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The EEAS: A Problem Of Representation?

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Master thesis submitted for the purpose of obtaining the degree of
Master International Relations and Diplomacy

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June, 2013

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
AD's	Administrator Officials
SNE's	Seconded National Experts
CCA	Consultative Committee on Appointments

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A FEW WORDS

Writing this thesis has been a real learning experience, giving me more insights into the functioning of the EEAS, problems of representation, loyalty perspectives. I was really pleased that I could couple my thesis subject with my interest for the international sphere. I thank my promoter for suggesting Q-methodology, because it offered me the opportunity to learn how to master an entire new research method. Although it did not make my task simple, as I was on my own to get the hang of it, at the end I was very satisfied. It was the best methodological choice for this type of research. Next, it also offered me the opportunity to develop myself in the area of statistical analysis. During my personal conversations with the respondents, everyone of them expressed optimism about the research method. They thought the statements were properly chosen and well drafted. They deemed it to be interesting and useful for some self-reflection as well. Their explanations on how they tackled the exercise also illustrated a careful approach, which gave me a sense of accomplishment and suggests more trustworthy results.

This master thesis would have been impossible without the help of a number of people. First of all I want to thank my promoter Mr. Jan Beyers for his professional guidance and expert advice. A second 'thank you' goes to Mrs. Christine Cassiers, for helping me to get in touch with my respondents and for her explanations on EEAS functioning. On the third place my sincere gratitude goes out to Mr. Steven Brown and Mr. Koenraad Keignaert for helping me to understand, conduct and analyse Q-methodology. Lastly I also want to thank Sofie Vansteenkiste and Bavo Meert for their English linguistic controls.

Of course I cannot forget to thank all the European diplomats who were prepared to participate in my research. Albeit their busy schedule they were happy to make some time for me. Without their cooperation, this master thesis could not succeed.

To end, I would also like to thank my friends and family for their endless support and understanding.

At this very moment, I can honestly say that I am proud to be able to present you my master thesis!

Evi Bastiaenssens,

Antwerp, June 3, 2013

ABSTRACT

The European External Action Service (EEAS) was criticized since the very beginning, and not at least concerning its staff structure. The new Member States accused that it is still an elite club of the old Member States, resulting in an unequal representation. This master thesis starts with examining the official recruitment regulation, and the resulting current staff structure. Secondly, the premier loyalty of the EEAS staff was investigated to reveal their point of view: supranational or intergovernmental. This determines the range of who is actually represented, which eventually leads to answering the question whether there is a problem of representation within the EEAS. Both qualitative and quantitative research methodology was utilised via the Q-methodology. The first quantitative phase consisted of a statements ranking, participated by thirteen national seconded diplomats. The qualitative research data were gathered through a short follow-up interview. The results indicated that there is an unequal formal representation. However, the respondents revealed a supranational point of view, suggesting they do not only represent the citizens of their home country, but the European population as a whole. The main conclusion was that notwithstanding the unequal formal representation, there is no dramatic problem because there are EEAS staff members who have a supranational point of view, representing every European citizen.

The first chapter covers an introductory overview of the literature on EU diplomacy, the emerging process of the EEAS and the previous research on loyalty. Second, the different aspects of the research question are described. The following chapter includes the explanation of the research methodology. Chapters four and five are the heart of this master thesis: the analyses of the current EEAS staff structure and the loyalty perspectives. This is logically followed by the evaluation of the hypotheses. The recommendations for future policy and research are made in chapter seven, and finally the last chapter covers the main conclusions.

Keywords: European Union, European External Action Service, representation, loyalty perspective, Q-methodology, national seconded diplomats.

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Proponents of the European integration are enthusiastic about the new institution, so-called the European External Action Service (EEAS). They perceive it as a general step upwards on the European ladder. For example David Spence (2008, p. 65 & 71), an experienced European diplomat, believes that the European Union (EU) project is an export commodity, which means that it is more than the sum of its (national) parts. The formation of this External Service could substantiate this belief, adding another component which improves the entire project. But is a deeper and wider integration really happening via the European External Action Service? Can we call this a streamlined organisation?

This master thesis wants to tackle a part of this question, focusing on the staff structure of the EEAS, and to which extent this staff really focuses on an integrated European Union. Let's begin with exploring some basic aspects: EU diplomacy, the EEAS itself and finally literature about loyalty representation.

1.1 DIPLOMACY ON THE EUROPEAN LEVEL

1.1.1 A THEORETICAL VIEW ON EU DIPLOMACY

Many new actors (international organisations, non-state actors, etc.) and factors play an important role in contemporary international politics. States and their traditional interests lost importance, while individual and social interests became more vital. Values, ideas and identities are now at the centre, which means the focus is on soft law and civilian interests (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan, 2008, pp. 8-34). The consequence is that diplomats need to consult a wide array of actors on different levels and concerning a wide spectrum of topics. Today, "club diplomacy" is not longer predominant, "network diplomacy" is required instead (Neumann, 2009, p. 15f). The concept "diplomacy" needs to be understood as 'the mechanism of representation, communication and negotiation through which states and other international actors conduct their business' (Melissen, 1999, p. xvii). Over the years, there have been many changes in the field of diplomacy: (1) an acceleration in the speed of communication and travelling, (2) more direct interactions between a wider array and a larger variety of actors at all levels, and (3) evolution in the content and manner of diplomatic work (Mahncke, 2012, p. 16). This is the context in which the EEAS came to life, requiring to take into account these diplomatic and the more comprehensive societal changes. The staff structure of the EEAS needs to be able to deal with these three evolutions in diplomatic functioning.

The type of diplomacy applied by the EEAS is “multilateral diplomacy”, conducted in the framework of international institutions (Keohane, 1989, p. 3). Multilateral diplomacy within the EU is challenging because states are the official members. Consequently, the key function of individuals working together in the framework of a European institution is representation, as they actually operate on behalf of their national state (Jönsson & Hall, 2005, pp. 152-153). This complicates negotiations.

A lot of problems emerge because multilateral diplomacy within the EU seems to be state-centric¹, so states try to get a grip on negotiations on the European level (Jørgensen, 2009, p. 190). The EU on the other hand prefers a commitment to effective multilateralism by its Member States, because it is ‘a defining principle of its external policy. This means that global rules should be taken seriously, other countries should be helped with implementing and abiding these rules, there should be active engagement in multilateral forums and a forward-looking agenda should be promoted, which is not limited to a narrow defence of national interests’ (European Commission, 2003).

1.1.2 EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY IN PRACTICE

One EU diplomacy practical aspect of premier relevance for this master thesis is the staff structure.

The EU has a *sui generis* composition² because of its relative size and the degrees of commitment of its members (especially the original six), its constitutional structures (especially its legal ones), and, to a lesser extent, its internal policies (Winters, 2010). It is a respected international actor. However, it is affected by the different political interests of its Member States (Barton, 2012, p. 63). When discussing the staff structure of the EEAS, the Member States have argued that at least one third of the EU diplomats at AD-level³ should be seconded from the national level, and therefore not recruited from another EU institution. But these seconded national diplomats are in a difficult position when the points of view between the national and the European level differ seriously. Formally, their premier loyalty is to the

¹ Negotiations officially take place between states, but they need to be represented by human beings.

² “Sui generis” is a Latin expression, meaning “of its own kind” and hence “unique in its characteristics”. The mixture of intergovernmental and supranational elements within the EU led already to a lot of debate. In comparison with other international organisations, the EU has known an unparallel development, which is why it is called a “sui generis” geopolitical entity.

³ “AD” stands for “Administrator” which is the graduate level for EU officials. These are staff members who are fixed employed by the EU itself.

High Representative.⁴ However, when they behave against the national interests of their country of origin, it could harm their career after their time at the EEAS. And if they just try to balance between national interests and EU policy, they do not help the latter either (Mahncke, 2012, p. 33).

A report dating from 1982 by the hand of the British career diplomat Adrian Fortesque already pointed out that the main problem is finding the right staff and a proper administrative culture, ensuring the right lines of responsibility. This already evoked a discussion about reform at that time (European Commission, 2004, p. 29). During the next steps in the formation of the EU (the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997), the issue of personnel remained at the top (European Commission, 2004, p. 44). A new report distributed in March 1996 on “Longer-term Requirements of the External Service”, also known as the “Williamson Report”, expressed the need for a diplomatic service, hereby stressing the importance of loyal staff (European Commission, 2004, p. 47). Throughout the development of the External Service in general, almost every reform concerned personnel and career planning (European Commission, 2004, p. 51).

The incentive for the drafters of the Lisbon Treaty (signed on December 13, 2007 and entered into force two years later) was improving coherency and enabling the EU “to speak with one voice” on the international level (Petry, 2012, p. 225). The goal of the European Parliament concerning the EEAS was therefore about setting up a communitarian foreign service, with as minimum state intervention as possible, so the Union would be able to speak with a single voice for its foreign policy (Mahncke, 2012, p. 29).

At the end of 2009, there was already a large deal of criticism in the press about the new position outlined in the Lisbon Treaty. The perceived gap between the ideal representation of the EU in international affairs and the situation today seemed to be increasing. The Lisbon Treaty wanted to create the EU as a first-rank diplomatic actor, with real decision-making power. So the EEAS needed to be a full-fledged EU diplomacy (Marangoni, 2012, pp. 89-91). But today, the EEAS still operates below its potential diplomatic weight (Willis, 2009), which could be linked to the contested staff structure.

⁴ As will be explained in detail in chapter 1.2.

1.2 THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE

1.2.1 EVOLUTION

Already at the start of the EU, there was a strong feeling that some kind of outward representation was necessary, a new institution to give Europe a chance to play an independent role on the international stage. The first steps were taken by the European Commission and until the establishment of the EEAS, the international representation of the EU remained in the hands of European Commission staff and the Council Presidency (Mahncke, 2012, pp. 21-23).

In November 2009, Catherine Ashton was appointed as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President (HR/VP) of the European Commission. She was the one who had to develop the EEAS, which was a very difficult task.⁵ She was monitored closely by the Brussels Press corps when negotiating with the European Parliament, and the consequential successes and failures were made public.⁶ The evolution of the EEAS could be monitored by all the EU partners (Petry, 2012, p. 218). The establishment of the new function of High Representative received high political attention in the run-up to the Treaty of Lisbon (Marangoni, 2012, p. 89). Javier Solana, the first High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, defined his post as he deemed necessary: he shaped his position, contributed to institutional creation and exercised far reaching agenda powers (European Convention, 2002, p. 32). It seems however unlikely that Ashton will follow the footsteps of Solana (Marangoni, 2012, p. 91), as will become clear when discussing her minimal role in the EEAS selection procedure, later in this thesis.

The Treaty of Lisbon (which entered into force on December 1, 2009) changed the EU external representation enormously. Ever since, the EEAS was established with the function to support the High Representative in representing ‘the Union for matters relating to the common foreign and security policy. [Sh]e shall conduct political dialogue with third parties on the Union’s behalf and shall express the Union’s position in international organizations and at international conferences’ (art. 27 TEU after Lisbon).

⁵ The goal was to abolish the “pillarized” institutional fragmentation (the Council with its intergovernmental approach, the Commission using a supranational approach) in EU foreign affairs (Behr, Nykanen, & Siitonen, 2010, p. 3).

⁶ See *inter alia* Andrew Rettman, “Ashton calls off EU ambassador hearings”, *EUobserver*, 4 October 2010; and Honor Mahony, “MEPs demand more say over EU foreign policy spending”, *EUobserver*, 29 September 2010.

On the 26th of July 2010 the EEAS was formally brought to life, by decision of the Council of Ministers, which was based on a proposal from the High Representative endorsed by the European Parliament on July 8, 2010 (European External Action Service). Thereafter, the EEAS was officially launched on December 1, 2010, one year after the Lisbon Treaty. It has an autonomous institutional set-up⁷, with staff coming from the European Commission, the European Council and the Member States. The staff was transferred on January 1, 2011. The goal of establishing the EEAS was to strengthen the European international reputation via streamlining foreign policy abilities (Barton, 2012, pp. 63-64).

The EEAS was set up as a centralised body, linked across the various EU institutions dealing with foreign policy. It needed to enhance cooperation and coordination, to create a unified EU foreign policy (Barton, 2012, p. 83). It is thus functionally independent, although by integrating its staff from different EU institutions and from the Member States the goal is to guarantee that the foreign policy is in line with the EU policy in general.

1.2.2 FORMAL STAFFING RULES

The connection between the EU and diplomacy takes place on different levels: diplomats within the EU, national and EU diplomats, EU bureaucrats fulfilling an EU foreign policy and EU diplomats representing this policy and the EU in general to the outside (Mahncke, 2012, p. 30). The establishment of the EEAS tried to clarify some parts of this story.

With the establishment of the EEAS, the EU now has an official diplomatic corps. It supports the EU foreign affairs chief (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton) in conducting the common foreign and security policy. It has Delegations around the world working on behalf of the people of Europe and representing the EU as a whole. The EEAS is functionally autonomous from other EU bodies, but has a legal responsibility to ensure that its policies are consistent with other EU-policies. To help ensure this, the High Representative is also a Vice President of the European Commission, and President of the Foreign Affairs Council. The EEAS diplomatic service also supports High Representative Catherine Ashton in these capacities (European External Action Service).

⁷ ‘Article 1(2) of Council Decision 2010/427 establishing the organisation and functioning of the EEAS provides that the EEAS “shall be a functionally autonomous body of the European Union, separate from the General Secretariat of the Council and from the Commission with the legal capacity necessary to perform its tasks and attain its objectives.” In accordance with Article 1(3) of that decision, the EEAS is placed under the sole authority of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy’ (Ashton, 2012, June 20).

The initial basis of the EEAS lies within article 27(3) of the Lisbon Treaty, stating that personnel must be provided for the purpose of the establishment and the functioning of the EEAS, which resulted into the Council Decision of July 26, 2010. This decision requires that EEAS staff should only perform their duties with attention to European concerns. Their recruitment should be based on merit, and there should be a geographical and gender balance, with a meaningful representation of all the Member States (Article 6(6)). Until July 1, 2013, staff is recruited from three sources: the General Secretariat of the Council, the Commission and the diplomatic services of the Member States (Staff Regulations, Article 98(1)). After this date, vacancies will be open (European Council, 2010).

The Council Decision requires a transparent recruitment procedure based on merits, to ensure staff of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity can be selected. At the same time, it reiterates that an adequate geographical balance and a meaningful presence of nationals of all Member States is necessary. The fact that geographical balance is referred to twice in the same article demonstrates the importance of this issue (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 10)!

Currently, there are two categories of Member States diplomats active at the EEAS.⁸ The first category can be seen as the *real* EU diplomats and are a part of the AD-officials (AD's). They are recruited via the same selection procedure as staff members coming from the Council and the Commission, namely the EU concours organised by EPSO (European Personnel Selection Office).⁹ The second category contains the Seconded National Experts (SNE's)¹⁰, which are selected on a more or less bilateral basis. Every Member State can occupy a number of functions at the EEAS, and it is the Member State who recommends someone in a first phase. Subsequently, the director of staff (or frequently the head of the department in which the candidate could be appointed) is in the possibility to refuse someone if this person does not meet the right requirements. This type of recruitment is always temporary, mostly for a maximum period of six years (Cassiers, 2013a). SNE's and AD's are at the same level concerning responsibilities, diploma requirements and job content. The only difference is their type of contract and payment. SNE's have a temporary contract and are still paid by their

⁸ Which is the scope of this study.

⁹ For more information: http://europa.eu/epso/index_en.htm.

¹⁰ A Seconded National Expert (SNE) is typically seconded from the civil services of Member State, so it is a national, regional or local civil servant. A SNE has a dual role: bringing in experience on the issues one is used to deal with, and take back to the home administration the knowledge of EU issues acquired during their period of secondment.

national government. AD's have a permanent contract and are paid by the EU (Cassiers, 2013b). Nevertheless, both of these categories have a previous career on the national level, which could influence their loyalty preferences.

Important in order to understand the way these Member States European diplomats need to fulfil their function is article 11(2) of the Treaty on the EU. It concerns the "loyalty provision", which is a conflict-avoiding mechanism. It requires Member States to act in line with EU external actions. So the formal principles and objectives of the EEAS, also in Article 6(4) of the Council Decision of July 26, 2010, clearly state that this new institution should lead to more coherence on the European level. Already at the very beginning however, the variety and numbers of actors involved led to concerns about potential incoherence (Quinn, 2012, pp. 56-57). Many Member States kept on requiring a better geographical balance. The Visegrad Group¹¹ noted in a non-paper¹² about the organization and functioning of the EEAS that an adequate geographical balance and a meaningful presence of nationals from all EU Member States need to be ensured. The Polish non-paper added that the EU would benefit most from the EEAS if the institution is well integrated, not only in the European institutions, but also in the national diplomatic services. Also Germany took position in the same line. Lastly, a working document by Elmar Brok and Guy Verhofstadt written in April 2010 focused on the legitimacy of the EEAS. They declared that this depends on the ownership and feeling of responsibility by each and every one, which in its turn depends on a well geographical 'representativity' of its staff (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 13). These examples of criticism on the representation clearly illustrate the relevance of the issue.

¹¹ Also known as the "Visegrad Four" or simply "V4". It reflects the efforts of the countries of the Central European region (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) to work together in a number of fields of common interest within the all-European integration (International Visegrad Fund, 2013).

¹² Non-papers are discussion documents without an official status, drawn up either by one of the EU's institutions or by a national government. They are designed to stimulate discussion on a particular issue and do not represent the official position of the institution or country which drafted them (E!Sharp, 2013).

1.3 EXPLORING THE LITERATURE ON LOYALTY AND REPRESENTATION

The study of the connection between European integration and changing identities among actors within the EU is an upcoming topic in literature, and it is part of the so-called contemporary “Europeanisation” studies (Beyers, 2005, p. 899). This is a broad concept, referring to a number of related phenomena and patterns of change. The focus here is on the process through which the EU becomes mainstreamed as a unitary organisation in the field of foreign policy via a common diplomatic body, the EEAS.

1.3.1 TWO PERSPECTIVES

A first point of view is seen through the eyes of the outside world. How do they perceive the EU?

A relevant study in this regard is the one of Shannon Petry (2012, p. 215), on the perception of EU diplomacy in the extern society (i.e. the view of people who are not working in a EU-related organisation, the wider public), as is described in chapter 9 of the book *European Union Diplomacy* of Mahncke and Gstöhl. Her focus is on three main questions: (1) How does the EU present the EEAS to the rest of the world?, (2) Do third parties see the EEAS personnel as members of a service in its own right, or as representatives of their national government?, and (3) Does the new sui generis service has an impact on the perceptions on the EU as a unitary actor in international organisations? These first two questions are about how the world looks at the EEAS. The last one focuses more on the perceptions of the European diplomats themselves, on the way they think the outer world comprehends them.

To answer these questions, Petry (2012, pp. 216-217) did research on the external perceptions about the EU, on public statements by the EU itself and by third-party officials. Lastly, she also interviewed some members of Union Delegations (diplomats at third-party representations of the EU and personnel in third-party host states or international organisations). Her focus was thus on elite perceptions, by a subset of the EU’s official external partners. The results of the study showed that officials at the EU Delegations in New York and Washington meet the requirement outlined in the European Council Decision of July 26, 2010, indicating that all staff of the EEAS should perform their duties and conduct themselves with their premier loyalty to the Union. But some Delegation personnel still write their *function of origin*, i.e. their previous job in their home country, at the bottom of their email messages. So, EU personnel did declare that third-parties predominantly perceive them as being a *European*, but they still seem convinced that information about their former

(national) function is relevant. This leads to the conclusion that a uniform institutional culture is not present yet, and that more time will be needed to create one (Petry, 2012, pp. 233-234).

The second point of view is how European diplomats perceive themselves, as in who they identify themselves with. Here, the theories of European integration (also called “Europeanisation”) and the closely linked socialization process are important to address.

Theories about Europeanisation tell us that EU membership would affect national policy by constraining the range of possible and acceptable actions (Hartstein, 2012, pp. 116-117). This could be caused by the socialisation process. Socialisation can be seen as the key mechanism for Europeanisation. Jeffrey Checkel (2005, p. 804) defined it as follows: ‘the process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community’. It is oriented towards changes in beliefs, values and actions within individual actors who enter an institutional setting (Hartstein, 2012, p. 118). It is an important mechanism in terms of analysing European diplomat loyalty, because various diplomats were initially national policy-makers.¹³ They have pre-existing norm and action expectations, being penetrated in a new social environment.

Yannick Hartstein (2012, p. 116) studied the role of SNE’s in the Development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European (now Common) Security and Defence Policy (ESDP/CSDP). His hypothesis was that SNE’s who come to Brussels, socialised in their own cultural and historical baggage, can constrain European and national foreign policy-making via the right social and learning mechanisms. This could lead to a convergence, or Europeanisation, also in values and norms. He believes in the existence and the relevance of the socialisation process.

The basic assumption of socialisation is that ‘actors who enter into a social interaction do not emerge the same’ (Johnston, 2001, p. 488). The process of socialisation is the product of the interaction between the characteristics of the socialising organisation and the career trajectory of individuals (Suvarierol, Busuioc, & Groenleer, 2011, p. 2). International institutions as the EU can be interpreted as such social interactions/environments, a.k.a. socialisation organisations. Christoph Meyer (2006, p. 37) added that ‘close proximity and high frequency of interactions induce individuals to mutually adapt their perceptions and attitudes in order to

¹³ Who are the target group of this study.

minimize cognitive dissonance'. The field of diplomacy is by definition one in which interaction is at the centre. So this reasoning would lead to the fact that seconded national diplomats are adapting in line with the EU, in order to minimize their differences.

Three mechanisms of socialisation exist. At first there is "strategic calculation", which means that agents obey the rules to satisfy their own interests. Secondly "role playing" would consist of *simplifying shortcuts* in situations of scarce resources and attention in combination with bounded rationality, which together would lead to agents adapting automatically and sometimes unconsciously to their environment. "Normative suasion" finally is the deepest type of socialisation in which the focus is on argumentation, persuasion and convincing, leading to agents reflecting and maybe redefining their own beliefs and preferences (Checkel, 2005, pp. 808-812). A point of criticism is that this kind of socialisation mechanism would not exist on the European level. Research by Liesbet Hooghe (2005, p. 862), and for example also by Jan Beyers (2005), indeed show that support for supranational norms is mainly because of previous national experiences, thus not because of socialisation into European institutions.

Which type of socialisation prevails depends on the role European diplomats take upon. They can play three different roles, which leads to a triple balance (Trondal, 2006, p. 156):

1. As national government representatives they need to have political loyalty
2. As sectorial experts they need to have professional autonomy
3. As supranational actors working for the EU they need to have supranational loyalty

This could lead to the problem of "ambiguous representation", which means that representatives have multiple obligations, institutional affiliations and loyalties. The underlying idea frequently is that supranational and expert roles will only supplement national roles, but will never supersede them, because national civil servants are already socialised and they cannot redefine themselves in an international setting (Trondal & Veggeland, 2003, p. 62). Nevertheless, it is not certain whether this implies the presence of inconsistencies or contradictions.

Theories on Europeanisation and the socialisation process invert the initial view on the relation between the national and the international political level. The historical notion of foreign policy is state-centred; the idea that political entities with clear national interests were able to use policy tools to influence world politics. The European foreign policy, though, is not a unified actor, and does not have one identifiable interest (Wong, 2006). However, it cannot be seen as strictly intergovernmental either (Smith, 2004, p. 741). Its position would be somewhere in between supranationalism and intergovernmentalism: Member States adapt it, but they can also contribute to it (Wong, 2007, p. 322).

1.3.2 THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL IDENTITY AND PREMIER LOYALTY

Up until today, very little is known about the beliefs and loyalty perspectives of the staff at the EU institutions. Literature about the European Commission for example usually assumes that the EU is a unitary actor in which the office holders defend the institutional interests. However, this idea could be wrong. We could have an incomplete understanding on the motivations and opinions of some key position holders at the European institutions. The additional question here is why some European officials prefer an intergovernmental European structure, while others are in favour of a supranational EU? Or is a combination of both the most realistic and ideal scenario? (Hooghe, 1999) This is a broad issue which requires a various amount of political identity studies and can only be answered via further examination. An important step in this research area is the loyalty question, which is the frame of this master thesis: the premier loyalty of initial Member State diplomats now working at the EEAS.

Supranationalist and intergovernmentalist preferences differ on three different aspects. A first difference is whether Europe is perceived as a goal, or as an instrument. For supranationalists, the dominant issue in EU politics is about the future of European integration. They do not focus on right- or leftwing politics, believing ideology is the wrong axis. Intergovernmentalists on the other hand do not focus on building Europe. They merely see it as an inevitable issue. A second aspect on which they differ is where they position themselves on the democratic-technocratic continuum. The supranationalists focus on a democratic Europe: technocratic efficiency and persuasion are not enough to get to an integrated Europe, politicisation and increased participation are necessary. Intergovernmentalists however, perceive the EU only as an instrument for producing better policies, political objectives should be set elsewhere. The national sensitivities remain important, national states must retain a very important place in the construction of Europe. The last difference touches on the

view on activism and/or mediation. The supranationalist view is in favour of activism (loving a good institutional fight), as they are politicians with a radical view on Europe (“Europe is in the making”), aiming on building a new society. In contrast, the intergovernmentalist view perceives institutional bickering as a waste of time and energy, they are policy-makers (not politicians), with a realist(ic) view of Europe (“Europe is something there is”). The primary focus is on successful policy (Hooghe, 1999). Both points of view exist among the staff working at EU institutions. At the EEAS, the supranational view should be predominant, as it is required that staff members perform their duties with their largest attention towards European concerns. This means they should aim for the future integration of a democratic Europe and take actions in this direction.

An obvious next question is what determines the prevailing viewpoint.

There are two theoretical tracks on the extent to which individuals can decide for themselves which point of view they take upon considering European integration. On the one hand, there is the “socialisation logic” focussing on the learning process. Here, individuals are not able to choose, they are socialised in particular institutional environments. Institutional learning shapes political orientations (Rohrschneider, 1994; 1996), because people are social beings who are influenced by their experiences and views. Institutions help shape individuals’ orientations. On the other hand there is a “political logic” saying that individuals often seek to shape institutions consciously and purposively. Actors engage in purposeful political action, so when officials take position on the supranational-intergovernmental continuum, they make a political statement concerning the degree of autonomy they require from their national governments (Hooghe, 1999). According to this last reasoning, individuals are in the possibility to choose their loyalty preferences autonomously.

2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES ON REPRESENTATION AND LOYALTY

The major focus of this research is on the representation of all Member States in the EEAS. This does not only require an investigation of the formal composition of the institution, but it is also a rather sociological question. Having the feeling you represent someone or something is actually a private issue. Although people are in similar positions, it is possible that their internal feelings towards the context is completely different. A topical example can clarify this. All the people living on the Belgian territory have the formal identity of being a “Belgian”. However, it does not necessarily predict that all these people feel as Belgians as well. It is possible that some of them primarily feel Flemish, Walloon or a citizen of Brussels. This leads to different personal interests between them, their premier loyalty will not be towards the Belgian federal government, but to the regional governments. So despite of the fact they all have the same formal nationality making them part of the same group, their personal identifications are different. As a result, they will defend diverse interests, representing their singular preferred loyalties.

This potential problem of diverse primary loyalties leading to different patterns of representation within the EEAS is tackled in this master thesis. Formally, all the Member States diplomats working at the EEAS should feel like “Europeans”¹⁴, giving these interests top priority. Unfortunately, it is not for sure whether this is their real premier loyalty. The question of who they really represent, their national governments or the EU, is more difficult to answer. This leads to the main research question: **“Is there a problem in terms of equal Member States’ representativeness within the EEAS?”**

To be able to answer this question, it needs to be split up into two sub-questions:

1. **“Which procedural rules are applied within the EEAS when recruiting Member States diplomats and how does the current formal representation of the Member States within the EEAS look like?”** This question addresses the formal representation of EEAS staff.
2. **“Where can the primary loyalty of European diplomats seconded from the Member States be found: still directed towards the national level, or towards the higher European level?”** This question is the real check-up for the potential problem, focusing on representation influenced by primary loyalties.

¹⁴ Which could also have different substantive meanings per se.

Concerning the first sub-question “Which procedural rules are applied within the EEAS when recruiting Member State diplomats and how does the current formal representation of the Member States within the EEAS look like?”, the hypothesis is derived from the official rules and statements about the recruitment process and the criticism towards the EEAS, like for example in the Polish report on staffing practices in the EEAS (Formuszewicz & Kumoch, 2010). Considering the minimum of fixed rules and the different selection procedures, a review of the (un)equal distribution between old and new Member States imposes itself.

H1: “The current alterable recruitment process of the EEAS leads to an unequal representation of old and new Member States among the seconded national diplomats working there.”

In relation to the second sub-question “Where can the primary loyalty of European diplomats seconded from the Member States be found: still directed towards the national level, or towards the higher European level?”, most of the literature¹⁵ suggests European diplomats unifying themselves for the largest part with the institution “Europe”, which means there would be no problem in terms of representation.

For example, according to the mechanism of socialisation “role playing”, which has already been discussed before, there would be *simplifying shortcuts* in situations in which there are scarce resources, low levels of attention and bounded rationalities. This leads to agents adapting automatically and unconsciously to their environment. This works in small groups with sustained contacts, and it also depends on previous experiences and the level of tolerance towards new settings of the agent (Checkel, 2005, p. 810). In his book, Wong (2006, p. 10) also talks about institutions having socialisation effects by which elites internalise supranational norms and interests, and feed them back to their national administrations. This is a call in favour of the fact that EEAS staff primarily represent the EU as a whole, an argument pro European loyalty among European diplomats. It can be labelled as a supranational point of view.

H2a: “Because of socialisation processes playing at the European level and a supranational point of view, seconded national diplomats in the EEAS will feel more loyal to the European level, instead of to their national levels.”

¹⁵ As discussed in chapters 1.2 and 1.3 of the theoretical framework.

But not all literature shares this point of view. There are also some good arguments saying that European diplomats do still focus on their national interests.

Trondal (2006, p. 156), for example, pointed out three different roles a European diplomat can play, which leads to a triple balance: firstly as national government representatives they need to have political loyalty, next as sectorial experts they need to have professional autonomy and finally as supranational actors working for the EU they need to have supranational loyalty. This could lead to the problem of “ambiguous representation”, which means that representatives have multiple obligations, institutional affiliations and loyalties. The underlying idea is that supranational and expert roles will only supplement national roles, but will never replace them, because national civil servants are already socialised and they cannot redefine themselves in an international setting (Trondal & Veggeland, 2003, p. 62). This is an argument saying that European diplomats do not primarily represent the EU as a whole, but that their dominant loyalty remains national. This is called an intergovernmental point of view.

H2b : “Because the prior socialisation processes at the state level and an intergovernmental point of view, seconded national diplomats in the EEAS still feel more loyal to their national levels, instead of to the European level.”

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 DOCUMENT ANALYSES, Q-METHODOLOGY AND PERSONAL CONTACTS

The first part of this research concerns the current official situation: how is the selection procedure for national seconded diplomats at the EEAS organised and how does the contemporary staff composition look like? These questions are answered via a detailed study of official documents and by gathering extra information via personal conversations.

In the next phase Q-methodology is used to explore the personal perceptions of Member State diplomats working at the EEAS, to get insights into their premier loyalty.

Q-methodology is the bridge between quantitative and qualitative research (Robyn, 2000, p. 85). Quantitative research mostly involves structured interviews and questionnaire researches within a cross-sectional design. It is based on a large target group and characterised by empirical research; all phenomena can be reduced to empirical indicators which represent *the truth*. Surveys are the best known example. Qualitative research on the other hand is more about the semi-structured interview with much fewer respondents. There are multiple realities or multiple truths based on one's understanding of reality, which is thus socially constructed. The emphasis of qualitative research is on process and meanings, which are often investigated by in-depth interviews and focus groups.

As said, Q-methodology is situated somewhere in between these two extremes. It can be interpreted as quantitative, because at a first stage a fixed kind of questionnaire is presented at the respondents. But the content of the research is more qualitative: the social constructed opinion of the respondent. On top of that, the sample is also much smaller in comparison with classical quantitative research.

Fundamentally, Q-methodology provides a foundation for the systematic study of subjectivity. It represents human subjectivity in an ordered way, by searching for and explaining patterns of behaviour across individual expressions. It starts with the respondents receiving a set of statements about the topic, and the question to rank-order them. This process is called *Q-sorting* and has some connections with quantitative research. The statements are based on *the concourse*, which involves all communication linked to the topic. This again confirms that they are always subjective and incomplete, nevertheless sufficient (Brown, 1993, p. 94). Q-sorting is a subjective exercise because the Q-sorter ranks the statements solely based on his/her point of view, they do not risk giving an incorrect answer.

It is the rank-ordering of a set of statements by one individual, in an array that reflects that person's overall perspective relative to the societal discourse (Brown, 1993, pp. 93-94; Robyn, 2000, p. 85). In other words, the ranking illustrates the perspective of one Member State diplomat working at the EEAS about which interests should be predominant according to him/her, reflecting his/her premier loyalty.

The participants pick and choose a way through the sample of statements, deciding which they can and cannot agree on. This way, the individual reveals his/her identity. It is a way to get to a *positive distinctiveness*, distinguishing one individual from another, which is a critical part of establishing a person's social identity (Cinnirella, 1996, pp. 253-254).

The predominant reason for using Q-methodology is that it is particularly designed for a research project focusing on a target group which is rather hard to reach and whose time is very valuable. European diplomats are a typical example of this. The major advantage is that only a limited number of cases can be the focus of significant research. The focus is on quality, rather than on quantity (Brown, 1993, p. 94). Next to that, Q-methodology is extremely useful in gauging whether a particular political discourse is resonating within a population, i.e. whether it is resonating in ways that theorists and/or general commentators suppose. Q-methodology is particularly useful in examining the vexed question of national identity in Europe (Robyn, 2000, pp. 86-87).

It is, however, important to note that despite the fact that some parts of the analysis have quantitative ties, Q-methodology only leads to qualitative findings,. Therefore, indisputable statistic conclusions like with quantitative research are impossible. The strength of Q-methodology lies within its warrant for further quantitative research on the subject (Keignaert, 2013b).

After this general explanation on Q-methodology, it is time for the operational process.

The first operational step was investigating the *concourse* (i.e. relevant literature, the media, opinions of people in the field, etc.), of which as much relevant statements as possible were deduced. All the statements in the concourse are categorised into two groups: one reflecting a supranational point of view, another with the more intergovernmental points of view. They were initially all positioned into the most suited cell, out of which eventually an equal number of statements were selected. At the end, this led to a *Q-sample* size of $N = 20$ statements.

Consequently, the Q-sample is a subset of statements drawn from the large concourse, which will be presented at the participants in the form of a *Q-sort*. The goal is to provide a miniature

which, in major respects, contains the comprehensiveness of the larger process of identity formation (Brown, 1993, pp. 97-99). The selected statements were numbered randomly and typed onto cards. This pack of cards was then ready to be presented for Q-sorting at the respondents.

The statements for this research are mainly based on previous literature from Liesbet Hooghe (1999 & 2005), Richard Robyn (2000) and Jan Beyers (2005). The table below shows how they are categorised into the earlier mentioned categories.

Note that there is no assumption that these statements really measure a “supranational” or “intergovernmental” position. They were categorised on a logical basis, but in concrete situations words and phrases can mean wholly different things to different people (Brown, 1993, p. 100).

TABLE 1: CATEGORISATION OF THE STATEMENTS

	A supranational point of view	An intergovernmental point of view
1	If someone said something bad about the European Union, I would feel as if they had said something bad about me.	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state, to constrain the potential consequences of international or European socialisation.
2	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is useful in order to be able to take into account interests of all the Member States when setting out a common European policy.	My country must maintain an independence in European affairs.
3	Greater European integration can give national minorities more a sense of their own identities.	I think European integration has gone about as far as it can go.
4	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding policy solution in the interest of a common, European, good.	In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of European diplomats is to inform about and defend the national positions of my Member State.
5	Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives and a common policy in collaboration with the different Member States.	Europe will be stronger precisely because it each Member State has its own customs, traditions and identity. It would be folly to try to fit them into some sort of identikit European personality.
6	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nationality next.	European countries are too diverse for a European Union to work.
7	The more policymaking and policymakers become Europeanised, the more distant the EU staff will become from the own domestic values and norms.	I want a Europe of nation-states that are as politically and culturally different as they are geographically diverse.
8	The EU leads to a homogenisation of European cultures.	Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.
9	Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. It is a process, bringing peoples and nations together to adapt themselves jointly to changing circumstances.	Globalisation threatens our own national cultures.
10	I am attached to Europe as a whole.	Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their own peculiar characters.

The Q-sort was handed over to the respondents, accompanied by the *condition of instruction*¹⁶, a set of rules which needs to be followed. First, the respondents were asked to read all statements, to get an impression of the range of opinions and to permit the mind to settle into the situation. Next, the respondents needed to divide the statements in three piles: agreeable, disagreeable, and the rest. Finally, they ranked them on the scale¹⁷ with the range of +2 to -2, from ‘most agree’ (+2) to ‘most disagree’ (-2) (Brown, 1993, pp. 101-102). Every respondent put two statements under ‘most agree’ as well as under ‘most disagree’, five statements under each ‘somewhat agree’ and ‘somewhat disagree’, and lastly six statements in the ‘neutral’ group. This procedure forces the respondents to compare the statements with each other.

The complete process only takes 30 minutes to maximum one hour (Robyn, 2000, p. 86). At the very end, every completed Q-sort was followed by an interview¹⁸, so the Q-sorter could elaborate his/her point of view. During this short conversation, special attention is paid to those statements classified under the extremes (+2 and -2), and those ranked as ‘0’ (Brown, 1993, p. 106).

The exercise is all about finding subjective impressions, so there was of course no ‘correct’ manner of sorting the statements (Robyn, 2000, p. 91).

As already identified as an important advantage, the group of participants in a Q-methodological study, the *P-set*, is relatively small compared to quantitative procedures. They are divided along the levels in which one might expect to find significant national identity differences (Robyn, 2000, pp. 91-92), in this case the different EU Member States.

So a large number of respondents is not required, because Q-methodology focuses on an in-depth analysis. The emphasis is on the meaningful generalisation of a small sample, not on the size of the sample. It is important, however, that all parties are represented. This is why sampling is done on a theoretical basis, carefully selecting various individuals to assure certain viewpoints are heard (Brown & Unga, 1970; Callahan, Dubnick, & Olshfki, 2006).

¹⁶ Included in the appendix: annex 1.

¹⁷ Included in the appendix: annex 2.

¹⁸ Follow-up questions included in the appendix: annex 3.

As a result of the difficult accessibility of European diplomats there was no possibility to choose who to include or exclude in this study. Getting in contact with the target group was already challenging, so every willing respondent was included in the sample. A total number of thirteen Member State diplomats participated in the research project, three women and ten men. They cover six different nationalities: two Swedes, two Danes, three Belgian, four Dutchmen, one Frenchman and one Romanian. Most of them are SNE's, although also some AD's took part. Before their job at the EEAS, they all were employees within their national government.¹⁹ The Q-measurement was given to every respondent in person, and the necessary explanation was given orally. One or two weeks later (depending on the agreement made at the first meeting), the score sheets were picked up again in person, and a 10 minute evaluation interview took place.

3.2 DATA PROCESSING

For processing the data, the software program PQMethod was used, which is made specifically suitable for Q-methodological studies (Schmolk & Atkinson, 1998). Via this program, the various rankings by the respondents are correlated, and the correlation matrix is subsequently factor analyzed (Brown & Ungs, 1970). Correlations summarise the views among the people, factor analysis denotes the clusters of people (Steelman & Maguire, 1999).

The correlation of the answers of the different respondents results into a comparison between the views of person A with the views of person B. The outcome (symbolised 'r') varies between +1 and -1. When the number is +1, this means that there is a perfect positive correlation, while the number -1 refers to a perfect negative correlation. In this last case, it means that all statements embraced by person A are rejected by person B. All the separated comparisons are then brought together in a correlation matrix, which illustrates all respondent views vis-à-vis one another (Brown, 1993, pp. 107-109). When most results in this matrix are positive, this would mean that most participating European diplomats share a similar view, i.e. supranational or intergovernmental.

To know whether the correlation is really substantial, one has to look at the standard error. The rule of thumb here is that correlations are statistically significant when they are 2 to 2,5 times the standard error (Brown, 1993, p. 109).

¹⁹ More details about the background of the respondents is left out to assure their anonymity.

Although this correlation matrix can be very interesting for identifying how the respondent views relate to one another, it is actually only a way station and a condition through which the data must pass to be able to reveal their factor structure, which implies a factor analysis (Brown, 1993, p. 110). This outcome represents factors which correspond to a group of respondents who have ranked the statements in a similar order; persons who have displayed a common attitude with respect to their loyalty perspective (Brown & Unga, 1970).

Q-methodology does not require much mathematic understanding; the software package PQMethod lessens the need to comprehend factor analysing in detail.²⁰ In short, a factor analysis determines in essence how many different Q-sorts can be found in the correlation matrix. Q-sorts which are highly correlating with one another can be considered having a family resemblance: they belong to one family with high correlation among them and being uncorrelated with members of other families. The factor analysis table illustrates how many different families (factors) there are, and to which extent each respondent is associated with each factor: the factor loadings.²¹ The initial rough factor analysis is usually of little interest. Subsequently, much more interesting are the results after factor rotation, which repositions the factors to highlight the view of one respondent, simultaneously changing the factor loadings for all Q-sorts. The final outcome is the table for rotated loadings (Brown, 1993, pp. 110-116), in which the columns show the chosen factors, and the rows the respondents. The intersections give the factor loadings, illustrating which respondents can be categorised under which factor.

The software program PQMethod offers the opportunity for different kinds of factor analyses. A Principal Components or a Varimax factor analysis are pure mathematic calculations. The number of factors retained is equal to the number of data entered, which at the end leads to a variance close to zero. Although this mathematically leads to the best result, it is not the most interesting one. Getting to the best possibilities for interpretation is much more important, because here it is about people's opinions. This is why the Centroid factor analysis is preferred, which assumes and requires a manual factor rotation. The researcher acts on the basis of own reasoning, looking for the most logical interpretations (Keignaert, 2013a).

²⁰ For an in-depth explanation of the methodological background, see 'Stephenson, W. (1953). *The study of behavior: Q-technique and its methodology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.', 'Brown, S.R. (1980). *Political subjectivity: Applications of Q methodology in political science*. New Haven: Yale University Press.' and 'Watts, S. & Stenner, P. (2012). *Doing Q methodological research: Theory, method and interpretation*. London: Sage.'

²¹ Note that when using Q-methodology, only factor loadings in excess of $\pm 0,50$ can be considered significant.

So for the sake of precision, the Q-sorts are weighted and rotated to take into account that some are closer approximations of the factor than others. The subsequent interpretation of the rotated factor analysis focuses on factor scores: the score for a statement as a kind of average of the scores given to that statement by all of the respondents associated with the factor (Brown, 1993, pp. 117-118). The following comparison between the factors focuses on those statements which distinguish them (Brown, 1993, p. 120). This finally results into insights on which views really exist among the participating Member State diplomats working at the EEAS. It is again important to remind here that the initial distinction made between “supranational statements” and “intergovernmental statements” was purely based on logical thinking. There is absolutely no certainty that these same two categories will come out of the analysis.

4 THE CURRENT STAFF STRUCTURE IN THE EEAS

4.1 RECENT PROCEDURES AND RULES FOR RECRUITMENT

Article 27(3) of the TEU contains the formal rules for staffing. The EEAS has three sources for recruiting staff: the Council, the Commission and staff seconded from national diplomatic services of the Member States. The actual transfer of certain departments and functions from the General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission took place on January the first, 2011 (as outlined by Article 7 of the EEAS Council Decision). That day, a total of 2805 staff members were transferred from the Commission and another 411 from the Council (European External Action Service, 2012, p. 2). However, the further appointment procedure experienced a lot of complications.

The sui generis nature of the EEAS is a consequence of the negotiation process. From the start, there seemed to be a disagreement between the Member States on the one hand, and the Parliament and the Commission on the other. The former wished to see the EEAS as a more “intergovernmental structure”, however the latter preferred it to be part of the Commission and therefore wanted a more “communitarised structure”. This placed the EEAS in an uneasy position between the major stakeholders in EU external action, and led to a lack of clear and commonly accepted understanding of its nature, mandate, powers and role (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, pp. 18-20). This could explain the absence of a clear selection procedure.

In March 2011, High Representative Catherine Ashton established the EEAS Consultative Committee on Appointments (CCA), including representatives of the European Commission, the General Secretariat of the Council and the Member States. It deals with the selection procedures for all Heads of EU Delegations and senior management positions for Headquarters. On January 12, 2012 the CCA gathered to discuss the evolution of the EEAS’ personnel policy and to monitor the overall selection procedures in the EEAS, in particular in relation to gender, geographical balance and the meaningful presence of nationals from all Member States (European External Action Service, 2012, p. 2). From January 12, 2012 until the 30th of June 2013, the EEAS recruits at AD-level exclusively officials from the Council, the Commission and the diplomatic services of the Member States (*the three sources of recruitment*), as imposed by Article 98(1) of the Staff Regulation.²² As from July 1, 2013, the

²² Inserted by Regulation 1080/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of November 24, 2010.

EEAS shall also consider the applications of officials from other EU institutions. Next to that, Article 6(9) of the EEAS Council Decision imposes that one third of the EEAS staff should come from the Member States, and permanent officials of the Union should represent at least 60 per cent (European External Action Service, 2012, p. 2). This short overview shows that the number of selection rules is very limited. There is no detailed procedure, which results in the fact that not all selection campaigns are alike.

The lack of selection clarity is also demonstrated in the wording of the Council Decision itself. It is clear that recruitment should primarily be based on *merit*. It should be in line with an *adequate* geographical balance, with a *meaningful* representation of all Member States. It is however unclear what these wordings imply exactly. The requirements concerning the geographical balance is vague, given the lack of a clear definition of the words *adequate* and *meaningful* (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, pp. 10-11).

It is also worth noting that in her following official statements High Representative Catherine Ashton kept on affirming the importance of a geographical balance. But she is very limited to assure this herself, being only authorized for the personal interview with candidates for AD-level functions. She can solely demonstrate her commitment for a better balance in the appointment of heads and deputy-heads of Delegations or for occasional senior positions at Headquarters (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 20).

In the aftermath of the latest procedural attempts an additional difficulty emerges: what to do when some Member States cannot present suitable candidates because there is a lack of necessary background and experience? This issue was addressed in the EEAS' own staffing review of June 2012 (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 26):

‘Recruitment to posts in the EEAS is based on merit, as well as the availability of posts, so progress towards the one third target will depend largely upon how well candidates from the diplomatic services of the Member States fit the selection criteria specified in the vacancy notices for the available positions in comparison with candidates from the other two sources of EEAS recruitment.’

The EEAS has been created as a functionally autonomous body, with the consequence that it serves as an intermediate entity. There is no real shared understanding among stakeholders outside or within the EEAS about the role, mandate and position of the Service within the EU external action architecture. The organisation and internal structure is very top-heavy. There are duplicating layers of management, an unclear hierarchy and opaque relationships. Among

the staff, this results into a lack on three important areas: trust, support from the top and an *esprit de corps* (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 10; Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013).

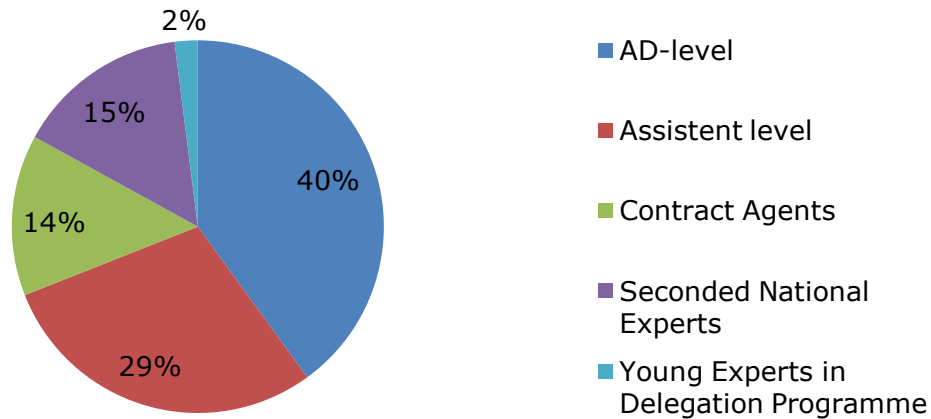
Interviewed EEAS staff members confirm that within the EEAS a lot of pre-existing personal relations have an impact on policy-making, policy-shaping and results. This makes the existence of an unequal representation of the Member States not improbable. On the other hand, however, some respondents emphasized that such personal contacts could also create some opportunities for Member States to have an input in the official negotiations, even though they are formally underrepresented (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 21; Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013).

The general problem of the unclear institutional place of the EEAS was identified by almost every respondent as the most significant disadvantage of working at the EEAS. It affects their job performance because they spend a lot of time on building and constructing ways of doing things. This sometimes leads to rather chaotic situations. One respondent phrased it very nicely: ‘one has to master the art of complexity’ (Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013).

4.2 ACTUAL FIGURES

The earlier mentioned analysis of June 2012, shows that 3346 people were working in the EEAS at that time: 1443 at the Headquarters, 1903 spread around the EU network of 140 Delegations and Offices worldwide. The figure below shows how the staff is divided along the nature of their contracts (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 18):

Composition of the EEAS staff broken down by the type of contract (in percentages, June 2012)



The emphasis of this master thesis is on the geographical balance among the diplomats recruited from the national Member States on AD-level²³ and the SNE's.

The number of seconded national diplomats back then was 336. The largest part of the total sum of 3346 EEAS staff, 920 members to be precise, has an AD-level, because one wanted to ensure high quality work. On this level, 248 of them came from the Member States and were divided between Delegations and Headquarters. This means that a total of around 27 per cent of the Member State diplomats in the EEAS was part of the AD-staff, which is almost the required one third. The distribution among the Member States is set out in the table below (European External Action Service, 2012, pp. 3-5).

²³ Reason: when it comes to the geographical balance, the AD-grades are of primary concern (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 18).

TABLE 2: EEAS STAFF DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES (JUNE 2012)

Country	Member State Diplomats ²⁴	% of total staff	AD Officials	% of total staff	Total	% of total staff ²⁵
Old Member States: the EU15						
Austria	11	1,2%	17	1,9%	28	3,1%
Belgium	15	1,6%	48	5,2%	63	6,9%
Denmark	6	0,7%	17	1,9%	23	2,5%
Finland	8	0,9%	17	1,9%	25	2,7%
France	31	3,4%	90	9,8%	121	13,2%
Germany	14	1,5%	71	7,7%	85	9,3%
Greece	7	0,8%	25	2,7%	32	3,5%
Ireland	6	0,7%	16	1,7%	22	2,4%
Italy	12	1,3%	88	9,6%	100	10,9%
Luxembourg	2	0,2%	2	0,2%	4	0,4%
Netherlands	8	0,9%	23	2,5%	31	3,4%
Portugal	7	0,8%	20	2,2%	27	2,9%
Spain	13	1,4%	77	8,4%	90	9,8%
Sweden	10	1,1%	26	2,8%	36	3,9%
United Kingdom	21	2,3%	54	5,9%	75	8,2%
Subtotal	171	18,8%	591	64,4%	762	83%
New Member States (joined in 2004 or 2007): the EU12						
Bulgaria	9	1,0%	3	0,3%	12	1,3%
Cyprus	1	0,1%	3	0,3%	4	0,4%
Czech rep.	12	1,3%	11	1,2%	23	2,5%
Estonia	7	0,8%	5	0,5%	12	1,3%
Hungary	8	0,9%	8	0,9%	16	1,7%
Latvia	5	0,5%	4	0,4%	9	1,0%
Lithuania	4	0,4%	6	0,7%	10	1,1%
Malta	5	0,5%	2	0,2%	7	0,8%
Poland	9	1,0%	29	3,2%	38	4,1%
Romania	8	0,9%	2	0,2%	10	1,1%
Slovakia	6	0,7%	3	0,3%	9	1,0%
Slovenia	3	0,3%	3	0,3%	6	0,7%
Subtotal	77	8,4%	79	8,5%	156	17%
Total²⁶	248	27%	670	73%	918	100%

²⁴ These are only the temporary agents: the SNE's

²⁵ Rounded to 0,1 per cent.

²⁶ Rounded percentages.

As the table shows, the ‘new’ Member States, who joined the Union in 2004 or 2007, clearly represented a minority of the total staff working at the EEAS. The 15 old Member States represent around 83 per cent, while the 12 new Member States are only accounted for 17 per cent. In other words, the success rate of diplomats from old Member States in applying for posts in the EEAS as seconded national diplomats seems significantly greater (European External Action Service, 2012, p. 5). This gives a first notion that the first hypothesis²⁷ is correct.

In 2012, a selection procedure was organised for 42 posts at both management and non-management levels. Overall, 1769 applications were received. A number of 882, which is about half of them, were handed in by diplomats from Member States, of which 310, or about 35 per cent, were from a new Member State. After the pre-selection, a total amount of 337 applications were reserved, 57 per cent were Member State diplomats. On the management level, 34 of them had their origins in the new Member States (nearly half), at the non-management level there were 48 new Member States candidates left (which is 40 per cent). So there was an increase in their success rate of almost 10 per cent, from about 35 per cent before the pre-selection, to nearly 45 per cent afterwards. At the final selection stage, the number of applicants from the new Member States on the non-management level dropped to only 4 or almost 17 per cent. At the management level however, their result was good, with 6 applicants being selected (European External Action Service, 2012, pp. 6-7). So although the EU15 (the old Member States) still has a substantial numeric superiority, small evidence can be found for some (re)balancing. The success rate of national diplomats of the EU12 (the new Member States) is significantly larger than their proportion of AD-staff overall (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 28).

²⁷ “The current alterable recruitment process of the EEAS leads to an unequal representation of old and new Member States among the seconded national diplomats working there.” (cfr. chapter 2)

5 LOYALTY PERSPECTIVE: THE REPRESENTATION QUESTION

With the former chapter in the back of our minds, we now turn to the core of this master thesis: is this apparent unequal formal representation of the Member States at the EEAS a real problem? Are the new ones really less represented?

To answer this question, we need to explore the minds and thoughts of the EU diplomats. Which level do they primary identify with: their national government or the EU? As already mentioned before, the Q-Methodology was used to get a grip on this issue.

5.1 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS²⁸

The analysis started with the generation of the correlation matrix²⁹, comparing the answers of all respondents with one another. It shows that many respondents agree with each another, as almost all numbers in this matrix are positive. To know what it is they exactly agree upon, we continue to the more exploratory factor analysis.

The first unrotated factor matrix immediately clarifies that three factor loadings can be restrained.³⁰ The first two factors together explain almost 60 per cent of the total variation, which makes them of particular interest. Next to that, this also shows that the statements can indeed be divided into two categories, affirming the initial distinction. Eleven out of the thirteen respondents are most closely linked with factor 1, while only 2 respondents say more about factor 2.

The correlations between the factor scores is -0,2825, which means that factor 1 and factor 2 do not mean exactly same, but they are not each other's strict opposites either. If the correlation coefficient would be zero, both discourses would be entirely independent from one another. This result is quite close to zero, so the discourses are rather independent from each other.³¹ However, the negative value illustrates that within their independent opinions, they contradict one another to a certain degree.

²⁸ The complete printout of the statistical analysis is included in the appendix: annex 4.

²⁹ Cfr. the first table in annex 4.

³⁰ Cfr. chapter 3.2 for the theoretical explanation.

³¹ This is demonstrated by the fact that there is consensus on seven statements. Cfr. the last table in annex 4.

To make the output more understandable for interpretation, some manual rotations were executed. The goal is to find a so-called *simple structure*: a pattern of loadings where items load most strongly on one factor, and much more weakly on the other factors (Keignaert, 2013a).

Respondents strongly aligned with factor 1 are having strong opinions towards the supranational statements, while factor 2 respondents had the clearest opinions about intergovernmental statements.³² Consequently, factor 1 can be labelled as the supranational point of view and factor 2 represents with the intergovernmental point of view. This means the two restrained factors represent the initial distinction of the statements in two groups. Furthermore, the factor scores of the different statements per factor affirm that factor 1 is indeed referring to a supranational point of view, while factor 2 to the intergovernmental point of view. The initial distinction is almost perfectly confirmed by the respondents' rankings. However, some differences can also be detected.

First of all, the supranational-oriented respondents agree on two additional statements: "Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state, to constrain the potential consequences of international or European socialisation" and "Europe will be stronger precisely because each Member State has its own customs, traditions and identity. It would be folly to try to fit them into some sort of identikit European personality". They most strongly agree with the statement "Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. It is a process, bringing peoples and nations together to adapt themselves jointly to changing circumstances" and oppose themselves the most with "In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of European diplomats is to inform about and defend the national position of my Member State". This means they do not question the existence, nor the importance of the EU as an institution at all, they experience it as a natural fact. During their job performance, they therefore do not focus predominantly on national interests.

The second intergovernmental-oriented group agrees on all statements initially categorised as being intergovernmental, and on two extra statements: "In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is useful in order to be able to take into account interests of all the Member States when setting out a common European policy" and "Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding policy solutions in the interest of a common, European,

³² However the opinions of these two respondents towards the intergovernmental point of view are strictly different, which will be explained later.

good”. These last two statements are thus agreed upon by all respondents, which means they are all aware of the importance of a common European policy in the interest of common European good. The intergovernmental-oriented group mostly identified with the statement “Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties” and most strongly disapproved of “I am attached to Europe as a whole”.

Besides the differences between the initial categorization of statements and the results, there are also some distinctions between the two analysed groups. This is illustrated by determining the greatest differences between Q-sort values of both factors.

TABLE 3: MOST DIFFERENT OPINIONS BETWEEN THE TWO FACTORS

Statement	Q-sort value factor 1	Q-sort value factor 2	Difference
Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. It is a process, bringing peoples and nations together to adapt themselves jointly to changing circumstances.	2	-1	3
I am attached to Europe as a whole.	1	-2	3
Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	-1	2	3
I think European integration has gone about as far as it can go.	-2	1	3
In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of European diplomats is to inform about and defend the national position of my Member State.	-2	1	3

The three statements at the bottom of this table are those on which the respondents under the supranational factor disagree and those under the intergovernmental factor agree. In contradiction, for the first two statements at the top of the table the meanings are divided in reversed direction: supranational-minded respondents strongly agree here, but the intergovernmental-minded ones obviously do not. This confirms their sceptical view towards the EU.

There are two additional findings which need to be highlighted.

First of all, this analysis shows this is not an either/or-story. The fact that there are two statements on which all respondents agree, in combination with the fact that scoring positive on the supranational side does not automatically lead to a negative score for the intergovernmental point of view, illustrates this. Being able to identify oneself with one viewpoint does not mean that you are immediately rebelling against the other. More specifically, eight of the thirteen respondents can agree on both points of view³³, but they all are just more in favour of one of those two. In reality, it is thus impossible to simply divide the respondents into two groups. They are all more ‘in-betweens’.

The second aspect is the bipolar character of factor 2. As already said before, only two respondents are most closely linked with the intergovernmental factor, but only one of them does this in a positive way. No more than one respondent really has an intergovernmental point of view, while the other is genuinely against it.³⁴

Unfortunately, these results cannot be extrapolated to other nationalities. However, this dependence relationship between the results and the nationalities also uncovers important insights on their particular viewpoints.

The factor matrix below illustrates how decisive the opinion of each respondent is per factor. We focus on the first factor because most respondents can have this supranational point of view. The respondents can be divided in three groups: the Dutch, the Belgians and the Scandinavians (the Danish and Swedish respondents together).³⁵

³³ The results show positive numbers related to both factors.

³⁴ This respondent is more empathically against a intergovernmental structure, than he/she is in favour of a supranational structure. It is most clear what this respondent does not want, than what he/she does want.

³⁵ For the sake of a meaningful interpretation, the Romanian respondent is left out.

TABLE 4: FACTOR LOADINGS

Respondent	Factor 1 loadings	Weights per group
Dane 1	0,8682	$\frac{(0,8682+0,7945+0,7000+0,8228)}{7,2218}$ $= 0,4411$
Dane 2	0,7945	
Swede 1	0,7000	
Swede 2	0,8228	
Belgian 1	0,8365	$\frac{0,8365+0,7860+0,6239}{7,2218}$ $= 0,3111$
Belgian 2	0,7860	
Belgian 3	0,6239	
Dutchman 1	0,6265	$\frac{0,6265+0,6143+0,5491}{7,2218}$ $= 0,2478$
Dutchman 2	0,6143	
Dutchman 3	0,5491	

The calculation of the weights per group shows that the Scandinavian respondents are the most decisive. They account for nearly 45 per cent of the supranational factor. The Belgian respondents occupy the second place, together determining 31 per cent and finally the Dutchmen follow with almost 25 per cent.

On top of that, the average weight of the individual respondents in terms of their nationality is approximately 9,5 per cent for the Scandinavian and Belgian diplomats, whereas the average individual weight of the Dutch respondents is only 7,5 per cent. Hence, we can conclude that this factor is dominated by respondents coming either from countries that are peripheral to the European heartland and/or diplomats coming from a country whereof one can wonder whether or not it will evaporate in the future, namely Belgium.

5.2 SUBSTANTIATIONS FROM THE FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

In general, the statistical results are in line with what the respondents communicated during the short follow-up interviews. Below, some argumentative snapshots to illustrate.

Respondents with a supranational point of view who agreed on the statement “Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state, to constrain the potential consequences of international or European socialization”, explained that they are just very much in favour of the rotation system.³⁶ They believe flexibility is a valuable characteristic, and do not make the

³⁶ Especially respondents from those countries in which it is the general rule in public organisations, like the Scandinavian ones.

link with potential loyalty issues. They consider it obvious that one just adapts to the position and function he/she occupies.

Furthermore, these respondents also agreed on the statement about the importance of national customs, traditions and identity, because they believe a European identity does not replace the national identity. This was also proven by the fact that most respondents had positive scores related to both factors. Different respondents confirmed that they believe a national and a European identity can coexist. People can have different identities next to each other, without any tensions between them. One respondent even said ‘nation states behave too much like jealous lovers, requiring their citizens to have only one identity’.³⁷

Concerning the statements most obviously distinguishing the two points of view, respondents with a supranational viewpoint simply argued that only focusing on the national position is impossible, because then they would not be taken seriously when fulfilling their job.

Finally, especially the Dutch identity seems a fascinating national identity to focus on. Analysis shows they have a rather modest preference for the supranational point of view, which was also confirmed by the follow-up interviews. They were the only ones expressing their doubts on the supranationality of the EU. One Dutch respondent for example emphasised the importance of *legitimacy*:

‘Today, the focus is mostly on effectiveness. And yes, scale enlargement is efficient. Nevertheless, if it goes too far, it could derail. Working on a too large scale leads to a loss of legitimacy, which eventually results into a loss of morality. I am in favour of a federal Europe concerning a lot of topics, but the focus should remain on legitimate justification. The EU should have much to say about several areas, but sometimes it should also give some issues back to the Member States, because there is a lack of EU legitimacy. Effectiveness is not the only criteria.’

Another Dutch respondent unhesitatingly added that according to him, national identities still prevail. Lastly yet another Dutch respondent referred to the fact that he thinks it is obvious that there is a more supranational point of view in the Commission, and that the intergovernmental idea is dominant within the foreign policy areas.

³⁷ This is in line with the idea of Trondal & Veggeland (2003), as discussed in chapter 1.3.

6 EVALUATION OF THE HYPOTHESES

6.1 FIRST HYPOTHESIS

As well the (shortage of) formal rules, as the actual figures and comments confirm the first hypothesis: “The current alterable recruitment process of the EEAS leads to an unequal representation of old and new Member States among the seconded national diplomats working there.” The lack of a formal selection procedure hinders getting a clear view on whether or not there are equal access and equal chances of success for all Member States. In either way, the numbers of nationalities of origin among the EEAS staff prove that significantly more national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS come from the old Member States. It seems that new agreements cannot assure a good geographical balance throughout the whole EEAS. This leads to a focus on the level of Heads of Delegations, where all Member States should have at least one such position (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 26).³⁸

There is an overrepresentation of the old Member States, occupying around 83 per cent of the AD-functions. At first sight, they seem to perform better in applying for post in the EEAS (European External Action Service, 2012, p. 5). A small positive footnote however is that the recent selection procedure in 2012 shows that the success rate of the new Member States is slowly rising. Evidence can be found for some (re)balancing (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 28).

One possible explanation for the stronger position of the EU15 is that they are larger in the sense that they have a higher number of potential candidates and lower opportunity costs, compared to countries with a smaller diplomatic service. The EU15 also enjoys greater prior exposure to the EU and the way in which it works. Luckily for the new Member States, this advantage will erode over time (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, pp. 28-29).

Second, the dominant focus on *merit* during the recruitment process could also explain the unequal representation. Candidates from new national diplomatic service are relatively unknown, while others have a better-known track record. The exact size of merit of those national diplomats may be harder to establish. The relevant experience of a national diplomat from a new Member State and his/her subsequent grade may be subject to inspection and

³⁸ This goal is reached with one exception: Cyprus.

negotiation, while the career path and grade of the candidates from old Member States is mostly more crystal clear (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 11). This was also affirmed by some respondents. According to them, old Member States already know from historical experience that mutual linkages, cooperation and exchanging information eventually lead to more possibilities than risks. They are aware of the positive cost-benefit analysis. New Member States on the other hand are less familiar with these positive effects and the respondents believe they are still focusing on getting their man on the highest possible position in order to maintain some sort of control. The European institutions are aware of these different visions and mentalities between old and new Member States. For this reason 80 per cent of the jobs at the European level are subject to quotas, but the 20 per cent high quality jobs are still based on merit, meaning that the most competent person will get the job. And often, this will be the one who recognizes the benefits of European cooperation (Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013).

6.2 HYPOTHESIS 2A OR 2B?

The statistical analysis first of all clarified that all respondents but one have a more supranational point of view, identifying themselves to a great extent with the EU. They are concerned about the future of the European integration and are willing to actively contribute to it.³⁹

Analysis suggests that the problem of multilateral diplomacy can be tackled: despite of the fact that the respondents are representatives from the Member States, they are aware of the fact that they need to protect the interests of the EU as a whole. The analysis shows evidence that their premier loyalty is in line with the formal rules and that the right lines of responsibility are present, namely towards the High Representative.

The goal of the drafters of the Lisbon Treaty was to enable the EU to speak with one voice. The points of view of these respondents could be a sign that we are on the right track.⁴⁰ Most of the respondents focus on an integrated Europe and are conscious of their role in the outward representation of the EU, via the EEAS. However, it looks as if this is not the result of a successful socialisation process.⁴¹ The respondents accuse the substandard initiation

³⁹ NB: this conclusion only relates to the set of respondents of this study. It is influenced by their specific nationalities (Dutch, Belgian, French, Romanian, Danish and Swedish).

⁴⁰ Presuming that the EEAS officials have an actual impact on policy choices.

⁴¹ As was also confirmed in the researches of Hooghe (2005) and Beyers (2005).

process when they arrive at the EEAS, which makes it hard to believe that they really are inducted into the norms and values of the EU.

These findings partly lend credibility to hypothesis 2a, whereas doubt is cast on hypothesis 2b: seconded national diplomats in the EEAS of the participating Member States are likely to have a more supranational point of view, therefore feeling more loyal to the European level, instead of to their national levels. Nevertheless, this is not due to a successful socialisation process on the European level.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

7.1 FOR THE POLICY AREA

Even though a dramatic situation is not indicated by this research, some measures could be taken to lower the criticism on the staff structure of the EEAS. Many difficulties and proposals for improvement were already covered by a recent evaluation report from the policy department of the Directorate-General for External Policies: *Achieving geographical and gender balance in the EEAS*. These issues also returned during the interviews with the respondents.

A first topic the evaluation report externalises is that the EEAS has to build a common working culture. One of the challenges for creating this are the different backgrounds of the EEAS staff, because this shapes their (competing) perceptions of the EEAS mandate in EU external action. The degree of mistrust between EEAS colleagues from different backgrounds must be addressed. There needs to be ownership by the Member States in order to make the EEAS successful, to spread the supranational viewpoint. The dominance of a few countries which are most efficient in lobbying for top-positions should be in some way countervailed (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, pp. 23-24). Evaluating the actual figures also revealed an implication on the institutional mindset. By November 2012, around 40 per cent of the EEAS staff at AD-level originated from national diplomatic services, whereas the large majority of the remaining posts were occupied by permanent officials of the Union. The distinct origins, working cultures and financing among these personnel members (for example SNE's are entirely paid by their national government) led to misunderstanding and divided loyalties, thereby creating some obstacles to the creation of a common EEAS culture (for example temporary agents may find it difficult to confront their Member States' interests) (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, pp. 64-65).

While an *esprit de corps* is expected to emerge over time, the issue of career perspectives for EEAS staff is broadly reported, emphasising the concern that this issue needs to be addressed urgently. So secondly, it is crucial that a clear and professionally fulfilling career path is set out for staff joining the EEAS. Diverse statuses and career perspectives and importantly, differences in remuneration, create a sense of injustice and tension (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, pp. 23-24).

An answer to the second problem could be found in the last aspect: better formal rules. Although some efforts already have been made to get a better geographical balance, it looks like longer-term strategies are required. Up until now, the goal was to get a representative of each Member State on the level of Head of Delegation. In an ideal situation however, there should be national representation on as much EEAS levels as possible, and not only for example at the AD-level. Junior and mid-level officials should be attracted via offering a promising career path, which requires internal training strategies and mentoring (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, pp. 40-41). So not only official rules for the recruitment process are recommended, a mandatory education on EEAS level was also suggested by many respondents. Today only a two-day introduction course exists, which is organised together with the Commission. It is very shallow, mostly focusing on practical and administrative issues. It is not about the European institutions or its vision, which however could offer a solution for the first problem mentioned as well. At the military department of the EEAS, the organisation of trainings and such is different. During a first phase an administrative procedure takes place, offering documentation and IT-tools. Thereafter, a number of various courses can be followed, divided between on the hand induction trainings, and on the other more specialised courses. Lastly, every new staff member gets a personal coach during the first few months, who they can ask for help and/or advice. Maybe one should explore whether this work method can be implemented in the other EEAS departments as well (Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013). Anyway, a better training could create a common esprit de corps, common knowledge about diplomacy, EU working methods and notably a long-term common vision on the purpose and functioning of the EEAS (Directorate-General for External Policies, 2013, p. 85). Regulatory clarity is a condition to succeed.

7.2 FOR THE RESEARCH AREA

An early interesting motivation for further research was already revealed in the literature overview: the direction of the socialisation process. Does it go from the national to the international level? Or vice versa? What influences what?

The principal-agent principle⁴² could manipulate this. On the one hand, officials could want to defend the international institution against the control of national governments (Bawn, 1995; McCubbins, Noll, & Weingast, 1987; Ringquist, 1995). But on the other hand, the national government could be seen as the principal trying to influence the performances of their agents at the European level (Pollack, 1997). However, without good political control from the principal, the agent can follow his own agenda (Bawn, 1995). And because such control is never perfect, this could lead to more agency discretion (Bawn, 1995; Ringquist, 1995; Wood & Waterman, 497-528), which means that the agent (the European civil servant) can choose which interests are of prior importance: the national or the European ones.

On European level, the official departure point is without political controls, which means that officials should prefer a supranational structure, as supranational governance gives them maximum discretion in policy-making. If officials deviate from their base position, this could be because of national government control (Hooghe, 1999). So the research focus for the socialisation direction needs to be who is taking up the role of principal in real life, and who serves as the agent?

A second set of research impulses are based on some specific results of this research. First, in relation to the unequal formal representation of old and new Member States, one could investigate whether there are maybe some structural limitations for the EU12 to occupy a larger part of the AD-staff at the EEAS. This could really help drawing up better formal rules for the recruitments process, training and career path. On a second place, the statistical analysis via Q-methodology pointed out some attractive study issues, with a deeper focus on the national differences among European diplomats, exploring the ‘what’ and the ‘why’ questions. It would be interesting to investigate more in detail what the national differences between representatives of Member States exactly are. For example, it looks like the findings here are in line with some research results of Beyers and Kerremans (2012), stating that ‘French organisations develop extensive multilevel strategies while the strategies of Dutch organisations are rather weakly Europeanised.’ This is also shown by the factor loadings of the Dutch respondents in this research: although they identify themselves with the supranational point of view, this is rather weak compared to the other nationalities. Mapping and analysing such national differences will probably reveal valuable insights. Furthermore,

⁴² This refers to a situation in which the two parties (the principal and the agent) have different interests and asymmetric information (the agent having more information). The principal will try to influence the actions of the agent, because the principal cannot directly ensure that the agent will act in its (the principal's) best interests.

there was only one respondent in this sample primarily identifying himself with an intergovernmental point of view and one could question why? Is there a link with the position of his home country within Europe? For example, will France and Germany both prefer the intergovernmental structure because they are big players on the European scene and want to keep control on that level?

A third suggestion for further research is the question to which extent individuals themselves are able to choose which loyalty they prefer. According to the “socialisation logic” loyalty preferences are decided through a learning process, which means that institutional pressures have influence and so it depends on which institution, the national or the European ones, has the heaviest weight. The “political logic” however, believes that an individual can choose its own point of view. Taking up a function at a European institution is then seen as a statement towards the national government, and a demand for autonomy. A study about which of these two logics can be detected as a rule in reality, introduces itself.

A last research option brought up by a respondent is the effect of the employer (i.e. who pays your loan) on job performance. At the EEAS, the AD-staff can be seen as real EU employees because they are paid by the EU itself. This could lead to the fact that their job performance is driven by career perspectives. SNE’s on the other hand are national employees because they are still paid by their own governments. They could be driven by autonomy, because they do not feel bounded by the traditional way of doing things within the institution. In other words, a study on to which extent the expression ‘don’t bite the hand that feeds you’ is in order.

8 CONCLUSION

This master thesis started with an overview of the introductory literature on EU diplomacy, the emerging process of the EEAS and earlier research on loyalty in the first chapter. The second one covered the research question aspects, after which an explanation of the research methodology followed. The current EEAS staff structure and the loyalty perspectives were analysed in chapters four and five, after which the evaluation of the hypotheses followed. The recommendations for future policy and research were explained in chapter seven, and this last chapter finally fabricates the main conclusions.

The answer to the main question of this master thesis “is there a problem in terms of equal Member States’ representativeness within the EEAS?” is twofold, illustrated by the distinctive answers on the first and the second sub-question.

The analyses of the hypotheses in chapter six pointed out that the answer to the first sub-question⁴³ is rather negative. Only a small number of rules exist for the recruitment process of national seconded diplomats at the EEAS. On top of that, these few regulations are characterised by vague wording (cfr. *adequate, meaningful*, etc.) and High Representative Catherine Ashton is not in the possibility to clearly make her voice to be heard, resulting in only a limited impact.

Some respondents even testified that today the EEAS only recruits national seconded diplomats on the junior level, restricting their importance and influence. According to them, the higher positions are still occupied by diplomats coming from the European Commission, who predominantly have old Member States nationalities. According to them, this confirms the overall preference for seconded national diplomats from traditional EU nations. The only role Mrs. Ashton plays in the selection procedure is conducting an interview with possible Delegation Heads in the final round, so she only has a say for a very limited amount of posts (Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013).

Considering the actual figures, the negative tenor remains. An internal EEAS document published in 2012 affirms that a substantial part of the entire EEAS staff is coming from the old Member States. Although there are some hints for improvements, the current formal representation of the Member States within the EEAS is unequal.

⁴³ “Which procedural rules are applied within the EEAS when recruiting Member States diplomats and how does the current formal representation of the Member States within the EEAS look like?” (cfr. chapter 2)

Continuing to the second sub-question⁴⁴, the story gets brighter. A supranational viewpoint lives among the respondents, as they agree on statements like “In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is useful in order to be able to take into account interests of all the Member States when setting out a common European policy” and “Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding policy solutions in the interest of a common, European, good”.

The answers of the respondents when they were asked about the biggest advantage of working for the EEAS confirmed a positive view towards the European project, suggesting EU loyalty. They emphasized benefits like being able to work with talented, driven people from different backgrounds and countries, the EU as a value-adding learning platform for foreign policy, the potential impact they could have on EU policy, operating in a multilateral environment, etc. One respondent said ‘the EEAS opens doors to the highest layers of the world, and it is a privilege to be allowed to represent the EU on this level’ (Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013).

However, many respondents undoubtedly added that loyalty to one identity, does not automatically result into losing the other one. They believe both can coexist. In fact, they perceive the continuing existence of the independent nationalities on the European level as a gain, because the EU’s strength is exactly because ‘there are 27 Member States all singing the same song, but with different instruments’. The EU combines what all Member States have in common, and together they can have a louder voice on the global platform (Interviews with national seconded diplomats working at the EEAS, 2013).

In sum, the answer to the second sub-question is that the unequal formal distribution of all Member States at the EEAS does not necessarily propose a threat to the less represented countries. Most seconded national diplomats have a supranational point of view, following the requirement in the Council Decision of July 26, 2010, that EEAS-staff should only perform their duties with attention for European concerns. Consequently, they represent the entire European population in their job performance, whatever their nationality of origin.

⁴⁴ “Where can the primary loyalty of European diplomats seconded from the national level be found: still directed towards the national level, or towards the higher European level?” (cfr. chapter 2)

This leads to the final conclusion that it is too short-sighted to say that the new Member States are insufficiently represented in the EEAS, because there are staff members who feel committed to the EU as a whole. They represent each and every European citizen, regardless the Member State they live in.

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APPENDIX

ANNEX 1: CONDITION OF INSTRUCTIONS

Dear Sir, Madam,

Thank you for taking part in this research project. Your participation is really important for the successful completion of my research on seconded diplomats within the European External Action Service. This research is supervised by Prof. dr. Jan Beyers, who is an international recognized expert in European and international socialization (his publications can be consulted on www.ua.ac.be/jan.beyers).

My research consists of a small exercise which takes about 30 minutes. Important is that your answers will be completely anonymous and that we do not aim to publish the results of the individual responses. If we publish the findings, we will do this in an aggregate way, which implies that separate answers will not be disclosed in any way. When finished, you get a short report of the research outcomes.

The exercise consists of different small steps:

1. First, read carefully through all the statements, to get an impression of the range of opinions and to permit your mind to settle into the situation.
2. Next, divide the statements in three piles : agreeable, disagreeable, and the rest.
3. Finally, rank each pile on a scale of +2 to -2, from 'most agree' (+2) to 'most disagree' (-2). You find the detailed scale on the other sheet in this envelope. You are allowed to put 2 statements under 'most agree' and 2 under 'most disagree', 5 statements under 'somewhat agree' and 5 under 'somewhat disagree', and lastly 6 statements under the 'neutral'-group. Please write the number of the statement (which you can find on each statement card) in the category of your choice.

In one or two weeks (depending on your time), we meet again and I will pick up the completed Q-sort. At that moment, we will have a short follow-up interview of no more than 15 minutes, so you can elaborate on your point of view.

If you have any question, you can contact me by phone (+32 498 11 86 79) or e-mail (evi.bastiaenssens@student.ua.ac.be).

With sincere gratitude,

Evi Bastiaenssens
Student Master of International Relations and
Diplomacy Studies
Master of Science in Public Administrations



ANNEX 2: THE SCALE



-2 Most disagree	-1 Somewhat disagree	0 Neutral	+1 Somewhat agree	+2 Most agree
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
	3	3	3	
	4	4	4	
	5	5	5	
		6		

ANNEX 3: FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Questions on the exercise

1. How did you experience the exercise?
2. With which statements did you encounter difficulties?
3. Do you have an explanation for why you placed the statements in exactly this ordering?
4. Could you give a brief explanation on why you placed those 2 statements at the extreme ends?
5. Why are those 6 statements in the centre category?

Question on the personal career path

1. What is your nationality?
2. What was your former job, before the EEAS?
3. How did you end up working at the EEAS?
4. How did the initiation process go? Did you get some kind of training? Were there selection tests?
5. According to you, what is the greatest advantage of working at the EEAS?
6. According to you, what is the greatest disadvantage of working at the EEAS?

ANNEX 4: PRINTOUT Q-ANALYSIS

Correlation Matrix Between Sorts

SORTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Belgian 1	100	62	65	46	77	46	54	77	46	58	42	27	-4
2 Belgian 2	62	100	62	50	58	69	58	50	62	19	50	46	19
3 Dane 1	65	62	100	62	58	50	65	62	65	35	54	62	23
4 Romanian 1	46	50	62	100	27	62	58	58	62	42	35	31	12
5 Swede 1	77	58	58	27	100	42	38	65	38	38	35	46	8
6 Dutchman 1	46	69	50	62	42	100	23	54	50	15	27	42	12
7 Belgian 2	54	58	65	58	38	23	100	46	42	35	46	31	-8
8 Swede 2	77	50	62	58	65	54	46	100	58	73	38	50	-23
9 Dane 2	46	62	65	62	38	50	42	58	100	12	85	54	27
10 Dutchman 2	58	19	35	42	38	15	35	73	12	100	-12	23	-42
11 Dutchman 3	42	50	54	35	35	27	46	38	85	-12	100	31	38
12 Dutchman 4	27	46	62	31	46	42	31	50	54	23	31	100	-4
13 Frenchman 1	-4	19	23	12	8	12	-8	-23	27	-42	38	-4	100

Unrotated Factor Matrix

	Factors		
	1	2	3
SORTS			
1 Belgian 1	0.8191	-0.4697	-0.3411
2 Belgian 2	0.7855	0.1163	-0.0851
3 Dane 1	0.8678	0.0595	-0.0591
4 Romanian 1	0.7035	0.0480	0.2419
5 Swede 1	0.6909	-0.2193	-0.1968
6 Dutchman 1	0.6362	0.1953	0.2031
7 Belgian 3	0.6212	-0.0054	-0.0946
8 Swede 2	0.8271	-0.4082	0.3191
9 Dane 2	0.8054	0.4248	0.1264
10 Dutchman 2	0.4475	-0.7372	0.3134
11 Dutchman 3	0.6132	0.3198	-0.2020
12 Dutchman 4	0.5540	0.0639	0.1129
13 Frenchman 1	0.1273	0.6120	-0.3381
Eigenvalues	6.0363	1.6977	0.6584
% expl.Var.	46	13	5

Cumulative Communalities Matrix

	Factors 1 Thru		
	1	2	3
SORTS			
1 Belgian 1	0.6709	0.8915	1.0079
2 Belgian 2	0.6171	0.6306	0.6378
3 Dane 1	0.7531	0.7567	0.7602
4 Romanian 1	0.4949	0.4972	0.5557
5 Swede 1	0.4773	0.5254	0.5642
6 Dutchman 1	0.4048	0.4429	0.4841
7 Belgian 3	0.3859	0.3859	0.3949
8 Swede 2	0.6841	0.8507	0.9525
9 Dane 2	0.6487	0.8292	0.8452
10 Dutchman 2	0.2003	0.7437	0.8420
11 Dutchman 3	0.3760	0.4783	0.5191
12 Dutchman 4	0.3069	0.3110	0.3238
13 Frenchman 1	0.0162	0.3908	0.5051
cum% expl.Var.	46	59	65

Factor Matrix with an X Indicating a Defining Sort

	Loadings	
QSORT	1	2
1 Belgian 1	0.8365X	-0.2726
2 Belgian 2	0.7860X	0.1418
3 Dane 1	0.8682X	0.0794
4 Romanian 1	0.6947X	-0.0629
5 Swede 1	0.7000X	-0.1108
6 Dutchman 1	0.6265X	0.0865
7 Belgian 3	0.6239X	0.0366
8 Swede 2	0.8228X	-0.5067
9 Dane 2	0.7945X	0.3265
10 Dutchman 2	0.4487	-0.8000X
11 Dutchman 3	0.6143X	0.3760
12 Dutchman 4	0.5491X	0.0080 *
13 Frenchman 1	0.1285	0.6983X
% expl.Var.	46	14

Free Distribution Data Results

QSORT	MEAN	ST.DEV.
1 Belgian 1	0.000	1.170
2 Belgian 2	0.000	1.170
3 Dane 1	0.000	1.170
4 Romanian 1	0.000	1.170
5 Swede 1	0.000	1.170
6 Dutchman 1	0.000	1.170
7 Belgian 3	0.000	1.170
8 Swede 2	0.000	1.170
9 Dane 2	0.000	1.170
10 Dutchman 2	0.000	1.170
11 Dutchman 3	0.000	1.170
12 Dutchman 4	0.000	1.170
13 Frenchman 1	0.000	1.170

Factor Scores with Corresponding Ranks

No.	Statement	No.	Factors			
			1	2	1	2
1	If someone said something bad about the EU, I would fe	1	-0.52	15	-0.38	14
2	My country must maintain an independence in European a	2	0.13	10	0.24	10
3	I think European integration has gone about as far as	3	-1.37	19	0.62	7
4	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for f	4	1.08	5	0.38	9
5	Europe will be stronger precisely because each MS has	5	0.58	6	1.00	5
6	In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task	6	-1.65	20	1.24	3
7	I want a Europe of nationstates that are as politicall	7	-0.24	12	1.00	5
8	European countries are too diverse for a EU to work.	8	-1.10	16	0.00	12
9	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nat	9	-0.29	13	-1.00	16
10	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their	10	0.46	7	0.38	9
11	Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their	11	-0.14	11	1.24	3
12	The more policymaking and policymakers become European	12	0.18	9	-1.38	18
13	Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great po	13	1.61	1	-0.62	15
14	Greater European integration can give national minorit	14	0.30	8	-1.38	18
15	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positi	15	1.45	2	0.76	6
16	Globalization threatens our own national cultures.	16	-1.13	17	0.00	12
17	I am attached to Europe as a whole.	17	1.14	4	-1.62	20
18	Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	18	-1.31	18	1.38	1

19	The EU leads to a homogenization of European cultures.	19	-0.48	14	-1.62	20
20	Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives.	20	1.31	3	-0.24	13

Correlations Between Factor Scores

	1	2
1	1.0000	-0.2825
2	-0.2825	1.0000

Factor Scores -- For Factor 1

No.	Statement	No.	Z-SCORES
13	Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. I	13	1.605
15	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is	15	1.445
20	Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives and	20	1.306
17	I am attached to Europe as a whole.	17	1.135
4	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding	4	1.085
5	Europe will be stronger precisely because each MS has its ow	5	0.581
10	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state,	10	0.463
14	Greater European integration can give national minorities mo	14	0.298
12	The more policymaking and policymakers become Europeanized,	12	0.176
2	My country must maintain an independence in European affairs	2	0.135
11	Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their own pe	11	-0.138
7	I want a Europe of nationstates that are as politically and	7	-0.242
9	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nationali	9	-0.294
19	The EU leads to a homogenization of European cultures.	19	-0.475
1	If someone said something bad about the EU, I would feel as	1	-0.516
8	European countries are too diverse for a EU to work.	8	-1.098
16	Globalization threatens our own national cultures.	16	-1.135
18	Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	18	-1.306
3	I think European integration has gone about as far as it can	3	-1.374
6	In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of Eur	6	-1.653

Factor Scores -- For Factor 2

No.	Statement	No.	Z-SCORES
18	Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	18	1.383
6	In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of Eur	6	1.242
11	Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their own pe	11	1.242
5	Europe will be stronger precisely because each MS has its ow	5	1.002
7	I want a Europe of nationstates that are as politically and	7	1.002
15	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is	15	0.762
3	I think European integration has gone about as far as it can	3	0.621
10	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state,	10	0.381
4	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding	4	0.381
2	My country must maintain an independence in European affairs	2	0.240
8	European countries are too diverse for a EU to work.	8	0.000
16	Globalization threatens our own national cultures.	16	0.000
20	Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives and	20	-0.240
1	If someone said something bad about the EU, I would feel as	1	-0.381
13	Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. I	13	-0.621
9	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nationali	9	-1.002
14	Greater European integration can give national minorities mo	14	-1.383
12	The more policymaking and policymakers become Europeanized,	12	-1.383
19	The EU leads to a homogenization of European cultures.	19	-1.623
17	I am attached to Europe as a whole.	17	-1.623

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 1 and 2

No.	Statement	No.	Type 1	Type 2	Difference
17	I am attached to Europe as a whole.	17	1.135	-1.623	2.758
13	Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. I	13	1.605	-0.621	2.226
14	Greater European integration can give national minorities mo	14	0.298	-1.383	1.681
12	The more policymaking and policymakers become Europeanized,	12	0.176	-1.383	1.559
20	Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives and	20	1.306	-0.240	1.547
19	The EU leads to a homogenization of European cultures.	19	-0.475	-1.623	1.148
9	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nationali	9	-0.294	-1.002	0.708
4	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding	4	1.085	0.381	0.704
15	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is	15	1.445	0.762	0.684
10	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state,	10	0.463	0.381	0.082
2	My country must maintain an independence in European affairs	2	0.135	0.240	-0.105
1	If someone said something bad about the EU, I would feel as	1	-0.516	-0.381	-0.135
5	Europe will be stronger precisely because each MS has its ow	5	0.581	1.002	-0.421
8	European countries are too diverse for a EU to work.	8	-1.098	0.000	-1.098
16	Globalization threatens our own national cultures.	16	-1.135	0.000	-1.135
7	I want a Europe of nationstates that are as politically and	7	-0.242	1.002	-1.244
11	Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their own pe	11	-0.138	1.242	-1.380
3	I think European integration has gone about as far as it can	3	-1.374	0.621	-1.995
18	Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	18	-1.306	1.383	-2.688
6	In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of Eur	6	-1.653	1.242	-2.895

Factor Q-Sort Values for Each Statement

No.	Statement	No.	Factor Arrays	
			1	2
1	If someone said something bad about the EU, I would feel as	1	-1	-1
2	My country must maintain an independence in European affairs	2	0	0
3	I think European integration has gone about as far as it can	3	-2	1
4	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding	4	1	0
5	Europe will be stronger precisely because each MS has its ow	5	1	1
6	In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of Eur	6	-2	1
7	I want a Europe of nationstates that are as politically and	7	0	1
8	European countries are too diverse for a EU to work.	8	-1	0
9	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nationali	9	0	-1
10	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state,	10	1	0
11	Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their own pe	11	0	1
12	The more policymaking and policymakers become Europeanized,	12	0	-1
13	Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. I	13	2	-1
14	Greater European integration can give national minorities mo	14	0	-1
15	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is	15	2	1
16	Globalization threatens our own national cultures.	16	-1	0
17	I am attached to Europe as a whole.	17	1	-2
18	Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	18	-1	2
19	The EU leads to a homogenization of European cultures.	19	-1	-2

20 Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives and 20 1 0

Variance = 1.300 St. Dev. = 1.140

Factor Q-Sort Values for Statements sorted by Consensus vs. Disagreement (Variance across Factor Z-Scores)

No.	Statement	No.	Factor Arrays	
			1	2
10	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state,	10	1	0
2	My country must maintain an independence in European affairs	2	0	0
1	If someone said something bad about the EU, I would feel as	1	-1	-1
5	Europe will be stronger precisely because each MS has its ow	5	1	1
15	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is	15	2	1
4	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding	4	1	0
9	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nationali	9	0	-1
8	European countries are too diverse for a EU to work.	8	-1	0
16	Globalization threatens our own national cultures.	16	-1	0
19	The EU leads to a homogenization of European cultures.	19	-1	-2
7	I want a Europe of nationstates that are as politically and	7	0	1
11	Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their own pe	11	0	1
20	Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives and	20	1	0
12	The more policymaking and policymakers become Europeanized,	12	0	-1
14	Greater European integration can give national minorities mo	14	0	-1
3	I think European integration has gone about as far as it can	3	-2	1
13	Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. I	13	2	-1
18	Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	18	-1	2
17	I am attached to Europe as a whole.	17	1	-2

6 In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of Eur 6 -2 1

Factor Characteristics

	Factors	
	1	2
No. of Defining Variables	11	2
Average Rel. Coef.	0.800	0.800
Composite Reliability	0.978	0.889
S.E. of Factor Z-Scores	0.149	0.333

Standard Errors for Differences in Factor Z-Scores

(Diagonal Entries Are S.E. Within Factors)

Factors	1	2
1	0.211	0.365
2	0.365	0.471

Distinguishing Statements for Factor 1

(P < .05 ; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the Z-Score (Z-SCR) are Shown

No. Statement	No.	Factors			
		1		2	
		Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
13 Unity in Europe does not create a new kind of great power. I	13	2	1.61*	-1	-0.62
20 Our main task in the EEAS is achieving common objectives and	20	1	1.31*	0	-0.24
17 I am attached to Europe as a whole.	17	1	1.14*	-2	-1.62
14 Greater European integration can give national minorities mo	14	0	0.30*	-1	-1.38
12 The more policymaking and policymakers become Europeanized,	12	0	0.18*	-1	-1.38
11 Humanity is naturally divided into nations with their own pe	11	0	-0.14*	1	1.24
7 I want a Europe of nationstates that are as politically and	7	0	-0.24*	1	1.00
19 The EU leads to a homogenization of European cultures.	19	-1	-0.48*	-2	-1.62
8 European countries are too diverse for a EU to work.	8	-1	-1.10*	0	0.00
16 Globalization threatens our own national cultures.	16	-1	-1.13*	0	0.00
18 Loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties.	18	-1	-1.31*	2	1.38
3 I think European integration has gone about as far as it can	3	-2	-1.37*	1	0.62
6 In my role as an official in the EEAS, the first task of Eur	6	-2	-1.65*	1	1.24

Consensus Statements -- Those That Do Not Distinguish Between ANY Pair of Factors

All Listed Statements are Non-Significant at $P > .01$, and Those Flagged With an * are also Non-Significant at $P > .05$.

No.	Statement	No.	Factors			
			1		2	
			Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
1*	If someone said something bad about the EU, I would feel as	1	-1	-0.52	-1	-0.38
2*	My country must maintain an independence in European affairs	2	0	0.13	0	0.24
4*	Europe is an autonomous level primarily designed for finding	4	1	1.08	0	0.38
5*	Europe will be stronger precisely because each MS has its ow	5	1	0.58	1	1.00
9*	I think of myself as a European first, then my own nationali	9	0	-0.29	-1	-1.00
10*	Rotation allows diplomats to stay in touch with their state,	10	1	0.46	0	0.38
15*	In my work in the EEAS, information on national positions is	15	2	1.45	1	0.76