particularly relevant here are their views regarding their position with respect to the recruitment of participants. Both individuals were of the opinion that should I wish to interview high ranking officers that this would only be achieved through a personal contact from them, demonstrating that the research had the full support of the Equal Opportunities Units in each case. We discussed the consequences of this approach for the research process and the following factors were identified:

- The identity of individuals agreeing or refusing to participate would be known to the HoEOU in each organisation.
- Agreement or refusal to participate might be influenced by the relationship between the individual approached and the HoEOU.
- An informal and personal approach involves fewer boundaries surrounding the information given about the research; each HoEOU would inevitably convey their own interpretation of the research which might influence a) agreement or refusal to participate and b) participants subsequent responses to questions at the actual interview stage.

The obvious alternative, a direct approach from me as an unknown researcher, would likely be less successful in terms of recruitment of high-ranking participants. Therefore, a compromise was agreed that in some way attempted to address the above concerns. I prepared some information about the study that the HoEOU could give to potential participants; the HoEOU would approach potential participants informally as they had suggested, but instead of seeking agreement to participate, they sought “in-principle” agreement that I could approach them subsequently to discuss whether or not they would be prepared to participate. In order to adhere to the principle of inclusivity, they agreed to
approach all individuals holding posts in the given grades provided they were going to be physically present in the organisation at the allocated time of data collection. In reality, all of the people approached by the HoEOU in each organisation gave permission for me to make contact with them; the only subsequent barrier I encountered to obtaining agreement was a practical matter of mutual availability for interview. Due to the location of the organisations (mainland Europe) relative to my own location of residence (North of England) interviews were arranged for two separate periods in November 2006. This time-restriction led to some individuals being unable to participate.

The possibility of conducting telephone interviews was considered, however previous experience of interviewing individuals on the matters relating to diversity has led to the realisation that this is a potentially sensitive topic and under these circumstances it is vital to maintain connection with the interviewee as fully as possible, which includes relating to body language and eye contact. On this basis, the decision was made to interview only those who were available for face-to-face interviews during the specified time period.

Interview participant numbers are indicated in Table 4.1. Due to the fact that there are very few people in each organisation at this senior level, precise details about nationality and job-role are not attributed to individual contributors as this would seriously compromise anonymity and might have deterred participation. Suffice it to say that most, but not all, of the participants from each organisation were from Established Member States and this is a reflection of the relative numbers of individuals from New versus Established Member States that hold high ranking roles in the organisations.

The mean age of participants and the mean length of service were both calculated. The fact of being a parent or not is also noted in order to contextualise different experiences of raising a family whilst working. However, as previously mentioned, the small number of employees in the relevant roles here means that precise demographic information cannot be linked to individual interviewees without compromising anonymity; therefore the details are presented in a somewhat collective manner in Table 4.1. It should also be mentioned that there are slightly more women than men in the sample (female n = 11; male n = 9) and males in the CoE are somewhat under-represented. Though equal numbers of men and women in each organisation were invited to take part, the numbers interviewed reflected the availability of the individual participants during the interview period. Therefore, given that women are under-represented in the upper echelons of the hierarchy in both organisations, there is a disproportionate number of women in the sample. This might lead to an over emphasis on
the perspective of females in the findings, and it is also possible that the male perspective from the CoE might not be represented as fully as that of the other participants.

Table 4.1. Interview participants’ demographic information†

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EP Senior Managers (n = 11)</th>
<th>CoE Senior Managers (n = 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR professionals (n = 2)</td>
<td>HR professionals (n = 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 6</td>
<td>Parent*: 4/6</td>
<td>Parent*: 4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age:</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Mean Age: 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(range: 35-58)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(range: 44-58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean length of tenure:</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>Mean length of tenure:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(range: 5 - 18)</td>
<td>14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(range 3 - 24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent*:</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>Parent*: 2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age:</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Mean Age: 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(range: 40-59)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(range: **)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean length of tenure:</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>Mean length of tenure:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(range 8 - 25)</td>
<td>17 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(range: **)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† As previously mentioned, specific details about the participants national identity is omitted in order to preserve anonymity.
*Parent refers to the fact that the interviewee has or has had dependent children during their working life, regardless of whether the off-spring are now adult and independent.
** This data is deliberately omitted in order to preserve anonymity of interview participants.

Interview Objectives and Schedule Construction

The objective of these interviews was two-fold. Firstly, the interviews were intended to familiarise the researcher with the operation of in-house practices, such as those utilised in the recruitment, promotion and transfer systems (supplementary reading of relevant policy documents also contributed to this familiarisation process). Secondly, the interviews were intended to be the preliminary means for generating themes regarding European nationality and organisational experiences. These themes subsequently formed the basis for developing focus group questions for use in Study Two.

These dual objectives provided the basis for the construction of the interview schedule. This was designed to explore views on whether individuals are treated equally with respect to
various organisational practices, such as recruitment and promotion decisions and appraisal outcomes, and views about the factors that might influence social perceptions and organisational networks. There was also a question regarding whether external factors such as educational qualifications, social norms and values of different individuals were perceived as being equally valued in the organisation. The primary questions did not explicitly refer to gender or nationality; it was hoped that this issue would be raised spontaneously by interviewees. However, where this did not happen, a “prompt” question was used, in which the interviewee was invited to comment on the role of nationality and gender with respect to whichever organisational process was under discussion. In accordance with recommendations by Robson (2002) a number questions regarding demographic details were asked at the beginning of each interview. These allowed some level of rapport between the participant and researcher to develop before more probing questions were asked. The demographic details given by participants also provided useful information for understanding the context of individual responses.

The last question in the interview asked the interviewee whether there was anything else I should have asked them. Commitment to a social constructionist epistemology required the acknowledgement that though the interviewer has a role in the mutual construction of meaning in the interview setting, if I only asked questions defined by pre-determined parameters then I would have restricted the interviewees’ opportunity for free expression. Although it is acknowledged that by this time in the interview (i.e. the last question), a shared understanding of patterns and content of verbal exchanges would already have been established, I felt it was important to offer the opportunity for the participant to lead the dialogue without prompting, to check that they had had sufficient chance to contribute whatever they felt was relevant without the pre-determined constraints that were present in more focussed questions. The interview schedule can be seen in Appendix 1.

**Interview Process & Interviewer Role**

The interviewees were invited to suggest a convenient place and time to be interviewed; all chose to invite me to their office for an interview during normal working hours.

In consultation with each HoEOU, a decision was taken not to use audio recording for these interviews. As representatives of the participating organisations, both HoEOU stated that the use of audio recording would significantly reduce the likelihood of senior manager participation due to fear and suspicion surrounding the potential for misuse of recorded material. Furthermore, previous research has demonstrated that where sensitive subjects
are under discussion, participants are less likely to speak freely and honestly if audio recording is used (Crozier & Snodgrass, 2006). With the possibility that the present topic of discussion might include potentially sensitive areas of inequality and discrimination, I considered that there were sufficient grounds to proceed without the use of audio equipment. Instead, I decided to use note-taking as the method of recording participants’ views, which included accurately reporting several direct quotations from each interviewee. The limitation of this method is that inevitably, not all comments could be recorded in full and there is the likelihood that some of the original meaning has been lost or altered in the process of interpretation (However, it should be noted that the only direct quotations are used to illustrate the points made in the analysis section, see Chapter 5).

At the start of each interview, a consent form was given to the interviewee participant which outlined the aims of the study, issues surrounding confidentiality and their right to withdraw at any time (see Appendix 2). It is interesting that 3 out of the 20 interviewees expressed surprise and discomfort at having to sign this. I explained that this was a feature of ethical research and was an administrative aspect of the process; therefore it would not be linked to their interview in any further way. The first time this happened, the interviewee suggested that we continue with the interview and if they were happy to sign the consent form at the end they would do so then. I agreed to this on the understanding that if they felt unable to sign the form at that point that this was entirely their choice and that the interview notes would then be destroyed in a manner that befitted confidential waste. On the second occasion where an individual objected to the consent form, they did in fact sign it before the interview commenced, but asked to retain possession of it until the interview was over. I agreed to this on the same condition as above. On each of these two occasions, the interviewees gave their written consent at the end of the interview, stating that they were very happy to have their views represented in the research project. On a third occasion, written consent was withheld until I had sent a copy of the interview notes to the interviewee to consult, but thereafter consent was willingly given.

The precise reasons why barriers to obtaining consent were overcome on any or all of these occasions are not clear. One possibility might be that during the course of the interview I managed to establish a measure of rapport and trust with these initially sceptical individuals; alternatively, consent might have been given only because they felt they had managed to remain sufficiently guarded in expressing their opinions during the interview for them not to feel exposed.
There are several factors that might have had a bearing on participants’ willingness to be open in the current setting. As previously mentioned, matters relating to diversity at work are potentially sensitive; previous research (e.g. Mor Barak, 2005) has indicated that individuals might feel out of touch with currently accepted terminology and unsure about whether what they have to say might be considered offensive, either in terms of their actual opinions, or regarding the manner in which they express themselves. Anxiety over creating misunderstanding and thereby unintentionally causing offence is a common occurrence. This leads to consideration of the relative positions of power within the interview exchange. The interviewees in this research phase are in high-ranking positions within the International Civil Service and are therefore in positions of power with respect to several key work domains (Haslam, 2006), such as reward and penalty control, decision-making authority and “referent” power, or in other words, the capacity to be admired by colleagues and those who work “for” them. By contrast, as a student researcher, I am not yet considered an expert in my field, and I certainly have no international status. Although a measure of credibility is conferred onto me due to my association with Manchester Business School, which is an organisation with an international reputation, my social stature would be considered inferior to those I was interviewing.

Nevertheless, it became apparent that the discussion of issues surrounding diversity was deeply uncomfortable for some interviewees, and I sense that this might have been compounded by the possibility that I would have been seen as an “outsider” and therefore might not buy into the ways of discussing such matters that were accepted within the organisation. This put me into an unexpected position of power, in which the interviewee was nervous of giving “wrong” answers for fear of being considered politically incorrect, or of inviting negative judgement. Whilst there was little I could do to address this issue directly, I hope that my attempts to build rapport with participants helped to overcome this in some small way, but the main purpose of raising the issue here is to acknowledge that social desirability effects may have influenced responding to questions in some cases. Experience of interviewing in this topic area has allowed me to develop techniques to help interviewees overcome this anxiety. Specifically, the practice of reflecting back interviewees statements before moving on to another question can help to check understanding between parties. This can also encourage interviewees to expand or clarify their points where they might have been hesitant to do so otherwise.

During one interview, a more difficult situation arose where the interviewee expressed a view that I found sexist and therefore offensive. This created role-conflict for me; in my role as an
interviewer I was concerned with facilitating the expression of views of the interviewee and any expression of disapproval on my part may have resulted in the suppression of these views or taken the interview down a tangential path of arguing over the appropriateness or validity of our respective opinions. Nevertheless, as a believer in the notion that silence indicates tacit collusion with the views expressed it was very difficult not to challenge remarks that were rooted in prejudice. Following intense internal dialogue regarding the way forward, I decided that the most appropriate approach was to continue to facilitate the expression of genuinely held views, regardless of my personal perspective, on the basis that unless such views are uncovered and exposed, they cannot be explored and challenged on a wider level. Thus a challenge from me at the micro-level of the interview might have led to views being suppressed that would otherwise have offered the opportunity for exploration and challenge on a larger scale.

One of the main problems with tackling discrimination in the present-day workplace is that “modern” forms of discrimination are tacit and covert and often hidden beneath and within more acceptable discourses on diversity (Benokraitis, 2002). Their very invisibility makes such views difficult to challenge. Therefore, the opportunity to uncover covert prejudice provides an opportunity to explore and expose prejudicial views and discriminatory practices and in the context of the current research project, the production of the current thesis and any publications and/or organisational reports arising thereof offer the opportunity to bring the debate surrounding prejudice and discrimination to a wider audience and thereby instigate challenge on a large scale.

Thematic Analysis
The interview notes were subjected to thematic analysis, using a hybrid approach that combined both inductive and deductive exploration (Boyatzis, 1998). Although the thematic analysis followed a systematic process, I acknowledge the inherent subjectivity of theme identification and classification and suggest that my perspective was heavily influenced by the process of reviewing relevant research literature.

In the first instance, a deductive approach was used for the purpose of identifying matters relevant to addressing the first research question:

*How do gender and nationality affect the working lives of employees within the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in the post-Enlargement era?*
Repeated reading of the interview notes allowed the identification of any references to gender and/or European nationality within the data. A list of these references was compiled in note form and continued to grow with each new reading; readings ceased after 6 repetitions as no new references were emerging. These reference notes were then repeatedly read in order to allow grouping of the references into three overarching “macro” categories. These were initially labelled:

- External social influences
- Human Resource Practices
- Organisational Culture

Further lists were then made as the references were re-distributed under the categories above.

Returning to the original interview notes, a more data-driven approach suggested that adjustments to the categorisation needed to be made. Firstly, it became apparent that the category of “organisational culture” not only contained significant overlap with HR policies and practices, but also contained two very distinct subcategories that were initially labelled “experiences of equality and discrimination” and “social contact at work”. These two subcategories became sufficiently distinct to warrant more prominent positions within the thematic schema and the category of “HR policies and practices” was dissolved within “organisational culture”. Meanwhile, the category “experiences of equality and discrimination” appeared to need renaming; closer inspection of the data revealed that rather than discussing their own experiences of equal or unequal practices, participants were expressing opinions regarding the existence or otherwise of equality in their organisations and it became apparent that there were several different conceptions of the notion of equality itself. The category was therefore renamed “Perceptions of Equality”.

Thus the four factors that were considered to have a major influence on the working lives of male and female employees of differing nationalities within the secretariats of the participating organisations were designated as follows:

- External Social Influences
- Organisational Culture
- Work-related Social Contact
- Perceptions of Equality at Work

Each theme was given a distinguishing code and then interview notes were inspected line-by-line; codes were annotated in the margin indicating any reference to one of the themes. A
template was created that presented the themes and also cross referenced the location of coded data on the interview notes (see Appendix 3).

**4.6 Study 2: Focus Groups**

In order to investigate staff experiences of equality and inclusion at work, focus group discussions formed the next step in the sequential research process; the issues for discussion were selected on the basis of the themes identified in Study 1. Given the assertion that day-to-day workplace experiences are intrinsically linked to social processes (Mor Barak 2001), interpretations of such experiences may be socially constructed on a group-specific basis. This factor influenced the selection of focus groups as a method to explore participants’ views, due to the likelihood that they would “allow for group interaction and provide greater insight into why certain opinions are held” (Blaikie, 2000, p234).

The main disadvantages of focus groups are considered to be that the views of talkative people can be disproportionately represented, whilst minority viewpoints can be lost (Morgan, 1997). However, it was considered that these potential problems could be overcome with sensitive facilitation. Furthermore, any disadvantages of the method were outweighed by the consideration of its advantage in the current context, which is that the use of focus groups allowed the exploration of many more participant views than would have been possible with further interviews. In sum, this method met the requirement to maximise involvement from within a large participant-base, whilst also conserving scarce project resources. It was these factors, in conjunction with the aforementioned epistemological considerations, that confirmed selection of focus groups as the optimal method for this stage.

**Focus Group Participants**

Invitations to attend focus groups were extended to staff from pre-management and lower and middle management grades.

Following much debate within and between the participating organisations, it was agreed that there would be separate focus groups according to hierarchical position and region of Europe. Furthermore, it was agreed that there would be sub-groups of men and women within each focus group. These decisions were based on consideration of the research findings thus far, which had indicated a potential power imbalance between senior and more junior staff, between those from differing regions of Europe and between male and female employees. It is established practice in forming focus groups that in order to facilitate full and
frank contributions from all participants, a “safe” environment needs to be created (Robson, 2002), where participants may be open about their experiences without fear of reprisals. On this basis, the organisational hierarchies were divided into 3 groups (non/pre-management, lower management and middle management) and within these categories groups were separated by gender. As a testimony to the complexities surrounding Europe as a geographical entity (see Chapter 3), the classification of regional groupings proved a difficult area in which to reach agreement. It was important for consistency within the research project that nations were given the same classification in each organisation i.e. the UK could be classified as either Northern or Western European but it was important for the purposes of this research for the organisations to agree on the same classification.

The possibility of designating nations as “New” versus “Established” Member States was immediately dismissed because the different times at which states entered each of the institutions would have suggested that they should be categorised differently in the different organisations; for instance, Cyprus joined the CoE in 1961 but it didn’t join the EU until 2004. Therefore, the classification debate centred on the possibility of having regional sub-groups but concerns were raised that this should not result in discrepant classifications where some nations would be classified by a relational geographical term (i.e. Eastern, Central etc) and others by a unitary term such as “Balkan” or “Scandinavian”. The main problem with this is that it would ignore the possibility of dual identities – nations could potentially be both Scandinavian and Northern for example. Further debate involved the classifications of North, East, South and West of Europe, but the Heads of Unit could not agree on the classification of nations within these, nor whether the term “Central” would be a useful additional category.

My only contribution to the debate was to raise the issue of the size of the groups. We had already decided to have groups separated by hierarchy and gender, and the possibility of then also having differing groups according to several regions might mean that some groups would have very few or indeed, no participants in. This might have compromised the confidentiality or even the viability of some of the focus groups. In taking this issue on board the Heads of the Equal Opportunities Units decided to categorise all nations in terms of Eastern or Western Europe and agreed on the categories shown in Table 4.2.
### Table 4.2. Regional Classification of European Nations for Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eastern Europe</th>
<th>Western Europe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andorra</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>Greece</td>
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<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Liechtenstein</td>
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<td>Malta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Monaco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep.of Macedonia</td>
<td>Rep. of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>San Marino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agreement on the classification of all but one of the nations was reached on the basis of prior classification within their respective organisations. The exception was the classification of Turkey, which had been designated as “Western” by the CoE and “Eastern” by the EP. However, as Turkey is not a member of the EU, there would be no Turkish participants in the EP focus groups, thus the classification according to the CoE was agreed upon for the purpose of this research.

I have considered here whether the issue surrounding the complexity of classification might have had an impact on individuals’ willingness to participate. For instance, sensitivities surrounding the classification Eastern (see Chapter 3) were noted and I raised the concern
that this might prohibit certain members from wanting to take part, if they knew in advance that they were being categorised as “Eastern”. However, it was also felt that to withhold the classification aspect of the groupings until participation had been secured would have amounted to manipulation of participants. Therefore, employees were invited to take part in a designated group, and I hoped that any issues surrounding its categorisation would be brought up in the discussion (which did turn out to be the case, see Chapter 6).

On the basis of the above discussions, it was intended that 24 focus groups would take place, 12 in each of the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. In reality, difficulties in recruiting for some of the focus groups, in particular for lower management Eastern males and middle management Western males in the EP, meant that these two focus groups did not go ahead. Consequently only 22 focus groups were conducted; these were held in March/April 2007. 88 participants (52F; 36M) took part (see Table 4.3 for summary) and 33 nationalities were represented (see Table 4.4 for details).

### Table 4.3 Summary of Focus Group Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchical Level</th>
<th>Region of Europe</th>
<th>EP</th>
<th>CoE</th>
<th>Participant totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>CoE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Management</td>
<td>Western Europe (n21)</td>
<td>F (n8)</td>
<td>F (n4)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M (n7)</td>
<td>M (n2)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Europe (n16)</td>
<td>F (n5)</td>
<td>F (n5)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M (n3)</td>
<td>M (n3)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Management</td>
<td>Western Europe (n17)</td>
<td>F (n3)</td>
<td>F (n5)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M (n3)</td>
<td>M (n6)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Europe (n12)</td>
<td>F (n4)</td>
<td>F (n5)</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M (n0)</td>
<td>M (n3)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Management</td>
<td>Western Europe (n11)</td>
<td>F (n3)</td>
<td>F (n3)</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M (n0)</td>
<td>M (n5)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Europe (n11)</td>
<td>F (n3)</td>
<td>F (n4)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M (n2)</td>
<td>M (n2)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4. Details of Focus Group Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational Level</th>
<th>European Parliament</th>
<th>Council of Europe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Nation of Origin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-management</td>
<td>8F; 7M</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Cyprus</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Management</td>
<td>5F; 3M</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Estonia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lower Management</td>
<td>3F; 3M</td>
<td>Finland</td>
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<tr>
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<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lower Management</td>
<td>4F; 0M</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Management</td>
<td>3F; 0M</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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(*In order to preserve anonymity, the links between participants’ gender, nationality and grade have been removed.)
Session Details

In order to facilitate participants’ attendance, consideration was given to the precise location of the focus groups. All focus groups in the Council of Europe were held in the main building of the administration at their headquarters in Strasbourg. Meanwhile, due to the split location of the European Parliament, focus groups for this organisation were divided between their sites in Luxembourg (groups EP 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12) and Brussels (groups EP 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10).

Each focus group lasted for 2 hours and the sessions were structured to allow discussion of the designated topics in sub-groups, followed by a plenary session involving all focus group members. The minimum number of people in each focus group was intended to be 3 in order to preserve anonymity of views (Morgan, 1997). This condition was generally met, however, due to unforeseen circumstances, 3 of the focus groups contained too few participants for it to be achieved. Thus in focus groups EP12, CoE2 and CoE12 there were groups containing only 2 male participants.

I introduced the session by outlining the aims of the study and the objectives of the focus groups. A consent form was issued in order to conform to ethical practice in research (see Appendix 4). Confidentiality was emphasised for the purpose of maximising frankness of responses. The topics for discussion were outlined and participants were invited to ask for clarification of any areas of concern or confusion.

There were six topics for discussion, including the four based on analysis of the themes that had emerged from the semi-structured interviews in Phase 1. Two additional categories were added. I considered that the four categories on which the questions were based were quite tightly defined and that a social constructionist epistemology should allow participants the opportunity to express themselves more freely. On this basis, following Questions 1 & 2 it was considered necessary to include a more general question regarding pressures encountered at work. In addition a question about “any other barriers to equality” was included at the end in order to allow for possible contributions that could not be accounted for by the other categories. The topic of “intercultural differences” included a prompt that asked participants to identify work-related similarities and differences between a) themselves and their colleagues and b) their home and host countries cultures. The six topics for discussion therefore comprised:

**Topic 1.** What are the potential career barriers in this organisation?

**Topic 2.** Are there any barriers to participating in formal or informal organisational activities?
**Topic 3.** What are the main pressures that you experience at work?

**Topic 4.** Do you feel equally treated on the basis of your gender and/or nationality by this organisation?

**Topic 5.** What are the work-related cultural similarities and differences between a) you and your colleagues and b) your host versus home country?

**Topic 6.** Are there any other barriers to equality not covered already?

Participants were given instructions for the format of group discussions. These included the following:

- Within the sub-groups, participants should discuss their views on each topic in turn, allowing for about 10 minutes per topic.
- Each person should be given the opportunity to represent their views on each topic, though it is not necessary to reach a consensus opinion.
- Direct personal experience, observations and personal opinion should all be included.
- Each sub-group was required to appoint a person to record on flip-chart paper the issues discussed within each topic. All ideas should be recorded as the flip chart would form part of the documentary evidence from which the analysis would be made. It was particularly important to record conflicting views, in order to show divergent perspectives.
- Participants could discuss ideas in whatever language was most suitable but they were requested to write in English* in order to facilitate subsequent analysis by the researcher.
- Groups were required to appoint someone to present their ideas, in English*, during the plenary session.

(*this requirement was not likely to inhibit participation at this stage since EP and CoE employees are required to have fluency in either English or French and a working knowledge of the other.)

Having introduced the session and delivered instructions for the group discussions, my role was restricted to time keeping until the plenary session. The purpose of this was to ensure that all views were participant- rather than researcher-generated and to allow discussion in the language most convenient to each group.

During the plenary session, the sub-groups made flip-chart presentations to the larger group, which included me as the researcher. At this point, I sought clarification of issues where necessary, ensured that all participants felt adequately represented and made notes to
supplement the flip-chart records. Following the discussion of the responses to the six topics, I then facilitated a short discussion in which participants were asked to generate solutions that would address any of the barriers to inequality identified. I made extensive notes on the nature of the solutions proposed. The focus group session plan may be found in Appendix 5.

Analysis of Focus Group Data
Analysis of data at this stage was performed through thematic analysis using a template approach (King, 2006). This involved the transfer of flip-chart data and related notes to a table of raw data for each focus group. All the ideas generated within the 6 initial categories and the "solution" category were recorded, retaining as much of the original language and emphasis as possible. A template was then compiled (See Appendix 6) in which data from all the focus groups were thematically coded using the process outlined below.

Firstly, the data were explored with reference to the previously identified macro themes that emerged during the analysis of the interview data. Following a deductive process, the focus group data were inspected for references to any of the macro categories identified in Study 1. Data were initially analysed on a semantic level on the basis that it was important to elicit surface-level meaning of the patterns within the data at this stage; an exploration of latent meaning, or underlying assumptions that inform the semantic content was undertaken once the data had been categorised. Repeated readings were undertaken until all data that could be categorised within one of the macro themes (designated as such in the first study) had been identified. It had been intended that any remaining, uncategorised data would then be explored further to allow for the possibility that additional themes may emerge, however, all data was appropriately categorised within three of the original macro themes, “External Social Influences”, “Organisational Culture” and “Perceptions of Equality”. Unlike the analysis of the interview data, none of the focus group data were classified within the category “Work-related Social Contact”; this discrepancy is addressed in Chapter 6 which presents the findings of the focus group analysis.

4.7 Study 3: Discourse Analysis
In order to explore the second research question, this second study takes a critical discourse analytic (CDA) approach to exploring two publicly available documents, one each relating to the participating organisations. The process of data collection and subsequent method of analysis is outlined below.
Data Collection
Fairclough (2005) takes a very broad view of what constitutes a text: “any actual instance of language in use is a ‘text’” (p3) and cites examples of newspaper articles, organisational documents, interview transcripts and even shopping lists that may be categorised as “texts”. However, Oswick (2012) suggests that texts appropriate for discourse analysis should be pre-existing and should not involve the researcher as an active party in its construction. His point is that if discourse is about the way in which individuals make meaning out of the way they speak; were I as the researcher to conduct interviews I would be complicit in the construction of whatever meaning was relevant within the interview. It would then be a somewhat cyclical process for me to firstly collude in the making of meaning and then to be the agent of analysing that meaning. Oswick therefore suggests that texts to be analysed through the means of discourse analysis should be sourced in a “non-participatory way” (p15). On this basis, further interviews or focus groups were discounted as possible sources of data and instead I decided to focus on a search for company documents.

With reference to sampling and sample size, it has been suggested that when selecting texts for a CDA study, only a small sample of texts will be involved. Dick (2005) explains “this is because the focus is on the text not the individual and because the aim is to provide an in-depth analysis that is focused on explanation not generalisation” (p207). Furthermore, in exploring how and why language is used to construct a particular account of reality, CDA can be performed using one text or several texts, depending on the scope of the research. The aim in this third study is to conduct a detailed textual analysis in the pursuit of answering the second research question:

“What are the underlying assumptions and values about European Enlargement that are conveyed within public communications by representatives of the EP and the CoE? “

On this basis, the selection criteria for texts to analyse within the current study were as follows:

1) Texts should self-evidently have been produced by representatives of the EP or the CoE;
2) At least two texts, one from each organisation were required so that communications by representatives of the EP and CoE could be analysed separately;
3) Texts should be those that are ‘publicly available’; this means that the texts should not be restricted to in-house documents, but rather should be those that have been intentionally produced for a wider public audience
4) For ease of access and comprehension, a full-text, English-language version of any text under consideration was required to be available online;
5) The length of the text needed to be appropriate for analysis within the scope of the current study, therefore overlong texts such as books and research reports that spanned several hundred pages were rejected. The type of texts for consideration was therefore generally limited to those such as journal and newspaper articles, meeting reports and conference or parliamentary session briefings;

6) Texts should be from the same era as other data collected in the course of this study. Given the rapidity with which the European political landscape has been changing in the new millennium, this criterion was considered important so as to facilitate the comparison of findings from the CDA with analysis of the interviews and focus groups from the same socio-political period.

During the data gathering stage for Studies 1 and 2 I had spent several weeks in the organisations and uncovered a wealth of textual data in the form of company policy documents, staff handbooks, equality directives, annual reports etc. However, although some of these met the criteria regarding the relevant time period, very few were available externally and were therefore not publicly available and only one specifically focussed on Enlargement. I therefore decided to explore the possibility of gaining data through the websites of the relevant organisations; the process of identifying the final texts for analysis is outlined below.

CoE Text Search

The document archives of the CoE were searched via the CoE website; these are located at http://www.coe.int/t/dgal/dit/ilcd/Tools/default_en.asp. There is an online cataloguing system, “WebCAT”, which enables an online search of the central archives, and of some libraries and information centres of the Council of Europe. It contains several thousands of Council of Europe documents and publications since 1949, some of which provide links to full texts. The search criteria described above initially returned 11 items, but when French-language texts had been discarded and an over-long text (a book) rejected, this left one remaining text. The surviving text was a newspaper article of around 550 words, published on 11th May 2007 in “The Guardian”, a UK broadsheet newspaper and the author of the article was Terry Davis, the Secretary General of the CoE from September 2004-2009. The title of the article is “Serbia is not Robert Mugabe” and a copy is located in Appendix 7. This article is a response to a previously published piece by George Monbiot and Monbiot’s piece is heavily referenced within Davis’s article; therefore the article by Monbiot is located for reference in Appendix 8.
The search function on the EP website is restricted to press items only and is located at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/archive/search/general.do?language=EN&LEG_ID=6F. As the search term “Enlargement” included the use of the term within the body of the texts as well as in their titles, the search criteria above returned 4 items. These items were subsequently inspected for relevance to Enlargement. Three of the items merely referred to Enlargement in passing, whilst the primary thrust of the articles related to peripheral matters such as gun ownership in the EU and arrangements for the funding of political parties. The text that was finally selected for analysis within the current study is a press briefing of approximately 750 words from the plenary session of the Committee of Ministers at the parliamentary session held in April 2007. It is entitled “Croatia: good progress towards accession and some issues remain” and a copy is located in Appendix 9.

**Discourse Analysis**

“The Latin roots of the word “text” are to be found in the activity of weaving, and the tissue of material that clothed us is now the model for the tissue of meaning that holds the social world together”.

Parker 1996

Discourse analysis is now widely used in the field of psychology as a means of analysing linguistic data (Oswick, 2012). It is evident from the above quotation that discourse analysis is an analytic practice that is entirely in keeping with the social constructionist epistemology that underpins the current research process. Discourse analysis and social constructionism both hold as a central tenet that language acts not as merely a vehicle for reflecting meaning, but as a means through which meaning is created. Since language and consequently “discourse” are means of communication and are therefore interactive social mediums, it is almost inevitable that the practice of analysing discourse should be rooted in a social constructionist philosophy.

Discourse analysis focuses on language as a social practice; language is not merely a vehicle for information delivery, but plays a functional role in the way that the world around us is constructed. Proponents of discourse analysis suggest that by studying how language is put together and how it changes, we can begin to understand how and why individuals and groups use language to construct meaning in relation to themselves, others and the world at large (Dick, 2005). Schwandt (2001) points out that the performance of discourse analysis draws on multidisciplinary insights including those from such fields as sociolinguistics, cognitive psychology, communication studies and the philosophy of
language. The pivotal assumption within discourse analysis is that individuals and groups use language to both represent and construct meaning; thus by analysing discourse we can not only begin to expose the differing values and assumptions held by individuals and groups but we can also explore how those values and assumptions are both reproduced and perpetuated through the use of language (Dick, 2005).

There are several different forms of discourse analysis that have different underlying principles, though they all have the common feature of seeking to expose variations, assumptions and inconsistencies within texts and to demonstrate how they are created using pre-existing social and cultural resources. In other words, discourse analysis attempts to lay bare the means by which every-day language is used to construct a shared understanding of social realities (Dick, 2004).

Michel Foucault is a name that is often linked with the discipline of discourse analysis – indeed it would be difficult to imagine reading a book or even a chapter on discourse analysis without this name being mentioned (see Parker, 1996; Dick, 2005; Faircough, 2005; Oswick, 2012). According to Foucault, discourse analysis involves “the identification, contemplation and articulation of the abstract semantic features of a discourse (or discourses) and/or sets of abstract linguistic themes” (Oswick, 2012). However, there is somewhat of a mystery about how to operationalise Foucauldian analysis in practice. Foucault himself refused to be prescriptive about the process of analysis, although it is clear that he avoided techniques that focussed on very close reading of texts, preferring instead to explore the semiotics of large bodies of knowledge, such as political or economy discourses, or those involved with the exploration of natural history (Foucault 1970).

Fairclough (1992, 2005) offers a criticism of Foucauldian analysis, suggesting that it pays “little close attention to the linguistic features of texts” (2005, p2) and contrasts this with a deconstructive approach which requires a much more close reading of texts and is therefore more “textually oriented”. However, he also criticises the latter approach for avoiding meaningful engagement with social theory. He offers instead an approach termed “Critical Discourse Analysis” which intends to link linguistic analysis of texts with wider social conventions, understanding and meaning:

“I see discourse analysis as ‘oscillating’ between a focus on specific texts and a focus on what I call the ‘order of discourse’, the relatively durable social structuring of language which is itself one element of the relatively durable structuring and networking of social practices”

Fairclough (2005, p54)
Whilst I acknowledge the contribution of Foucault to the development of discourse analysis as a recognised discipline, the approach taken within this study is more aligned to the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This discipline emerged in the late 1980s and was developed in relation to the study of European discourses (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). Supported by a social constructionist epistemology, the purpose of CDA is to explore and expose “opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (Wodak, 1995, p204). The fundamental assumption of CDA is that macro social systems of power and inequality are both reflected and perpetuated by discourses, or “systems of language” (Fairclough, 1992).

However, even CDA does not have a unitary theoretical or methodological framework. Van Dijk (2003) points out that critical analysis of conversations or interviews differ greatly from an analysis of press articles or other forms of discourse such as those used in delivering lessons in school. Despite this, there is a level of acceptance regarding the overall aim of CDA being the exploration of the way that language structures are used in the representation and maintenance of social power relations; therefore the fields of research in CDA typically centre around notions such as power, inequality, hegemony, ideology, institutions and social structure (Fairclough, 2005).

It might be said that discourse analysis attempts to explore the relationship between micro and macro level social order. Whilst language structure, verbal exchange and text production constitute the micro-level social order, social power, dominance and inequalities are typically explored within the macro level; it is the role of CDA to explore and explain how these micro and macro domains are conceptually interdependent (Oswick, 2012). It should be noted, however, that though these domains are described separately above, in reality they co-exist within the same act. As Van Dijk (2003) explains, “a racist speech in parliament is a discourse at the micro-level of social interaction in the specific situation of a debate, but at the same time may enact or be a constituent part of legislation or the reproduction of racism, at the macro-level”. In order to provide clarity in the process of analysing the relationship between these levels, several researchers have offered differing frameworks for performing CDA (e.g. Wodak, 2001; Van Dijk, 2001; Fairclough, 2005). Having reviewed these, I have selected the analytical framework by Fairclough (2005) based on my assessment of it as the most cogently explained and comprehensive of the recently developed CDA frameworks (Dick & Cassell, 2004).
As one of the pioneers of CDA, in one of his earlier works, Fairclough (1992) suggests that discourses operate within three related social domains:

1) The identity function of discourse, which serves to construct notions of personal and group social identities;
2) The relational function, in which relationships between individuals and groups are constructed and developed through discourse;
3) The ideational function of discourse, in which the ideological systems of belief that are dominant in any given society are reproduced and/or challenged.

Fairclough (2005) argues that in order to explore how discourse functions in the domains above, three levels of analysis must be undertaken. Firstly, a textual analysis needs to be undertaken. The term “text” may be used to refer to language either in written or spoken form. The focus of Fairclough’s (2003) framework is the analysis of grammar (the exploration of the way units of text are constructed) and semantics (the exploration of explicit and implicit meaning) within the text. Secondly, the context in which the text has been produced needs to be explored in order to understand how information exchange is influenced by the construction of the author(s) and recipients relative positions.

Thirdly, there needs to be a social analysis; this level is explained by Dick and Cassell (2004): “The focus for analysis at this level is an examination of how propositions function to maintain, or disrupt, ideological systems of beliefs and norms. The focus is on an examination of what is taken for granted and under what circumstances taken-for-granted ‘truths’ are challenged. In deploying this analytic focus, the hegemonic function of ideology is demonstrated. That is, how ideologies function to secure consent or to maintain their status as ‘common-sense’” (p59).

Fairclough (2005) provides a checklist of questions, grouped within 12 separate domains, that I have used (with one addition – see * below) to interrogate the texts in the current study, in the course of performing an analysis of the above levels. This checklist is summarised below in Figure 4.2.
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Social events</th>
<th>What social event or chain of events is the text a part of? Can the text be framed within a chain of texts?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>What is the purpose of the text? Is the recipient passive as in a reader of an article (one way communication) or an active participant in the construction of discourse such as during a conversation (two-way communication)? Is the communication non-mediated (i.e. face-to-face) or mediated (e.g. by telephone, print, radio, internet)? etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>How is difference treated in the text? For instance, is difference accepted, accentuated, dissolved or normalised?</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Intertextuality</td>
<td>Are other texts or voices present within the primary text and if so, how are they attributed and how are they positioned in relation to the authorial voice? If they are absent, what is the effect of omission?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>What value assumptions or ideological assumptions are made in the text?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Semantic/grammatical relations between sentences and clauses</td>
<td>Are particularly significant relations of equivalence and difference set up in the text? Are there higher-level semantic relations over large stretches of the text?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exchanges, speech functions and grammatical mood</td>
<td>What are the primary types of exchange (knowledge versus activity) and speech function (e.g. statement, question, demand, offer)? Are statements factual, predictive or evaluative? What is the over-riding grammatical mood (declarative, interrogative, imperative)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Discourses</td>
<td>What interpretive repertoires are drawn upon in the text and what is the relationship between them?</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Representation of social events</td>
<td>What elements of social events are included or excluded?</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Styles</td>
<td>To what extent does the linguistic style of the voices present in the text indicate aspects of their identity?</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Modality</td>
<td>Is the modality of the text primarily epistemic (concerned with knowledge exchange), deontic (concerned with obligations to act) or boulomaic (concerned with hopes/desires/fears/regrets)? To what degree are agents in the text committed to the different types of modality. *</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>What are the values to which agents are committed? How is their commitment communicated (for instance, explicit/implicit endorsement)?</td>
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</table>

*Whilst epistemic and deontic are types of modality suggested by Fairclough (2005), I have added an exploration of boulomaic modality which is suggested by Simpson (1993).*
The Analytic Process

In order to fully engage with the complexities within each text, a line-by-line analysis was undertaken, in which each text was interrogated using the questions in Fairclough’s (2005) checklist that is outlined in Figure 4.2 above. A summary of the findings from each text in relation to these questions was then written up discursively and this summary was then further analysed for instances of values and assumptions that were implicit within each text. This latter process was more akin to thematic analysis, where the “themes” were identified across the texts and were classified within the apriori category “assumptions or implicit values”. These themes are then used to structure the textual analysis presented in the next chapter.

Discourse analysis is concerned with the way that power relations are constructed through the use of language and it is particularly appropriate for research that aims to explore how “local” (micro, individual-level or meso, organisational-level) texts are influenced by wider social and cultural (macro level) factors and the possibility of a reciprocal influence between discourses at these two levels (Oswick, 2012). Therefore, this would seem to be a process ideally suited to the exploration of research questions 2 and 3, which are concerned firstly with exploring underlying assumptions and values about European Enlargement conveyed within public communications of the organisations involved, and secondly with exploring the relationship between these public communications and the internal organisational experiences of employees.

Furthermore, CDA offers the opportunity to investigate and expose the phenomenon of a “hegemonic struggle” between dominant and subordinate discourses and to explore reasons why these respective power positions exist (Oswick, 2012). Given that the current research is related to matters surrounding diversity in the workplace and is concerned with the integration of “new” minority groups (i.e. those from newer Member States), CDA is ideally placed to assist in the exploration of competing discourses that might reveal how meaning is constructed and attributed to both the dominant (pre-existing, West-focused) discourse and the newer, marginalized (New Member State–focused) discourse.

4.8 Chapter Summary

As previously mentioned, the first two studies are sequentially linked in that the findings from the first study (interviews) were used as the basis for constructing questions for the second study (focus groups). These two studies were designed to address research question 1. Research question 2 is addressed by the third study, the discourse analysis of two publicly
available texts. Research question 3 is addressed by bringing together the findings from all three studies.

The findings of each of the three studies are presented separately, beginning with the interview analysis in Chapter 5, following with the focus group analysis in Chapter 6 and then the discourse analysis in Chapter 7.
Chapter 5

Analysis 1: Thematic Analysis of Interview Data

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected in Study 1. The findings of the analysis of the interview data are presented in relation to each of the macro categories identified through the process outlined in Chapter 4. Where there are differences in views or experiences between or within organisations, this is discussed within the exploration of the findings of the relevant category. As previously mentioned, the categories were developed in order to address the first research question, which is:

*How do gender and nationality affect the working lives of employees within the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in the post-Enlargement era?*

Each of the categories therefore represents a domain in which employees of different genders and nationalities might have different experiences in the workplace and will be explored in turn. They have been labelled as:

- External Social Influences
- Organisational Culture
- Work-related Social Contact
- Perceptions of Equality at Work

5.2 External Social Influences

Social influences are defined here as phenomena that exist within society at large as opposed to those that are specific to the cultures of the participating organisations. For instance, there were a number of interviewees that referred to the external labour market being a major factor impacting on recruitment and indeed, a factor that was relevant to both gender and nationality of job applicants. Firstly, it was noted that applicants for lower level administrative posts in both organisations were predominantly female and likely to be living relatively locally, therefore likely to be native French speakers. The possible reasons for this are multifaceted. It was explained that the nature of the work was seen as largely secretarial, which is widely stereotyped as “women’s work” (Wilson, 2002):
“We are restricted to what the labour market offers us. We cannot control who applies from outside the organisation, if the work is seen as a secretary’s position then we will inevitably have the majority of applicants being women...”

Female Senior Manager, CoE

Furthermore, it was suggested that the comparatively lower pay might not be sufficient to attract applicants from further afield, a factor that is compounded by the notion of women as “second earners” and thus a male partner might be less willing to become the “trailing spouse” (Sheridan, 2004; Linehan & Scullion, 2001). Additionally, it is reported that managers whose first language is not French might be relying on their administrative assistant to have native fluency in the local language.

External social factors are also perceived to affect the recruitment of individuals from the New Member States in both organisations. It is suggested that individuals from these countries are so “desperate to join Europe” (Male Senior Manager, EP) that there are large numbers of applicants for every external vacancy; this has apparently lead to the recruitment of individuals who are vastly overqualified for their appointed position:

“there are those from New Member States who come here just to get a foot in the door, but they are overqualified and then prevented from progressing so they become frustrated...”

Female Senior Manager, CoE.

However, the use of the term “over-qualified” is worth considering further. Though individuals from the New Member States might be applying for positions well below those for which their academic qualifications would make them technically suitable, however, there is also a view held by individuals from New Member States that their qualifications are not accorded equivalent value to those gained from within Established Member States:

“I am lucky, though I am a Polish national, I have a masters degree from a respected Italian university so I am ok here. Other people from New Member States are not so lucky, their qualifications mean nothing.”

Female HR Professional, EP

This has lead to the problem that individuals from New Member States feel that they are recruited into positions for which they are theoretically overqualified, but then subsequently find themselves unable to progress because the qualifications they hold are not valued in practice. This is perceived to be due to assumptions that the education systems in non-
Western European countries do not adhere to rigorous standards of teaching and assessment and that qualifications are awarded on the basis of much lower levels of achievement. Thus a conflict in perceptions is evident; those from New Member States feel they are over-qualified for their current positions, whilst those from Established Member States perceive that those same qualifications do not suitably qualify the holder for promotion.

In terms of gender-related factors, some commonly available gender stereotypes are offered by both male and female senior managers as reasons for the comparatively small number of women in senior positions. Consistent with the suggestions of Maier (1997), individuals not demonstrating typically “masculine” traits are considered to be unsuitable for management careers. Thus women are presented as being “afraid of responsibility” (Female Senior Manager, CoE), “unwilling to put themselves forward” (Female Senior Manager, EP). It is interesting that women have also been characterised as unsupportive of each other, as illustrated by the following:

“Women have more difficulty with other women than men have with other men. Women are very critical of each other. They don’t support each other at all. I have more complaints about the women in my department than I do of the men, but the complaints come from other women, not men at all.”

Male Senior Manager, EP

Whilst the interviewees are not making a judgement about whether these characteristics are the result of biology or socialisation, they are nevertheless presented as integral to the state of being female. This has the unfortunate consequence of making the situation seem to be a) caused by women themselves and b) immutable. As a corollary, not only are gender stereotypes are perpetuated within the organisation, but the organisation is absolved of responsibility for challenging them.

5.3 Organisational Culture
Organisational culture will be defined here as “a set of shared mental assumptions that guide interpretation and action in organizations by defining appropriate behavior for various situations” (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006). One of the key implications of this definition is the notion that it is not HR policies in themselves that define an organisation’s culture, but the interpretation of those policies and the assumptions guiding their implementation. On this basis, the analysis within the macro theme “organisational culture” will be structured around
the various HR policies that individuals have reported as differentially affecting men and women or individuals from different nationalities in the participating organisations.

One of the most frequently discussed issues surrounded the use of “quotas” for ensuring adequate national representation amongst staff. In each organisation, there was a firm written commitment that staff should be recruited from all of the respective member states and that the proportion of staff from each state should reflect the population size and monetary contribution of the state itself. The impact of successive Enlargements for the Council of Europe and the European Union has meant that the respective Secretariats have been required to expand their recruitment exercises to mirror the accession of each New Member State. In a very general sense, this is seen as largely positive:

“Working with people from different cultures is seen as one of the main reasons to work in such an organisation as this”

Male Senior Manager, EP

However, in practice, the use of quotas is more problematic. There are accusations that individuals have been appointed who don’t have the appropriate skills for the job, but who were appointed simply to fill the quota. There are also accusations that “better” candidates have been passed over for promotion and are being held back in their career because the quota for their nationality is “full” higher up the organisation. This is perceived to affect those from Established Member States particularly:

“In this directorate most of the higher up posts are occupied by British people therefore when a new post comes up they look more negatively on appointing another person of that nationality...but if the British person is the best then they are being discriminated against by not getting the job...”

Male Senior Manager, CoE

This practice of being denied a position due to the quota system is seen as a direct contrast to previous systems of recruitment in which there was a tendency to appoint individuals on a “like-me” basis. In other words, cultural similarity used to be a factor that increased chances of promotion rather than the opposite:

“Amongst people there is a natural tendency to see advantage of someone who is of a similar background to yourself – you view cultural similarity as positive”

Male Senior Manager, CoE
The juxtaposition of the previous two quotations is interesting; promotion on the basis of the “like-me” bias is presented in rather positive terms as a naturally occurring phenomenon, meanwhile the quota system is presented as an organisational artefact that is at best discriminatory. The discrimination within the former situation is not explicitly acknowledged and by inference, it would be justified as “natural”; thus the dominance of the Established Member States and the means by which this dominance was achieved is therefore also implicitly natural. The quota system is presented as a disruption to this natural order and certainly in this instance, viewed as a vehicle of discrimination rather than a practice that is allied to principles of equality.

There are similar issues surrounding the concept of the “Equal Merit” rule with respect to promotions. Both organisations adhere to a written principle that where two people are available for promotion who are of “equal merit” then gender can be taken into account in making the promotion decision: the individual from the under-represented gender should be appointed. However, there was much criticism of this, both in principle and in its practical application:

“It can give the impression that so-and-so only got the job because she was a woman and then she starts the job on the back foot, feeling she needs to prove that she got the job on merit...”

Female Senior Manager, EP

“Its ok to say that you are going to appoint the under-represented gender but in reality you can always find a reason to appoint the person you want – there are always reasons to say that there is not equal merit if you don’t want there to be... i don’t think it helps to avoid discrimination in practice.”

Female HR Professional, CoE

In keeping with the findings of previous research (e.g. Kalev, Kelly & Dobbin, 2006) taking positive action to combat inequality can be counterproductive. It may result in a negative backlash from the majority group who may feel that their position of privilege is threatened by such action; furthermore, the minority group may be filled with self-doubt if they sense they might not have achieved the reward on merit alone.

The language policies in both organisations also impact on recruitment and promotion decisions. Both organisations require all applicants to have fluency in either English or French and a working knowledge of the other. There is a view that this immediately favours
native speakers of these languages with respect to recruitment and promotion. However, the fact that the quotas are already full for French and English nationals effectively neutralises this potential advantage. There is perhaps more of a subtle advantage to being able to communicate in one’s mother tongue however:

“you are more free to express yourself; you have greater credibility when you speak because you are more confident in your native tongue”

Female Senior Manager, EP

There is also the factor that individuals may be initially recruited into either organisation on the basis of their fluency in a minority language; with successive Enlargements has come the need to communicate with individuals from prospective accession nations and New Member States, which has brought a need for translators and interpreters who are fluent in a wide range of “new” languages. Whilst this skill might be useful for acquiring an initial position in the organisation, there is a perception that it might impede promotion. Firstly, there might be no need for that particular language to be spoken at a more managerial level, meanwhile the individual might be “pigeon-holed” as merely a native speaker of a minority language who has little else to offer. This compounds the situation mentioned earlier where overqualified individuals from New Member States enter the organisation with the intention of rising to more senior levels but find that their qualifications are not sufficiently recognised to do so.

One of the major ways in which Human Resource Practices differ between the organisations is with respect to promotion opportunities. Within the EP, there is a practice referred to as “grade-banding”, in which an individual can be promoted to the next rung of the ladder on their own merit and in their existing role, contingent upon getting a recommendation for promotion during the annual appraisal process. Within the CoE this practice does not exist; the only way to achieve promotion is to move to another role by applying for an internal vacancy. There appears to be widespread awareness amongst staff in the CoE that their internal process does not compare favourably with their EP counterparts:

“Here you are literally waiting for someone to die in order to get promotion. We need grade-banding like they have in the Parliament...here appraisals are pointless, you know it doesn’t count for anything, at least at the Parliament you would be more motivated to show what you have achieved”.

HR Professional, CoE
5.4 Work-related Social Contact

It has been suggested that the degree to which individuals are able to make social contacts at work affect the working lives of both men and women of different nationalities in the participating organisations. The activities typically discussed in this category relate to non-compulsory activities such as socialising and leisure activities both inside and outside of work as well as participation in self-organised staff groups. Factors viewed as affecting participation in these activities include gender, nationality and hierarchical position.

In the CoE, interviewees have repeatedly referred to the hierarchical nature of the organisational culture, suggesting that socialising is informally organised by grade, although this wasn’t a matter that was raised by the EP interviewees:

“Here you wouldn’t find managers having coffee with the B Grades [administrative assistants]...it just wouldn’t be done”

Female HR Professional, CoE

“Even if a manager has a close working relationship with their assistant, they don’t socialise together”

Female HR Professional, CoE

It is notable that the above issue was only emphasised by those in the CoE, perhaps pointing to a more hierarchical structure in the CoE and maybe indicating a flatter structure and more progressive culture in the EP. This would be consistent with findings from a previous study in the CoE (Gavin & Davidson, 2005) which found a preoccupation with individuals “grade” (ie position within the hierarchy) was prevalent and that when meeting a colleague for the first time, it was common to ask their grade before asking their name.

Participation in social groups and staff working groups is considered in both organisations to be indirectly driven by factors associated with gender and nationality. For instance:

“Where things are optional and you [as a woman] are already overloaded at home with the kids and trying to balance work anyway, you are not going to volunteer yourself, whilst for a man he knows his kids are not a factor he has to consider because he’s wife will be doing that”

Female Senior Manager EP
Furthermore, there is an acknowledgement that socialising is a key aspect to networking, which may influence career opportunities. In the following quotation, the term “networking” is actually used synonymously with “socialising”:

“Women are not good at networking – at the end of the day you know you are going home to the kids not to the pub.”

Female Senior Manager CoE

However, another perspective is offered regarding the possibility in participating in voluntary activities at work; this perspective suggests that those without children might also face barriers to inclusion:

“It is more difficult to manage your workload if you are single...that is...without children...you can’t take on extra things or do the things you want to do because the boss has expectations that you will work late even at short notice and that you will continue to work until the task is complete regardless of how long it takes.”

Female HR Professional, CoE

The implication here is that having children is a legitimate reason to adhere to core working hours and that without this reason one faces a loss of control over volume and predictability of their workload. On this basis, those without children are alleged to have difficulty coordinating participation in non-compulsory activities at work. However, this factor was only mentioned within the CoE participants and not raised by those from the EP; it is not clear whether this indicates a genuine discrepancy, or whether the issue is still felt within the EP but just not mentioned in by these particular interviewees.

There is also a perception that social contact may operate differently for individuals of different nationalities:

“It is said that Italians, and the Greeks also, look after their own, so you arrive as a new Italian and there are lots of your countrymen looking out for you...for those from some of the Newer Member States the matter is different... You might be the only one [of that nationality] ...and if you have come looking to work with other nationalities you don’t necessarily want to spend all your time with your own countrymen who you could have got to know back home”

Male Senior Manager CoE

Implicit within this statement is the perception that those from New Member States are actively eschewing their compatriots in favour of their international colleagues. And perhaps
also, this betrays assumptions about the respective values placed on the company of individuals from Established versus New Member States. The “Italians” referred to in the above quotation are not assumed to be desperate for the company of colleagues from Eastern Europe – the support of fellow Italians is presented in a positive light. Meanwhile, the individuals from New Member States are assumed to actively prefer the company of individuals who at the very least are not their compatriots and who by inference are from the Established Member States.

5.5 Perceptions of Equality at Work

There were varying perceptions about whether there was equality for men and women in the organisations. Notably within this category, there were intercultural differences in attitudes and perceptions that are addressed separately.

One common occurrence was an apparent conflict of views between the interviewee and “others”. Some interviewees indicated that they believed equality existed in their organisation but acknowledge that not everyone agreed with this view. For instance:

“Yes, we have equality here but...women continue to complain that they face discrimination even when we have all these things that help them...management training, equal merit rules and such like”.

Male Senior Manager, CoE

However, this indicates not just an acknowledgement of a different view, but a dismissal of this view as invalid. Practical matters that are intended to assist in a move towards equality are cited as though the existence of formal policies and practices are in themselves evidence that equality has been achieved. However, it is suggested here that the interviewee is mistaking steps towards equality for the achievement of actual equality. It should be noted that the perception that equality has been achieved is not restricted to male interviewees:

“It is equal for men and women now, but women find reasons to hold back. Children don’t have to be a barrier anymore like they used to be when I was young.”

Female Senior Manager, EP

In keeping with previous research on women in senior positions (Brief, 2005), it is possible that this manager perceives that if they have achieved senior status themselves, then it should be possible for other women to do likewise, thus any failure to do so must be a result of women’s own actions. There is also the possibility that as family-friendly policies have been introduced that aim to support women with children, those who achieved seniority
before such support was available might once again perceive improvements towards equality as actual equality having been achieved. This further places the burden of responsibility back onto the female staff members; the implication is that if it were possible to reach a senior position without all these new policies then it must be so much easier now and once again, any failure to do so must be the result of women's own attitudes and actions.

There are mixed feelings about the appointment of women to senior roles however, with some women feeling that this indicates tokenism and masks true inequality:

“Men are advantaged because of the tradition of the organisation...but progress it being made...we have a female Deputy Director General now... although sometimes it seems we recruit women at the top to be visible but it doesn't reflect the reality lower down the organisations.”

Female Senior Manager, CoE

What is interesting about the above quotation is that two conflicting perspectives are offered by the same interviewee; on the one hand, the appointment of a very senior female is seen as “progress” whilst on the other it “doesn’t reflect reality”. That an individual can hold both views simultaneously is an indication of the complexity of the situation regarding gender equality at work. Whilst it is important for high profile senior women to be appointed, that in itself is not evidence of equality or even progress. It could even be a mechanism that prevents real progress from being made; where equality is assumed on the basis of a small number of high ranking women, complacency might divert energies from making any further efforts to increase opportunities for women at other levels.

It is acknowledged by one of the interviewees that overt sexism may not be as commonplace as it once was, but that sexist attitudes might still remain, albeit that they are not directly expressed:

“People know it is not good to say that women with children can’t do certain things like go on missions but the attitude may still be there and it comes out in other ways.”

Female Senior Manager, EP

This acknowledgement of the conflict between “espoused values and values in use” (Schein, 1992) indicates that although sexism may be more covert, it is still perceived to exist and the impact of it is still experienced. This is entirely in keeping with the work of Benocratis (eg Benocratis, 1997; Benocratis & Feagin, 1995) who identified a taxonomy of covert and subtle
forms of discrimination, all of which are less obvious than traditional, overt discrimination, but which nevertheless have negative outcomes for women in the workplace and are difficult to challenge.

Findings from the present study allude to the possibility that even where inequality is perceived to exist quite explicitly, individuals might be prepared to put up with discrimination if they are receiving sufficient rewards in other domains. For instance, where an individual’s pay and conditions are perceived to be better than they would be able to achieve elsewhere, they might be prepared to overlook the possibility that they might not be treated fairly compared to other members within their organisation:

“Here there is no [gender or nationality] equity but there are good salary and conditions so people don’t leave, they don’t want to lose what they have so they put up with it.”

Female HR Professional, CoE

The implication here is that an individual will make a cost-benefit appraisal of their circumstances and will decide whether their personal net benefit is worth remaining in a situation where they are treated less favourably than others. This situation inevitably leads to psychological conflict and the potential consequences of this are explored further in the discussion.

Intercultural differences with respect to perceptions of equality

There were notable perceived differences between individuals of different nationalities with respect to approaches to equality, diversity and also authority.

Differing perceptions of whether the host organisation was more or less inclined to be concerned with equality were evident between participants. For instance, there were those who valued the approach taken by their host organisation as more progressive than they would find at home:

“The view of married women is very different here, in Switzerland it is seen that you are giving away their [men’s] jobs, here that view just doesn’t exist” and “there is also more openness to difference – like handicapped people and different sexual orientation and nationality in comparison to what I would find at home...yes this is a good thing...”

Female Senior Manager, CoE
However, there was one male manager from Scandinavia who felt that his host organisation was lacking behind organisations at home with respect to attitudes towards gender, parenting and flexible working:

“It would be harder for me to take part-time work here – at home I wouldn’t think twice about it – but here, I think people would think it was odd for a man. They would consider that I am not fully committed to my career”.

Male Senior Manager EP

One manager commented on the difficulty of managing individuals who bring what he considers to be outdated views on gender equality:

“There are some cultural values....where there is still a tendency of pushing women down – particularly the southern States of Europe...you get imported views from the country of origin and then there is a problem with promoting these people even if they are competent for the post because they will perpetuate those views.”

Male Senior Manager, EP

What is interesting about the above view is that competence is perceived as a concept that excludes attitudes relating to equality and diversity; instead it could be argued that commitment to equality is an essential organisational competence and that those that practice unequal treatment are not demonstrating competence in their current post, let alone achieving sufficient competence to warrant promotion. The manager expressing the above view is clearly critical of the attitudes of his southern colleagues and also implies that he himself is more progressive. However, he is actually perpetuating these views by suggesting that attitudes towards equality fall outside the assessed level of competence for promotion.

Also worthy of note are the views of differences between members of the Old and New Member States with respect to attitudes to equality and authority. It has been frequently stated that those from the old communist countries are used to operating within organisational cultures that are more hierarchical than in the two participating organisations, for instance:

“Individuals from New Member States have a respect for the hierarchy, whilst the Old Member states will not be put off expressing their opinion”.

Female Senior Manager, EP
In another example, a gendered aspect to differences between cultures is discussed:

“There are different perceptions of relationship between women and men. Young women from the New Member States are more shy and more reluctant to have equal relationships or friendships...there are hierarchical barriers...they may see themselves in secretarial roles...especially the younger females”.

Female HR Professional, CoE

The first of these quotations sets up a dichotomy between “respect” and “expressing opinion” implying “either-or” and therefore indicating that these are mutually exclusive concepts. Thus it is not possible to respect authority at the same time as expressing one’s own opinion. However, it is notable that both the “either” and the “or” are presented with a positive valence. By using a word such as “respect” that is highly positive, the interviewee is almost conferring approval onto this attitude towards the hierarchy. But similarly, by suggesting that others “will not be put off” expressing themselves, this also indicates a level of approval – implying that overcoming any hierarchical barrier to giving an opinion is also to be welcomed. By indicating two possibilities, and by conferring a positive valence on each, the interviewee indicates a view that although those from New and Old Member States come from very different cultures both have something positive to offer within the current organisation. By setting up a dichotomy however, the interviewee is indicating the view that these cultures are immiscible; the characteristics of each cannot co-exist a) within an individual because they are mutually exclusive and b) within the organisation without one or other party being judged negatively. Thus if one “respects authority” one might be criticised for not putting forward one’s own view, whilst on the other hand, if one expresses one’s own views, this might be criticised as lacking in respect for authority. However, these two positions do not hold equal power within either organisation since the majority of individuals further up the hierarchy are from Established Member States. The consequences of this are two-fold. Firstly, there is an expectation that those from New Member States will adapt to the pre-existing cultural norms – the possibility of adopting or even incorporating a more respectful approach into one’s way of being is ignored. Secondly, since apparent unwillingness to speak out would not conform to the traditional “masculine” values judged important for management careers (Maier, 1997) it might therefore present a barrier to advancement for those from the New Member States.

In the second of the two quotations above, there is an implied criticism of females from the New Member States that links with the previously addressed issue of gender stereotyping. The implication once again is that these individuals do not possess attitudes commensurate
with high ranking positions and that it is their own inherent characteristics that are holding them back. Overall then, it would appear that being female, being from a New Member State and moreover, being both female and from a New Member State consigns an individual to a non-management role on the basis that the characteristics displayed do not correspond to the masculine traits considered suitable for management (Maier, 1997).

5.6 Chapter Summary

One of the most notable aspects of many of the views about the wider social factors that impact on both organisations is the sense of the inevitable that pervades their expression. Thus there is a perceived lack of control over the importing of social conventions and attitudes that are rooted in inequality; the workplace is presented here as merely a passive recipient of something that is undesirable but unavoidable. On the other hand, in relation to HR policies and practices, the organisations are presented as much more actively involved in the creation of both equality and inequality. Certain policies and practices that are intended to have a positive impact on equality are criticised as having unintended effects and creating subsets of inequality in their wake. In terms of work-related social contact, factors relating to parenting duties, hierarchical position and degree of national cohesiveness were found to impact on levels and types of connections that individuals made in both workplaces. It should be noted that analysis of the data revealed no obvious differences between HR professionals and senior managers and only minor differences between the organisations. The latter were primarily focused on the increased restrictions on achieving promotion in the CoE and an apparently greater division between hierarchical levels in the CoE. Meanwhile, there was disagreement about whether gender equality was evident in the organisations, with conflicting opinions being offered that did not appear to be determined by the gender of the interviewee. Analysis of these revealed that covert sexism might be present in which equality is claimed to exist, whilst evidence to the contrary is ignored. There were also perceptions of intercultural differences regarding attitudes towards equality and authority. Whilst those importing more overt forms of sexism and are outwardly criticised, there is also evidence that a westernised stereotype of masculinity is valued, albeit covertly, in terms of managerial careers in both organisations. One of the most interesting findings in this analysis has been that evidence of covert discrimination is often uncovered within the views of speakers when they are actually in the process of condemning more overt forms of discrimination.

In sum, it might be said that the factors identified, namely external social influences, HR practices, social contact at work and perceptions of equality have a major impact on the working lives of both men and women from Established and New Member States of the
participating organisations. Specifically, these factors affect the career progression and career barriers of individuals, the degree to which they are able to participate in work-related voluntary and social activities and the extent to which they feel equally valued by the organisation.
Chapter 6

Analysis Two: Thematic Analysis of Focus Group Data

6.1 Introduction
This chapter presents here are the findings from the analysis of the focus group data. The major difference between the classification of the focus group data in comparison to the classification of the interview data is that here, none of the data was categorised within the category “Work-related Social Contact”. This might have been due to a feature of the research process in that the issues contained within this category such as national-nepotism and networking might not have been issues that employees wanted to discuss with their colleagues. An alternative explanation is that these issues might only have been considered important by senior colleagues who had had cause to recognise their importance in achieving senior positions. A further deviation from the findings of the interview stage is that the data categories within each of the macro themes did not always conform to those previously identified; any such discrepancies between interview and focus group participants will be highlighted in the relevant section. What follows here then, is an analysis of the focus group data according to its classification within the three previously identified macro categories of “External Social Influences”, “Organisational Culture” and “Perceptions of Equality”.

6.2 External Social Influences

European Enlargement
In a similar vein to the findings of the interviews, external social factors were perceived to influence the European labour market and thus the pool of individuals available for recruitment to each organisation. As Europe has expanded to encompass new nation states, the two organisations have made a commitment to represent their Member States within their workforce; on this basis, successive Enlargements have led to recruitment drives within the new, primarily Eastern European Member States. The “story” amongst staff at both organisations is that Eastern Europeans are attracted to these employment opportunities because a) it offers the opportunity to experience parts of Europe that had previously been out of bounds and b) working for such European-identified organisation(s) offers the opportunity to increase the individual’s own European identity. This latter view combines notions of traditional organisational identification theory (e.g. Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999), which asserts that individuals are motivated to identify with organisations where association...
with the organisation is in some way ego-enhancing. With the assumption that membership of the CoE and EU are desirable, as a corollary, working for an associated organisation will enhance self-esteem. The issue of Eastern Europeans being overqualified for their position was again evident, with comments on the matter deriving from individuals from both organisations in non-management positions:

“Many Eastern Europeans are overqualified for the position because the only opportunity was to come as a secretary – there were many fewer opportunities at Administrator grade”

Non-Management, Eastern Females, EP

There was further comment on this situation from Eastern European managers in the EP, who felt under threat from their compatriots who had been recruited into secretarial positions:

“Those from New Member States who have degrees – they don’t want to be secretaries, they want YOUR job. They think if they show they are better than a secretary then they will move up.”

Lower Management, Eastern Females, EP

Unlike the interview data that indicated a view (from a female HR professional in the EP) that within the organisation, qualifications from Eastern Europe were not held in the same esteem as their Western equivalent, this view was not expressed in the focus groups.

EU Law

Whilst EU regulations stipulate that member state nationals have the right to move between EU countries to live and work, employees from non-EU European countries face particular difficulties. Spouses and other family members of non-EU employees are not permitted to work in EU countries and this specifically affects those working in the CoE as its workforce is drawn from all of its member states, including several from outside the EU. For example:

“it [working restrictions] is a problem for non-EU female personnel – their husbands can’t get jobs here and they are less willing to stay at home with children. These men are not stay-home fathers”.

Non-Management, Eastern Females, CoE

Here we can see that the influences of gender-role stereotypes and EU working restrictions combine to affect Eastern European female employees specifically. Moreover, accession to the EU for nations whose citizens had previously been subject to such restrictions has
inadvertently created problems for employees from the New Member States when travelling for work purposes:

“I thought it would be so nice to have EU membership but it is much harder now because so many of the New Member States passports go on the black market and this creates more suspicion during missions...I was stopped for 2 hours at Zurich airport and stripped of all documents until I could get someone from work to vouch for me”

Middle-Management, Eastern Females, CoE

Here, the status of being a citizen of a New Member State travelling in the EU means that suspicion is automatically aroused, with the onus on the individual to prove the validity of their situation. It is notable that in these circumstances, it is the association with the Organisation that both incites and resolves the problem; the individual comes under suspicion due to their involvement in official CoE business and subsequently has to rely on the Organisation to verify their identity and integrity.

Stereotyping

In keeping with the findings of the interviews, some of the widely available gender stereotypes are suggested to be alive and well within both organisations. There were several discussions of gender stereotyping within the workplace, many of which focussed around the “think-manager, think-male” conundrum (Schein & Davidson, 1993) and the perception that secretarial posts are viewed as women’s roles. One example of this surrounds a debate that occurred between the women in one of the lower management focus groups:

“Secretaries have a problem, they have been working for men for years and sometimes don’t obey requests from women....and a woman superior can more easily shout at you as a woman but wouldn’t shout at a man”.

Lower Management, Eastern Females, CoE

Here, the discussion centres on the double-bind for women in lower management positions – these individuals felt that because of their gender, they were not accorded respect by either their subordinates or their superiors. What is concerning about these suggestions is the implication that some women might have internalised gender-role stereotypes to the extent that it affects their behaviour towards colleagues. Secretaries might demonstrate a lack of respect due to discomfort with women who violate job-role gender-norms by becoming managers, whilst superiors might be less respectful to women below them in the hierarchy due to the implicit association of females with lower-grade (secretarial) roles, even where
those women are actually in a management role. A somewhat cyclical feature of this situation is that a lack of respect from a secretary could lead to a superior feeling the need to be more aggressive in order to enhance their authority, thus treating all subordinate women in a more disrespectful manner.

Another discussion in the same focus group surrounded a further example of gender-role stereotyping, though this also involved consideration of regional differences in the degree to which traditional gender-roles are endorsed, and on this basis the example is discussed in more detail in the section below entitled “Cultural Differences”.

An additional way in which commonly available stereotypes are imported into the organisation surrounds the conflation between national history and individual identity. For instance, individuals from nations with a recent history of conflict sometimes complained that they were treated within the organisation as though they were in some way personally responsible for the actions of their compatriots or even their governments, where those actions had been subject to international condemnation:

“There is a bad perception of Turkey because of its past history...sometimes people assume I don't know anything about human rights...”

Middle Management, Western Females, CoE

This situation might be explained by classic stereotyping theory as advanced by Greenwald and Banaji (1995). The implication is that international media information about events in Turkey has been widely absorbed and is then reactivated with the trigger of any reference to Turkey, regardless of the relevance of the original information to the current situation. Thus interactions with an individual Turk trigger cognitions about human rights abuses and consequently an implicit association develops. Although this process can be over-ridden, Devine (1989) has argued that the individual must be firstly aware of its existence and secondly, motivated to consider stereotype-disconfirming information. Where the individual above has encountered the assumptions mentioned, it would appear that either there is little to challenge the assumptions or that there is little motivation to consider an alternative view.

Cultural Differences

One of the issues classified here as an external social influence is the matter of cultural differences between employees. In this context, I use the term cultural differences to refer to the variations in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that occur between societies in different regions of Europe. It is notable that this issue was completely absent from the interviews with senior managers and HR professionals, although there were major discussions
surrounding cultural differences in many of the focus groups of all levels in the hierarchy and from both organisations. These differences were discussed from a wide variety of viewpoints and suggested that they had an impact on individuals’ capacity to build relationships at work, the level of pressure experienced and their sense of being equally valued compared to colleagues.

For instance:

“[There are some] cultural behaviour differences that are not accepted by others, for instance speaking loudly or with the hands like those from Southern Countries...touching or standing close is mostly upsetting to Brits, Germans and Scandinavians...although the latter need space they are more adaptable and accepting...this diminishes the opportunity to develop communication.”

Non-Management, Western Females, CoE

Although the participants in the above focus group identified as “Western” European in terms of the dichotomy between East versus West, they also recognised a division, seemingly within the category of “Western”, of Southern” versus “Northern” European. Those identifying as Southern European felt very strongly that their behavioural norms noted above were not accepted as organisational norms in either organisation:

“Northern values are more accepted, southern are more talkative and northern more introvert...there is a lack of common values for evaluation of work and different academic backgrounds...for a Greek, minutes must be as detailed as possible, for a Nordic national, minutes would be bullet points or bare bones”

Lower Management, Western Females, EP

Some individuals from Southern Europe expressed the view that they were resentful of the expectation to conform to a more “Northern” way of behaving:

“I am tired of adapting – why is it only me that has to adapt – because i am more open...”

Non-Management, Western Females, CoE

There was also discussion of differences in the degrees of national cohesion between Northern and Southern Europeans, with some of the Southern European nationalities accused of using national nepotism to enhance career progression for compatriots:
“As soon as you have a Greek or Italian high up you get floods of nephews and cousins coming in – it’s something we know happens, but can’t prove”.

Non-management, Western Females, EP

This alleged practice was very much frowned upon as unfair by the Northern Europeans in the focus groups although when asked whether they thought it significantly altered the balance of nationalities within the workforce, they replied that whilst it led to “pockets” of Greeks and Italians in certain Directorates, the practice was not sufficiently widespread for it to affect the dominance of English and French nationals in the organisations. The above quotation also implies a need to “prove” that the practice exists, and it is almost as though the perception that national nepotism can occur unchallenged in the organisations is the main issue of contention – without proof of unfairness, the organisations can maintain a veneer of equity even in the face of beliefs to the contrary. This finding endorses those from previous research by Chrobot-Mason (2003) who demonstrated that organisations that promote equality as a primary feature of their working practices are creating expectations amongst staff that are very difficult to fulfil and as a consequence, disillusionment and dissatisfaction can result.

On several occasions, cultural differences surrounding the degree to which gender-role stereotypes are endorsed were the subject of discussion, for instance:

"... you get the impression that the New Member States are more backward in terms of gender equality"

Middle Management, Western Females, EP

Here, Western Europeans are being critical of what they consider to be less progressive values held by their Eastern counterparts, however, it should be noted that in one of the Eastern focus groups, discussion centred on the perception that Southern European men were likely to endorse gender stereotypes, for example:

“MEPs have different views on what service you should give for example, an MEP from established Southern Member State wanted a female assistant because he would have felt ashamed to ask a man to deal with his dry cleaning”.

Lower Management, Eastern Females, EP

Here the work-role of “assistant” is being conflated with the traditional domestic role of women, with some senior officials expecting women to accept duties that include a level of
personal assistance that would be considered inappropriate for a man to perform. The implication of the above quotation is that regional differences in degrees of gender-role stereotyping are not neutralised by the more egalitarian values promoted by the organisation; thus social values external to the organisation are imported and maintained.

There are also several instances where cultural differences between the dominant nations of the UK and France are seen as a challenge for others to negotiate:

“It is difficult to position yourself between the French and the English...they are two countries with a history of war!”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, CoE

“Anglo-saxon ways are more flexible, less formal and more pragmatic, whilst the French are resistant to change, more formal and hierarchical and also attached to local culture”

Lower Management, Western Females, CoE

There has also been considerable debate amongst Eastern Europeans surrounding the need to conform to established organisational norms, which are perceived to derive from French culture:

“You find that you don’t always have the same opportunities to participate if you don’t behave like a French person...for example, the way you behave in the hierarchy is that you argue a lot, contest everything and monopolise the floor.”

Lower Management, Eastern Males, CoE

However, an alternative perspective is demonstrated by an individual from another of the Eastern Europe focus groups, who started behaving in a manner that was considered to be outside his Eastern European cultural norms and he felt he was judged more harshly due to this deviation, even though he wasn’t deviating from the above mentioned organisational (French cultural) norms:

“I was suddenly considered to be lacking in diplomatic skills because after a while I just got fed up with their assumptions and started biting back.”

Middle Management, Eastern Males, CoE

This is another double-bind, on this occasion for Eastern Europeans. If they behave in a manner commensurate with assumptions about their own culture, they find that participation and opportunities are restricted; on the other hand, if they behave more in keeping with
organisational norms, they are also considered deviant, as they are not behaving in a predictable “Eastern European” manner. It is significant that the stereotype of typically “Eastern European” behaviour has been demonstrably prevalent in several of the Western European focus groups and is neatly summarised by the following quotation:

“They [Eastern Europeans] show more deference to hierarchy and are non-questioning. They are less critical of their own countries and are more self-identifying with their home-nation”

Lower Management, Western Females, CoE

Furthermore, this matter of national identity is interesting in that it is only raised in relation to Eastern nationals by Western nationals; it is therefore difficult to determine whether there is a difference in self-perception between Eastern and Western employees, or whether the apparent differences are merely imagined as a result of stereotyping and assumptions on the part of the dominant (Western) group. Regardless of its origin, that Westerners perceive differences in organisational identification is illustrated by the following:

“Western nationals have more of an organisational CoE identity and less of a national identity than Eastern nationals”.

Lower Management, Western Females, CoE

However, it is possible that the perception of Eastern Europeans as possessing a strong national identity may stem from the possibility that minority-group behaviour might be more prominent and open to scrutiny due to its novelty (Linehan and Scullion, 2001). This possibility is endorsed by a view offered by Western males considering the position of their Eastern counterparts:

“Smaller countries using examples from their own culture are seen as narrow and that they cannot get past their own culture – but it’s just seen as “normal” for English or French to use their own cultural references – say from literature etcetera”

Middle-Management, Western Males, CoE

6.3 Organisational Culture
The definition of organisational culture is offered in the previous section of this chapter in relation to findings from the interviews with senior managers and HR professionals. In keeping with these previous findings, the way in which the various human resource policies
are operationalised within the two organisations were frequently cited as issues that affected individual experiences at work. The rules surrounding “Equal Merit” were again under debate, alongside the policies relating to the “official languages” of the organisations. The one subcategory that was mentioned by interview participants that did not feature in the focus group discussions is the matter of staff quotas for ensuring equal representation across nationalities. However, the reasons for this discrepancy are unclear. It could be that employees are more ready to accept the concept of quotas as fair, or that there were more pressing examples of “unfairness” that took precedence in the focus groups.

Equal merit

The policies on promoting or recruiting individuals from the under-represented gender in cases where two candidates are of equal merit were discussed frequently in the focus groups. The views offered were generally negative and indicated a lack of support for this policy. For instance, in several of the male focus groups, views were expressed that indicated the existence of the equal-merit policy indicated a prioritisation of women over men, even to the extent that the policy is sometimes described inaccurately, but in terms that belie the underlying perception:

“Some posts are reserved for women because of the equal merit rule”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, CoE

“It’s all about perception – women think it’s harder for them to get up the hierarchy but it is actually harder for us because of the equal merit criteria”

Lower Management, Eastern Males, CoE

Thus far, it has been observed that males within the organisations feel threatened by the “equal merit rule”, however, there is evidence that women are often not in favour of this practice either. Women in both organisations acknowledge a perception that the desire to achieve targets relating to numerical equality of promotions and appointments can lead to pressure for staff involved in selection decisions and sometimes, inappropriate selections:

“When I got the job, the person recruiting had been under pressure to appoint more women, so she was very happy when I accepted the post”.

Middle Management Eastern Females, EP

“Political correctness can lead to women being appointed who may be under qualified”.

Lower Management, Western Females, EP
As a consequence of this and in keeping with much previous research on the matter (e.g. Kalev, Kelly & Dobbin, 2006), women who are promoted feel under extra pressure to prove their suitability for the post:

“Positive discrimination can be problematic; because these policies exist you sometimes have to prove that you got a job on merit”.

Middle Management, Western Females, CoE

Working Hours

There are policies in both organisations that allow part-time working. However, the reality for many staff is that working part-time is considered to indicate a lack of commitment to the organisation, a “women’s issue” and by some, a legitimate reason for lack of career progression. There is an irony that the availability of part-time hours is matched by a “long-hours” culture in both organisations, in which individuals are expected to work however long it takes to get the job done, regardless of the impact on work-life balance. Within focus groups in both organisations, there was considerable discussion surrounding comparisons between the host organisation and home organisations regarding the availability of part-time work. There was a noticeable difference between the perceptions of males from Eastern European countries and those from Scandinavia or progressive Western nations such as The Netherlands, with the latter suggesting that males would find it easier to work flexibly in their home countries in order to facilitate time with family:

“There are more opportunities for part-time working in Holland - management enables this and it is assumed to be normal...The CoE is an island by itself – it hasn’t caught up, it’s in a cultural time warp”.

Lower Management, Western Males, CoE

“As a man, it could be more difficult to have colleagues accept that you take parental leave, whereas for example in Sweden, you have to take a certain period of parental leave”.

Pre-management, Western Males, EP

Meanwhile, Eastern European men suggested that in theory at least, it would be easier for them to work part-time in the host organisation than in their home countries:

“Here you could work part-time as men but at home it is not possible – it would be odd for a man – also part-time work is generally hard to find...here it is theoretically possible but in
reality it is often not – they make it difficult – also part-time working is seen as a female agenda so it’s even more difficult for men...part-time is seen as a women’s issue”.

Non-Management, Eastern Males, CoE

Thus in Eastern European countries it would be difficult to work part-time due to its general lack of availability; as men, these participants felt it would be just as difficult to work part-time in the host organisation because of their gender. It is interesting that this debate arose in relation to a discussion about equality in the host organisation and the lack of access to part-time work was given as an example of an area from which men felt excluded. Meanwhile, the lack of part-time working in their home countries was just accepted as a societal norm and was not perceived by the participants as a matter of equality or inequality.

Many more focus group discussions surrounding host versus home country differences focussed on the difficulty faced by expatriate workers in finding childcare. For instance:

“In Turkey and Cyprus there are more crèches and they also come to pick up your children. People from these countries often bring family over to look after their children because they feel they cannot work and live with the facilities here. You just cannot go home at 6.30 everyday in this job so if you have no family you have to have a live-in nanny, which just feels wrong for some of us”

Non-Management, Western Females, CoE

There may also be cultural differences in views about what constitutes acceptable childcare:

“Here, if my child is ill, I am supposed not to stay at home – I have to get a childminder but it goes against nature to leave a sick child with someone other than family”.

Non-Management, Eastern Females, CoE

“At home I would be seen as a very bad mother if I returned to work within 3 years of childbirth...at home the grandparents would take your child whilst you were working because part-time working hardly exists”

Lower Management, Eastern Females, EP

In these discussions, Eastern European women in both organisations are expressing concern about the struggle to balance responsibilities of family and work and whilst these sentiments are not dissimilar to those expressed by Western women, there is the additional factor that the cultural norms from their home nation indicate that blood-relatives are the only
acceptable alternative to mother-care. On the other hand, Eastern European women welcome the job-security of their host organisations, suggesting that the situation is preferable to that of their home country:

“At home if you get pregnant you run the risk of not getting your job back – despite government regulations – but here you have a secure job – you can get pregnant because you have a secure job and cannot get fired unless you die!”

Middle Management, Eastern Females, EP

The apparent gratitude for a level of job security that allows women to combine working with raising a family is appreciated to the extent that there is initially a denial of any problems relating to combining these roles:

“For us, working and having children just is not an issue, our mothers and grandmothers would always have done this – we don’t see a problem”!

“Yes, we just always find a solution”. Lower Management, Eastern Females, EP

The emphasis on “for us” is worthy of comment here; “us” refers to Eastern as opposed to Western working mothers and the suggestion is that Western women complain too much about gender inequality, particularly in relation to challenges associated with work-family balance:

“Do not push the topic of gender discrimination too much – it is a big topic in the Western world but in Hungary we could not afford NOT to have women working and also have children – it is a fact of life so there is no issue”.

Middle Management, Eastern Females, EP

It is worth comparing this assertion that “there is no issue” with further comments from Eastern women; the quotations below suggest that Eastern women have accepted that childbearing and childrearing are going to be career-limiting life choices and to some extent, they embrace this as a “natural” situation on account of biological gender differences:

“Here, family is not a problem so long as you don’t want to get too far up”.

Lower Management, Eastern Females, EP

“You can’t expect the same level of women to get to upper-tier if by their own choice they have time out or work part-time to look after children...a single childless person will always
move up quicker. We don’t want to break nature, it’s women who have the children and breastfeed...”

Middle Management, Eastern Females, EP

Meanwhile, Western women also comment on the need to make a choice between working flexibly and career progress; however, unlike their Eastern counterparts, instead of endorsing the situation and viewing it as “natural” they view this situation as a choice that is forced upon men and women by organisational culture and practices, which when combined with differing priorities between men and women, result in different choices being made:

“You can have this flexibility to bring up and care for family but as a consequence you must accept it will affect your career – therefore, men are less likely to be carers because they don’t accept these consequences”.

Lower Management, Western Females, EP

In support of the above view, Western men acknowledge that family-related flexibility or absence is going to have an effect on career and some also indicate the view that this presents a problem with covering the residual work:

“Women more often take part-time, which might impact on their careers...but men are less absent in general; sickness of children, pregnancy etcetera and the solution is to foresee more flexible polyvalent replacement even for short periods”

“Most women are leaving work earlier because of the children...we need more men in the EP.”

Non-management, Western Males, EP

Resentment regarding residual work and its impact on the workload of other workers is evident here and two solutions are proposed, the first of which is that the organisation should appoint short-term replacements for absent staff and the second of which is that more men should be appointed to the Organisation. This reinforces the associations between a) women and family and b) men and work and cites the sources of the problem as women being both employees and mothers at the same time.

The association between part-time working and motherhood is also evident in the debate amongst women without children. There were also several instances where women without children complained that the possibility of working part-time was not only reserved for women but specifically women with children, thus constructing the notion of flexible working
as an issue relating to motherhood. This created resentment not only from men, but from other women who might have wanted to work part-time to pursue other interests:

“We need a mentality change, part-time is discouraged at or before job applications and there is certainly no opportunity for part time if you don’t have children”.

Non-management, Western Females, EP

“When family obligations mean that you are not available to work overtime this creates the necessity to choose between career and family...women with no children are supposed to be totally available”.

Non-management, Western Females, EP

The two quotations juxtaposed below offer a neat contrast between Western women and men in terms of their respective focal concerns regarding working whilst raising a family:

“There is a big pressure to be seen not to be choosing one or the other but to be combining both whilst not neglecting work”.

Lower Management, Western Males, EP

“As a mother sometimes you feel guilty – you feel you have to maintain the impression of not neglecting your family even if you know you are not”.

Lower Management, Western Females, EP

It is evident that both genders are concerned with the reality of combining work and family life and there are two features of these comments worthy of further consideration. Firstly, aside from the attending to the challenges involved, both quotations indicate concern with impression management. For the men there is a pressure “to be seen”, for the women “to maintain the impression” and both of these phrases imply effortful construction of an image to present to the outside world. However, the focus of the impression that each desired to create differed according to gender. Whilst both genders were concerned to avoid the appearance of being neglectful, for the men, the focus was on the importance of demonstrating that work was not being neglected, whilst the women were anxious to avoid the impression of neglecting their family.

It should be noted that in the interviews with senior managers and HR professionals, the debate surrounding working hours primarily focussed on the restrictions that family commitments place on networking activities. This was barely acknowledged in the focus
groups, whilst instead concerns centred on the difference between policies and realities relating to the availability of part-time work and the impact of working part-time on those who choose to do so and those that do not. It would seem that those in authority feel that they have fulfilled their responsibility by making flexible working available in principle and appear unwilling to engage with the consequential difficulties encountered by their subordinates. It is also possible that those in authority have achieved their senior position precisely because they have not availed themselves of flexible working practices and therefore implicitly associate flexible working with lower work commitment and is thus legitimately career limiting in their view. A further explanation might be that networking might be more of a concern for those in senior positions because promotion at the higher levels might be more dependent on “who you know”; thus the capacity of senior managers to engage in networking practices might take on particular significance at this level.

Language
The issue of language in relation to the official languages of both organisations was mentioned frequently. Endorsing the views of the Senior Managers interviewed previously, native speakers of minority languages stated that their minority status might have been an advantage in their initial recruitment to the Organisations; however, there is a widespread perception in both Organisations that native speakers of English and French have an advantage in promotion terms:

“I am recruited because I speak Turkish, but it is now a disadvantage to career progression. Even where your English or French is very good, I am still not the same standard as a native speaker”.

Non-Management, Western Females, CoE

Within this focus group, there was an acknowledgement that those individuals for whom neither English nor French was their native language felt the need try harder to make up for this apparent failing:

“Other nationalities than the two official languages feel the need to prove they are as good”

Non-Management, Western Females, CoE

This view is endorsed further with comments on the difference between “policy” and “practice” in the organisation and some participants even came up with a suggestion of how to even up this apparent inequality:
“There is easier promotion for native speakers of French and English – the higher posts are only for them, but this is unofficial practice...they should require native speakers to speak another language as well!”

Lower Management, Eastern Women, CoE

What is interesting about this particular debate is that there is no distinction here between individuals from New Member States and those from Established Member States who are non-native speakers of English or French; there is a clear divide between English/French speakers and “everyone else” in the perceptions of the Western European participants. Meanwhile, in the Eastern European focus groups, there was more of a sense of being classified as generically “Eastern”:

“They make assumptions as an Estonian I should know Russian – Westerners don't differentiate between Eastern European countries, they come to me with Latvian, Russian, Lithuanian scripts. Though Estonian is similar to Finnish...I would have liked to work for the Scandinavian unit, but I am not seen as such”.

Non-Management, Eastern Females, CoE

In both organisations there was the view that Enlargement brought more employees whose second language is English rather than French and that this has created a larger proportion of employees who converse in English, eroding the dominance of the French language. This is viewed as potentially problematic for those relying on communicating in French, such as administrative assistants who are drawn from the surrounding locality:

“English is becoming more widely spoken since Enlargement – this could be increasingly problematic for those who rely on fluency in French – it could end up being a real career barrier...”

Non-management, Western Males, EP

Some of the discussions conveyed the view that rather than breaking the linguistic dominance of English and French in the organisations, Enlargement had shifted the balance of power from French to English-speaking individuals:

“Enlargement helped shift the balance from French to English in the organisation; there is a French admin system but now the new management tools are anglo-saxon...this is better because with French systems it was very hierarchical and there was a lack of transparency”

Lower Management, Western Males, CoE
This shift in power is accredited to the critical mass of individuals entering the organisations from Eastern Europe, whose second language was English and who, at most, may have only a rudimentary knowledge of French. In the debates surrounding the dominance of language, discussion frequently alluded to ways of working that were designated specifically English or French, indicating that as linguistic dominance shifted to favour the former, a concomitant cultural shift accompanied this, indicating that the power of language extends beyond communication in the most basic sense.

6.4 Perceptions of Equality at Work

In keeping with the findings from the interviews, there were varying responses regarding the issue of feeling equal in the organisations. Furthermore, in a similar vein to the interview analysis, there is a relationship between this category (i.e. perceptions of equality) and the previous categories (external social influences and organisational culture) in that the perception of being equally valued (or otherwise) in the organisation is to a large extent based on experiences that are classified within the previous two categories. To avoid repetition, there will therefore be cross-referencing to the previous categories where appropriate.

Analysis of the data within the present category revealed substantial differences in perspectives according to gender and nationality. In order to explore these differing views, the subcategories, or “themes” in this section map the focus group categories as follows:

- Western Men
- Western Women
- Eastern Men
- Eastern Women

Following the classification of data within these categories, a matrix analysis was performed in order to facilitate a between-groups comparison. However, Nadin and Cassell (2003) point out that “a completed matrix is not the end point of the analysis” (p273) and that “analytic text” needs to be produced, which is an in-depth exploration and interpretation of the actual data in the matrix. In this case, the analytic text is presented first so that the complexities within the data might be considered in some detail. The matrix is then presented by way of summarising this data and facilitating more immediate insights into the locations of similarities and differences according to gender, nationality, hierarchical level and organisation (see Figure 6.1).
Western Men

Western men in all of the focus groups reported feeling equally valued on the basis of both gender and nationality; there were no differences according to organisation or hierarchy. Typically they characterised equality as a lack of discrimination or negative consequences on the basis of gender or nationality and the following quotation is quite typical of their responses:

“Yes, I am equal that is my answer what more is there to say?”

Lower Management, Western Males, EP

Many of the Western men appeared to struggle with even considering the concept of equality in relation to themselves – they seemed surprised to be asked for their own perspective and it was as if many of them had never previously considered the matter. For these men, equality appears to be an unconscious presumption that is perpetuated due to a lack of disconfirming information, interactions or incidents.

Furthermore, many of the Western men offered the view that those claiming discrimination might be looking for reasons to excuse their own failings rather than being the victims of unfairness:

“Some people just look for discrimination and latch on to things that happen to them and then call it discrimination when it could be another reason and another person wouldn’t call it that.”

Non-Management, Western Males, EP

This finding is in keeping with much previous research into majority-group reactions to claims of discrimination (e.g. Kaiser, Dyrenforth & Hagiawara, 2006) and potentially endorses research into the “just-world” hypothesis in which system justifying beliefs are required to be maintained as employees at all levels of hierarchy have a need to see their world as fair (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009; Lerner, 1980). Thus where individuals claim discrimination the majority-group are motivated to reject these claims as they do not conform to their concept of the “just-world” and the potential challenge to the belief that they themselves obtained their superior position on merit is too ego-threatening to contemplate (Cameron, 2001). On this basis then, an explanation is offered in relation of the motivation of the majority group to dismiss claims of discrimination.

In support of the above view, Western men specifically reject the notion that women are disadvantaged when it comes to managing work-family demands:
“It’s more acceptable for women to have difficulty in combining family and work, but as a father I experience this too. Barriers exist for parents more than men or women”

Lower Management, Western Males, EP

According to James et al, (2001) this is a common reaction of majority group members and it betrays their lack of understanding of the minority perspective. Possibly motivated out of a need to maintain a “just world” viewpoint (Hafer & Bègue, 2005) this may also be a means of protecting their own self-esteem; Western men may have a need to believe that they achieved their position on the basis of their own skills and abilities, rather than because they were favoured due to their gender or nationality.

Eastern Men

The Eastern men in the focus groups had an entirely opposite perspective to their Western counterparts, with men in all the relevant focus groups expressing the opinion that they are not equally valued by their organisations and face disadvantage on the basis of both gender and nationality. To reiterate, there were no differences between organisations or hierarchical position in this respect.

Eastern men frequently referred to the “equal merit rule” (where in promotion cases of equal merit, the candidate from the under-represented gender should be selected) as an example of women’s interests being given priority and even the existence of an Equality Unit was seen as a threat to the male position:

“It’s all about perception – women think it’s harder for them to get up the hierarchy but it is actually harder for us because of the ‘equal merit’ criteria.”

“Equal opportunities is just another term for women’s rights”

Lower Management, Eastern Males, CoE

There are several aspects of the above quotations that merit further inspection. Firstly, in comparison to the Western male perspective, Eastern men in both organisations express much more dissatisfaction with policies and practices surrounding gender equality. Whilst Western men are more likely to view these policies as an attempt to address existing gender inequality in the workplace, Eastern men view them as promoting gender inequality, with men as the losers. Aside from self-serving reasons for rejecting HR gender-equality policies another possible reason for resistance is the association of “regulation” with state control and thus the restriction of personal freedom that existed under the now-rejected communist regimes. As discussed in Chapter 3, Sharp (2005) argues that the rejection of communism
has brought with it an associated denunciation of any attempt to impose regulation on what are considered to be personal matters which in this instance means the choices surrounding work and family.

A related matter to consider here is the reference to homosexuals in the EP. In two of the Eastern male focus groups in the EP, there was the view that there were a large number of homosexuals in the organisation and that these individuals were actively privileged:

“Women and homosexuals are privileged here – there are just so many of them – I am disadvantaged because I am not like them”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

This perspective was in part based on the mention of sexuality as a protected characteristic in the equality and diversity documents of the organisation and the opposition to this may be related to the aforementioned aversion to the regulation of what are viewed as private matters. However, there was an additional view that the organisation appeared to eschew traditionally masculine characteristics in favour of a less “macho”, more feminine way of being. In the view of the Eastern men, these favoured characteristics were associated with women and homosexual men, thus giving certain individuals an advantage in terms of career progression and interpersonal relationships:

“In my personal opinion, homosexuals – especially mens – have better possibilities for career because they have better personal relations with women – more gentle, kind, more communicative, thus they can seek for careers more easily. In other words, they are flowing between mens and women without conflicts”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

This view is not demonstrated in the focus groups of the CoE and one possible reason for this might be the degree to which the participants had become accustomed to the organisational norms of their present employment. Eastern European nations have had a longer history of inclusion within the CoE and therefore there is a larger body of Eastern European employees with longer employment records in the CoE administration. A longer period of socialisation within the host organisation may have brought acceptance of an attitude towards minority sexuality that is more open than would have been the case in organisations within Eastern Europe. This socialisation may also have inculcated a more “Western” approach to organisational regulations amongst employees from the East, in which there is more acceptance that HR regulations are designed to address inequalities in
the workplace and not to exert control over personal choices. By contrast, for those individuals newly arrived in the EP, the issue that employees with a minority sexual orientation are apparently permitted to be open about their sexuality might be a culture shock:

“There are a large proportion of homosexuals in this organisation – in my last [home country] organisation, there were none”.

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

Regarding nationality, there was a very strong feeling in all of the Eastern Male focus groups that they were treated as inferior in comparison to their Western counterparts. Firstly, it should be noted that they felt that the East-West differentiation was the primary basis for categorisation within the organisations:

“You are first of all looked at as whether you come from East or West”

Middle Management, Eastern Males, CoE

Secondly, the EP is perceived to make a distinction between nations that are “established” in the EU and those that have entered with the recent Enlargement activities and this is viewed as divisive in terms of creating a sense of “us” and “them”:

“Data is presented separately for old and new Member States so we are made to feel different”

“When do we stop being ‘new’?”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

Thus a classic ingroup-outgroup dichotomy is created, in which old member states are set up in opposition to newer ones. According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), one of the mechanisms by which such a dichotomy is created and maintained is by emphasising differences between groups whilst minimising differences within groups. This practice is reported to be prevalent in both organisations, for instance:

“Russian, Armenian, Czech, for Westerners these are all the same”.

Non-Management, Eastern Males, CoE

Ironically, though this speaker is complaining about Westerners’ apparent inability or unwillingness to differentiate between non-Western groups, by using the generic term
“Westerners”, he is also homogenising the opposing group, in suggesting that all members behave the same.

For some, the sense of their own inferior status in the organisations derives from what is frequently termed the “attitude” of those in the in-group, with concrete evidence of unequal treatment being hard to define:

“It’s not a question of a big discrimination, more a series of small discriminations”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

This may indicate that modern forms of discrimination that are more subtle and covert are more prevalent than more traditional, overt forms in the organisations. This would be in keeping with recent research on racial and sexual discrimination, that demonstrated a cultural shift in organisations towards the endorsement of a rhetoric of equality that masks underlying attitudes of prejudice towards the out-group that nevertheless remain (Brief, 2007). The attitudes of the in-group are described as constructing the positions of those from the “West” and those from the “East” as superior and inferior respectively:

“They think we are barbarians who are just trying to get lucky in ‘their world’”.

Non-Management, Eastern Males, CoE

The pronoun “they” is used here to denote “not-us”, immediately alluding to the aforementioned us-and-them dichotomy, in this instance, “they” referring to the dominant, Western group. Furthermore, the use of the term “their world” also draws attention to the positioning of the EU as the property of the West, with Eastern Europeans being viewed almost as imposters. The characterisation of Eastern Europeans as “barbarians” invokes historical connotations of the East-West opposition (discussed in Chapter 3), in which the term 'Eastern Europe' was used during the Enlightenment period to refer to nations that were located both geographically and culturally between the ‘civilised’ West and the ‘barbarous’ Orient (Wolff, 1994). The possibility that some members of the “out-group” might wish to distance themselves from the above characterisation is evident in comments that indicate a rejection of the notion of “Eastern” from their identity:

“We need to change the mentality of old established officials with respect to knowledge of geography of Europe – we come from CENTRAL EUROPE not from Eastern Europe!”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP
This quotation reveals a desire to be identified by a concrete geographical location rather than a more nebulous cultural inference and as such is an explicit rejection of the identity that is allegedly imposed upon them by the “established officials”. At the same time, it also manages to act as a criticism of the establishment by indicating the officials’ apparent lack of knowledge of the geography of the region over which they have dominion.

Further descriptive expressions of feeling excluded and inferior are offered in two of the EP focus groups where the status accorded to Eastern Europeans was compared to the racial discrimination faced by black people in the west. The following example specifically invokes imagery associated with the racial segregation in the first half of the 20th Century in the USA:

“It’s as it was for blacks, we are on the same coach going to the same place but those at the back are Eastern European now”.

Middle Management, Eastern Males, EP

The underlying values within this analogy may be explored further with reference to a vocal exchange from another of the focus groups:

“If you are black you get respect, but if you are Eastern European you are not worth anything”.

(Laughter)

“Yes we are the new Negros.”

(Laughter)

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

This exchange may have started with a genuinely felt expression of feeling; however the attendant laughter indicates that the group sense an irony within the first and second statements. Verbal irony indicates speech in which the implied meaning is in opposition to its literal meaning. Thus, whilst the speakers are indicating that they feel discriminated against in the manner that black people are discriminated against by white people, the laughter indicates that the statements made are not factual statements, but indeed are used ironically to indicate that Eastern Europeans are self-evidently not inferior to Negros and their treatment as such is defacto ridiculous and worthy only of derisive laughter. Furthermore, stating that they are treated as Negros, these Eastern Europeans are indicating their dissent with Western values in which racial equality is prevalent but cultural acceptance of Eastern Europe is not.
Western Women

The majority of Western women in both organisations reported to feel equally valued on the basis of their nationality; however, there was some ambivalence on the issue expressed by some individuals. In two of the focus groups (Western females in lower management in the EP and Western females in middle management in the CoE) there was a difference in perspective between those from Northern and those from Southern Member States. Cultural differences that were accorded differing levels of acceptance have been previously discussed; those individuals who felt under pressure to adapt to dominant cultural norms expressed the view that they were not equally valued in terms of their nationality within the organisations. Notably, there was no such divide in any of the male focus groups. It is possible that women might be more sensitive to non-verbal cues (Baron-Cohen, 2002) surrounding the acceptability or otherwise of their cultural mannerisms, or an alternative explanation might be that “western maleness” accords sufficient status to negate any concern about the relative acceptability of variations in behaviour.

Notwithstanding the above, the primary concern of Western Women with respect to equality in the two organisations related to the challenge of combining their domestic roles with their work roles. Some of these issues were addressed within the section entitled “Organisational Culture” in the subsection “Working Hours”. A comment typical of the findings from both organisations indicates that because women are more likely than men to be primary carers in domestic situations, women are more affected by the pressure of combining the two roles:

“It is less macho here than before, but there are still effects of parental responsibilities – part-timers, mostly women are less valued…”

Lower Management, Western Females, CoE

This is specifically felt by those whose home-nation has a more progressive attitude to flexible working in which gender roles carry a more equal share of domestic and work responsibilities:

“Scandinavians are disheartened here because they are more ‘enlightened’ and find the culture very old-fashioned”

Lower Management, Western Females, CoE

In addition to those findings, it would seem that organisational linguistic requirements might combine with sex-role stereotyping to create difficulty for some women in certain roles,
particularly those in translation units. This perspective was evident in both organisations and the following is a good example of the feelings expressed:

“Five years working in your own language is a handicap – if you want to move elsewhere in the organisation ... we are seen as just a bunch of mothers who only work in our own language”

Non-management, Western Females, EP

The practice of minimising the contribution of women managers by emphasising skills associated with secretarial as opposed to managerial work was also highlighted:

“There is gender prejudice for example, asking me to take the minutes in a meeting because I am the only women and then ‘here comes the suffragette’ when I walk in”

Lower Management, Western Females, EP

This is a notable quotation because it not only betrays attitudes of sex-role stereotyping but also points to experiences where women’s resistance to such stereotyping is ridiculed. The latter comment “here comes the suffragette” was reported to come from an Eastern European male, and the ironic use of the term “suffragette” could be viewed as an attempt to belittle Western feminist ideals. As women’s suffrage was achieved in the Western world in the early part of the 20th Century, the ironic invocation of the notion of the Western women’s suffrage movement has the effect of positioning the recipient of the comment as outdated and irrelevant. At the same time the male employee is implicitly indicating his opposition to women’s attempts to achieve social equality.

There were several discussions about the nature of sexism in the organisations and whilst evidence of overt sexism was rare, most of the Western women in both organisations and at all levels gave examples of modern discrimination. The following is a very cogent example of this:

“I came with the expectation of moving on much faster but have felt held back by being a woman. I have felt this invisible barrier – spoken – always the message is that competence counts – but their behaviour in meetings etcetera ... yawning, looking away, looking bored when women speak...”

Middle Management, Western Females, EP

Here, the lack of correspondence between organisational policies on equality and interpersonal experiences are highlighted. The experiences of the speaker would be
classified within the realms of covert discrimination (Benokratis & Feagin, 1995) and have the effect of creating a hostile working environment for female managers whilst being unobtrusive and ambiguous enough to go unchallenged.

An interesting feature of the Western female focus groups is that in both organisations, the women in the lowest hierarchical category (non-management employees), did not report gender discrimination, instead stating that they felt equally valued in terms of their gender. That this was the case for both organisations might lead to the conjecture that this is not a mere anomaly; it is important then to consider possible reasons for this finding. Firstly, it might be that women in the lower echelons of the organisations are accorded more flexibility that is considered inappropriate for managerial positions and therefore find less role conflict in terms of combining domestic and work duties. Another possibility is that there might be fewer women in the lower ranks who have yet to begin a family and therefore have not yet encountered the barriers cited by other women in terms of work-family balance. A third suggestion might be that women in non-management positions might be viewed as fulfilling a more appropriate gender-role and are therefore not faced with the same level of resistance from traditionalists as encountered by those challenging the established “think-manager, think-male” phenomenon.

**Eastern Women**

The overall finding relating to the experience of Eastern women is that they generally report facing difficulties on the grounds of their national status in the organisations but unlike their Western counterparts, do not allege discrimination on the grounds of their gender.

Firstly then, in terms of nationality, there are concrete examples of where they have felt disadvantaged, for instance:

“The introductory materials – like the staff regulations were not available in our mother tongue”

Non-Management, Eastern Females, EP

There are also reports of modern forms of discrimination that are more subtle and difficult to define:

“I am seen as a second-class person but in terms of colleagues I am treated well, but between the lines... it’s never explicit”

Middle Management, Eastern Females, EP
As reported by Brief (2007) one of the principle problems with modern forms of
discrimination is that their very subtlety makes them difficult to challenge without appearing
oversensitive or irrational. Indeed this very charge is levelled at Western women by those in
several of the Eastern focus groups:

“Sometimes you can exaggerate the position out of fear of discrimination – we should keep
some rationality”

Lower Management, Eastern Females, CoE

“You are causing a problem for yourself – if you bang the drum for women you will be treated
differently.”

“Some feminists forget that we are different – women have other strengths and weaknesses
than men it doesn’t mean they are better or worse”.

Middle Management, Eastern Females, EP

The above quotations convey a rejection of calls for gender equality in the workplace,
suggesting that it is feminism itself that is the cause of differential treatment of women. This
supports the assertion discussed in Chapter 3 that feminism is largely rejected by women in
Eastern Europe. The underlying reasons for this might be that feminism is either considered
to be located within the left-wing values synonymous with the now-rejected communist
regimes or perceived as representing an implicit and unquestioning acceptance of Western
values (Sharp, 2005).

“Do not push the topic of gender discrimination too much – it is a big topic in the Western
world but in Hungary we could not afford NOT to have women working and also have
children – it is a fact of life so there is no issue”.

Middle Management, Eastern Females, EP

This supports the notion that women’s increasing inclusion in the workplace does not have
the same connotation of emancipation as it does for middle-class feminists in the West.
Under communism, going out to work was not considered a “right” but a “necessity” and
most of women’s work was concentrated in low-paid menial jobs (Dölling 1991). Added to
the issue that entry to the workplace did not result in a reduction of domestic duties, this
“double burden” was viewed ambivalently at best (Sharp, 2005).
Although the aforementioned experiences are representative of the majority of the Eastern Women participating in the current study, it should be noted that not all of the Eastern women reported experiences of gender equality. Notably, those in the higher levels in the CoE reported experiences that were more similar to those of Western women, alluding to barriers associated with gender-role stereotyping and work-family balance. As previously mentioned, the fact that accession to the CoE for Eastern European nations occurred significantly before accession to the EU means that there are more Eastern European employees with longer employment records in the CoE administration. This longer period of socialisation within the host organisation might have lead to a more Western view being inculcated amongst the Eastern women in the CoE. This may also partially account for hierarchal differences between groups in the CoE assuming that those at higher levels have longer employment records. However, this last point in particular is only offered as a possible explanation; the veracity of the situation would need further research to establish.

Matrix analysis of data regarding perceptions of equal value
As previously discussed, a matrix was constructed to make explicit the patterns within the text that are discussed in this section. Amongst the more detailed and discursive responses explored above, the data from the focus group transcripts also indicated each group’s yes/no answer to whether they felt equally valued on the basis of gender and nationality. In order to facilitate a comparison of responses according to organisation, hierarchical level, gender and region of Europe, a matrix analysis was performed. Miles and Huberman (1994) point out that data matrices can be constructed to either describe the data or to explain data phenomena. The purpose of constructing a matrix in the present context is to reduce large amounts of data within the macro theme of “Perceptions of Equality” to its component parts i.e. personal perceptions of being equally valued or otherwise. This process had the effect of making explicit the differences in views according to the above mentioned demographic features of employees. On this basis, the present matrix is of the descriptive variety, constructed as a tool for displaying similarities and contrasts in views between groups.
**Figure 6.1. Matrix Displaying Perceptions of Being Equally Valued at Work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>European Parliament</th>
<th>Council of Europe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Men</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Women</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Men</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Women</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Men</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Women</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES/NO*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Men</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Women</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Men</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Women</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Men</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Women</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*YES/NO in these focus groups refers to a North/South divide in perceptions, with employees from Northern Europe feeling more valued than those from Southern Europe in each case.

### 6.5 Chapter Summary

In summary then, it may be said that both factors from outside the organisations (External Social Factors) and those inside the organisations (Organisational Culture) affect experiences of employees in the CoE and EP. Factors external to the organisations that were considered to influence individual experiences were identified as European Enlargement, EU legislation and the gender stereotyping and cultural differences that exist in society at large. Meanwhile, influential features identified from inside the organisations related to organisational culture, which was discussed in terms of the difference between HR
policies and the actual practices surrounding the implementation or otherwise of these policies. The precise nature of the impact of external social factors and organisational culture on employee experiences is determined by the nationality and gender of employees and to a lesser extent, the position of employees within the organisational hierarchy.

Whilst Western European males felt equally valued by the organisation on the basis of their nationality and gender, Western females focused on work-life conflict as the primary source of their sense of being undervalued by the organisation. Meanwhile, Eastern European males expressed resentment towards equality initiatives, believing them to indicate an organisational prioritisation of the needs of women ahead of their own. Both Eastern females and males reported a sense of being of less value to the organisation than their Western colleagues. However, the Eastern females (unlike their male counterparts) reported a sense of being equally valued on the basis of their gender, believing that Western women “made too much fuss” about gender inequality. An integration of these different perspectives demonstrates that Western women are concerned with different forms of discrimination to Eastern women. Meanwhile, Eastern men report a “double dose” of discrimination, which is in direct contrast to Western men, who report an absence of discrimination.
Chapter 7
Analysis 3: Discourse Analysis of Public Communications

7.1 Introduction
A discourse analysis of the texts selected using the criteria outlined in Chapter 4 was performed with the aim of addressing the second research question:

What are the underlying assumptions and values about European Enlargement that are conveyed within public communications by representatives of the EP and the CoE?

The process of analysis was outlined in Chapter 4 and three main discourses were identified in relation to the following:

1. Power relations
2. Difference
3. Paternalism

These discourses will be explored in turn, with an analysis of the linguistic techniques that help to construct both explicit and implicit meaning within each text. In so doing, the underlying assumptions about European Enlargement within the texts will be exposed.

7.2 Power Relations
In both of the selected texts, power relations between the various stakeholders in each piece can be explored through examining the way that the narrative voice (as a representative of the CoE and EP respectively) is positioned with respect to other named voices in the texts. In the first text, the author is the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in the second the author is a non-specified individual representing the Committee of Ministers of the European Parliament. By exploring the construction of voice in each piece, it is possible to gain insights into the power relations between the relevant stakeholders in the text and the way these power relations are naturalized, or made to appear part of a natural order.

CoE Text
In this text, the title is offered in the form of a statement: “Serbia is not Robert Mugabe” and the predominant grammatical mood of the piece is similarly declarative, with statements of fact (“Serbia and Montenegro became members of the Council of Europe in April 2003”) interspersed with evaluative statements (“The record of the Serbian membership in the past
three years has not been brilliant”). This mood is indicative of the exchange function of the text. Fairclough (2005) points out that “the ‘exchange’ in the case of written texts is played out between the writing and the reading of the text” (p109) and by using both statements of fact and of evaluation, the author is positioned as a provider of knowledge and assessment, with the reader positioned as a passive recipient of the author’s offerings. By using statements in this manner from the title onwards, the authority of the narrator is immediately established – whilst suggestions or questions might have engaged the reader in a more active manner, statements such as these do not invite challenge or disagreement; alternative views are not invited.

Aside from the authorial voice of Terry Davis, the other agents named in this text are George Monbiot (political columnist at the Guardian newspaper) Robert Mugabe (President of Zimbabwe), Vijislav Seselj (Serbian politician) and the citizens of Serbia. Analysis of the way in which these agents are characterised reveals a variety of techniques used to make the central argument of the piece appear convincing.

Firstly, although Robert Mugabe is referred to prominently in the title, this is the only reference to him in the entire piece. This gives prominence to him as a concept, but the absence of further reference to him leaves him without a voice in this piece; he is used merely as a symbol of an implied value system, an indication of something unspecified that “Serbia is not”.

George Monbiot’s words from his original article are referred to on several occasions. Davis wrote the current article as a rejoinder to Monbiot and there are various ways in which he minimises the power of Monbiot’s argument, thereby gaining power for his own, alternative view. Davis’s main technique is to characterise Monbiot’s perspective as irrational and irrelevant and he achieves this by layering. His initial reference to Monbiot’s commentary utilises phrases designed to construct a version of Monbiot’s view as overly emotional in that he “expressed indignation” and is “shooting from the hip”. Davis’s choice of vocabulary and idiom here are interesting. By portraying Monbiot’s emotion as “indignation” as opposed to anger or rage, he invokes a sense of personal offence. The term “anger” would have lent more credibility to Monbiot’s response – though it would still have conveyed a strong emotional reaction, it does not have any intrinsic connotations of being misplaced or inappropriate. Meanwhile, the term “indignation” is suggestive of self-serving bias and is therefore, by implication, lacking in validity. The use of the term “self-righteous” adds to the sense that Monbiot might have a personal axe to grind in that it implies an unwillingness to
consider an alternative view. That Monbiot is “brimming” with it conjures up the image of something about to spill over, implying that he is barely in control of his feelings and adding to the notion of him as inappropriately emotional.

The use of the idiom “shooting from the hip” has a number of functions. Firstly, the reader is intended to interpret this as a criticism of Monbiot, the suggestion being that he has reacted too quickly to consider the possible effects of his actions. Whilst a mere statement to this effect would have communicated surface meaning, Davis’s use of the idiom does far more than this by constructing an image of Monbiot as a cowboy, complete with gun and holster, ready to engage in a shoot-out without a second thought. The image is given more veracity by the layering of figurative language. Davis uses the phrase “high moral ground” from which Monbiot is apparently shooting, thus locating the cowboy within a specific scene; he then completes the picture when he states that it is not the best place to do this because he has missed the point. In other words, the cowboy has chosen an inappropriate location for his gun battle because his shots have “missed”. Monbiot the cowboy then, albeit a somewhat ineffective and incompetent one.

The use of the term “high moral ground” has another function. It is popularly associated with the verb to assume; thus someone assumes the moral high ground. The verb “assume” indicates that a position is taken without evidence (CED, 2011) and assuming the moral high ground is considered to be a somewhat underhand tactic used in political debate. The tactic is designed to give an advantage to the party taking a position that is morally superior to another, by forcing the other party into an apparently lower moral position. However, the implication of the phrase is that the apparently superior position has been taken without evidence that the party deserves to be there; it then becomes the role of the other party to prove the unworthiness of their position. This is exactly the situation in which Davis has found himself and by stating that Monbiot has taken high moral ground, he is making their respective positions clear and in so doing, further questioning the credibility of Monbiot’s stance.

Davis uses another notable technique when he manages to belittle Monbiot’s contribution by apparently praising its linguistic construction in the phrase “brimming with self-righteous eloquence”. By using such a term as “eloquence” which is generally used in a positive manner, the implication is that if the fluency of the words is the only thing worthy of comment and that fluency itself is irrelevant to the validity of the argument, then the semantic content must be so unworthy of attention that it must be completely irrelevant. As if this point were
not made clearly enough Davis follows this with an explicit attempt to dismiss Monbiot’s argument by saying that he is “missing the point”.

Further layering takes place by “it is a bit more complicated than it would appear in his [Monbiot’s] text”; thus Monbiot is not only missing the point but is possibly incapable of considering the complexities of the situation that he, Davis, is grappling with. Monbiot’s expertise is again called into question with “this may not mean much to Monbiot” further suggesting that there are important matters that Monbiot has not considered. The final reference to Monbiot compares his perspective to that of Vojislav Seselj, a Serbian politician who was indicted for war crimes in 2003. However, Seselj is referred to by name only, with no further elaboration on his background and no explanation of why the comparison is appropriate. This is a very similar technique to the title reference to Robert Mugabe by name only, but this time a different effect is achieved. Seselj is not an international household name in the way that Mugabe is, thus Davis is appealing to those who have a more intimate knowledge of Balkan history to appreciate his comparison. Thus an implied “in-group” is created between the author of the piece and other knowledgeable individuals - readers who do not immediately recognise Seselj by name are excluded though their lack of knowledge. Thus knowledge here is used to create a power imbalance that would not have existed had an explanation of the comparison been offered. The somewhat casual nature of this name-dropping is intended to underline Davis’s expertise and attempts to add credibility to his argument.

EP Text
The power relations between the EU and Croatia can be explored by examining the linguistic techniques used in the naming of these two major stakeholders. The piece is a report of the Committee of Ministers from the European Parliament, the administrative body of the EU. However, the authorial voice is primarily labelled as “The House”, which serves a number of functions. Firstly, “the House” is a political term for a body of people who make laws or who bring a topic to debate (OED, 2011) – this instantly gives the narrative voice the veneer of authority and also invokes the notion of a substantial body of people who are speaking with a unified voice. Furthermore, grammatically speaking, use of the noun “the House” as the narrator requires verbs to be used in the third person, thus giving the illusion of objectivity and thus independent credibility to the voice; the alternative “we” as the first person plural, would have immediately appeared more partisan and thus any sense of objectivity would have been lost. Furthermore, the term “house” has the potential to create an image of a building in which a single family reside, thus the use of this term in the context of discussing
Croatia's potential accession emphasises Croatia’s position outside of the “family” that is otherwise known as the EU.

It is worth also considering Goffman’s (1981) differentiation between “author” and “principal”, the former being the term used for the individual (or collective) responsible for the wording of the text whilst the latter is the principal/s whose position is/are represented. The actual author is not named in this text and in making this omission the emphasis of the piece is transferred from what might have been viewed as the opinion of an individual to the representation of the views of the principal. However, there is some degree of obfuscation surrounding the identity of the principal, since a variety of different terms are used. Other terms for the authorial voice used in this piece are variously “the EP”, “MEPs” and “the committee”. Whilst these are different terms, these authorial voices all represent parts of the same entity – the Committee of Ministers is made up of MEPs and is one of the administrative committees of the EP, which is the supporting body of the EU. However, as a result of using the different terms an impression is created that lots of different voices all hold the same ideological position with respect to Croatia, thus adding weight to the central arguments.

Meanwhile, Croatia itself, as the other major stakeholder in this piece, is presented as a collective social actor. “Croatia” is not a term used to delineate a geographical location (indeed in the paragraph discussing Croatia as a geographic entity, the name “Croatia” is actually omitted, with the text simply referring to “this central European country”), but is instead used to denote an apparently agentic, cognitive being that is capable of action and thought. This construction of Croatia is necessary in a relational context; in order to perceive the EU as powerful, there needs to be a subordinate agent – political power is not achieved by merely subjugating a geographical space!

Textual Comparison
In each text, the authors are speaking from positions within the very highest echelons of their respective organizations and by creating publicly available text, they not only speak on behalf of their organizations, but use their authorial power to affirm their organizations social status. By exposing the techniques used to establish narrative authority it has been revealed that the creation of a credible authorial voice helps to construct power relations between the European Institutions that are represented by the respective authorial voices and the prospective or existing member states that are also represented in the texts. In so doing, the power relations are naturalized – that is, if the reader accepts the authority of the narrative
voice, then the associated authority of the Institutions represented by that voice is implicitly accepted and power relations seem part of a natural, “taken for granted” order.

It is also worth considering here the matter of “audience”. One of the crucial elements of CDA (Fairclough, 2005) is the acknowledgement of discourse as social action. On this basis, it is important to consider the wider context of both of the selected texts, including their intended readership. The CoE text is published in The Guardian newspaper, a UK based broadsheet with a circulation of just around 250,000 copies daily (The Guardian, 2011); it is also available online, increasing its potential sphere of reach to international readers. The paper’s political identity is that of centre-left liberalism and its readership is generally well-educated, affluent (The Guardian, 2010) and largely supportive of ties between the UK and Europe (Garner, 2003). On this basis, the audience might be assumed to be receptive to the anti-Mugabe, pro-European message of the piece.

Meanwhile, the EP text has a slightly different purpose. As a press-release, it has two social functions. Traditionally, press-releases take the form of texts that are designed to be picked up and reinterpreted for presentation by national or international media outlets. This makes the valence of the text’s “message(s)” more difficult to control in the public domain as different media will represent the material through the lens of the specific political and social values that form part of that media’s identity (Hardman, 2008). The acknowledgement that recipients of the message(s) include a variety of social and political perspectives might mean that more conscious effort has been made to position the text in a particular way, perhaps focussing on general points rather than complexities of the situation that might be more open to interpretation. However, there is another point here, in that with the introduction of the internet, press-releases can now also be posted online in order for the public to read directly. In this instance, the public are enabled to access the original information source; here the text is not subject to an additional layer of “repositioning”.

A feature of both texts is that the agents named within them (Robert Mugabe, Serbia, Croatia) are not expected to have a direct right of reply – that is to say, it would be surprising to find a rejoinder in a subsequent edition of The Guardian written by Mugabe or a senior Serbian politician, or a press release located on the European Parliament’s website by the Croatian government. This gives further power to the authors of the texts, effectively silencing the primary stakeholders and influencing the audience to align themselves with the authorial stance.
7.3 Difference
The varying ways in which difference is constructed at different points in each text reveals how new or prospective nations are positioned with respect to established nations and with respect to the supranational institutions of the CoE and EP.

CoE text
Intertextually, the title statement “Serbia is not Robert Mugabe” references the article printed two days before in the same newspaper criticising the CoE’s record on challenging human rights abuses. In this previous article by George Monbiot, an analogy is offered in which the act of allowing a Serbian to become CoE Chair of the Committee of Ministers is commensurate with appointing Robert Mugabe as Head of Amnesty International. However, Terry Davis alters the reference and rather than comparing like-for-like and inducing comparison between a specific Serbian individual and Robert Mugabe, Davis inserts the nation-noun “Serbia” into the declaration instead, setting up an opposition between two identities a) the nation of Serbia and b) the President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe. The declaration of an almost algebraic disjunction between two entities \( x \neq y \) superficially serves to create a distance between them. However, in juxtaposing the two entities in this manner the reader is firstly compelled to draw comparisons before drawing conclusions; in order for the reader to endorse the veracity of the equation \( x \neq y \) the entities must first be brought into closer proximity and any similarities considered.

However, Davis simply declares that Serbia is not Robert Mugabe and does not elaborate on this comparison further; what Serbia “is not” is therefore left unspecified. The mere mention of Mugabe is assumed to trigger specific associations in the minds of the readership thereby acting as a means of cognitive shorthand. Widespread criticisms of Mugabe include accusations of dictatorship, anti-white racism, murder and violence against individuals in opposition parties, political corruption, misappropriating public money to boost personal wealth and neglecting the physical health and economy of the nation (Meredith 2007). It is worth considering here that individuals in power in Serbia’s recent history have also been accused of almost all of these actions, with notable exception that none of them have been anti-white; indeed, Serbia is a predominantly white nation (Judah, 2010). One possible interpretation of the comparison then, is that Serbia is not Robert Mugabe because these criticisms are not quite so applicable at the current point in Serbia’s history; whilst similar in some respects, Serbia is not as bad as Robert Mugabe.
However, there are other, more radical interpretations. Firstly, is the possibility that Serbia is not Robert Mugabe simply because Serbia is white whilst Robert Mugabe is black. By inference, where Mugabe is anti-white, Serbia will be pro-white. Secondly, Serbia is not Robert Mugabe because Serbia is European, whilst Robert Mugabe is African. Thirdly, it underlines Serbia's apparent lack of power and influence by contrasting their position with that of a dictator such as Mugabe, who has a significant sphere of political control. Furthermore, by comparing Serbia with a single person, Serbia is personified as an individual and the complex human diversity and intergroup processes that are present within a nation are dissolved into a single unified entity.

All of the above readings of this five-word title suggest the need to minimize Serbia’s political status and reduce its sphere of influence. In so doing, Serbia becomes a manageable body and its position within the CoE is made palatable as it does not threaten the authority of the CoE. Furthermore, by maximizing the difference between Serbia and an undesirable entity, the similarity between Serbia and the rest of the nations in the CoE is emphasised; as a corollary, these nations can include Serbia in the “in-group” without threatening the identity of the group. As far as the Secretary General of the CoE is concerned, Serbia is “like us”; Robert Mugabe is “not like us”.

Consider also, the short phrase “they need our help”. “They” is used to refer to “everyone living in Serbia – especially those who hope for a better future rather than a recycled version of the past”, whilst “our help” refers to the help of the CoE. Although at face value, this phrase might appear to appeal for compassion for Serbians, the notion of Serbia needing “our” help could be considered puzzling. Serbia is already a member of the CoE, and yet “they need our help” implies a faction outside of the organisation needing help from within. The term “they” implies “not-us”, a separate entity that is external to the primary unit conceptualised as “us”; thus the phrase clearly belies the notion of Europe as a unified entity. Whilst this piece ostensibly offers support for Serbia remaining a part of the CoE, discourse analysis reveals the underlying value systems that position Serbia outside of the organisation to which it administratively belongs.

**EP text**

In the context of considering how the text deals with difference, it is worth considering the use of the conjunction “and” in the title: “Croatia: good progress towards accession and some issues remain”. The use of the word “and” to join the two clauses avoids drawing attention to the negative aspect of the situation: “some issues remain”. The authorial voice is
constructing a “problem” of some outstanding matters that need attention before accession can be permitted, but avoids over-emphasising this problem by avoidance of the conjunction “but”, which would be the customary manner in which to suggest a contrast that is unexpected in light of the first clause. Instead, the word “and” suggests that having some unresolved issues is not at all incongruent with the notion of “good progress” and is therefore minimised as a problem area. In other words, there is a “problem”, but nothing that cannot be resolved; there is a difference between Croatia and existing member states, but as long as Croatia works on these differences, they will be permitted to join the club. It is notable that in all the actions that are required to be undertaken, Croatia is considered to be the primary social agent; it is Croatia’s responsibility to effect change, to reduce its “difference” from the rest of the EU.

The degree to which the EU expresses urgency about the reduction of difference is evident in the modality of the piece which is predominantly deontic in nature, which can be seen in such statements as “Croatia must comply...”, ”Croatia’s institutions should counteract...” as well as the references to the words “obligation” and “requirements” in relation to actions on which accession depends. Within this deontic modality, power relations between the EU and Croatia can be further exposed by exploring the grammatical structures used when the two entities are linked in a sentence. Through the use of a variety of transitive verbs there is a layering of meaning in which the EU is primarily linked to Croatia through varying degrees of pressure and persuasion, for instance, “the EP exhorts Croatia to...”, “the House urges the Croatian authorities to...”, and “the committee calls on Croatia...” and “MEPs attack the persisting bias”. The cumulative effect of these verbs conveys a sense of urgency surrounding Croatia’s position and leaves the reader with the impression that the House has made a series of very heavy demands and as a corollary, were Croatia able to comply with these then they would have indeed earned their place in the EU.

Worthy of note here is that the priorities of the EU in terms of Croatia’s actions may be exposed by considering the relative potency of the different verbs used. Whilst the sense of urgency is created by the use of verb-phrases in which the authorial voice “urges”, “exhorts” and “calls on” Croatia to act, the most forceful verb used is to “attack” and is reserved to condemn actions that affect non-Croatians, thus having the potential to affect EU nationals: “MEPs attack the persistent bias amongst some judicial staff against non-Croatian nationals”. This betrays the House’s prioritisation of the interests of the rest of the EU; phrases that are used to address the interests of the Croatian public are less strongly worded. Indeed, the phrase with the least impactful verb is reserved to discuss Croatia’s
treatment of its minority groups; here the authorial voice merely states that “another point raised by the EP is the integration of minorities into everyday life”. The verb “raise” is completely neutral in its valance and the impact is further weakened by its use in the passive voice. Although minority-group interests are required to be attended to by the EU, the choice of language and grammatical structures described above reveal that this issue is an extremely low-priority with respect to Croatia’s accession activities.

Fairclough (2005) refers to the practice of naming as a contentious one and this would indeed seem to be the case in the current text. Croatia is named as a “central European country” which would appear to be a deliberate attempt to avoid classifying it within the geographical region known as South Eastern Europe. This latter term has been used frequently by the constituent nations in official discourses to reference their geographical and ideological positions, for instance in the naming of the “South East European Co-operation Process” which was a programme launched in 1996 on the member countries’ own initiative. The EU itself has also frequently used the term, for instance in the “Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe” which was an EU supported initiative set up in 1999. However, as explored in Chapter 3, Wolff (1994) and others suggest that the notions of “east” and “west” are not neutral geographical terms when applied to Europe, but are instead widely accepted as cultural constructs with strong political connotations. Though the term “Eastern Europe” has taken on varying associations throughout history, it is currently still strongly associated with communist ideology despite the increasing capitalisation of the Eastern European nations. “East” therefore may be used to emphasise the ‘otherness’ and inferiority of countries considered to be located outside Western Europe. With this in mind, there does indeed seem to be a concerted effort in the current text to avoid referencing Eastern ideology; Croatia is further labelled part of the “Western Balkans” – the notion of western creating potential similarities with the notion of Western European ideology. In so doing, Croatia’s Eastern-ness is minimised, and as a corollary, their difference from Western Europe is made less visible and thus less threatening.

A further feature of this text is that there is only one other European nation named in the piece, Slovenia, a border-nation of Croatia that joined the EU in 2003. The language linking Croatia and Slovenia in the text is one of equivalence rather than contrast, as demonstrated by the following: “MEPs urge both the Croatian and the Slovenian governments to exploit all the opportunities available in order to reach an agreement…and invite them to abstain from any unilateral action which might undermine such an agreement”. In this passage both nations are being persuaded to take similar actions; neither one is constructed as superior
with respect to the “rightness” or “wrongness” of their position, instead they are being urged to act together. Furthermore, MEPs propose that Croatia and Slovenia use “the good offices of a third party if solutions cannot be found bilaterally to outstanding border disputes”, signifying firstly that neither is being given priority in terms of MEP support but secondly that both nations are equally subjugated to the power of the supranational institution. The effect of constructing equivalence between Croatia, an EU accession nation and Slovenia, an existing EU nation, is that difference between the two nations is minimised in favour of emphasising difference between “compliant” (i.e. established Western) and “wayward” (newer and Eastern) nations in Europe. The implicit message is that if the EU can already accommodate one of the latter (i.e. Slovenia) then a small, similar nation is not going to significantly disrupt the status quo and can be managed in a similar manner by “recourses to the good office of a third party” (i.e. an established member state).

**Textual Comparison**

There are techniques used in both texts that alternately highlight and minimise differences between the focal nation and the rest of Europe. In the first text, differences between Serbia and the rest of the CoE are highlighted by the creation of an “us” and “them” dichotomy, whilst in the second text, differences between Croatia and the rest of the EU are emphasised by presenting a list of ways in which Croatia does not (yet) conform to EU requirements. On the other hand, authors of both texts seek to minimise differences that might have been viewed as threatening to the majority group. In the first text this is achieved by setting up a contrast between Serbia and an entity that is largely viewed as antithetical to European ideology; the emphasis on this contrast ensures that Serbia seems more aligned with European values. In the second text, the characterisation of Croatia carefully avoids any mention of the term “east” or “eastern” thus avoiding the invocation of Eastern ideologies and in so doing, making Croatia’s position within the western-dominated EU seem more natural.

**7.4 Paternalism**

In both texts disjunctions are created between the national governments and the citizens of the nations in question. By exploring the way that these disjunctions are constructed, assumptions regarding the relationship between the governments and their respective citizens can be exposed. In the construction of various “problems” associated with Serbia and Croatia, a discourse is constructed in which Serbia and Croatia are assumed to need to “parenting” by the CoE and EU respectively in order for their problems to be resolved.
The nation of Serbia is positioned in this paper as a major stakeholder in this debate surrounding CoE membership, but the concept of “Serbia” is not unitary in the text. Through a variety of linguistic techniques, Davis makes repeated attempts to disambiguate Serbian people from Serbian authorities. Whist the term “Serbian people” accompanied by bouliaic modality indicated by notions of “hope”, “frustration”, “shock”, “disillusionment” and “desperation”, the modality changes where there are reference to the “Serbian authorities”. Here, an episodic modality is deployed in which one Prime Minister discussed in terms of his “departure”, another discussed in terms of his “murder” and deontic modality is invoked with respect to the current regime who have “unfulfilled obligations” and who’s record is “not brilliant”. Whilst the nouns associated with the Serbian people intend to invoke a sense of compassion for the Serbian people, Serbian authorities are conceptualised as weak and ineffective at best. Inherent within this construction of the relationship between Serbian people and their government is the assumption that Serbians need assistance because they have been let down by their own authorities. This forms part of the paternalistic discourse in as much as it creates the image of a weak or absent father figure and an abandoned family in need of strong parenting.

Within the paternalistic discourse, two competing positions surrounding the relationship between the Council of Europe and Serbia are constructed. The first is one of patronage, in which the CoE is portrayed as a powerful agent that is willing and able to bestow the “support and solidarity” on Serbia. Inherent within this position is the assumption that this assistance is needed by the Serbian people who have apparently been let down by their own authorities. The second position is one of castigation, in which the CoE is “disappointed and impatient” with Serbia due to the lack of compliance by Serbian authorities with CoE demands.

Thus the paternalistic discourse constructs the CoE as a powerful force that can both help and castigate Serbia as it sees fit. This discourse is endorsed by further linguistic techniques, for instance the phrase “they need our help” though superficially appearing to appeal to the readership for compassion for the Serbian people, it has a number of other functions. Firstly, it sets up an opposition between “us” and “them”; another in-group/out-group situation is created in which “our help” can be read as referring to the help of both the author and the CoE but also as the help of the reader – the word “our” invites the reader to identify with the in-group, on the assumption that the reader is from an established Member
State of the CoE. Meanwhile, the out-group is Serbia, and the discourse surrounding their deservingness is clearly one of patronage rather than equality.

As explored previously, Terry Davis, the author of this text and representative of the CoE has stated explicitly that Serbia needs the CoE. However, the lack of an explicit statement to the effect that this need is not reciprocated indicates that the unilateral aspect of the situation is somewhat taken for granted; it is assumed that the reader will know that the CoE does not need Serbia for its own sake. The implicit positioning of the CoE relative to its need or otherwise for Serbia may be seen with the threat that the CoE could use its power to “throw Serbia out of the organisation”. There are two readings of this, one of which is that expulsion is an act of punishment that is only going to damage those being expelled and not those involved in the expelling, rather in the manner that a child might be expelled from a school. The other reading is that the term “throw out” is akin to discarding something, that is, to throw something away because it is no longer wanted. Either of these readings position the CoE as the agent with power, and Serbia as the object of rejection.

Another linguistic factor warrants attention here too – by stating that the CoE should not be throwing Serbia out of the organisation, the author is simultaneously appearing benevolent in his approach, whilst leaving the reader in no doubt that the CoE has significant power with which to expel or discard Serbia should they choose to use it.

**EP text**

Similarly divisive techniques are also used in this text, as Croatia, like Serbia in the previous text, is not characterised as a single unified entity; instead, divisions between the Croatian authorities and the Croatian people are emphasised. However, the discourse of paternalism operates slightly differently in this text. Instead of the supra-national organisation taking the place of the national government as was the case in the previous text, here the EP takes the role of parental coach. The authorial voice alternately aligns itself with either the authorities against the people or vice versa, depending on the interests of the EU with respect to Croatia’s actions. Where the Committee of Ministers believes that the people of Croatia are raising concerns that are aligned with their own priorities of environmental or public health, the House “urges the Croatian authorities” to take these into “due consideration”. However, on two other occasions, the House does not approve of the public view, instead aligning itself with the Croatian authorities, suggesting that they should “counteract the public’s perception of the ICTY [International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia]” and it also “voices concern at the flagging public support the EU accession”. The impact of emphasising
the divisions between the Croatian authorities and the Croatian people is that EU interference in this relationship appears justified, as the national authorities are positioned as needing help in order to understand when to take control and when to listen to its people.

The assumption that Croatia needs to belong within the EU is firstly exposed through the use of adjectives that conceptualise Croatia’s accession progress as “good”, “major” and “rapid” suggesting significant efforts on the part of Croatia to achieve their aim. Furthermore, by assuming a position of authority from which demands can be made, Croatia is by contrast positioned in a subordinate position in which these demands have to be met in order to achieve accession. The point here is that Croatia’s need to belong to the EU is indicated by the extent to which they are willing to subjugate themselves to the institutional demands. The demands are presented as a series of “problems” that are both listed and prioritised by the authorial voice, and instructions for the solution to the problems are given. For instance one of the main problems is characterised in relation to environmental action: “It [Croatia] must first strengthen its capacity to implement Community environmental legislation”. The solutions are then prioritised in terms of applying the “Aarhus Convention on public access to environmental information” and “the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol”, with a lesser priority being “to take into due consideration the concerns raised by local communities and public opinion with regard to controversial industrial projects”. There is an assumption inherent within the text that Croatia will meet these demands as conveyed by the following: “This central European country...is thus on course to become a member of the European Union once the accession criteria are met”. Here, the word “once” performs the same function as the word “when” rather than the word “if”; although accession is characterised as contingent upon certain actions, compliance is considered to be only a matter of time not a matter of ability or intention to comply. In other words, the list of demands will be met because it is in Croatia’s interests to do so; it would not be making such huge efforts were accession not so desirable.

As previously explored in relation to the CoE text, here there is also an unequal positioning of the supranational organisation relative to the target nation with respect to “need”. Though the EU is portrayed as bestowing congratulations on Croatia for their efforts thus far, in return for these efforts, Croatia will be merely “accommodated” within the EU. This term indicates a making room for, as opposed to a greeting that is more enthusiastic such as welcoming or embracing.
There is also an attempt to dismiss the impact of Croatia's accession by minimising the size of its population: “This central European country of less than 4.5 million inhabitants is thus on course to become a member of the European Union...” Note that the population of Croatia is enumerated as “less than 4.5 million”, where it could equally accurately have been specified as “more than 4 million”. However, by using the term “less than” the number is linguistically diminished, thereby making the population seem smaller than it would have if a lower number had been used and accompanied by “more than”. Taken in conjunction with the concept of “accommodating” Croatia, the message is that as long as Croatia complies with EU demands, its inclusion within the EU will have very little impact on the EU itself.

Textual Comparison
In both texts, linguistic techniques are deployed in the problematisation of the relationship between the national authorities of Serbia and Croatia and their respective citizens. This is the foundation of the paternalistic discourse, in that the construction of these relationships as a “problem” paves the way for the construction of a concomitant “solution”, which is characterized as an intervention by the relevant supranational institution. That these institutions assume the right to choose whether national authorities should be listening to their people or changing their public’s perception is testimony to the degree to which institutional hegemony has been established in Europe. Furthermore, the inculcation of the notion of “need” is inherent within both texts; Serbia and Croatia are both positioned in a state of need that can only be fulfilled by belonging to the respective supranational institution. This characterizes the CoE and the EU as “families”, which are kept in order by virtue of their authoritarian fathers, the institutional authorities. The possibility that Serbia and Croatia might have other options for meeting the needs of their people is ignored thus their “need” to belong becomes a matter of common-sense rationality, another taken-for-granted truth that is not questioned either explicitly or implicitly at any point. In both texts there is the implication that exclusion (in the form of expulsion in the former text or prevention from accession in the latter) is a threat that can be wielded by the relevant supranational organisation on the basis that only the excluded party would be affected. Thus the construction of the assumption of “need” as uni-directional underlines the inequalities inherent in the position of both Serbia and Croatia respective to the supranational institutions to which they belong or intend to belong.
7.5 Chapter Summary

A discourse analysis of two publicly available texts representing the positions of the CoE and the EU in relation to new member states revealed three primary discourses surrounding power relations, difference and paternalism. These discourses do not stand alone, but are instead interlinked. For instance, it is through the positioning of new or prospective member states as “different” that the in-group/out-group dichotomy is established; this dichotomy is characterised as oppositional in nature, with the in-group invoking the notion of collective unity positioning itself in opposition to the single entity, the Member State. This immediately puts the oppositional parties on unequal footing. The basis for creating a power imbalance is established, by invoking the apparently “natural” logic of “the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few or the one” (Surak, 1982); here, the single entity of the Member State is subjugated to the needs and wishes of the collective. Having established that difference exists, there also needed to be a minimising of difference in order to ensure co-operation of these new or prospective member states. Were difference emphasised to a larger extent, the “logical” conclusion would be to exclude these states from the “club” on the grounds that they wouldn’t “fit in”. It is precisely by “permitting” these states the aspiration of belonging, that pressure can be brought to bear regarding conformation to the CoE and EU “rules”. Thus by establishing a basis of what I have referred to here as inclusive inequality, the nature of the unequal relationship between the supranational entity and its member states is ripe for development. As discussed above, this relationship is characterised by paternalism, in which the CoE and the EU are conceptualized as “families”, which need to be kept under control by their authoritarian fathers, the institutional authorities.

Through the exploration of these interlinked discourses three underlying assumptions relating to European Enlargement are exposed:

1. Power relations between new or prospective member-states and the relevant supranational organisation are assumed to represent a natural order.
2. “New” nations are different from “established” European nations, but not sufficiently different to warrant exclusion from the European institutions.
3. New and prospective Member States have a need for membership of the European institutions which is not reciprocated.

These assumptions will be explored in relation to previous literature and to the findings from Studies 1 and 2 in Chapter 8.
Chapter 8
Discussion

8.1 Introduction
In this chapter I draw on the findings from the three studies for the purpose of addressing each of the research questions:

1. *How do gender and nationality affect the working lives of employees within the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in the post-Enlargement era?*

2. *What are the underlying assumptions about European Enlargement that are conveyed within public communications by representatives of the EP and the CoE?*

3. *What is the relationship between the public communications of the organizations and the internal organisational experiences of employees, with respect to Enlargement?*

The findings of Study 1 (interviews) and Study 2 (focus groups) are combined to address the first research question, whilst the findings of Study 3 (discourse analysis) address the second research question. The third research question is addressed by integrating the findings of all three studies.

8.2 Addressing Research Question One:

*How do gender and nationality affect the working lives of employees within the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in the post-Enlargement era?*

Study 1 (interviews with senior managers and HR professionals) and Study 2 (focus groups with non-management and lower-middle management employees) demonstrated that in general terms, external social factors and organisational culture were experienced differently by men and women of different nationalities and specifically, that these factors impacted on employee’s perceptions of their relative value to the organisations.

Firstly it should be said that external factors such as European Enlargement, EU law, gender stereotyping and cultural differences affected the day-to-day working life of employees within the participating organisations. European Enlargement was viewed as having a major impact on the applicant pool for prospective post holders in each organisation. Each round of Enlargement brought with it the requirement to recruit individuals from the New Member
States in order the each secretariat was fully representative of its constituent nations. In many cases, this meant that the newly advertised posts received such an overwhelming response that individuals were appointed to posts for which they were technically overqualified. However, exploring this notion of “over-qualification” further, it was noted that qualifications from New Member States were not held in the same esteem as those of equivalent educational levels from Established Member States. Thus the notion of qualified and specifically “overqualified” was problematised. It was reported that there were individuals from the New Member States with masters degrees who were appointed to administrative assistant posts; this allegedly created tensions between the expectations of the post holder and the evaluations of their manager. Whilst the post holders from the New Member States were reported to be ambitious and keen to move up the hierarchy, they also reported that their career progress was limited by the devaluing of their qualifications and experiences. The perception that “West is best” is inherent within these experiences, as is the notion that individuals from the New Member States might now be included but they are not accorded equivalence.

In the CoE, further between-groups divisions are constructed due to the legal restrictions on the right to work for spouses of individuals from nations outside of the EU. Within the CoE there are 22 states that are not members of the EU and individuals from a majority of these face restricted rights in terms of travelling and working across Europe. Firstly, this issue is conceived as placing an extra burden on particular expatriate workers, who potentially face the extra financial and emotional burden of supporting a non-working, possibly more socially isolated, partner and dependents. Considering this issue in light of the gender-literature on expatriate workers (e.g. Altman & Shorland, 2008; Shimoni et al., 2005; Linehan & Scullion, 2001), it is possible that female expatriates from non-EU states might experience additional pressures. Whilst normative gender roles position the notions of “worker” and “trailing spouse” as male and female respectively, those stepping outside of these roles might face additional issues relating to social judgements about their choices (Altman & Shortland, 2008). These findings can be further considered in light of the literature on social identity. The differing legal status of those in the EU and those outside creates a sense of EU-versus-non-EU members. Thus an in-group/out-group situation is set up in which the European credentials of the in-group are perceived to be superior to those of the out-group (Hogg & Terry, 2000). It might be suggested that the current research makes a new contribution here, by combining the literatures of gender, expatriate working and social identity; whilst individuals from the EU are privileged in comparison to their non-EU counterparts, female workers from non-EU countries potentially face the most challenging conditions.
The perception that these apparently “external” issues were manifest within the organisation indicates an organisational culture that has allowed such matters such as stereotyping to persist and even flourish. Additional factors within the category of organisational culture that affected employees’ day-to-day experiences were reported as being the existence and application of the “equal merit” rule and nationality quotas, working hours and language. Though some women felt that the existence of the equal merit rule was a positive step to address gender inequality in the higher echelons of the organisations, other women said that it made them feel as though they had to prove they got promotion on merit as opposed to because of their gender. Meanwhile some of the men, particularly those from Eastern Europe, construed the equal merit rule as evidence that women were privileged in the organisations. These findings are entirely in accordance with those from previous discussed literature (e.g. Kalev, Kelly & Dobbin, 2006; Doherty, 2004) and supports criticisms of the Equal Opportunities paradigm on the grounds of its tendency to create group-based divisions in a workforce (Wilson & Iles, 1999).

This notion of group-based divisions is also relevant to the issue of nationality quotas, which was raised as an issue of concern particularly in the interviews. Here there was a view that the need to ensure national representation meant that some individuals were appointed to posts when they were not the best candidates, which was perceived as a form of discrimination against those from Established Member States. This view betrayed an underlying assumption that those from EMSs would have more appropriate management skills but would face barriers to promotion because the promotion of individuals from under-represented (i.e. New) Member States would take precedence. Considering this assumption in the context of the social construction of management roles (e.g. Olsson, 2006; Maier, 1997) might extend the literature in this area. It was Maier’s (1997) contention that the benchmark of managerial behaviour is based on a somewhat stereotyped form of masculinity; in this study I might suggest that the valued form of corporate masculinity in both participating organisations is specifically based on Western European ideals. Although there is organisational rhetoric surrounding the valuing of cultural diversity, the way in which Eastern cultural values are stereotyped in discussion amongst Westerners (e.g. “more deference to hierarchy”; “non-questioning”; “less critical of their own countries”; “narrow...cannot get past their own culture”; see Chapter 6) locates Eastern attributes outside of those designated as appropriately managerial.
It might also be argued that the language policies of the organisations have a part to play in the construction of management roles. In order to understand this fully, it is necessary to juxtapose the “official language policy” of the secretariats with the notion of “officially recognised languages” of the political institutions that they support. Internally, the emphasis in both the CoE and EP is on fluency in either French or English with a working knowledge of the other, whilst externally, the number of officially recognised languages has increased with each subsequent Enlargement. The frequent need for translation to and from any of the officially recognised languages of the CoE or EU meant that many employees were recruited precisely because of being a native speaker in one of the minority languages. Whilst this might have enabled them to “get a foot in the door”, such individuals reported that their lack of a French or English “mother-tongue” was a hindrance to career progression. This might therefore define the managerial benchmark even more narrowly than simply “Western European”, suggesting instead that the ideal might be a native French or English person.

Literature relevant to the social construction of work and domestic roles is also relevant to the notion of flexible working in this study. Although both organisations had part-time working policies, there was a strongly voiced perception that part-timers were seen as less committed employees. Those working part-time felt that their choice to do so would inevitably affect their career progression and given that the majority of individuals choosing flexible working options were women with children, this perception is in direct accordance with findings relating to credibility gap for female parents (Correll et al, 2007). This situation casts further light on the organisational “standard” surrounding the construction of the ideal managerial candidates; not only are they Western European (or more narrowly, English or French), but specifically male, or at least, female-without-children.

However, several people in this study expressed agreement with the view of part-timers as less worthy of promotion. Whilst Western women generally expressed resentment about the prospect of having to choose between family and career, many of the Eastern women felt that it was “natural” that women should take more responsibility for childcare and thus sacrifice career progress in so doing. That Eastern women apparently reject the notion of Equal Opportunities on ideological grounds supports the criticism of EO as a paradigm that encourages both men and women to compete within existing patriarchal structures (Smithson & Stockoe, 2005). The argument is that by measuring success in terms of pay, seniority and sphere of influence, this paradigm endorses traditionally male, positivist “success factors” and misses the opportunity to redefine “success” in a way that might allow for multiple, personally relevant definitions. The differing views of Eastern and Western
women in this study suggest that notions of equality and success are socially defined and that there is a need to accommodate differing perspectives on such matters, particularly within multinational organisations in Europe.

A further issue regarding the social construction of work and domestic roles is raised by the finding that both Western males and females expressed concern about the impression that would be created by their respective choices regarding childcare and work. Whilst women were concerned with “appearing” not to be neglecting family, men expressed an opposite concern, which was about “appearing” not to be neglecting their work. These findings suggest that individuals are consciously engaged in projecting a self-image that does not deviate too much from normative gender-roles. That women might be concerned about being negatively evaluated on the basis of norm-violation supports previous findings by Bernard and Correll, (2010); however, the possibility that men might also be aware of the need to avoid the appearance of norm-violation is a previously unexplored avenue that warrants further research.

The different ways in which men and women from different regions of Europe were affected by external social factors and the culture of the organisations (as described above) had a major impact in terms of differing perceptions of equality at work, specifically in relation to whether individuals felt equally valued by their organisations in comparison to other employees of the opposite gender and of different nationalities.

Whilst Western European males reported feeling equally valued on the basis of their gender and nationality, Western females focused on work-life conflict as the primary source of their sense of being undervalued by the organisation. Meanwhile, Eastern European males expressed resentment towards equality initiatives, believing them to indicate an organisational prioritisation of the needs of women ahead of their own. Both Eastern females and males reported a sense of being of less value to the organisation on the basis of their nationality than their Western colleagues. However, most surprisingly, the Eastern females (unlike their male counterparts) reported feeling equally valued on the basis of their gender, believing that Western women “made too much fuss” about gender inequality.

An integration of these different perspectives is presented graphically in Figure 8.1. This demonstrates that Western women are concerned with different forms of discrimination to Eastern women. Meanwhile, Eastern men report a “double dose” of discrimination, which is in direct contrast to Western men, who generally report an absence of discrimination.
Indeed, many of the Western men appeared to struggle with even considering the concept of equality in relation to themselves – they seemed surprised to be asked for their own perspective and it was as if many of them had never previously considered the matter. For these men, equality appears to be an unconscious presumption that is perpetuated due to a lack of disconfirming information, interactions or incidents:

“Yes, I am equal that is my answer what more is there to say?”

Lower Management, Western Males, EP

It is interesting that these Western males did not acknowledge their position as one of “privilege” but instead it appears to be assumed is a matter of the natural order of power relations between genders. Meanwhile, the notion of Equal Opportunities is rejected by both Eastern men and women – men because it represents state control of what is perceived to be private arrangements regarding the domestic sphere and also because the existence of policies to equalize is taken to mean privileging of women. It challenges the Eastern men’s own conception of the natural order. For Eastern women, the idea of feminism is considered to be a Western obsession and on this basis alone it is likely to be met with opposition.

I am suggesting that these findings shed new light on the social construction of notions of both equality and discrimination and in so doing, present an alternative perspective to existing theories surrounding discrimination-attribution. The two competing theories surrounding discrimination attribution were explored in Chapter 2, but briefly, these are 1) the “self-protection” hypothesis (Major et al, 2003), which suggests that by attributing negative outcomes to an external factor such as discrimination, self-esteem can be protected and 2) the “discrimination rejection” hypothesis (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002) that suggests the opposite, which is to say that attributions to discrimination are often avoided as they have negative personal and interpersonal consequences. The findings of the present study suggest a third perspective, which takes a social constructionist perspective. This suggests that individuals have differing perspectives on the definition and meaning of notions such as equality and discrimination and that on this basis, personal perspectives could have a potentially larger role in discrimination-attribution than any cost-benefit evaluation regarding protection or harm to self-esteem.
It should be noted that the above diagram is somewhat of a heuristic and it should be emphasised that there were some differences according to organisational hierarchy as well as differences between the organisations. Notably, Eastern women in the higher levels in the CoE reported experiences that were more similar to those of Western women, alluding to barriers associated with gender-role stereotyping and work-family balance. As previously mentioned, the fact that accession to the CoE for Eastern European nations occurred significantly before accession to the EU means that there are more Eastern European employees with longer employment records in the CoE administration. This longer period of socialisation within the host organisation might have led to a more Western view being inculcated amongst the Eastern women in the CoE. This may also partially account for hierarchal differences between groups in the CoE assuming that those at higher levels have longer employment records.

These findings regarding the differences between the organisations in terms of socialisation periods are interesting to consider in view of the literature surrounding a) notions of espoused values versus values in practice (Schein, 1992) and the competing paradigms of Equal Opportunities versus Managing Diversity (Wilson & Iles, 1999). Firstly, it might be said that the espoused values of the organisations suggest that cultural diversity is embraced, whilst the experiences of the participants in this study suggest that there is more emphasis on assimilation of new employees into the existing, Western European (or more specifically, Anglo-French) culture. Secondly, it might be said that this, in conjunction with the focus on group-based initiatives, suggests that both organisations endorse the values of the Equal Opportunities approach.
Opportunities paradigm rather than those of Managing Diversity. The implications of this are debated further in the concluding chapter.

8.3 Research Question Two:
What are the underlying assumptions about European Enlargement that are conveyed within public communications by representatives of the EP and the CoE?

Study three, a discourse analysis of two publicly available texts was designed for the purpose of addressing the second research question. Three interlinked discourses were identified, with respect to power relations, difference and paternalism. During the exploration of these discourses and the linguistic techniques used to construct them, three underlying assumptions regarding European Enlargement were exposed; these will be addressed in turn below.

Assumption 1: Power relations between new or prospective member-states and the relevant supranational organisation are assumed to represent a natural order.

Perhaps indicative of the origins of the two institutions, the supranational organisations are assumed to have forms of power that are unquestionable and taken for granted. The goal precipitating the formation of the CoE and the EU in the first half of the 20th Century was increased co-operation and reduced conflict amongst European nations (Athanassopoulou, 2008). This conception itself is based on the assumption of “safety in numbers” on the grounds that increased co-operation amongst a selective few would result in collective support against threats from “outsiders”. The unfolding of the Second World War was a major incentive to the formation of the CoE. A nucleus of Western European nations formed this coalition and countries that were originally “on the other side” i.e. potentially part of the threat not part of the protection, are gradually being subsumed within the “in-group”. The outcome of the Cold War resulted in the disintegration of USSR and the demise of communism in Europe; the adage “west is best” might be said to be formed through the apparent “evidence” that Western principles have prevailed. In fact, in order to gain membership of the in-group the outsiders are required to prove that they qualify by passing pre-accession tests; tests based on Western values. That former communist nations are apparently adopting Western values is a testament to the apparent superiority of these values; this underpins the notion of power between West and East as part of the “natural” order. Furthermore, the supranational organisations have the additional power of authority and collectivity that enhances the impression of their right to govern. As Chapter 1 of the
Council of Europe states, “The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its Members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, and facilitating their economic and social progress.”

However, there is no element of surveying cultural diversity across Europe and making selections from each on the basis that all cultures might have something to contribute to the notion of “European-ness”. The notion of West being “first” and the concept that “West is best” leads to the assumption that Eastern nations will not only become socialized into Western democracy but will and should want to do so.

Assumption 2: “New” nations are different from “Established” European nations, but not sufficiently different to warrant exclusion from the European institutions. Both texts contain techniques that alternately highlight and minimise differences between the focal nation and the rest of Europe. In the first text, the creation of an “us” and “them” dichotomy highlights differences between Serbia and the rest of the CoE, whilst in the second text, a list of ways in which Croatia does not (yet) conform to EU requirements is used to emphasise differences between Croatia and the rest of the EU.

At the time the texts were published (i.e. 2007) Serbia and Croatia were members of the CoE but not members of the EU. Being outside of the EU has historically resulted in there being practical barriers to travelling and work. The EU is based on free-flow of trade across borders and a functioning market economy within each Member State; being accepted into the EU meant endorsing capitalism, thus those Eastern European communist states were by definition, excluded. It is perhaps unsurprising that notions of and the division of Europe into “East” and “West”, are often conceptualised as “communism” versus “capitalism” (Schimmelfennig, 2001).

Whilst Eastern values are perceived to be maintained, “they” are not going to be “one of us”. Until the New Member States are socialized into Western ideology they will remain constructed as “threats”; whilst the notion of salient difference between nations, the threat is maintained albeit now from within the “in-group”. There are now nested subgroups within the “in-group”, which foster hostility and conflict. Those on the outside we have brought to the inside but the notion of difference is maintained through discourses relating to East and West. The term Eastern is, of course, relative and used specifically within Europe to differentiate and denigrate – speaking from Japan, all Europe is within the Western world and internal divisions might appear less relevant. It is the positioning of Eastern as different
from Western within Europe that allows the “natural order” assumption to gain ground. This in turn assists the Western socialisation, or assimilation, of Eastern Europe by inculcating the desire to change.

By making divisions within the EU, but between “New” and “Established” Member States this creates a fourth layer of “European-ness”, in which the Established Member States are presented as an essential nucleus within the larger conceptions of “Europe” (see Figure 8.2)

**Figure 8.2 Four Layers of European-ness?**

![Diagram showing four layers of European-ness](image)

However, the authors of both texts seek to minimise differences that might have been viewed as threatening to the majority group. In the first text a contrast between Serbia and an entity that is largely viewed as antithetical to European ideology is created; this emphasis ensures that Serbia seems more aligned with European values. In the second text, there is no mention of the term “east” or “eastern” thus avoiding the invocation of Eastern ideologies and in so doing, making Croatia’s position within the western-dominated EU seem more natural.

The process of gaining membership of the supranational organisations is essentially a passage to Europe; the requirement to become more “Western” is evidenced by there being degrees of acceptability – join the CoE first and then there is a greater “test” of “European-ness” to pass before joining the EU. It is notable that no nation has joined the EU without first being a member of the CoE. Might the CoE be conceptualised then as the vehicle that
transports nations across the “finish line”, where completion of the race is constructed as accession to the EU? Certainly, the process of increasing inclusion within the ever decreasing circles appears to be the process of increasing identification with the notion of Europe. However, it might also be constructed as increasing Westernisation given that none of the tests for joining the tightly defined inner groups are based on norms of the Eastern countries.

I am suggesting that these dual acts of both emphasising and minimising differences constructs notions of “inclusive inequality” surrounding the approach to Enlargement taken by both the CoE and EU. The institutions are “inclusive” in a literal sense, in that they ostensibly seek to widen the scope of their membership, whilst the discourse surrounding inclusion betrays the perception that “West is best”, indicating ideological inequality. Thus the assumption underlying the discourse of difference is that “New” nations are different from “Established” European nations, but not sufficiently different to warrant exclusion from the European institutions. The Orwellian implication here is that all nation states might be equal but some are more equal than others.

Assumption 3: New and prospective Member States have a need for membership of the European institutions which is not reciprocated.

In both texts, linguistic techniques are deployed in the problematisation of the relationship between the national authorities and their respective citizens. The construction of these relationships as a “problem” paves the way for the construction of a concomitant “solution”, which is characterized as an intervention by the relevant supranational institution. That these institutions assume the right to choose whether national authorities should be listening to their people or changing their public’s perception is testimony to the degree to which institutional hegemony has been established in Europe. Serbia and Croatia are both positioned in a state of need that can only be fulfilled by belonging to the respective supranational institution; this characterises the CoE and the EU as “families” that are kept in order by virtue of their authoritarian fathers, the institutional authorities. The potential for other options for meeting the needs of their people is ignored; their “need” to belong becomes a matter of common-sense rationality, another taken-for-granted truth that is not questioned either explicitly or implicitly at any point. There is also the implication that exclusion is a threat that can be wielded by the relevant supranational organisation on the basis that only the excluded party would be affected – in the form of expulsion or exclusion from accession. Thus the construction of the assumption of “need” as uni-directional...
underlines the inequalities inherent in the position of both Serbia and Croatia respective to the supranational institutions to which they belong or intend to belong.

Notions of “problems and solutions” underpinned the formation of both the CoE and the EU. The “problem” was the threat of international conflict and the “solution” was characterised as forming and then joining the institutions. Therefore any nation outside of the supranational organisations is assumed to be in need of joining. Whilst the threat may no longer be military conflict, the notion of “belonging” is still associated with protection. Meanwhile, the continued existence of the Institutions suggests that their survival is not dependent on New Member States joining.

8.4 Research Question Three:

What is the relationship between the public communications of the organizations and the internal organizational experiences of employees, with respect to Enlargement?

This research question will be addressed by considering employees’ experiences (according to the findings of Studies 1 and 2) in light of the discourse analysis of the publicly available texts relevant to each of the participating organisations (Study 3). To explain further, the findings of the first two studies are brought together within the themes identified in the template analyses and are reconsidered with reference to each of the assumptions uncovered from the discourse analysis.

Assumption 1: Power relations between new or prospective member-states and the relevant supranational organisation are assumed to represent a natural order.

Findings within several themes are relevant to the assumption surrounding the “natural order” of the power relations between the supranational organisations and their Member States. The relevant findings relate to the themes of “Organisational Culture”, “External Social Factors” (including sub-themes of cultural differences and EU law) and “Perceptions of Equality” and these will be considered in turn here.

Beginning with “Organisational Culture” then, it might be said that findings that were classified within the sub-themes of nationality quotas, the equal merit rules, and the language policies demonstrate that employee experiences relating to these areas are sometimes founded on the assumption of a natural order in terms of the relative power status of the Member States and the supranational entity. For example, consider the views
of the male senior manager who felt that individuals from Established Member States were disadvantaged by the quota system:

“In this directorate most of the higher up posts are occupied by British people therefore when a new post comes up they look more negatively on appointing another person of that nationality...but if the British person is the best then they are being discriminated against by not getting the job...”

“Amongst people there is a natural tendency to see advantage of someone who is of a similar background to yourself – you view cultural similarity as positive”

Male Senior Manager, CoE

Here, promotion on the basis of the “like-me” bias is presented as a naturally occurring phenomenon, meanwhile, in that the quota system is presented in opposition to this designates it as “unnatural”. Thus the dominance of the Established Member States and the means by which this dominance was achieved is therefore also implicitly natural, whilst the quota system is presented as a disruption to this natural order. This view divides the notion of discrimination into “natural” and “unnatural” forms; the notion of the Organisations reproducing their male-dominated Western culture is presented as a “natural” form of discrimination, whilst any attempt to address this by considering the position of non-male, non-Western employees is perceived to be an “unnatural” form of discrimination. Once again highlighting the socially constructed nature of discrimination, these findings contribute to an understanding of the way in which Western European, masculine hegemony has a potential role in shaping organisational culture within international settings.

The language policies in both organisations also indicate implicit endorsement of privilege surrounding not just the Established Member States, but of English and French as both languages and cultures. Both organisations emphasise skills in spoken and written English and French, regardless of individuals’ native language. As previously mentioned, there is a view that this immediately favours native speakers of these languages with respect to recruitment and promotion. However, the fact that the quotas are already full for French and English nationalities effectively neutralises this potential advantage except that there is an underlying benefit to being able to communicate in ones native language:

“You are more free to express yourself; you have greater credibility when you speak because you are more confident in your native tongue”

Female Senior Manager, EP
Not only are individuals able to communicate more “naturally” in their mother tongue (Kraus, 2008), without the need for deliberations over translation or accuracy over vocabulary, the confidence alluded to in the above quotation is also a means by which the primacy of Established Member States, or more specifically English and French individuals, assumes part of the natural order. Supporting Kraus’s (2008) assertion that competence with language tires us to a specific cultural community, the ability to communicate fluently and confidently is clearly indicated as one of the major factors that delineates those in the in-group from those on the periphery. This might suggest another level to the model shown in Figure 8.2, with an inner circle based on the exclusivity of language (see Figure 8.3)

**Figure 8.3. Five layers of European-ness?**

Here, this inner circle is somewhat different to the previous layers of European-ness, in that there is an implication that some Europeans can never achieve core status; the previous layers have more fluidity of conception, resulting from a more permeable membrane, in that adaptation, socialisation and indeed Westernisation, could lead to inclusion. However, by conceptualising the inner core as the “UK and France”, this implies greater exclusivity, with definitions set in more concrete terms.

However, there is a caveat to the above situation; in terms of Enlargement, the accession of New Member States whose citizens have learned English as their second language has shifted the linguistic emphasis within both Organisations from French to English. This has several implications. The shift in language is discussed by participants in this study not only
in terms of communication but also in terms of a change in emphasis related to ways of working that are perceived to have become more Anglicised. In support of the notion that “learning a language is equivalent to acquiring a new standpoint from which to view the world (Krauss, 2008, p79), some of the discussions conveyed the view that rather than simply breaking the linguistic dominance of English and French in the organisations, Enlargement had shifted the balance of power from French to English-speaking individuals and from a French to English “way of being”. For instance, in the debates surrounding the dominance of language, discussion frequently alluded to ways of working that were designated specifically English or French, indicating that as linguistic dominance shifted to favour the former, a concomitant cultural shift accompanied this. This demonstrates that the power of language extends beyond communication in the most basic sense. As a corollary, it might be said that Figure 8.3 would be more accurately constructed by the addition of an innermost circle denoting native (and possibly non-native but nevertheless highly fluent) English-speakers. However, there is somewhat of a contradiction here, in that citizens of England are amongst the least likely to identify as European (Eurobarometer, 2008), so it is a curious situation in which dominance within Europe is becoming aligned to the ability to speak fluent English! On an ideological level, this emphasis on being a fluent speaker rather than a native speaker implicitly reintroduces a measure of fluidity about admission to this central level of European-ness, with the potential that anyone (including those from NMSs) with linguistic fluency in English may at some point supersede those who remain more wedded to their own mother-tongue.

Assumption 2: “New” nations are different from “Established” European nations, but not sufficiently different to warrant exclusion from the European institutions.

The discourse analysis explored the ways in which difference between New Member States and Established Member States were alternately emphasised or minimised in order to achieve certain aims. There is evidence of similar processes within the findings from the first two studies as well.

Difference is emphasised in Studies 1 and 2 through the debate within the thematic categories of “External Social Influences”, “Cultural Differences” and also “Perceptions of Equal Value”. Although EU regulations stipulate that Member State nationals have the right to move between EU countries to live and work, employees from non-EU European countries face particular difficulties. Spouses and other family members of non-EU employees are not permitted to work in EU countries and this specifically affects those
working in the CoE as its workforce is drawn from all of its Member States, including several from outside the EU. Here, there is a clear divide between EU and non-EU nationals, designating EU membership (or lack thereof) as a critical factor of great social relevance, even to workers whose only commitment is to the CoE.

Within Studies 1 and 2, allusions to the notion of East versus West are often made in terms of “New” versus “Established” Member States and one of the most frequently highlighted differences related to attitudes to equality and authority. It is assumed that those from former communist countries are used to operating within organisational cultures that are more hierarchical than in the two participating organisations and this is viewed both positively (as “respect” for authority) and negatively (as reluctance to offer their own opinions and “have equal relationships”) by Westerners. Furthermore, from the perspective of those within the Eastern focus groups, there was a strong feeling that the East-West differentiation was a fundamental basis for categorisation within the organisations:

“You are first of all looked at as whether you come from East or West”

Middle Management, Eastern Males, CoE

“Data is presented separately for old and new Member States so we are made to feel different”
“When do we stop being ‘new’?”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

Just as the classic in-group/out-group situation is constructed within the discourses in the texts analysed in Study 3, old Member States are set up in opposition to newer ones. In the EP text, opposition is created and maintained by emphasising differences between groups whilst minimising differences within groups. This practice is reported to be prevalent in both organisations, with Westerners being thought unable or unwilling to differentiate between non-Western groups:

“Russian, Armenian, Czech, for Westerners these are all the same”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, CoE

However, this quotation also suggests that members of the “out-group” i.e. those from the East are also likely to homogenise the opposing group, by implying that there are generic Western beliefs about non-Westerners.
Though notions of gender were notably absent from the texts in Study 3, the women in several of the Eastern focus groups emphasised that Eastern and Western ways of approaching gender in the workplace were not only different, but somewhat incompatible. Eastern women were largely critical of initiatives to improve numerical equality in gender representation throughout the organisation, instead constructing disparity between genders as a “natural” consequence of biological differences.

Thus whilst there is considerable emphasis on behalf of both Western and Eastern employees on the differences between West and East, there are also various attempts at minimising inter-group differences as there were in both texts in Study 3. Whilst in the EP text, the characterisation of Croatia avoids using the term “east” or “eastern”, there is a suggestion that some Eastern employees might also wish to distance themselves from Eastern ideology:

“We need to change the mentality of old established officials with respect to knowledge of geography of Europe – we come from CENTRAL EUROPE not from Eastern Europe!”

Non-Management, Eastern Males, EP

However, the major difference between the avoidance of the term “Eastern” in Study 3 and Study 2 is that within the text, this avoidance is super-imposed by the representative of the supranational organisation, whilst in Study 3 the avoidance is self-generated by those labelled as Eastern Europeans. Taken together, these findings suggest a tacit agreement that Eastern ideology should be rejected in favour of Westernisation. I say this despite the assertion from the focus group members that they belong to “central Europe”. Whilst the notion of central Europe does not have commonly accepted inferences and is thus a more neutral identity to adopt, the term not only constructs the group as geographically “nearer” to Western Europe but also by implication as ideologically more similar.

There is further evidence of minimising differences between New and Established Member States, this time from the Western focus groups. It might be said that the creation of the sub-unit of “English-French” dominance within the dominant group of “Established” Member States makes no distinction between individuals from New Member States and those from Established Member States who are non-native speakers of English or French. This shifts the in-group-out-group dynamic away from East versus West, instead making a clear division between English/French speakers and “everyone else”.

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Assumption 3: New and prospective Member States have a need for membership of the European institutions which is not reciprocated.

Whilst the texts in Study 3 both indicate an underlying attitude of “they need us but we don’t need them”, the findings from Studies 1 and 2 offer a more mixed perspective. Firstly, it should be said that there is evidence of a widespread assumption that individuals from New Member States have an urgent desire to belong to the CoE and the EU. It is suggested that individuals from the New Member States are so “desperate to join Europe” (Male Senior Manager, EP) that there are large numbers of applicants for every external vacancy; however, this assumption is criticised by those from the New Member States for constructing the positions of those from the “West” and those from the “East” as superior and inferior respectively:

“They think we are barbarians who are just trying to get lucky in ‘their world’”.  
Non-Management, Eastern Males, CoE

There is also the view that those from New Member States are attracted to employment situations that brings them into contact with “Westerners” ; whilst Westerners are not assumed to be desperate for the company of colleagues from Eastern Europe, the individuals from New Member States are assumed to actively prefer the company of individuals who at the very least are not their compatriots and who by inference are from the Established Member States.

Furthermore, there is the assumption that individuals from New Member States will be attracted by salaries and benefits that are greater than they would have received if they had remained working in their home countries. This puts the Institutions in a position of significant power; the implication is that where an individual’s pay and conditions are perceived to be better than they would be able to achieve elsewhere, they might be prepared to overlook the possibility that they are not treated fairly compared to other employees within their organisation.

However, unlike the discourses in the texts in Study 3, discussions in Studies 1 and 2 indicate the perspective that the supranational organisations do “need” employees from the New Member States, at least to a certain degree. This need mainly centres on the notion that with successive Enlargements has come the “need” to communicate with individuals from prospective accession nations and New Member States, and this has brought a concomitant “need” for translators and interpreters who are fluent in a wide range of new languages. However, though this need is constructed as important, its fulfilment is taken for
granted. There are various organisational roles at the bottom of the hierarchy (such as those of cleaner, clerk, receptionist) that are fundamental to the functioning of the organisation, but the skill level assumed to be required is of such a low level that financial reward and job-status are correspondingly low. Thus whilst the skill of fluency in a minority language might be useful for acquiring an initial position in the organisation, where there is no perceived need for that particular language to be spoken at a more managerial level, the individual might be labelled as merely a native speaker of a minority language who has little else to offer.

These findings have the potential to advance an understanding of theories surrounding minority groups and organisational identification. Rink and Ellemers (2007) suggest that groups (and indeed organisations) can develop their identity on the basis of the unique contributions of individuals on behalf of the team or organisation (see Chapter 2). Thus individual linguistic distinctiveness might initially assist in creating a sense of organisational identification amongst minority group members. However, considering the same findings in light of the theory offered by Hogg and Terry (2000) might explain why native speakers of minority languages might have more difficulty in achieving higher status positions. Their theory suggests that high status positions are awarded on the basis of the degree to which individuals appear to embody the values and behavioural norms of the group (or organisation). Where an organisation or division within the organisation constructs its image in a manner that minority group members don’t appear to embody as accurately as majority group members, then a minority group member is less likely to be appointed into a senior role. Thus where linguistic or cultural distinctiveness might initially be useful in carving a niche for a particular employee, that very distinctiveness might present a barrier to career advancement if it does not take a form that the organisation wants to emphasise within its projected image. This might shed further light on the previously discussed finding regarding the apparent desire to minimise the notion of “Eastern-ness”; where Western values and norms are implicitly endorsed by the Organisations, association with Eastern Europe might be a very specific deterrent to appointing individuals from the New Member States into senior roles.

8.5 Chapter Summary
Findings from Studies 1 and 2 indicate that the post-Enlargement era has offered an opportunity to explore the ways that employee experiences in the Secretariats of the CoE and EP differ according to gender and nationality and that there are some differences according to hierarchical position and organisation. Study 3 explores discourses surrounding
European Enlargement and exposes assumptions about the natural order of power relations in Europe, the nature of differences between New or prospective Member States and Established Member States and the lack of reciprocity surrounding need for membership of the supranational organisations. An integration of the findings of the three studies revealed a high degree of overlap between external discourses and internal experiences, though some differences were also identified. I have also considered these findings in light of potential contributions to the literature on gender and work, cultural diversity and expatriate working, managing diversity and social identity in the workplace.

In the concluding chapter, I consider the implications of the research findings for organisational practice, which may have resonance for the participating organisations and on a wider scale. I then consider the limitations of this research and include reflections on my role as the researcher in constructing the findings. Finally, I conclude by making some recommendations for future research.
Chapter 9
Conclusion

9.1 Introduction
To conclude then, it may be said that this research has demonstrated how taking a social constructionist approach to exploring working lives in specific organisational contexts can shed new light on the way in which notions such as equality and discrimination are perceived, and the way in which such perceptions shape the day-to-day experiences of employees of differing nationalities and genders. Furthermore, by exploring discourses used to discuss notions of European-ness in broader social contexts, I have exposed assumptions about the primacy of “Westernism” that pervade discussions surrounding membership of the different European institutions. By considering these assumptions within an organisational context, it may be seen that the implicit supposition that “West is best” underpins employee perceptions regarding their own sense of being equally valued at work. Despite the usefulness of the approach taken in this study, it is not without its limitations, and these will be discussed below; this chapter will then conclude by making suggestions for future research.

9.2 Limitations of the study
In Chapter 4 I considered some of the practical challenges of the methods used; here I reflect on some of the limitations of the research and this includes further consideration of my own role in the research process.

Firstly, it should be acknowledged that I, as the interviewer, had a role in the shared construction of meaning within the interviews, so it is difficult to know to what degree participants might have presented different issues or perspectives had they been interviewed by someone else. Similarly, in the focus groups, although I took a “minimal intervention” approach to facilitation, my presence and the focus of my questions will undoubtedly have had a part to play in shaping the discussion. Given that much of the discussions focussed on the valuing of native speakers of English and French in the organisations, it should be acknowledged that as a native English speaker, I might have been considered as part of the “inner circle” in terms of my own European credentials. Although as a student, my own sphere of influence might be considered minimal in many contexts, within the research context I might be said to have had a certain measure of power, that is, the power to explore
and analyse the position of others and re-contextualise their experiences. Whilst it is not possible to pinpoint the precise way in which these issues might have affected the research process, it is nevertheless important to acknowledge their potential influence.

An additional factor here is the lack of audio-recording in the first two studies. Whilst this was justified on the grounds of being a major factor facilitating participation and expression of views, it placed more emphasis on me as the researcher to construct the raw data by taking notes. Inevitably, though a form of short-hand was used, it was not possible to record everything that was said, thus my own judgement of what was important enough to be recorded will have played a large part in the data production. The situation in the focus groups was slightly different, in that participants were asked to record their views directly onto flip-charts, though even this was a limited form of data collection in that note-form was inevitably used in places. Although I supplemented these with notes from the plenary discussions, this process may have resulted in the loss of nuance in recording of views.

Much of this research has been about the use of language and the meaning conveyed by the use of certain terms. It is important to acknowledge that a feature of qualitative research is that the presentation of the analysis is often bound by the same linguistic conventions that are explored within the analysis itself. For instance, whilst uncovering assumptions surrounding the use of terms such as “Eastern Europe” I nevertheless have no alternative terms with which to describe the relevant entity. Furthermore, whilst seeking to explore the assumptions in relation to power-relations it has been necessary to take a “between-groups” approach and this in itself might have the effect of emphasising differences between those groups and minimising differences within groups. Therefore, though seeking to explore the way in which divisions might arise between groups, the present study might be accused of being part of the very processes that create such divisions.

Furthermore, in Chapter 6, where focus group participants’ perspectives were explored, I acknowledge that the order in which they are presented endorses the very value systems that I am exploring. In this chapter, I firstly present the views of Western males, then Western females, before discussing any Eastern views, which is testimony to the hegemony of Western values, suggesting that all other experiences should be evaluated against Western norms. The primacy of male experiences is also suggested by the presentation of male views before those of females in each regional category. I should perhaps reiterate that whilst this research seeks to expose and challenge underlying value systems, it does not take place in a cultural vacuum and is therefore not exempt from social and cultural
influences. However, I would argue that this does not invalidate the research findings, but rather that the findings should be considered within the context of the social and cultural value systems that are explored here.

9.3 Contributions to Practice

In terms of contributions to practice, each of the participating organisations is contextually unique, so it is difficult to assess how far any suggestions for practice might apply in a wider context. Nevertheless, a few points are worth considering here, even if only in relation to the context of the participating organisations. Firstly, it has been noticed that the organisations take an approach to managing difference that is aligned with the Equal Opportunities paradigm rather than that of Managing Diversity. Aside from the use of the term “Equal Opportunities” in the title of the relevant equality units in the organisation, there is also a clear emphasis within the EO Units of both organisations on numerical targets and group-based initiatives. The former is demonstrated by the requirements to appoint the under-represented gender in cases of equal merit and also the nationality “quota” system; meanwhile the latter is shown in the group-based approach to initiatives, such as those targeting women and minority nations. If the critics of the EO paradigm are to be given credibility, their view that EO creates a divided workforce and alienates the majority group might be worth considering in the current context. Certainly, some males, particularly those from Eastern Europe are disillusioned with what they see as “privileges for women”; given that this sense of disillusionment might be compounded by their sense of being devalued on the basis of their “Eastern-ness”, the concepts associated with the Managing Diversity paradigm might be better suited to fostering notions of inclusion by focussing on needs of the individual (as opposed to the group) and viewing difference as an asset (rather than “other”). More specifically, by focussing on individual needs, intergroup divisions might be avoided, and by viewing difference as an asset, Eastern and also Southern employees, might feel less pressure to conform to Western ideals, and feel that their cultural “difference” from the establishment was more valued and less like they were required to adapt to Western European norms.

One particular feature of the current research context that warrants consideration is that individual employees are recruited into apparently a-political roles within essentially political organisations. Thus for instance, an HR assistant is not only recruited or promoted because of their HR qualifications or experience; the additional factor is that their nationality, and potentially their gender may also play a part in their appointment. The possibility that this might set apart the recruitment and promotion processes in these organisations from such
processes in organisations outside of the European Civil Service might be a factor worth considering further in future research.

9.4 Future Directions
On the basis of findings from the current study, suggestions for future research include comparative and longitudinal studies. Reflecting on the point made above that employees in multi-national organisations outside of the European Civil Service might have very different day-to-day working lives suggests that exploring notions of nationality and gender (and the intersection of the two) in different work-contexts might give a broader perspective on employee experiences. Comparative studies might also have the potential to identify aspects of good practice surrounding the management of diversity in this post-Enlargement era in Europe.

Another issue that emerges as worthy of further investigation is the notion of organisational socialisation. Comparisons between the two organisations in this study is tentatively suggestive of the possibility that differences between experiences of Eastern and Western European employees might reduce over time, and that this might be due to socialisation within the pre-existing organisational culture. This possibility is worth considering further in that it suggests that specific cultural perspectives in organisations are subject to metamorphosis, or even erosion. This is not only directly at odds with the organisational rhetoric on “the preservation of cultural diversity” but is an interesting social phenomenon which may have parallels within society at large.
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Appendix 1

Study 1 Interview Schedule

1) Can you tell me a little about yourself and your role in the organisation?
   Prompt: age, tenure, time in current role, dependants, responsibilities in current role

2) Do you think that all individuals in this organisation are equally valued?
   Prompt: with respect to internal processes of recruitment/ promotion/ appraisals etc
   Prompt: with respect to social networks such as staff groups and more informal gatherings
   Prompt: with respect to personal attributes such as qualifications/behavioural norms/values
   Prompt: with respect to gender and/or nationality

3) Do you feel equally valued compared with other colleagues within this organisation?
   Do you feel equally valued with respect to your own gender and/or nationality?

4) Is there anything else I should have asked you with respect to equality in this organisation?


## Study 1: Interview Consent Form

### Perceptions of Equality in European Organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PhD Researcher:</th>
<th>Fiona Gavin, postgraduate student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Manchester School of Management, Manchester University, Oxford Rd, Manchester M15 6PB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gavin.fiona@virgin.net">gavin.fiona@virgin.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Supervisor:</td>
<td>Marilyn Davidson, Professor of Managerial Psychology, address as above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Parliament contact:</td>
<td>Rosa Brignone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rosa.brignone@europarl.europa.eu">rosa.brignone@europarl.europa.eu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Consent Form for Participants

Thank you for agreeing to help with this research which is taking place throughout 2007.

This form outlines the purposes of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

#### Purpose of Study

1) To investigate whether nationality affects experiences of career progression and/or organisational activities such as participation in social groups or staff committees.

2) To identify ways of improving participation for employees that may feel disadvantaged on the basis of their nationality.

Participants will be drawn from secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. The results will be used to produce an organisational report for the Council of Europe and to fulfil the requirements of a PhD at Manchester Business School, Manchester University.

#### Methods

During this research project I will be collecting information about staff recruitment, promotion, appraisals and length of service. I will also be asking people about any experiences within the organisation that they think may have been influenced by their nationality. I will be using a variety of methods including informal interviews, focus groups, document inspection and questionnaires. I may also be collecting quantitative data from existing sources.
Your Involvement

This phase of the research involves the collection of background data from informal interviews with key personnel and the inspection of documents relating to recruitment, promotion, appraisal and other activities. Your interview may take between 30 and 45 minutes. I will make notes of your responses during the interview. Audio recording will not be used.

The information I am collecting through these methods will be used primarily to draw out key themes for further investigation in focus groups and questionnaires. Your responses may also be used directly to illustrate issues in the final report, with your permission.

Confidentiality

In order to ensure confidentiality, any responses that you give will be reported anonymously. The original notes from our interview and this signed consent form will only be available to myself and my supervisor.

You are encouraged to ask any questions at any time about the nature of the study and the methods that I am using. Your suggestions and concerns are important to me; please contact me at any time using the details above.

Your Agreement

I agree to participate in the study outlined above conducted by Fiona Gavin. I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I give permission for my responses to be used in this study but understand that I may withdraw my consent at anytime before, during or after my participation. I am aware that I am free to terminate my participation in this research at any time, or to refuse to answer any questions to which I don't want to respond. The procedures being used to ensure anonymity have been explained to me, and I understand the limits of confidentiality.

Please sign: _____________________ Date: ____________

Print name: _____________________

Thank you for participating!
### Study 1: Template of Interview Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Script locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Social Influences</strong></td>
<td>Eternal Labour</td>
<td>1,3,6,7,10,12,13,15,17,18,19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stereotyping</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,7,9,14,15,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational Culture</strong></td>
<td>Quotas</td>
<td>1,4,7,9,15,16,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal Merit Rule</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language policies</td>
<td>2,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,12,14,16,17,18,19,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion practices</td>
<td>3,5,7,8,10,16,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work-related Social Contact</strong></td>
<td>Hierarchical socialisation</td>
<td>1,2,3,5,6,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in non-compulsory activities</td>
<td>2,4,7,8,10,13,15,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>2,3,6,7,9,14,16,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptions of Equality at Work</strong></td>
<td>Progress towards equality versus actual equality</td>
<td>3,4,7,8,10,15,16,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tokenism</td>
<td>1,2,4,6,8,12,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overt versus Covert discrimination</td>
<td>3,5,6,9,12,13,17,18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost-benefit appraisal</td>
<td>3,7,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural differences</td>
<td>1,2,5,6,10,12,15,19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4

Study 2: Focus Group Consent Form

Perceptions of Equality in European Organisations

PhD Researcher: Fiona Gavin, postgraduate student
Address: Manchester School of Management, Manchester University,
Oxford Rd, Manchester M15 6PB
Email: gavin.fiona@virgin.net

Research Supervisor: Marilyn Davidson, Professor of Managerial Psychology,
address as above.
European Parliament contact: Rosa Brignone
Email: rosa.brignone@europarl.europa.eu

Consent Form for Participants

Thank you for agreeing to help with this research which will take place from December 2006 and June 2007.

This form outlines the purposes of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

❖ Purpose of Study

1. To investigate whether nationality affects experiences of career progression and/or organisational activities such as participation in social groups or staff committees.

2. To identify ways of improving participation for employees that may feel disadvantaged on the basis of their nationality.

Participants will be drawn from secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. The results will be used to produce an organisational report for the Council of Europe and to fulfil the requirements of a PhD at Manchester Business School, Manchester University.

❖ Methods

During this research project I will be collecting information about staff recruitment, promotion, appraisals and length of service. I will also be asking people about any experiences within the organisation that they think may have been influenced by
their nationality. I will be using a variety of methods including informal interviews, focus groups, document inspection and questionnaires. I may also be collecting quantitative data from existing sources.

❖ Your Involvement

This phase of the research involves the collection of data from focus group discussions. You have been invited to take part in a focus group which will last around 1 hour. You will be encouraged to write notes of your discussions on flip-chart paper and I will also be making notes. Audio recording will not be used.

The information I am collecting through these methods will be used primarily to draw out key themes for further investigation questionnaires. Your responses may also be used directly to illustrate issues in the final report, although anonymity will be maintained at all times.

❖ Confidentiality

In order to ensure confidentiality, any responses that you give will be reported anonymously. The original notes from the focus group discussions and this signed consent form will only be available to myself and my supervisor.

You are encouraged to ask any questions at any time about the nature of the study and the methods that I am using. Your suggestions and concerns are important to me; please contact me at any time using the details above.

❖ Your Agreement

I agree to participate in the study outlined above conducted by Fiona Gavin. I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I give permission for my responses to be used in this study but understand that I may withdraw my consent at anytime before, during or after my participation. I am aware that I am free to terminate my participation in this research at any time, or to refuse to answer any questions to which I don't want to respond. The procedures being used to ensure anonymity have been explained to me, and I understand the limits of confidentiality.

Please sign: _____________________ Date: ____________

Print name: _____________________

Thank you for participating!
## Appendix 5

### Study 2: Focus Group Session Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Allocated</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Introduction of individuals, research aims and session plan. Confidentiality explained and instructions given.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Sub-group discussions of Topic 1. Group records ideas in note form on flip chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Sub-group discussions of Topic 2. Group records ideas in note form on flip chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Sub-group discussions of Topic 3. Group records ideas in note form on flip chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Sub-group discussions of Topic 4. Group records ideas in note form on flip chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Sub-group discussions of Topic 5. Group records ideas in note form on flip chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Sub-group discussions of Topic 6. Group records ideas in note form on flip chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Plenary session in which a representative of each group presented the main points of their discussion to the other focus group members and the researcher, using the flip chart as a prompt. The researcher made notes and asked for clarification of anything that was unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Researcher-facilitated discussion of solutions to address any of the barriers to inequality identified above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Debrief: participants were invited to comment on the session and further explanations about subsequent stages in the research were given. Participants were thanked for their time and energy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6

**Study 2: Template of Focus Group Themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro Theme</th>
<th>Meso Theme</th>
<th>Micro Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External Social Influences</td>
<td>European Enlargement</td>
<td>Motivation of those from NMSs to work in orgs New employees from NMSs overqualified for posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU Law</td>
<td>Working restrictions on spouses from non-EU countries Sale of passports of NMSs on the “black market”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotyping</td>
<td></td>
<td>Men’s work versus Women’s work National/cultural stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Differences</td>
<td></td>
<td>Body language, demeanour, personal space Values Ways of working National nepotism English versus French cultures Norm expectations and violations National versus organisational identity Prominence of minority behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Culture</td>
<td>Equal Merit</td>
<td>Privileges for women Pressure to prove merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time working versus long hours culture Part-time working = “women’s” issue Differences between host and home culture Access to childcare for expatriate workers Eastern versus Western female views Association between part-time working &amp; motherhood Normative gender-roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of language</td>
<td></td>
<td>Advantages for native speakers of English and French Assumption of generically “Eastern European” language Enlargement = shift towards English as dominant language Linguistic shift = cultural shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Equality at Work</td>
<td>Western Men</td>
<td>Equally valued on basis of both nationality and gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western Women</td>
<td>Generally equally valued on basis of nationality, though North/South divide evident Generally perceiving discrimination on basis of gender but hierarchical differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Men</td>
<td>Perceiving discrimination on basis of both gender and nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Women</td>
<td>Generally perceiving equality on the basis of gender, though organisational differences Perceiving discrimination on the basis of nationality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7


Serbia is not Robert Mugabe
By Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Strasbourg, 9 May 2007 - George Monbiot's commentary in yesterday's Guardian, in which he expressed his indignation about Serbia taking up the Chairmanship of the Council of Europe, is a proof that high moral ground is not the best place for shooting from the hip.

His criticism is brimming with self-righteous eloquence, but he is missing the point. The issue is not the Serbian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, but whether Serbia should be allowed to be a member of the Council of Europe at all. The answer to that question is bit more complicated than it would appear from his text.

Serbia and Montenegro became members of the Council of Europe in April 2003, only a month after the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. The decision was based on merit, but it was clearly also meant as a sign of support and solidarity to the Serbian people, whose hopes born out of the departure of Milosevic had been gradually replaced by frustration and ultimately shock following the murder of their Prime Minister. The record of the Serbian membership in the past three years has not been brilliant, but there has been steady progress in most areas. Clearly, the most important unfulfilled obligation is the extradition of Mladic. We are disappointed and impatient, and we have used every opportunity to make it clear to the Serbian authorities. Whether this should be enough to throw Serbia out of the organisation is another matter.

According to George Monbiot, the way to know the value of an institution is to imagine what the world would be like if it did not exist. I agree so let us try to imagine what would have happened to Serbia and its citizens.

First, all the conventions Serbia has signed and ratified would no longer apply. These include the European Social Charter, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Convention against Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. All our assistance programmes helping the Serbian authorities to modernise the functioning of the judiciary and other state institutions for the benefit of their citizens would be terminated. Finally, the people living in Serbia would no longer be able to bring any cases against their government to the European Court of Human Rights.

All this may not mean much to George Monbiot, but it makes a huge difference to everyone living in Serbia – especially those who hope for a better future rather than a recycled version of the past. They may be frustrated, disillusioned and even desperate, but they are still in majority and they need our help.

George Monbiot is not the first to criticise Serbian membership in the Council of Europe. I remember Vojislav Seselj saying more or less the same. His arguments may have been different, but the consequences for the people of Serbia would have been the same.
George Monbiot Text

The Guardian, 8th May 2007

The price of being left alone has been the tolerance of mass murder

Serbia is taking up chairmanship of the Council of Europe. But why isn't anyone talking about human rights?

By George Monbiot, Political Columnist


On Thursday the council's presidency will pass to Serbia. Serbia is not the only nation in Europe involved in human rights abuses. But it is distinguished by the fact that its failures are uncontroversial. Everyone from Human Rights Watch to President Bush has urged its government to hand over Ratko Mladic - the general responsible for the Sarajevo massacre - to the tribunal in The Hague. To decide that this country is unfit to run the Council of Europe looks uncomplicated and free from political cost. If European countries can't find the courage to act against Serbia, they can't find the courage to act against anyone. Human rights become a dead letter.

But there is something odd about the howls of outrage provoked by Serbia's impending presidency - there aren't any. Its accession, which mocks everything the council claims to stand for, has been greeted by a shuffling silence. This is why: as soon as European countries start criticising another member, they invite examination of their own record on human rights when it is their turn to take the chair. For fear of what might be found there, they have tacitly agreed to ignore each other's abuses.

The Council of Europe is a body quite separate from the European Union. Proposed by Winston Churchill, it was founded in 1949 for "the pursuit of peace based upon justice". It drew up the human rights convention and runs the European court of human rights. It has an annual budget of €197m (£134m) and 46 members. Among them is every state in Europe except Montenegro and Belarus. The exclusion of Belarus is perhaps the only difficult decision it has ever taken.

Observe its perpetual cowardice in dealing with Russia. The European court of human rights has repeatedly ruled against Russia's abuses in Chechnya. Russia's response has been to pretend to abide by its decisions - handing out a few roubles in compensation, for example - while protecting and promoting the people responsible for the torture and kidnappings and killings. That is one response. The other is to beat or kill the complainants. In May 2003, for example, armed men broke into the house of Zura Bitieva, who had applied to the court over her illegal detention and torture, and shot her and three members of her family. Case closed.
The member states, which are supposed to support the court's decisions, look the other way. Even when the Council of Europe's own delegation in Chechnya was blown up by a bomb in 2003, the member governments failed to act. As a result the Russian government has yet to carry out a proper investigation. A little of the council's credibility trickles away with every evasion.

But neither the foreign ministers who run the Council of Europe nor its secretariat appear to mind. Last year, when it was Russia's turn to chair the council, the secretary general, former British Labour MP Terry Davis, argued that the fuss about Chechnya was the result of the scapegoating of eastern European nations by the west, and suggested Russia had a credible "plan of action aimed at preventing similar human rights violations in the future". This was nonsense. It is not clear why Davis seems to believe his duties include belittling his members' crimes against humanity.

No one would suggest that either Russia or Serbia would suddenly become a paragon of restraint if it were censured by the Council of Europe. Serbia has shown it is prepared to pay an extraordinary price for sheltering Ratko Mladic. It has already forfeited accession talks with Europe, its confederation with Montenegro and hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign aid for the sake of its pet monster. But the council's refusal to condemn Serbia, or even to prevent it from taking the chair, strengthens the position of the nationalists who argue that Mladic need not be surrendered. They suspect that the other European nations, anxious to develop trade links and expand the EU, will find it convenient to forget that he exists.

Last year Nato dropped its requirement that he be arrested and handed over before Serbia could join its Partnership for Peace programme. In March Olli Rehn, the EU's enlargement commissioner, suggested that negotiations might recommence, despite Mladic. On Thursday, when the Serbian government becomes the official defender of human rights in Europe, the people who regard Ratko Mladic as a national hero will feel quietly vindicated.

But who will cast the first stone? There is scarcely a government that does not have something to hide. The UK, Germany, Italy, Macedonia and even Sweden have been assisting the CIA's "extraordinary rendition" programme, kidnapping people and delivering them to states that will torture them on the US's behalf. Poland and Romania seem to have let the US use secret detention centres on their soil. Austria, Germany and the UK rely on worthless diplomatic assurances to justify handing refugees to governments that torture prisoners. Poland warns that "teachers who reveal their homosexuality will be fired from work". France supports African genocidaires. Spain repatriates unaccompanied children. Ukrainian police torture sex workers and force them to confess to crimes they did not commit. The UK bans peaceful protest and continues to occupy the country it illegally invaded.

Lift a stone to throw at Serbia anywhere in Europe and you will find something unpleasant cowering there. Better to leave it on the ground. The price of being left alone by other states is the tolerance of mass murder. When I discussed these matters with Terry Davis, he admitted that he had "not heard anyone in the Council of Europe suggest any form of action against Serbia as a result of its failure to hand over Mladic". The only action they could take, he claimed, is to expel Serbia from the council. Once you have become a member, you have the right to chair it when your turn comes up. I am not convinced this is true. The council's statute says that a member which has seriously violated human rights and fundamental freedoms "may be suspended from its rights of representation". Surely this could apply to its right to be represented as chairman of the council?
Davis ingeniously argued that Serbia's visibility in its new role will expose it to embarrassment. Would I have been writing about Mladic if it were not about to assume the chair? I wouldn't. But on the same grounds you could argue that Robert Mugabe should become the next head of Amnesty International.

If you want to know the value of an institution, you need only imagine what the world would be like if it didn't exist. If the council were dissolved, would anyone suffer, except for those it employs? The European court would be missed. But the rest of it? Thanks to the member states' agreement to ignore each other's abuses, it is, at the moment, completely useless.
Appendix 9

EP Text

Croatia: Good progress towards accession and some issues remain.

Enlargement – 30-4-2007

Croatia, a candidate country for accession to the EU since October 2005, has made major progress in its preparations, according to the EP. However, the House believes it must make further efforts in areas such as cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), reform of the judiciary and the transition to a market economy. A revised institutional framework should enter into force by the end of 2008 in order to accommodate Croatia in the EU, say MEPs.

In an own-initiative report adopted with an overwhelming majority and drafted by Hannes Swoboda (PES, AT), the House "congratulates the Croatian authorities for the rapid progress made so far in accession negotiations". MEPs stress that key pieces of legislation in crucial areas such as public administration, the administration of courts and anti-corruption policy have already been adopted.

This central European country of less than 4.5 million inhabitants is thus on course to become a member of the European Union once the accession criteria are met and negotiations are completed, thus validating the argument that the future of the western Balkans lies within the EU. MEPs nevertheless stress that the current institutional framework (Nice Treaty) does not provide an adequate basis for further enlargements. This issue should be solved by the end of 2008 at the latest, according to MEPs.

Environmental standards and market economy

Nevertheless, the EP exhorts Croatia to make further efforts on several fronts. It must first strengthen its capacity to implement Community environmental legislation. The application of the Aarhus Convention on public access to environmental information and the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on the reduction of greenhouse gases are among the top priorities.

The House urges the Croatian authorities to take into due consideration the concerns raised by local communities and public opinion with regard to controversial industrial projects which might pose a threat to the environment or public health, and calls on them to set up a clear and transparent procedure whereby all stakeholders, and not merely investors, can be informed and consulted.

MEPs also point out that having "an open, competitive market economy is a fundamental requirement for EU membership". Croatia must thus comply with the agreed targets for the sale of "minority and majority state-owned interests in companies" and for the reduction of state subsidies in the shipbuilding and steel industries in particular. The committee appeals to Croatia to authorise the acquisition of real estate by EU nationals, with the exception of the exempted areas.
Cooperation with ICTY and judicial reform

In addition, the committee calls on Croatia to cooperate fully with the ICTY. Croatia's institutions and political parties should counteract the public's perception of the ICTY, say MEPs, who deplore the Government's offer to support the defence costs of Croatian army generals.

MEPs also attack the "persisting bias amongst some judicial staff against non-Croatian nationals" and the insufficient protection of witnesses against intimidation. They point out that thorough reform of the judicial system and police are requirements for Croatia's accession. The reform of procedures for appointing judicial staff is expected to provide "sufficient guarantees for a professional and independent judiciary", while a Working Group has recently introduced an obligation for judges to declare any interests and the possibility of transferring them to overburdened courts.

Border with Slovenia, integration of minorities

MEPs urge both the Croatian and the Slovenian governments to exploit all the opportunities available in order to reach an agreement on all their pending border issues, taking into account the agreements reached so far and the conclusions of the European Council of 17-18 June 2004 (which notes Croatia's decision not to apply to the EU Member States any aspect of the Protected Ecological and Fisheries zone), and invite them to abstain from any unilateral action which might undermine such an agreement.

MEPs also propose to "recourse to the good offices of a third party if solutions cannot be found bilaterally to outstanding border disputes".

Another point raised by the EP is the integration of minorities into everyday life and the idea of including in pension calculations the years worked by people who lived in the Republika Srpska Krajina during the conflict.

Lastly, the House voices concern at the flagging public support for EU accession in Croatia and welcomes the fact that the Government and the opposition are joining forces in explaining to the public the economic, political, social and cultural benefits resulting from the accession process.