

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: February 28, 2006

Qualitative diversity research: Looking ahead

Organised by the Research Centre for Organisation Studies,
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium.

Supported by the Marie Curie Series of Conferences
“EURODIV – Cultural diversity in Europe”

Leuven, Belgium, September 19-20, 2006

This is the first announcement and call for papers for the international Conference on “Qualitative diversity research: Looking ahead”, to be held at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, in September, Tuesday 19th and Wednesday 20th, 2006.

Diversity is becoming a key feature of European societies. European integration, global migrations, the ageing of the population, and changing gender roles have set diversity onto the agenda. Both the state and private organizations need to find appropriate and effective ways to understand and deal with diversity. Researchers are increasingly called to make sense of diversity and provide research to support public and private action. To fulfil this role, we need to develop stronger concepts to think diversity and appropriate methodologies to research it. The conference intends to provide an opportunity for diversity scholars to discuss the state of the arts of diversity research, and to envisage the future of diversity research specifically within European context.

The conference is organised by Prof. Maddy Janssens and Patrizia Zanoni, affiliated to the Research Centre for Organisation Studies of the Faculty of Economic and Applied Economic Sciences, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. It is the second of five conferences on diversity falling under the auspices of the Marie Curie Series of Conferences entitled “EURODIV: Cultural Diversity in Europe: A Series of Conferences” (MSCF-CT-2004-516670).

EURODIV Conferences intend to bring together younger researchers and leading scientists to exchange knowledge in a spirit of mutual learning. This call is therefore mainly addressed to *early-stage* and *mid-career researchers*, who conduct research on diversity (see below for details). More experienced researchers are welcome to submit an abstract. However, precedence will be given to submissions of high quality by junior researchers.

Leading diversity scholars Deborah Litvin (confirmed), Robin Ely (confirmed), and Pushkala Prasad (to be confirmed) will give key-note speeches introducing the sessions of the conference.

The conference is organized around four main topics:

Theorizing diversity. Generally, diversity studies define diversity by referring to one or more socio-demographic traits such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, (dis)ability etc. This approach is in recent years increasingly being questioned as the use of socio-demographic traits has de facto led to an understanding of diversity as a given, fixed individual or group essence. While several scholars have pleaded for more dynamic and contextual conceptualizations of diversity, much still needs to be done in this direction. In this section, we will focus on the question of how to conceptualize diversity in theoretically sound ways. We welcome theoretical and empirical papers that reflect on the problems of current conceptualizations of diversity or that introduce new concepts to study diversity.

Qualitative methodologies to investigate diversity. Most diversity research has been conducted using quantitative methods. Within this tradition, social phenomena are conceptualized in ways that allow their measurement. As leading diversity scholars have remarked, the dominance of quantitative methods has hampered a proper theorization of diversity. While identity is today often understood in dynamic, context-bound ways, diversity is still often reduced to socio-demographic traits. In this session, we would like to discuss appropriate ways to research diversity in the field, including the pro's and con's of specific approaches. We welcome both theoretical and empirical papers introducing new qualitative ways to carry out diversity research, or discussing methodological aspects in depth.

Reframing diversity within organisation studies. In this session, we would like to look at how diversity can be linked to other contemporary topics of organization studies. Traditional diversity research has focused on job-related aspects such as job satisfaction, promotion opportunities and networking, and on interpersonal relations such as intergroup conflict. However, much still needs to be done to understand the structural relationship between diversity and, for instance, productive processes, organizational identity, customer relations, emotional labour, business ethics, employee resistance, to name a few. The idea behind this session is to foresee possible research lines of diversity research, in ways that help 'mainstream' diversity within various domains of organisation studies. We welcome theoretical and empirical papers that make new links between diversity research and other research areas in organization studies.

Publishing qualitative diversity research. Qualitative studies of diversity seldom appear in international top-tier management and organization studies journals. A first reason is that diversity remains a relatively small domain within the discipline, and therefore is not yet a topic of interest for many journals. Second, top-tier journal reviewers often raise questions on the reliability, validity and generalizability of results of studies conducted using qualitative methodologies. In this session, we would like to reflect on strategies to publish qualitative diversity studies. Additionally, we would like to raise the question of how to be critical and at the same time communicate effectively with a more mainstream readership. We welcome in this session papers that propose ways of presenting qualitative work through which this approach is considered a valuable contribution in increasing our knowledge on diversity and diversity management.

Submissions:

If you are interested in presenting a paper, please send a 600-word abstract to the organizers maddy.janssens@econ.kuleuven.be and patrizia.zanoni@econ.kuleuven.be by **28th February 2006**, mentioning 'EURODIV Conference' in the subject of your e-mail. The abstract should clearly indicate the name, affiliation and e-mail address of author(s), who is the contact author, the paper title, and max 5 keywords.

The final decision will be taken by **March, 17th, 2006**. The full paper should be submitted by **July 17th, 2006**.

Grants:

There are several grants available for the conference. Grants cover living expenses (up to a max of EUR 150.00 per day) and travel expenses (up to a maximum amount established on the basis of travel distance). There are no conference fees.

Researchers eligible for funding:

Group 1 - Early-stage researchers. Researchers attending the event for training purposes, who have, at the time of their attendance no more than 4 years (full-time equivalent) research experience since obtaining the diploma which gives them direct access to doctoral studies in the country in which the diploma was obtained and who do not have a doctoral degree.

Group 2 – Mid-career researchers. Researchers attending the event for training purposes, who have, at the time of their attendance, a doctoral degree or 4-10 years of (full-time equivalent) research experience since obtaining the diploma which gives them direct access to doctoral studies in the country in which the diploma was obtained.

Group 3 – European Researchers active outside the Union. Researchers attending the event for training purposes, who have, at the time of their attendance, more than 10 years of (full-time equivalent) research experience since obtaining the diploma which gives them direct access to doctoral studies in the country in which the diploma was obtained, who are nationals of Member States or Associated Member States and who are active in research outside the Member States and Associated Member States at the time of the event.

To apply for a grant:

When submitting the abstract, you should specify the name of the grant applicant(s) indicating whether he or she fulfils the criteria of group 1, 2 or 3 above. Grants for multiple authors will be considered, depending on funds availability.

The Scientific Committee:

Gianmarco I.P. Ottaviano, Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei, Milano and University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy

Maddy Janssens, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven , Leuven, Belgium

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