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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In 2012, the European Union (EU) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its contribution to “the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe.” At a time of “grave economic difficulties and considerable social unrest”, the Nobel Committee asked attention for the EU’s transformative power in creating Europe “from a continent of war to a continent of peace.”

This idea of the EU as a peace-project fits very well with the EU’s own self-perception and has increasingly become a programme for action on the world stage. For long, the absence of military means at its disposal has been turned into a virtue of the European Community and, later, the European Union. Indeed, instead of recognizing it to reflect the inability of the member states to agree, this apparent weakness was portrayed as a deliberate choice. Yet, the 1991 Treaty of Maastricht emphatically included a security component in the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Initially, little came of this, as the traumatic experience of the Yugoslav wars in the 1990’s point out. But by the late 1990’s conditions converged towards the introduction of EU military operations (Howorth 2007). A crucial catalyst in this process was the *rapprochement* between the British and the French government which was sealed with the 1998 Saint-Malo Declaration. In

2003 the EU’s European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) became operational with the EU’s first military operation in FYR Macedonia.¹ Since then, another 10 EU military operations have been launched.²

This use of military force abroad has often been presented as part of promoting the EU’s peace project beyond its borders. As the EU’s first High Representative (HR), Javier Solana (2006), put it, the EU should become a “global power, a force for good in the world.” Already in 1999, he asked: “is commitment to values cheap talk or willing to shoulder the costs of promoting and defending them in a world in which they are violated too often?” (Solana in Kurowska 2008: 31).

However, this idea of the EU as a “force for good” in combination with the use of military force has been fiercely criticized. For example, former Nobel Peace Prize laureates argued that the EU is an example of a militarized peace-making block - “the EU and member states condone security based on military force and have waged wars rather than insisting on the need for alternative approaches” (IPB 2012).

Among EU scholars the debate about the character of the EU as an international actor that had been dominated by the notion of “Civilian Power Europe”, gained a new dimension with the development of CSDP. “Normative Power Europe”, which was introduced by Ian Manners in 2002, characterized the EU as promoting its values by “living by example.” Rather than using sticks or impose or enforce particular values on other actors, “living by example” entails a process in which an actor aims to diffuse its ideas by means of showing how it deals with issues (e.g. conflict) itself.

However, the role and actual use of military force by the EU led to a split among scholars arguing for and against its compatibility with being a normative power (see chapter 2). Moreover, the EU’s military involvement strengthened realist arguments of the EU as a geopolitical power that seeks to protect its narrow-defined security interests.

¹ After the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force in 2009, the European Common Security and Defence Policy was changed into a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). In the dissertation I will mainly refer to CSDP to denote the complete period of an EU Security and Defence Policy.

² This count is based upon the EU’s self-classification. It includes: Artemis RD Congo (2003), EUFOR Althea (2004–now), EUFOR Congo (2008), EUFOR Tchad/RCA (2008–2009), EUNAVFOR Atalanta (2008–now), EUTM Somalia (2010–now), EUTM Mali (2013–now), EUFOR RCA (2014), EUMAM RCA (2015–now), EUNAVFOR Med Sophia (2015–now). EUFOR Libya is not included in the research, as this operation was never actually launched despite the Council Decision of April 2011 (Council of the European Union 2011a). Also, the hybrid operation “support to AMIS” in 2005/2006 is not part of the analysis: the bulletin of the EU Military Staff does classify this operation as a civilian one (EUMS 2013: 12).

The “normative power debate” is connected to the question of whether there is an emerging EU strategic culture, i.e. a common EU understanding of the use of military force. Since the EU Member States play a central role in the launch of CSDP operations and they differ considerably in terms of their national strategic cultures, it is not self-evident that a common EU strategic culture is emerging and, if it does, what it looks like. Rather, the character of the EU as international security actor is essentially contested (see Vennesson 2010). The launch, or deliberate refrainment, of military operations are the most visible outcome of the battle of ideas about the nature of the EU as a security actor (see also McDonagh 2015). While the number of civilian missions launched under CSDP is much higher³ they do not touch upon a key dimension that is highly contested: the collective use of military force. Hence, this dissertation aims to enhance our understanding of the EU as an international security actor by an assessment of its military operations. Essentially, it aims to answer the question: *How has the character of the EU as an international power evolved ever since it started to launch military operations?*

The introductory chapter is structured in the following way. First, I shortly introduce the history and decision-making of CSDP. Subsequently I introduce the overarching research question and of this dissertation based upon a concise discussion of relevant literature. The fourth section outlines the research design of the dissertation, explaining the data collection and different case studies. Finally, I outline the structure of the dissertation.

1.2 CSDP

1.2.1 History: the emergence of CSDP

The launch of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy surely has not been self-evident. Being a matter of “high politics”, which means that it is highly politically sensitive, the discussion of a common EU policy on security and defence had met severe resistance for years.

In the 1950’s the proposal for a European Defence Community (EDC) failed (see Van Middelaar 2009: 207-214; Fursdon 1980). This was a far-reaching proposal to create an integrated multinational military force under supranational political control. The proposal emerged from a concern over “the German problem”, i.e. rearming Germany, without risking German military hegemony. Moreover, from the perspective of one of the EU’s founding fathers, Jean Monnet, the EDC was closely related to

³ A total of 21 civilian missions were launched: 11 civilian missions are completed, another 10 are ongoing (EEAS 2016a).

the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The EDC-plan was introduced by French Prime Minister Pleven to counter the alternative, which was preferred by the other Member States, of a NATO-solution for Germany. After tough negotiations the EDC treaty was signed, and ratified in the participating countries, except for France. Against the backdrop of the Indo-China War, the French parliament was wary of losing national freedom. The EDC treaty failed on a procedural motion. After the failure of the EDC, the Western European Union (WEU) was created to facilitate consultation and discussion on European defence.⁴ The operational work was left to NATO.

During the 1970’s a procedure for coordinating national positions on international issues emerged: European Political Cooperation (EPC; see Nuttall 1992). With the Single European Act (1985), the EPC was further institutionalized with a Secretariat in Brussels. However, the idea of incorporating military and defence issues as EU policy was a bridge too far for some Member States (see Dinan 2010: 547). While the UK aimed at including this into the EPC’s remit, this was opposed by Denmark, Ireland and Greece and lacked the support of France (cf. Nuttall 1992). It took until the Treaty of Maastricht (1993) for the first changes to be signalled. This Treaty did not only establish the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), but also included as one of its aims:

to assert its identity on the international scene, in particular through the implementation of a common foreign and security policy including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence.

Subsequently, the Treaty of Amsterdam (1999) defined the EU’s range of military tasks, a copy-paste of the Western European Union’s Petersberg tasks: humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making.⁵

Following this Treaty change, several meetings of the European Council in the period 1999-2003 (Cologne; Helsinki; Feira; Nice; Goteborg; Laeken; Brussels) provided essential input to establish the ESDP (Grevi 2009; see also Keane 2005). In particular, at the 1999 Council in Cologne, the EU heads of state and government agreed that:

⁴ In 2000 it was decided to integrate the WEU into the ESDP, but it took until 2010 for a final decision to put an end to the WEU. For a comprehensive overview of the role of the WEU, see Bailes and Messervy-Whiting (2011).

⁵ The term ‘peace-making’ was adopted as a consensual solution and as a synonym for ‘peace-enforcement’ (cf. EEAS 2016c). This underlines the contestation over the higher spectrum of violence.

the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO (European Council 1999).

Moreover, the institutional arrangements to plan and conduct military operations were put in place, codified with the Treaty of Nice (see Bono 2002). Ten years after the Treaty of Maastricht, the first actual EU military operation was launched in FYR Macedonia (Concordia).

This fundamental expansion of EU foreign policy in the 1990's was brought about by a combination of internal and external factors (see Bickerton et al. 2011; Howorth 2007; Mathiopoulos and Gyarmati 1999; Kurowska 2012: 3). First, the end of the Cold War in 1989 was a systemic change in the international relations of power, which allowed the EU to develop an identity as an international security actor. In particular, it meant that the EU could no longer be certain of protection by the security umbrella of the US.

Second, Europe's failure to act during the Yugoslav wars in the 1990's had been a traumatic experience, which proved to be a critical event, triggering a rather quick development of CSDP. In June 1991, before send off as part of a high-level mediation team to Belgrade as member of the Troika⁶, Jacques Poos, the Luxembourg foreign minister, claimed that "this is the hour of Europe. It is not the hour of the Americans" (Riding 1991). However, in the years that followed the EU had to face the fact that it did not have the military capacity and ability to act collectively. After, first, the Bosnian War (1992-1995) showed the impotence of EU Member States to prevent the massacre of Srebrenica, during the Kosovo War (1998/1999) the EU Member States were in a similar position again. This proved to be a "dislocating" traumatic experience, "smashing the identity and collective self-consciousness of Europe's strategists, civil servants and political establishment – as well as normal citizens" (Rogers 2009: 842).

Third, against the background of these dramatic conflicts in the EU's own backyard, Europe's two main military powers, France and Britain, grew closer. They found that they did share a common view on conflict prevention through commitment on the ground which "differed sharply from the US preference for air strikes and arming local forces" (Giegerich and Wallace 2004: 166). France and the UK decided in St. Malo (1998) that "the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in

⁶ The Troika comprises the Member State holding the Presidency, the Member State that held the Presidency in the previous six months, and the one who will hold the Presidency in the next six months.

order to respond to international crises." The fact that Labour, led by Tony Blair, took over from the Conservatives after almost 20 years in office provided a crucial "window of opportunity." While some argue that St. Malo was not about "Blair seeking to play a leadership role in Europe" and that there was no "genuine European project behind the initiative" (Howorth 2004: 223), others claim that during his first years in office Blair aimed at "maximizing the potential of the UK's influence" against the backdrop of the UK staying out of the Economic Monetary Union (EMU) (Whitman 2004). In any case, it seems fair to say that would the Conservatives still have been in office in 1998, it had been less likely that the St. Malo Declaration had been adopted by both countries.

The combination of these structural conditions and events may account for the fact that at the start of the 21st century the EU launched its first military operation, yet it does not necessarily prescribe its particular shape and character.

In 2003, the division among EU Member States on the US intervention in Iraq coincided with the launch of the EU's first two military operations and the European Security Strategy (ESS). This surely did influence the development of the European Security and Defence Policy. While some argue that it had a delaying effect on CSDP getting operational (e.g. Nováky 2015) most commentators view the row over Iraq as a trigger for the EU to reflect on its capabilities, assets and expertise which reminded the Member States that they needed to enhance their credibility (Menon 2004; Ellner 2005; see also Meyer 2006; Norheim-Martinsen 2011). As such the Iraq crisis may have contributed to the launch of Operation Artemis in Congo to show the EU's autonomy and provided the High Representative with a unique opportunity to launch the European Security Strategy (see Duke 2011).

1.2.2 Decision-making in CSDP

At the EU level a highly complex institutional set-up for military and civilian crisis management has emerged (for an elaborate description see Howorth 2007; 2013). Since CSDP remained underspecified in the EU treaties (Smith 2012), its institutionalization has taken shape gradually, containing both supranational and intergovernmental elements. The decision-making rules to allow for collective action in the field of security and defence raise high barriers (e.g. unanimity for launching CSDP operations), reflecting the sensitivity attached to this policy domain. While there are provisions that loosen the restrictive unanimity requirement, these are rarely used – consensus remains the norm.⁷ The supranational dynamic results from the emergence

⁷ Constructive abstention was already introduced with the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), yet only used once in the realm of CSDP, by Cyprus, with the launch of the civilian mission EULEX Kosovo (Grevi 2009). Moreover, the Treaty of Lisbon created more room of manoeuvre to allow for coalitions of the willing in defence matters, without losing the collective responsibility.

of a growing supranational apparatus in Brussels (i.e. the European External Action Service, EEAS), but also the socializing effect on national diplomats of their frequent meetings at numerous committee-meetings (see Juncos and Reynolds 2007). While intergovernmental decision-making gives the Member States formal independence, at the same time the “highly routinized and dense coordination procedures” (Puetter and Wiener 2009: 6) make the preferences of Member States more dynamic, though not necessarily converging. Hence, CSDP’s structures have been characterized as “supranational intergovernmental” (Howorth 2010) and “intergovernmental with supranational dynamics” (Merlingen 2012).

Actors

Since CSDP operations are launched on the basis of unanimity, the EU’s Member States are the main actors in the realm of CSDP. Moreover, their position is strengthened as they do not only have to agree, but also have to deliver the financial and material resources for any operation, i.e. there is no EU army. In chapter 3 the position of Member States in relation to the use of military force in the context of the EU is discussed further. At this point I merely give an overview of the actors involved in the decision-making process and the decision-making process of military operations (see figure 1.1 and 1.2).

The European Council is the highest political authority of the EU, consisting of the heads of government. They define the principles and general guidelines of the CFSP, including CSDP. So, in the early years of establishing CSDP European Council meetings played an important role. Moreover, the European Security Strategy was adopted by the European Council in December 2003. Also, regarding the relationship with NATO, the European Council approved important documents (cf. Grevi 2009). However, in practice CSDP is not often on the European Council agenda.⁸ Discussions on particular operations are even rarer.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs, who decide on the launch of EU military operations by adopting a Joint Action/Council Decision, meet in the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC).⁹ The “lynchpin” of CSDP is the Political and Security Committee (PSC)(Duke 2005). Consisting of Brussels-based national ambassadors, it “exercises political control and strategic direction” of EU military operations (Council of the European Union 2001b). To this end, the PSC receives support and advice from national

⁸ In December 2013, for the first time since 2008, a European Council was dedicated to discuss Defence.

⁹ Before the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force this was called the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC). There is no Council for the Ministers of Defence. They “informally” meet each half a year in the capital of the Presidency.

Chiefs of Defence in the EU Military Committee, (EUMC) and from the Political Military Group (PMG)(Council of the European Union 2001c; COREPER 2001).

In addition to the Member States, EU actors and EU institutions play an important role in the decision-making and planning process of military operations. It is of importance to distinguish between ESDP (pre-Lisbon, 2003-2009) and CSDP (post-Lisbon, >2009).

Before the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force, the Presidency played an important role in chairing the FAC, PSC and the committees (with the exception of the EU Military Committee). Since 2009, however, these meetings are all chaired by (a representative of) the High Representative (HR). Together with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the HR has been tasked to ensure the unity, consistency and effectiveness of the EU’s external CFSP and external action. Key tasks of the High Representative are: policy proposal, policy implementation and external representation (see Grevi 2009). Article 42.4 (TEU) stipulates the role of the High Representative in CSDP:

Decisions relating to the common security and defence policy, including those initiating a mission as referred to in this Article, shall be adopted by the Council acting unanimously on a proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy or an initiative from a Member State. The High Representative may propose the use of both national resources and Union instruments, together with the Commission where appropriate.

Before 2009, the High Representative directed the General Secretariat of the Council. Relevant divisions for the launch of military operations were the Policy Unit, DG-E for External and Politico-Military affairs, and the EU Military Staff. In 2006 a Crisis Management Board was created to bring together the geographic, military and civilian expertise within the Council Secretariat at times when a new ESDP operation was contemplated (cf. Grevi 2009).

After the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force, the High Representative became double-hatted (i.e. also Vice-President of the European Commission) and had to create a European diplomatic service: the European External Action Service (EEAS). The EEAS is composed of a mix of staff of the Council Secretariat, the European Commission and national seconded officials. In terms of organizational structure, it consists of thematic and regional units and the CSDP structures. With the Treaty of Lisbon, the CSDP structures were expanded with the Crisis Management Planning Directorate (CMPD), which is the “civilian-military strategic planning structure for EU peace-keeping and humanitarian operations and missions” (EEAS 2016d). Though part of the EEAS, the CSDP structures are located in a separate building.

Part of the EEAS, but not hierarchically under the HR are the EU Special Representatives. They are the EU's face and voice in particular countries/regions and bridge-builders across institutional and political divides (Adebahr 2008).

Finally, there are two important EU institutions that do not have a formal role in the launch of EU military operations, but cannot be excluded either. First, the European Commission, which deals with the Community dimension of external action, notably external economic relations, development cooperation, trade and humanitarian assistance. Before the Treaty of Lisbon (ToL) a leading role was taken by the External Relations Commissioner, who worked either in tandem with the HR or could be a powerful counterweight to the HR. With the ToL the HR's job was expanded to include the tasks of the External Relations Commissioner.

As second institution there is the European Parliament (EP). Since EU military operations are not financed by the EU-budget, the EP does not have a say in the launch of EU military operations. However, it has been active, with a special committee on Security and Defence, in expressing its opinions by means of resolutions, debates (inviting Operation Commanders and the High Representative) and field visits.

Procedures

The launch of an EU military operation involves several formal decisions (see Table 1.1). The first one is, of course, the decision that EU (military) action is considered appropriate. Subsequently the CMPD is asked to draft a Crisis Management Concept, which provides a political as well as military assessment of the situation (cf. Mattelaer 2010: 5). With input from the EU Military Staff and commented upon by the EU Military Committee this document is approved by the Political and Security Committee and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Then the Council Decision, including the mandate, reference amount and Operation Commander, can be drafted by the Working Party of Foreign Relations Counsellors. The Council Decision is the public and legal decision. The final steps are taken by the Operation Commander who drafts the Concept of Operations and the Operation Plan. The former is a concise statement of how the Operation Commander intends to fulfil his mission whereas the latter is a much more detailed script of the operation (Ibid.).

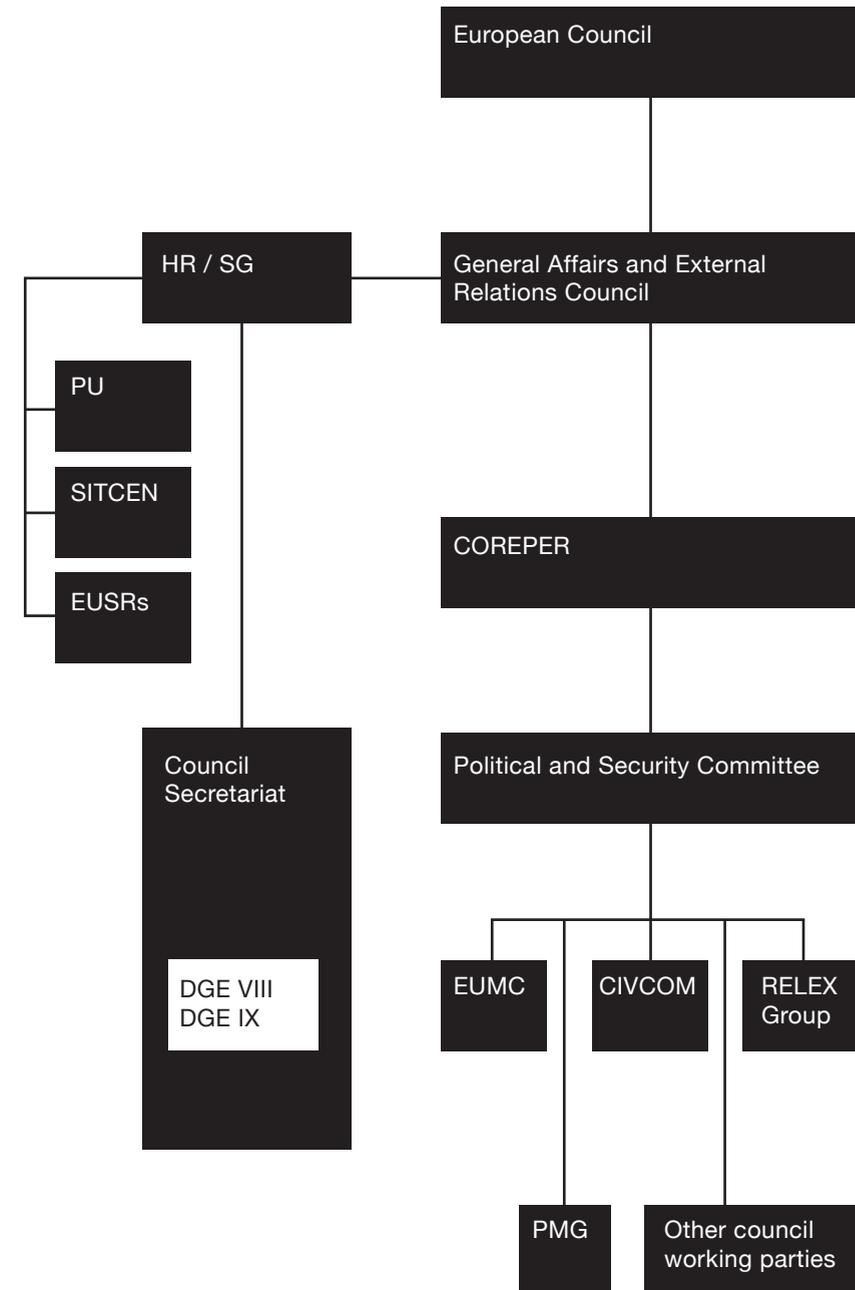


Figure 1.1 Institutional set-up ESDP

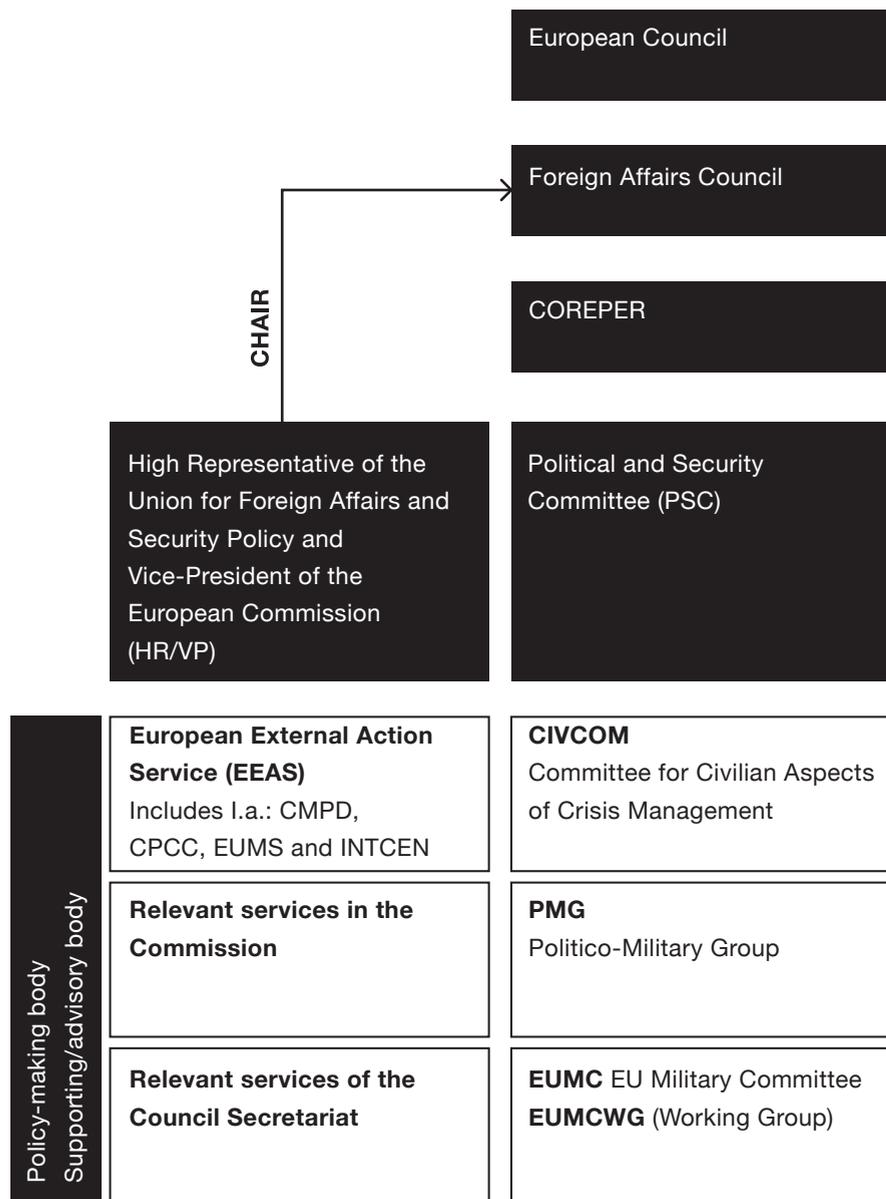


Figure 1.2 Institutional set-up CSDP

Table 1.1 Decision-making Procedure

1	Political Framework for Crisis Approach	EEAS Crisis Management Board/Crisis Platform
2a	Crisis Management Concept (CMC)	Drafted by CMPD, with EUMS input Commented upon by EUMC Approved by PSC & Council
2b	Military Strategic Option (MSO)	Optional – if requested by EUMC Drafted by EUMS Approved by PSC & Council
3	Council Decision (CD) and Initiating Military Directive (IMD)	Drafted by the Working Party of Foreign Relations Counsellors (RELEX) (i.e. Operation Commander and reference amount) EUMS translates MSO + CD into IMD, approved by EUMC
4	Concept of Operations (CONOPS)	Drafted by Military Operation Commander Approved by PSC and Council
5	Operation Plan (OPLAN)	Drafted by Operation Commander Approved by PSC & Council Fast-track procedure: CONOPS+

Source: based upon Mattelaer in: Rehl 2014: 45

1.3 State of the Art and Research Question

1.3.1 State of the Art

Research on the character of the EU as an international security actor already emerged during the Cold War. While the EU's security ambitions at that time were limited, as we have seen in section 1.2, several authors explored the potential of Europe's role in the world. Pointing at the increasing international interdependence, Duchêne (1972: 43) claims that Europe, endowed with economic resources and "free of a load of military power" could be an influential actor in the world. Denying a role as a major military power for Europe, Duchêne (1972) expected that a changing international setting would allow Europe to develop into a "Civilian Power."

In line with Duchêne's emphasis on the EU's non-military power resources, Galtung (1973) conceptualized the EU as "a superpower in the making" that derived

its powers primarily from its economic power. In contrast to Duchêne, however, he was more critical of the EU's economic power, characterizing it as a kind of neo-colonial policy. In contrast, Bull (1983: 151) highlighted the continuing primacy of power politics and argued that Europe "is not an actor in international affairs, and does not seem likely to become one."

After the end of the Cold War, just before the EU's Security and Defence Policy would become operational, several publications were launched that continued the debate that had started in the 70's and 80's. Cameron (1998: 42) states that "as the main provider of soft security, the EU is already performing an important stabilizing function, but it will also have to develop a hard security component if it is credibly to punch its weight on the world stage." Larsen (2002: 292) argues that St. Malo did not mean an "absolute break" with the EU's civilian power image. Rather, he claims that military means are embedded in a civilian power context. Kagan (2002) continues the line of Bull, arguing that it is the EU's weakness that characterizes its foreign policy identity. In contrast, Manners (2002) introduced the notion of Normative Power Europe, to move away from a conceptualization of the EU's international power in terms of military and economic capabilities by emphasizing the power of ideas. The debate on Normative Power Europe and its compatibility with the use of military force is further discussed in chapter 2. For now it suffices to say that different scholars highlight different dimensions of Normative Power, i.e. the ideas it promotes, or the instruments it uses. This has consequences for their assessment of the EU's use of military force.

An overall characteristic of this Normative Power debate is that it focuses on the EU level and as such assumes that there is a collective, common EU international power identity. However, this is problematized by an important line of research that assesses whether a common EU strategic culture is emerging, i.e. whether actors' ideas on the use of military force are converging or not (Biava et al. 2011; Biehl et al. 2013; Cornish and Edwards 2005; Haine 2011; Norheim-Martinsen 2013; Meyer 2006; 2011; 2013; Schmidt 2011a/b). Research on national *strategic cultures* draws our attention to the importance of conflicting interests and belief systems of different actors. This concept, which emerged in the 1970's as part of a larger debate about realism and constructivism, refers to deep-seated norms, beliefs and ideas about the appropriate use of force as a product of a state's unique historical experiences (Haine 2011; Norheim-Martinsen 2013). It is argued that there is a relatively enduring difference among states concerning (the reasons for) the use of force and the role of the military

as either part and parcel of foreign policy or as an instrument of last resort.¹⁰ As such, this would hamper the development of the development of a common EU strategic culture. Thus Haine (2011: 587) argues that no overarching EU strategic culture is emerging, but that the "prism of national experiences is dominant", highlighting the differences among the Big Three (UK, France and Germany). Indeed, he claims that socialization and learning processes may actually have become weaker ever since the creation of CSDP in 2003 (Ibid.: 586). Similarly, Biehl et al. (2013: 396) conclude in their edited volume in which country experts assess the strategic culture of all EU Member States that "persistent difference is just as, if not more, frequent." Hence, they expect CSDP operations to emerge from ad hoc coalitions, rather than being the result of an institutionalized EU consensus.

A more nuanced position is taken by Meyer (2006; 2011; 2013) who observes a considerable ideational convergence among the EU Member States, while also noting a lack of fundamental convergence. To account for this contradictory evidence, he refers to differences in material resources, institutions, and legal-constitutional factors that 'dilute the influence of new discourse coalitions advocating changes in norms and ideas about the use of force as well as limiting the extent to which they can be put into practice' (Meyer 2011: 678).

At the level of the EU's military operations, so far, empirical research has mainly provided descriptive analyses of the EU's military operations (Grevi et al. 2009; Merlingen 2012), has aimed to explain their genesis (Engberg 2014; Gegout 2005; Germond and Smith 2009; Nováky 2015; Pohl 2013, 2014; Riddervold 2011), the planning process (Mattelaer 2013; Nováky 2016) and the participation of particular Member States (Brummer 2006, 2013; Drent 2010; Gross 2011; Koivula and Sipilä 2011). Other research has addressed the implementation of EU military operations (Merlingen and Ostrauskaitė 2008), their impact (Ginsberg and Penksa 2012) and effectiveness (Peen-Rodt 2011; Whitman and Wolff 2008), or has examined the influence of EU institutions on the planning and conduct of missions (Cross 2013; Dijkstra 2013; Klein 2010). Moreover, Björkdahl (2012) assessed, in a comparative overview, to what extent the EU's military operations reflect a Normative Power Identity.

¹⁰ In 1996 Katzenstein introduced the notion of security cultures, which encompasses a broader notion of security than strategic cultures. As a sociological institutionalist approach it focuses on the cultural-institutional context of policy and the constructed identity of political actors. With the notable exception of Kirchner (2010) most literature on the EU has drawn, however, on the concept of strategic culture.

1.3.2 Research Question and Contribution

Despite the range of research that has been done so far on EU military operations, we do not have a good theoretical understanding of what drives decision-making on EU military operations and of the mechanisms that account for the particular development of military CSDP operations. In this study, I examine the EU's military operations from 2003 until 2015, and I seek to explain variation among operations as well as their changing character over time. As such, the overarching question that this dissertation aims to answer is:

How has the character of the EU as a security actor evolved ever since it started to launch military operations?

Importantly, as is implied by its formulation, this research question assumes the character of the EU as an international security actor to be dynamic. Against notions that take the EU's foreign policy identity as given and static, I argue that the nature of the EU as an international security actor is contested. Hence, due to changes in the internal process of contestation, combined with exogenous events, the character of the EU evolves.

Specifically, the way that this dissertation approaches the EU's character as an international security actor can be considered innovative in three respects. First, the approach adopted in this dissertation unpacks the evolving character of the EU as an international power by focussing on the EU's military operations and examining their evolution over time, both across and within cases. It shows how these operations are a visible outcome of the continuing battle of ideas over the character of the EU as security actor.

Second, the dissertation unpacks the character of the EU as a security actor by distinguishing several dimensions along which it can be assessed. These dimensions regard the justification, policy-embeddedness, and UN-authorization as salient political features of military operations and shows that they do not necessarily point in the same direction. This contributes to a more fine-grained understanding of the nature of the EU's international power.

Third, the focus on the contestation over the use of military force translates into a theoretical framework that is actor-oriented and allows for change and theorizing its underlying mechanisms. This research breaks new ground by applying an advocacy coalition framework to the field of foreign policy. This provides the theoretical tools to a) critically consider the role of a wider array of actors in decision making as well as the interplay between member states and EU institutions, and b) take seriously contestation among substantive ideas alongside conventional inter-institutional conflict. Thus this study combines a focus on ideas with a sensitivity to the wider institutional setting.

In light of these considerations, the following sub-questions are posed:

1. What are relevant dimensions for assessing the character of EU military operations?
2. What is the cross-case development of the character of EU military operations?
3. How can the changing character of EU military operations be explained?
4. What does the changing character of EU military operations tell us about the EU as an international security actor?

Based on these sub-questions an answer to the overall research question can be formulated.

1.4 Approach: Research Design, Methodology and Data

To answer the research questions, this research combines a variable- and a case-oriented approach. Central to this approach is a theory-led interpretation of the cases, i.e. an intensive reflection on relationship between empirical evidence and abstract concepts (Blatter and Haverland 2012). It is assumed that we can use empirical observations as proof for the correctness of propositions and for checking the relevance of concepts and theories in their empirical context (Ibid.). So, this dissertation engages in a detailed assessment of empirical material in a way that allows to draw conclusions about more abstract concepts.

To detect patterns and underlying mechanisms, this study combines cross-case and within-case analyses (section 1.5.3). Moreover, it combines elements of congruence analysis and process-tracing (section 1.5.2). The research draws upon policy documents and interviews (section 1.5.1).

1.4.1 Data

The study uses primary documents and interview notes or transcripts, and complements this by newspaper articles and secondary literature on all EU military operations, for comparative analysis and process-tracing.

The outcome of interest, the character of EU military operations, is established by means of a deductive qualitative content analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Kohlbacher 2006) of key policy documents. In chapter 3, I explain how I coded the EU's Joint Actions/Decisions in terms of their justification and policy-embeddedness.

Policy documents

The relevant EU-documents consist, first of all, of the documents by the Council of the European Union, in particular the Council Joint Decision/Joint Action launching the operation. Other important Council-documents include the Crisis Management Concept, the Operation Plan and Master Messages. Since these documents are in most cases not publicly available I only used those that I could access.

In addition, official documents from the European Commission (e.g. Stabilization and Association Agreements, PHARE Programme Reports, Country Strategy Papers) and the European Parliament (e.g. minutes from interparliamentary meetings, reports, resolutions and questions) are used.

The Member State documents consist of the governments’ decision-making documents on EU military operations that they prepared for deliberation with their parliaments. Since the degree to which governments are obliged to report to their parliaments, or are requested by their parliaments to do so, on the decision-making of EU military operations differ I have mainly included documents of the Dutch government (*Artikel-100 brief*), the German Government (*Antrag der Bundesregierung*), the Swedish Government (*Regeringens proposition*) and the UK-government (*reports of the European Scrutiny Committee*).

Because of the limited access to policy documents, I have also used leaked documents (e.g. PMG recommendations on Crisis Management Concepts) and US diplomatic cables (to substantiate claims about the mechanisms at work).

Interviews

While interviewing experts and elites as data gathering is often met with skepticism in political science, in line with Rathbun (2008: 690) I want to make a “pragmatic case” for interviewing, arguing that it is “often the best-suited method for establishing the importance of agency or ideational factors.”

During three interview-rounds (May/June 2013, May 2015 and February/March 2016) approximately 50 semi-structured expert-interviews were conducted in (primarily) Brussels (see Table 1.2. and Appendix 3).

These interviews add to the understanding and interpretation of the policy documents and positions taken by different actors. Following Littig (2009), I use the terms elite- or expert-interviews interchangeably. While not all elites are experts, and not all experts are elites, in the case of EU policy-makers and politicians they both have expert knowledge and the opportunities to bring their ideas to the fore. The same applies to senior military officials.

In targeting interviewees, I aimed to diversify my sources across nationality, institution (Council Secretariat, European Commission, European Parliament and

European External Action Service), and time frame (2003-now). Approximately half of the interviewees worked at an EU-institution, the other half represented their national governments. This in the full realization that these different interviews have not been of equal importance, i.e. the interviewees make different and unequal contributions (Dexter 1970).

Table 1.2 Distribution interviewees

Position	Number
Military officials (of which EU)	14 (5)
Commission officials	4
European Parliament	4
Solana-Cabinet	3
EEAS officials (of which Military officials)	13 (5)
National officials (both military & political)	24
Industry representative	1

Nationality	National	EU-institution
UK	5	4
Netherlands	4	5
France	3	2
Ireland	2	1
Belgium	2	3
Sweden	2	1
Finland	1	
Poland	1	
Austria	1	1
Germany	1	2
Spain	1	1
Italy	1	
Estonia		1
Portugal		1

Expert interviews are different from interviews with people who do not have a particular professional expertise and influential position in society in some important respects. Interests, power, control and hierarchy are keywords that characterize expert interviews (Abels and Behrens 2009). Experts are accustomed to talk about their field and explain others what they know and leave out what does not fit the message they want to convey (for strategic purposes) (see Kuus 2013).

These typical characteristics influence the pre-interview process (i.e. gaining access) and may play a role during the interview itself as well. Factors that may have influenced the interviews are my age (relatively young compared to the interviewees) and my sex (my interviewees were predominantly male). My main strategy for dealing with the age/sex difference and power dynamics was to make sure I would be seen as knowledgeable and competent (see Dexter 1970; Littig 2009; Meuser and Nagel 2009; Rathbun 2008).

In the pre-interview process of gaining access I did send a topic list, containing a number of relevant issues to be discussed, and an informed consent form, which specifies the arrangements on recording, identifiability and follow-up (see Appendix 2). While elites can be expected to be well aware of the sensitivity of their information, their influential position makes them vulnerable as well. Hence, to explicitly agree on the way the interview data is dealt with is part of an academic and ethical approach towards conducting interviews – including expert interviews. Sending the topic list and informed consent form in advance did not only serve the purpose of gaining access and conducting interviews in a proper way, but also contributed to presenting myself as a knowledgeable and competent political scientist.

During the actual interviews some balancing acts were required as well. Starting with open questions, being open to what the interviewee is about to say and allowing the interviewee to lead the conversation is key to have a valuable interview (see Littig 2009). However, I complemented this open approach with leading questions to induce the interviewee to go beyond the strategic message he/she aimed to deliver (see Rathbun 2008: 693). In particular, I confronted the interviewees with statements in policy documents or derived from other interviews.

I transcribed the interviews, or I wrote an interview report in cases where recording was not possible.¹¹ In both cases I returned the interview report to the interviewee to check against clear mistakes.¹² I also used this follow-up to ask for some clarifications in case things had remained unclear.

11 These transcripts do not include prosodic and paralinguistic elements.

12 Dexter [1970](2006) warns against the threat that that elites are “using their roles as gatekeepers to information to control the conclusions the researcher may draw.” While this is a real concern, in my research I have not encountered a real attempt to rewrite the interview.

The claims of interviewees were evaluated and weighed using three strategies: claims would be strengthened when supported by other (written) evidence, corroborated by other interviewees, and when the interviewee would be knowledgeable on the facts and figures of the case at hand.

1.4.2 Designing case studies

With a total population of eleven EU military operations, this research is a small-N study. As convincingly argued by Blatter and Haverland (2012) this need not to be a limitation. Rather, case study research is very well suited to understand perceptions and motivations, and trace processes of change (Blatter and Haverland 2012).

In case study research there are three explanatory approaches: co-variational analysis, causal-process tracing (CPT) and congruence analysis (CON) (Ibid.). This research combines the latter two. It asks how a particular outcome (changing character of EU military operation) came about (CPT) and which theory has most explanatory power to explain this outcome (CON).

A congruence-analysis goes beyond an explanation of the case and aims to give impetus to bigger theoretical debates. Another advantage of congruence analysis is that it is well-suited for complex conceptualization. In this case, the dependent variable consists of ideal types of multiple dimensions which are theoretically consistent but which cannot be aggregated into one score in a one-dimensional measurement scale (index) (Blatter and Blume 2008).

The different case studies focus on contradictory expectations derived from different institutional approaches about the mechanisms that guide the EU's decision-making process on EU military operations. As such, the operationalization consists of deductively derived anchor points. However, the empirical analysis is a reiterative process, i.e. with an open mind, step-by-step, it is assessed whether or not an empirical observation is classified as congruent with theoretical propositions (Blatter and Haverland 2012).

Moreover, this dissertation has benefitted from recent work on process-tracing, most notably by Beach and Pederson (2013). While this research has not broken down the mechanisms in different sufficient and necessary elements, the emphasis of Beach and Pedersen (2013) on different types of evidence has contributed the operationalization and data analysis. They distinguish evidence along two dimensions: uniqueness and certainty. Unique evidence has a strong confirmatory value (i.e. necessity), whereas certain evidence is strong on falsification (i.e. sufficiency). By implication, if evidence is neither unique nor certain (straw-in-the-wind) its added values is limited. For example, the mere existence of procedures of evaluation is straw-in-the-wind evidence for learning; the mere existence of particular procedures does not guarantee that there has been actually learning,

neither does the absence of these procedures mean that there is no learning taking place. Furthermore, evidence that is certain but not unique, i.e. ‘hoop’-evidence, does allow the falsification of claims, but is not strong evidence *in favour* of a particular mechanism. Evidence that is unique (smoking gun) or both certain and unique (doubly decisive) is much stronger, but also more difficult to find. For example, minutes of a meeting that indicate the use of veto power by a particular actor, would count as doubly decisive evidence for hard bargaining.

1.4.3 Case Selection

The dissertation includes a variety of (comparative) case studies, consisting of both within-case and cross-case analyses (Table 1.3). Chapter 4 consists of a comprehensive analysis of all the EU’s eleven military operations to assess the character of these operations in terms of the policy embeddedness and justification. The key finding of this analysis is that, over time, the EU’s military operations have become more explicitly justified in utility-based terms and more embedded in the EU’s overall foreign policy.

To account for these changes over time, I selected two operations for an in-depth assessment of the underlying decision-making mechanisms. First, in chapter 5, EUFOR Althea was selected as the EU’s longest running military operation. As such the EU’s involvement with Bosnia in general and the deployment of EUFOR Althea in particular runs parallel to, and is part, of the EU’s development as an international security actor. That is not to say, of course, that all changes in Althea necessarily reflect broader developments. Still, as the EU’s longest running operation, I expect this case to yield evidence of the mechanisms that have driven the evolution of the EU’s military operation at large.

Second, in chapter 6, EUNAVFOR Atalanta was selected as it embodies the twofold shift established in chapter 4, i.e. an increase in utility-based justification and increasing policy-embeddedness of the operation. Moreover, the chapter contrasts the decision-making process with that of the EU’s deliberate non-action in Congo at the same time. As such, it bears similarities with a structured focused comparison (George and Bennett 2005).

Chapter 7 focuses on the role of UN-authorization in the launch of EU military operations. It is the third dimension that is studied to establish the character of the EU as an international security actor in its use of military force. This chapter starts with a comprehensive account of the UN-authorization of all EU military operations and subsequently focuses on EUNAVFOR Sophia, in comparison with Congo 2008 and EUFOR Libya.

The case studies of Althea, Atalanta and Sophia, combined with attention for the non-cases Congo (2008) and EUFOR Libya provide a cross-case portrait of the

development of CSDP and the EU as international security actor. While these cases do not cover the full range of EU military operations (i.e. they do not include the training missions without executive mandate and the EU’s peacekeeping operations in Africa), they reflect some key changes in the development of the EU’s CSDP and are as such well-suited for explaining the underlying dynamics of change.

Table 1.3 Overview case studies

	Study 1 (Chapter 3)	Study 2 (Chapter 5)	Study 3 (Chapter 6)	Study 4 (Chapter 7)
Case Study	Cross-case analysis	Within-case analysis	Within-case analysis, with cross case comparison	Comparative case study
Case(s)	All EU military operations	Althea	Atalanta (& Congo)	Sophia (& Congo, Libya)
Data analysis	Qualitative content analysis	Congruence & process-tracing	Congruence & process-tracing	Process-tracing
Key Concepts	Justification & Policy embeddedness	Learning vs. Bargaining	Learning vs. Bargaining	Necessity & sufficiency of UN-authorization

1.5 Structure

This dissertation consists of a literature review, a theoretical chapter and four empirical chapters.

To assess the character of EU military operation, the dissertation starts with a discussion of the normative power debate (chapter 2). In this chapter I distinguish between NPE as a normative philosophy, an empirical claim and as recursive intervention. I assess along those three knowledge aims how NPE can contribute to the analysis and evaluation of the EU as security actor.

In the subsequent chapter (chapter 3), I conceptualize the dimensions on which to assess the character of the EU’s international power: policy-embeddedness, justification and authorization. Moreover, I theorize the role of advocacy coalitions in CSDP and mechanisms of policy change. The different advocacy coalitions are established using the strategic culture literature. To conceptualize different mechanisms of policy change I draw on the new institutionalist literature on *bargaining* and *learning* and *entrapment*.

Chapter 4 consists of a comprehensive analysis of the EU's 11 military operations, the character of the EU's military operations in terms of their *justification* and *policy embeddedness*. I claim that there has been a shift from value-based justification to utility-based justification, while at the same time military operations have become more embedded in the EU's overall foreign policies.

Subsequently, in the different case study chapters, I examine the underlying mechanisms that may account for the change in the character of EU military operations. In chapter 5 and 6, I assess the interaction between the diverse advocacy coalitions to explain the launch and development of respectively EUFOR Althea and EUNAVFOR Atalanta. In a final case study I examine the role of UN-authorization in the launch of EUNAVFOR Sophia (chapter 7). This integrates the focus on internal decision-making dynamics with an assessment of the character of the EU as an international security actor.

Finally, in the conclusion I bring the findings of the different case studies together and reflect upon their wider implications in terms of the character of the EU as a security actor and research on EU decision-making dynamics.