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Act – React – Impact?

The EU as a Global Actor in International Crises

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between actorness and effectiveness and questions the direct influence of coherent behavior united positions of EU member states on the degree of activeness the EU exerts during an international crisis. It looks at the interplay between actorness, the institutional setup of the EU and the role it took up during different crises. In addition to that, it questions the direct relation between a high degree of actorness translating into more influence on the international stage. It does so by answering the question if a more coherent foreign policy – as it is generally argued – would better enable the EU to exploit its capability as an international actor in global affairs. Two cases were studied to find answers on these questions: the Mali and the Syrian crises. In fact, the Mali crisis was characterized by a high degree of cohesive behavior, whereas in the Syrian crisis frictions were predominant even though a comprehensive sanctions regime could be installed. Institutional aspects, namely the changes with regards to EU foreign policy introduced by the Lisbon Treaty as well as characteristics of the member states, including size and length of membership, were vital as well. Further, the activeness of the EU in both crisis was different in the way that the EU took up a more active and decisive role in the Mali crisis as compared to Syria. Therefore, the expected effect could be found in both cases.

To my family

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"If there's a disaster happening to a family, the family will stick together and that's a bit what's going on. […] [I]f we don't have a united position on this, the rest of the world will not respect the EU as an actor. And that is what nobody says but everybody intuitively feels. If we don't agree here […], then we only show how unable we are."

(EU diplomat)

1. Introduction[1]

What is successful foreign policy? International politics and foreign policy in particular are policy areas where success and failure cannot be easily defined, let alone quantified. It is the very nature of diplomacy that states might pursue multiple objectives without clear order of priority. Diplomacy is more about managing crises, than fixing problems; it is rather about choosing the worst of two evils than having your way; sometimes success can merely be saving one's face or finding a strategy that allows you to exit the conflict without too much loss. This obscure and heterogeneous nature of foreign policy is even more pronounced in the case of the European Union (EU) as its member states certainly have different starting points, considering their allies and national interests, and different views on how a successful addressing of a crisis should look like. The different levels of crisis response and crisis management, ranging from humanitarian aid in the field, to forming diplomatic coalitions or bringing two opponents to the negotiation table, as well as supporting state-building, or imposing sanctions, make the definition of success even more arbitrary. On top of that, the EU has very different capabilities in each of them; the same holds true for the individual member states.

Actually, the initial position of the European Union is good, regarding its foreign policy capacity. In terms of economy, military power, population, and even the numbers of the total diplomatic corpus, the Member states of the European Union (EU) take up the lead worldwide and the EU could – potentially – be considered an important player on the world stage. Indeed, in the last 20 years the EU has taken up a key role in crisis management and peace-keeping missions, be it in Kosovo, Iraq or Afghanistan, and taken up central roles in conflict resolution, e.g. in the Darfur crisis (Harnisch and Stahl 2009, 15). Less prominently, it also became active in the Mali and the Syrian crises through institutions like ECHO and EUROPEAID and diplomatic involvement of the EEAS. And still, EU officials as well as

[1] I would like to thank the persons I could interview during my research for sharing their insights. Without them this thesis would have not been possible. I would also like to thank my supervisor Prof.Dr. M.O. Hosli for her helpful comments, her encouragement and her support during the research process.

scholars have lamented its degree of actorness (Krotz 2009, Thomas 2010, Schumacher 2011), generally defined as *the capacity to act, and actual influence in terms of deliberately changing the outcome to one's favor in international affairs*. A low degree of actorness in conflicts, amongst other factors caused by the lack of common positions and coherent strategy, is mostly translated into low authority and decisiveness, and generally low political influence. It seems that it is EU foreign policy where nationalism and internationalism, and the many nuances between them, come together – and either add to each other or conflict.

This project will look at the interplay between actorness, the institutional setup of the EU and the role it took up during different crises. It questions the direct relation between a high degree of actorness translating into more influence on the international stage. It does so by answering the question if a more coherent foreign policy – as it is generally argued – would better enable the EU to exploit its capability as an international actor in global affairs. The research questions are as follows: *How did the Lisbon Treaty influence the degree of actorness of the EU? Can an influence of the level of actorness on the level of activity in crisis management be found?* The project envisages to look at the link between actorness and active involvement during a crisis in a broad context. In order to answer these questions I will study two crises that took place after the Lisbon Treaty (hereafter Lisbon) came into force (2010), the Mali and the Syrian crises. Of course, ideally both Pre- and Post-Lisbon cases would have been compared; however, since for the study expert interviews were conducted also with EU diplomats, due to reasons of feasibility only Post-Lisbon cases were selected.

Thus, this research will make two major contributions: by analyzing the EU capabilities as an international actor, it will provide practical implications for the development of the EU as a successful international actor, and specify the actual relationship between actorness and the influence of the institutional changes after the Lisbon Treaty. The question if the institutions that have been established in the Lisbon Treaty, e.g. the EEAS, have furthered and facilitated an institutionalized foreign policy will be addressed on two levels. First of all, it will analyze two Post-Lisbon cases and allow conclusions about the foreign policy capacity of the EU after 2010. Secondly, it also allows for a comparison between the two Post-Lisbon cases since for the Syrian crisis more time for institutionalization had been given – especially in the last phase of the crisis to be analyzed in 2013 – and it will be seen if an even better exploitation of the foreign policy instruments and crisis management, as well as preference conversion took place. Also, the comparison between two crises taking place at approximately the same time will allow to gain insights into the mechanisms between actorness and active crisis involvement since the international environment and the

relationships between states was the same for both crises. While the studies that have been published so far have only looked at very narrow policy areas with regards to effective actorness[2] (e.g. Young 2003, Thomas 2010, Groen and Niemann 2012), the two crises at hand impact at a much larger policy scope, including military involvement, humanitarian aid, development aid, but also trade policies and other sanctioning policies. Eventually, I will also contribute to refining the theoretical notion of actorness, what it is actually measuring and how – if at all – this directly leads to a more active involvement.

The thesis is divided into two main parts: after having introduced the Theoretical Framework as well as the Research Design, first of all the institutional setup of how EU Foreign Policy is made will be described, including the decision-making bodies and Foreign Policy Instruments that are used. The changes the Lisbon Treaty imposed will be discussed in the next subchapter, which is then followed by a short elaboration on how a member state makes its foreign policy, with special focus on the coordination with other member states and how Political and Security Committee meetings are prepared. The next part will present the results of the case studies, by first providing insights into the Mali crisis, the EU position as well as the member states' positions and eventual discussions and disagreements, and as a second part, the Syrian crisis respectively. The aspect of how active and directive the EU generally was during both crises will be discussed hereafter. Eventually, the thesis is concluded by revisiting and evaluating the hypotheses, as well as some policy recommendations, some thoughts on the future of EU foreign policy and ideas for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

The creation of the EU as well as its development as a global actor has fundamentally contributed to questioning the concepts of actors in international relations (IR) theory. Classically, IR, especially the realist school, has tied its conceptions to nation state actors and sovereignty, and studied their capabilities in terms of foreign policy. Essentially, its considerations were formulated under the presumption of the Westphalian state[3], which means the sovereign nation-state and the basic order of the international system as we know it today, established after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 (cf. Miller 1994, 21). Also neoliberal

[2] I am not directly assessing effectiveness here, yet a link between an active role in crisis management and effectiveness has been found (Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille 1991, 16).

[3] With the Peace of Westphalia (1648) the principles of sovereignty, territoriality, autonomy and self-determination of nation-states as well as equality and legality in the international system were established; by doing so the basis and the constitution of the modern world order was created (Miller 1994, 21).

approaches – as reaction against realist and neorealist claims – considered non-state-actors in their theories but still linked sovereignty to the model type of the Westphalian state (Wunderlich and Bailey, 51). With the EU, however, an actor has entered the stage that does not fit the model of the Westphalian state anymore, nor does it necessarily adhere to the way international organizations behave in global challenges and crisis management. Still, even though a non-nation-state actor in that sense, the EU in fact executes a foreign policy and reserving this prerogative to only nation-state-actors has to be questioned. Since research, especially with regards to foreign policy, has been shaped and influenced by this tradition of focusing on nation-state actors, it is not surprising that the EU has been largely neglected (Bretherton and Vogler 1999, 12). In how far it has been underestimated as a global actor as well is still open to research.

In European Union studies, this problem of how to deal with the newly created foreign policy institutions of the EU has been addressed since the late 1970s, with Sjöstedt's 1977 work on actorness leading the way. According to him, actorness assesses 'the capacity [of an actor] to behave actively and deliberately in relation to other actors in the international system' (Sjöstedt 1977, 16). It goes beyond "state capacity", which is broadly defined as the ability of state institutions to effectively implement official goals, since also other aspects such as external opportunity structures, e.g. structures provided by other actors in a crisis situation, are comprised under the concept of actorness. The concept of actorness was first developed in the context of the EU but since it is constituted by variables that are "abstract from any particular institutional form" (Jupille and Caporaso 1988, 214), it generally provides a tool for the analysis of international organizations as well as other nation-state actors in the international system. Actorness is not restricted to capabilities and institutional setups, and is essentially created and developed by the international actor itself but also the recognition of other actors involved plays a role. A certain degree of actorness allows an actor to be recognized as relevant player in town, and is a prerequisite to be invited to negotiation tables, asked for expertise or international crisis management aid. Consequentially, actorness gives the opportunity to assert influence and affect the outcome.

Besides Sjöstedt's early contribution (1977), which looked at capacities of actors in the international system in order to differentiate between strong and weak ones, Allen and Smith (1990) added the concept of presence of an actor to the debate. The latter assesses the ((self-)perceived) ability of an actor to make an impact on both actions during a crisis and on other actors.

From the late 1990s onwards, we can see a shift towards a more structured way of analysis, introducing criteria-based approaches of actorness: Jupille and Caporaso (1988) suggest four dominant factors, namely recognition, autonomy, authority and cohesion[4], while Bretherton and Vogler (1999) propose presence, opportunity and capability to be the principal features of actorness[5]. These conceptions have been called under question, since greater precision in specifying and operationalizing the variables was demanded (Groen and Niemann 2012, 2); Groenleer and Van Schaik proposed that the two concepts of "cohesion" and "autonomy" are comprehensive enough to study actorness. Cohesion, on the one hand, stands for the degree "to which an entity […] is able to formulate and articulate internally consistent policy preferences" (Groenleer and Van Schaik 2007, 972). "Autonomy", on the other hand, stands for "institutional distinctiveness", namely that the actor, the EU in that case, is able to operate and act independently from its member states (ibid).

Thus, it can be seen that actorness as concept in foreign policy analysis also allows for non-nation-state, non-sovereign actors, such as the EU, to be analyzed (cf. Nuttall 2000; Ginsberg 2001; Keukeleire and McNaughtan 2008; Krotz 2009, amongst others). More specifically, findings up to now show that the EU is overall still lacking horizontal coherence, namely coherent acting across issue areas, plus vertical one, namely coherent acting by member states and also different EU institutions (Chaban et al 2006; Greiçevci 2011). Studies also suggest that effective acting is only possible with common preferences (which can be equated to vertical coherence) and initial agreements of preferences by the member states (Groenleer and Van Schaik 2007). What is more, Smith (2008) argues that presence is a critical aspect that often fails to translate into actorness. Generally speaking, a "truly common foreign and security policy" is required to "be effectively aligned around the same objectives" (Maull 2005, 791). In line with this reasoning, "horizontal conflicts" (Jupille and Caporaso 1988), which are deeply rooted disagreements and conflicts between member states, e.g. on the Kosovo question (Greiçevci 2011), can also undermine actorness and capability considerably.

In this study I will therefore primarily focus on cohesion and conversion among member states towards a common EU position. The influence of the institutional setup on this

[4] By *recognition* they understand acceptance and interaction with other actors, *autonomy* comprises institutional distinctiveness and independent acting from others, *authority* is defined by the legal capability to act, and *cohesion* is conceived as internal consistency, in terms of policies and articulation (Jupille and Caporaso 1988, 215).

[5] Their concepts are defined as follows: *Opportunity* means the external environmental opportunity structure, whereas *presence* is conceptualized as the ability "to exert influence beyond its borders"; *capability* is about the internal context, namely the presence of institutions and policy instruments (Bretherton and Vogler 1999, 24).

preference conversion – if at all – will be the focal point of analysis. The cohesive behavior will be assessed on three levels, drawing on Groen and Niemann (2011):

(1) Preference cohesion: Do the member states initially share common preferences and are they in accordance with the official EU position?

(2) Procedural-tactical cohesion: In case of divergence and conflict, is the EU able to arrive at common positions?

(3) Output cohesion: As a result of the success of the previous two, is the EU able to formulate cohesive policies, sanctions and positions?[6]

Attempts to relate the degree of actorness to effectiveness have recently been made (cf. Thomas 2010, Brattberg and Rhinard 2013). Assessing effectiveness, however, raises the problem of how to define effective outcomes; especially in crisis management the outcome is furthermore heavily influenced by extraneous circumstances. In fact, activeness and the actor's role taken up during the crisis, consequently, prove to be a better concept to assess an actor's performance. Kressel (1972) developed a classification of roles taken up during a crisis, from passive to active involvement: *reflective* (passive involvement, aim to reduce uncertainty), *non-directive* (more active, aim to ensure that opponents arrive at solution themselves) and *directive* behavior (deliberate and active encouragement of a specific solution). My research project will question the relationship between actorness and activeness and hence contribute to the literature by assessing what actorness is measuring and – as commonly claimed – if it directly leads to a more active involvement.

3. Research Design

Choosing a comparative case study design to answer my research question, I have selected two recent and timely crises, the Mali crisis and the Syrian crisis. Selection criteria were a relatively similar scope of the crises time-wise, and content-wise (international attention and internal agreement to react, realm of development etc.) as well as no predominant involvement of the US. Since foreign policy is considered a policy field where low actorness is expected due to the intergovernmental decision-making process (Vogler 2005, Chaban et al 2006, Smith 2011), the cases at hand serve as least likely cases for converging behavior.

[6] Note that the concepts Groenleer and Van Schaik propose as well as those Groen and Niemann suggest are similar but not equatable. "Cohesion" as operationalized by Groenleer and Van Schaik (2007) is similar to the concept of "output cohesion" by Groen and Niemann (2011). The concept of "autonomy" (Groenleer and Schaik 2007) plays into both levels of "preference cohesion" and "procedural-tactical cohesion" (Groen and Niemann 2011).

Comparability is given due to the same timeframe, which means that exactly the same institutional structures were in place, as well as the international circumstances, such as the political and economic situations, were alike. In order to trace the decision-making process and how – if at all – a common position was reached, the method of process tracing was used. Moreover, during the research process it became apparent that a network analysis of the cooperation between member states would provide insights into their behavior as states executing foreign policy. Therefore, multilateral meetings and other cooperative structures, such as informal meetings and fora, were coded when they had issued a common statement in relation to the Syrian or the Mali crisis. *Gephi* (version 0.8.2 beta) was used for the network analysis.

With this qualitative case study design, I am able to examine mechanisms and interactions between actorness and the role taken up during the crises, as well as the influence of the institutional setup. Eventually, I refine the picture of actorness that we have right now. Ideally, a comparison between Pre- and Post-Lisbon cases would have directly shown the influence the institutional changes brought about. Since my study draws heavily on expert interviews, revealing the inner workings and decision-makings of the member states in the Foreign Affairs Council, the study was restrained by feasibility issues. Due to the rotating principle in the Foreign Service, the EU diplomats I was able to interview could only share their insights of the last two to three years. With these two case studies at hand, however, first trends of what the Lisbon Treaty changed for the European Union could be evaluated and an in-depth analysis provided. Furthermore, substantial conclusions about the changes in foreign policy capabilities over the last decades were based on expert interviews with long-standing experience and involvement in this field. So, even though they might not have been in Brussels and experienced other crises situations at first-hand, insights into the changes of the foreign policy of the EU and their role on the international stage could still be provided. The comparative case study design and the deployment of process tracing also allowed to shift the emphasis of my research according to the findings. While mainly focusing on the diverging member state positions in the Syrian crisis, it was rather frictions in inter-institutional coordination and relations that characterized the Mali crisis, as seen in the following chapters.

a) Operationalization

The aspect of actorness I use for this study is the congruent positions of member states, in concordance with the official EU position taken up in the crises. I will focus on the concept of

cohesion (internal consistency and cohesive behavior of member states) as proxy to assess actorness. As laid out in the theoretical framework, preference cohesion, procedural-tactical cohesion and output cohesion will be looked at. Therefore, I will conduct a two-step analysis. The first goal will be to measure the degree of actorness of the EU in the two crises. As a next step, I will assess the member states' positions. Also, the type of member state (big/small, new/old member states) will be taken into account. With these assumptions at hand, I will assess the degree of actorness during the two crises by looking at both the official EU position, as well as the individual member states' position – if pronounced – in the crises. Member state countries' positions will be coded according to cohesion or divergence with the EU position. I will therefore develop a gradual score of actorness on all three levels, which also gives the possibility to directly compare the two crises and their different stages of EU convergence and cohesion.

As a second step, I will then categorize the EU's role in the crises according to its degree of activeness drawing on Kressel's (1972) classification of roles during crises from passive and non-directive to active and directive. The hypotheses I want to test in my study assess the influence of the Lisbon Treaty on actorness and activeness in crisis management. First of all, due to the creation of new foreign policy instruments with the Lisbon Treaty, more cohesive behavior can be expected after Lisbon on all three levels of analysis. Secondly, also the time for institutionalization is expected to have a positive effect on the level of congruence.

(1) Influence of the Lisbon Treaty

H1: *Coherent behavior by the member states is expected after the Lisbon Treaty came into force (2009).*

H1a: *Initial congruence is high in the Post-Lisbon cases.*

H1b: *Procedural-tactical cohesion is high in the Post-Lisbon cases.*

H1c: *There is a high degree of cohesive policies, sanctions and positions in the Post-Lisbon.*

H2*: Due to more time for institutionalization, a higher degree of congruence occurs the longer the time after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (cf. Syria compared to Mali).*

Further, speaking in principal-agent terms, it has to be considered and questioned in how far the member states saw themselves primarily as EU actors – acting within the latitude that the EU provided for the crisis – or rather as representatives of their own member states' interests

(cf. Hawkins et al. 2006, 6). Especially with regards to specific crises and individual involvement by specific member states, e.g. France's interests in Mali, this needs to be considered. To clarify, it is expected that different kinds of member states are likely to show different forms of cohesive behavior. Since it is more likely that they will be heard on the international stage, bigger member states are more likely to express diverging positions and act independently and, consequently, bypass the EU. Smaller member states, contrary to that, are more likely to adhere to the official EU position because their position is not influential initially. It is likely that they will rather try to have their say and influence outcomes internally, namely in the Council meetings themselves[7]. The operationalization of big and small member states is based on population, as this is also the decisive factor for seat distribution in the European Parliament or weighted votes in the Council: Germany, France, the UK, Italy, Spain and Poland are considered "big member states", whereas Malta, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia and Lithuania are seen as "small member states"; the remaining are classified as "medium member states". Furthermore, as has been shown, the literature suggests that the longer the EU membership of a state is, the higher the likelihood of adhering to the common EU position is since they should be growing into their role. In addition to that, new member states, similar to candidate countries, are more likely to adhere to the official EU position in order to not stand out from the crowd but rather assimilate.

(2) Member states' roles

H3: *Bigger member states are more likely to pronounce a diverging position from the common EU position.*

H4: *Smaller member states are more likely to adhere to the common EU position.*

H5: *Old member states (the Inner Six) are more likely to adhere to the common EU position.*

H6: *New member states are more likely to adhere to the common EU position.*

Lastly, the congruence aspect will be linked to active behavior during the crises:

(3) Activeness

H7: *A lack of cohesion results in a less active and directive role of the EU in the crisis.*

[7] I have tested these assumptions in a previous paper, studying the North Korea Crisis and the EU's as well as the member states' reactions (time- and content-wise) during the crisis.

b) Data Collection

Concerning the data collection, firstly all the relevant actors during the two crises were identified. Further, the official EU position was coded according to press releases on the EEAS website, including official statements by the High Representative Catherine Ashton or her Spokesperson, as well as the President of the European Commission Emanuel Barroso, and Council Conclusions and other reports issued by the Council. For the Syrian crisis the sanctions regime and the Council Conclusions related to that were particularly taken into consideration.

For the member states' positions, publications released by the respective Foreign Ministry were coded, amongst which were official statements by heads of the state, Foreign Ministers, spokespersons but also press releases reporting on bi- and multilateral meetings of the Foreign Minister. Since it was to be suspected that some member states will not openly voice a diverging position before a Foreign Affairs Council Meeting, also semi-structured expert interviews were conducted. Two officials of a Member state's Foreign Ministry, as well as two Commission officials and two EU diplomats were interviewed[8]. The interviews with the two latter ones were especially valuable since they could provide insights into the negotiations and member state positions prior to the official Council Conclusions, both at the Political and Security Committee Meetings and the Foreign Affairs Council Meetings. This data was complemented by newspaper articles, e.g. reporting on Foreign Affairs Council Meetings and interviews of member state officials. For the chapter on cooperative behavior among the member states outside the official realm of the EU,

Concerning the degree of activeness of the EU in both crises, newspaper reports were analyzed, as well as reports published by non-EU institutions, and thus providing an outside perspective. Further, also the experts interviewed for this research were asked to evaluate the EEAS's role as well as the High Representative's performance and the general EU performance during both crises. This data was complemented by the results of the Foreign Policy Score Card for the respective country and the respective years; this score is based on expert evaluations of the involvement of the EU in international crises, including outcome and output scores. Including figures on humanitarian aid and development aid, eventually I arrived at an evaluation of the EU activeness during the crises. Thus, by employing multiple observers, experts and sources, data triangulation was achieved and credibility as well as validity of the research results increased.

[8] Five out of these six preferred to stay anonymous; one Commission official, whom I was allowed to interview, was Head of Unit Cornelis Wittebrood (DG ECHO, Directorate B Humanitarian and Civil Protection Operations, 3. East, West and Southern Africa, Indian Ocean).

4. Foreign Policy and Crisis Management by the EU

a) The EU Foreign Policy and Changes the Lisbon Treaty Brought About

Not only the scholarly debate shapes the way the EU is perceived as a global actor, also the very basics of its institutional set-up should be taken into consideration. The Lisbon Treaty, currently in force after becoming effective in December 2009, has changed the EU's institutional capability to deal with foreign policy issues considerably. In general, the treaty was meant to address the most salient issues the EU had to face, namely keeping the institutional set-up of the EU working with even more member states, but also tackling the lack of efficiency, effectiveness as well as direct accountability. Part of these aims are also applicable when it comes to the EU's foreign policy, namely the clarification of the distribution of powers between the institutions, and the EU and its member states. "Who does what" and "who is responsible for what" should now be easier to understand. Thus, first of all the distinction between executive and legislative actors, and above all the role of the European Council and the Council has been clarified: the Council, while having both legislative and executive tasks, was re-interpreted as a foremost legislative institution (Kreppel 2013, 2-3).

Now, the Council presidency lasts for 2.5 years, formerly six months, allowing for more "coherence and continuity" (Verdun 2013, 6). Aside from that, also the external representation of the EU has been addressed, with the implementation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) (Verdun 7). The EEAS is the EU's diplomatic service, assisting the High Representative of the Union of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. This post has also been agreed upon in the Lisbon Treaty, aiming to fulfil the following functions:

> "The High Representative shall conduct the Union's common foreign and security policy. He shall contribute by his proposals to the development of that policy, which he shall carry out as mandated by the Council. The same shall apply to the common security and defence policy" (Treaty of Lisbon, Art 18/2.).

And still, the President of the European Council is responsible for the external representation of the EU, although, especially mentioned "without prejudice to the powers of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy" (Treaty of Lisbon, Art 15d). Some might argue that this new set-up does not solve the accountability or responsibility issue. Nonetheless, these three changes have, and as time will show will have, major consequences for the foreign policy of the EU and might even be interpreted as considerable steps towards a unified foreign policy of the EU. The counsellor of the EEAS stated the following in a recent interview:

> "In the world of states, institutions that can play this role [note: dealing with conflict] are hard to construct since states are powerful and jealous. In Europe, following the tragedies of the first half of the twentieth century, […] we have succeeded in doing this. The institutions concerned are dreary, irritating, imperfect, difficult to deal with from the outside, badly in need of change and very difficult indeed to change. But they are also an (sic!) historical miracle" (Robert Cooper, interviewed by Fiott, 2013).

All six experts agreed that with the institutional changes the Lisbon Treaty brought about were considerable with regards to the EU Foreign Policy and how it is perceived. An EU diplomat phrased it like this: "Now the EU is perceived more professionally. […] EU Foreign Policy is identified with Brussels and what the EU does in foreign countries, what the Commission does and also what the member states do is seen as EU foreign policy". Compared to Pre-Lisbon, he stated that "foreign policy by the member states and there was an international acting by the Commission", so both of them were kept separate, not necessarily working against each other or contradicting each other, but also not coordinating. Now, it is the case that member states in fact coordinate amongst each other, and when being abroad, they act as member states and representative of the European Union, which got also confirmed by the country officials that were interviewed. Further, member states also back and deliver the official EU position abroad. This gets highlighted by the example of how a Foreign Minister of a member state prepares visits abroad, according to an EU diplomat: "Nowadays it is like that that when the [Foreign] Minister goes on a trip to the Middle East, we get the questions: 'What is the latest EU position?', 'Are there messages that [the High Representative] Catherine [Ashton] would like to be delivered to [Hassan] Rouhani[9]?'"

Moreover, not only the perception of the EU abroad has been altered with the creation of the post of the High Representative, also the installation of the EEAS has introduced changes that are crucial for the making of EU Foreign Policy. Generally speaking, it has strengthened the position of the High Representative by giving her a Foreign Service. However, in the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) meetings it also means, as a representative of a Foreign Ministry put it that "there is a professional body that has their opinions about the issues we are discussing. That sometimes means that you are not discussing among 28 but among 29. Sometimes our position is not exactly the same as that of the EEAS. [...] That [the fact that there is a professional body] is most of the time an advantage, but sometimes we think: 'Come on guys, we are the Council, we would like to go this way, so please follow us.'"

[9] President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

b) Decision Making Bodies and Crisis Response Instruments

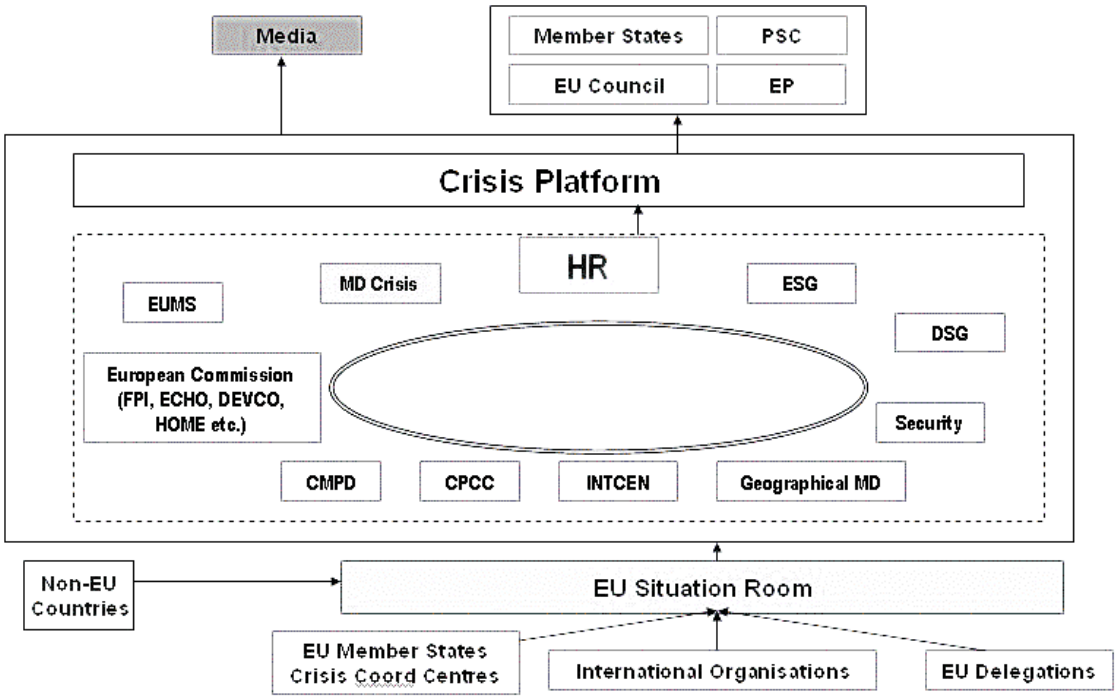
The Foreign Policy of the European Union has three predefined goals, namely to (1) "preserve peace and strengthen international security", to (2) "promote international cooperation", and to (3) "develop and consolidate democracy, the rule of law, and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (European Union, "Foreign & Security Policy"). In addition to that, it is claimed that the Common Foreign and Security Policy "enables the EU to speak and act as one in world affairs" (ibid).

There are different institutions at play that decide on and conduct the EU Foreign Policy. Further, a set of crisis response instruments exists in order to respond to crises quickly and effectively. Generally, the European Council defines the overall guidelines and strategies for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Based on these, the Council of Ministers adopts joint actions, which address specific situations, and common positions, which are rather more abstract in nature and tailored to bigger thematic topics or geographical regions. The meeting of foreign ministers of the member states, the FAC, is responsible for the EU's external action and is chaired by the High Representative. The PSC exercises the strategic direction for EU crisis management situations. Composed of national (diplomatic) representatives, representatives of the Commission and chaired by the EEAS, it prepares the FAC meetings by drafting opinions, monitors the international situation in general and agreed upon policies, and develops guide- and baselines towards specific countries and it also manages the EU missions.

In addition to these bodies, three EU agencies are also concerned with Foreign Policy, the European Defence Agency (EDA), the Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), and the European Union Satellite Centre (EUSC). The first aims to encourage an increase in defense capabilities, and military research and further works on the formation of an EU-internal market for military technology. The EUISS is a think-tank providing research and insight for the common security policy and its development. The EUSC is responsible for providing analysis on satellite and collateral data.

The EU has a platform for crisis decision-making, which includes various actors and bodies. It was installed to ensure timely and adequate responses to crises and emergencies through effective coordination of the crisis management instruments. The Crisis Platform, as it is called, was first put to test with the outbreak of the Arab Spring and has ever since guaranteed responsiveness of the EU during crises. It provides the EEAS and the Commission with political and strategic guidance, bringing together:

- "various EEAS crisis response/management structures: Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD), Crisis Response Department, EU Military Staff (EUMS), Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC), Situation Centre (SitCen), EU Situation Room as well as relevant geographical and horizontal EEAS Departments,
- the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and
- the relevant European Commission services (ECHO, DEVCO, FPI, etc.)." (European External Action Service, "Crisis Response")



Graph 1: EU Crisis Platform (graph taken from European External Action Service, "Crisis Platform")

Graph 1 presents details on the workings of the EU Crisis Platform and the actors involved. The EU situation room is a stand-by body which monitors the worldwide situation and happenings. It further coordinates in interdisciplinary crisis and ensures situational awareness at all time for the EU. The Crisis Platform holds meetings with the stakeholders, involving all the different components of EU external action, and decides on the general course of action. The EU Crisis Platform was active in both the Syrian and the Mali crises.

5. The Mali and the Syrian Crises and the EU as an Actor

In the following I will present the results of my case studies, beginning with the Mali crisis, which is then followed by insights into the Syrian crisis. Both of these chapters are organized as follows: first of all, I will provide a short overview of the crisis and will then present the EU position. Secondly, the member state positions as well as important discussions and diverging positions during the PSC meetings and Council Meetings of the Foreign Ministers will be discussed. In addition, during the research it became apparent that during both crises the member states made use of various forms of fora and multilateral meetings in order to coordinate amongst each other. Therefore, another chapter will provide insights into the cooperation amongst member states outside the framework of the European Union in the two crises in particular, but also more generally, common ally countries on certain topics of Foreign Policy will be presented.

a) The Mali Crisis

The Mali crisis started after a coup d'état in March 2012, led by the Malian military. The military officials' justification for the coup d'état was the apparent failure of the government to deal with a rebellion by Salafist forces in the North about a territorial dispute, which has been ongoing for decades, beginning as early as the 1960s. The North of the country was historically controlled by the Tuaregs tribe; the Tuaregs population, however, became minorities in many of the sub-state entities that were created in a decentralizing effort, initially trying to secure order but eventually causing more conflict and rebellions. After the fall of the Gaddafi regime, armed Tuaregs from Libya returned to Mali and gave the rebellion new momentum. Right after the coup, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) prepared for a military intervention; the preparation for that, however, turned out to be time-consuming (and did not take place in the end). Through French-led military intervention, territorial integrity was restored just one year after the coup d'état. Mali was furthermore established as the new front of the "war on terror", which caused US involvement as well as making the crisis an international one[10].

On the following two pages, the EU position on the Mali crisis is presented by providing a timeline of the (most important) EU reactions to the Mali crisis, see table 1. The During the crisis time that was analyzed, about 100 press releases were issued on the EEAS

[10] For a more comprehensive account of the Mali crisis see for example Armstrong 2013.

website. This data was complemented by a content analysis of Council Resolutions and press releases provided on the FAC meetings and discussions during, as well as documents issued by the European Parliament. In the beginning of 2012, the High Representative condemned the Coup d'État in Mali, which was followed by the suspension of the EU development aid for Mali. During the next couple of month only further condemnations of violence were issued, until in June 2012 the Commission announced that it would scale up its assistance in response to the Sahel food crisis. In October the FAC found a consensus for supporting the restoration of the rule of law and of democracy in Mali. One month later, the first official proposal to install a training mission for Mali forces was issued after an FAC meeting. In December both the relief aid for Mali was increased by €20 million and the preparations for the EUTM were started. Following a consultation of the High Representative at the European Parliament, the EUTM was established in January 2013. The African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) further got actively supported by the EU both financially and logistically. After the French military intervention, the EU also resumed its development cooperation with Mali in February 2013. Another milestone was the donor conference organized by the EU and held in Brussels in mid-May, where all in all €3.25 billion could be raised. Finally, in July 2013 the EU send an Election Observation Mission to Mali to ensure fair and transparent elections. Thus, it becomes clear that the EU was involved throughout the whole crisis, with involvement going well beyond verbal condemnation of the violence. Especially the donor conference showed the high priority the EU attached to the Mali issue. In combination with both the EUTM and the Election Observation the contribution was quite substantial.

Date	Press Release
22-3-2012	Catherine Ashton condemns the Coup d'État in Mali
23-3-2012	EU suspends its development aid to Mali
22/23-3-2012	Council conclusions of 3157th Foreign Affairs Council meeting on Sahel: continuation of aid to combat food crisis
11-4-2012	Commissioner Georgieva warns of possible humanitarian disaster in northern Mali
17-4-2012	Speech by Catherine Ashton on situation in Mali in European Parliament
23-4-2012	3159th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting: Foreign Ministers call for end of violence
23-4-2012	Remarks by Catherine Ashton following the Foreign Affairs Council
17-5-2012	Catherine Ashton remains concerned about the situation in Mali
29-5-2012	5th Joint Consultative Meeting between the EU PSC and the AU PSC
18-6-2012	Sahel food crisis - Commission scales up assistance and launches a Partnership for Resilience in Sahel
4-7-2012	Catherine Ashton concerned about destruction of historical heritage in Timbuktu
19-7-2012	Communiqué of the EU on the threat on freedom of the press in Mali
23-7-2012	3183th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting: Conclusions on Mali/Sahel
31-7-2012	Spokesperson of High Representative on execution of an unmarried couple in Northern Mali
15-10-2012	3191st Foreign Affairs Council Meeting: Council Conclusions on the situation in Mali: support for restoration of rule of law and democratic government
19-11-2012	3199th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting: proposal for CSDP military mission to support and train Malian armed forces
19-11-2012	Catherine Ashton's remarks following the Foreign Affairs Council
8-12-2012	Increase in relief aid for Mali of €20 million
10-12-2012	EU prepares mission to train Malian army (EUTM)
11-12-2012	Catherine Ashton expresses concern over recent events
23-12-2012	Catherine Ashton shocked by destruction of historical heritage in Timbuktu
11-1-2013	Catherine Ashton concerned about the military movements of terrorist groups in the north of Mali
15-1-2013	Catherine Ashton at the European Parliament on the situation in Mali
17-1-2013	3217th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting: EUTM Mali established
21-1-2012	EEAS provides a 'Clearing House' mechanism (financial and logistical support) for the AFISMA mission
29-1-2013	Donor conference on Mali: EU pledges €50 million to support AFISMA
31-1-2013	3218th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting: EU welcomes progress of Mali armed forces supported by France and regional states
12-2-2013	EU resumes development cooperation with Mali

15-2-2013	EU releases extra €20 million crisis response and stabilization support package for Mali
18-2-2013	3222nd Foreign Affairs Council Meeting: EUTM launched
18-2-2013	Remarks by Catherine Ashton following the Foreign Affairs Council
7-3-2013	Catherine Ashton welcomes decision of Malian Cabinet to establish a Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation
9-4-2013	Ashton hosts conference on Women's Leadership in the Sahel Region
14-5-2013	Meeting between President Barroso and M. Dioncounda Traoré, President of Mali
15-5-2013	International donor conference in Brussels: €3.25 billion raised
16-5-2013	EU-ECOWAS Political Dialogue Meeting at Ministerial Level
7-6-2013	Catherine Ashton is concerned about the military developments in the North of Mali
19-6-2013	Catherine Ashton welcomes the signing of a preliminary peace agreement in Mali
5-7-2013	European Union launches Election Observation Mission to Mali

Table 1: Chronology of EU Reaction to the Mali Crisis (source: own compilation on the basis of press releases by the EEAS, European Parliament press releases, Commission reports and information on their websites on the crisis, FAC meeting press releases, newspaper articles (amongst others: *European Voice*, *EUobserver*))

The member states' positions in the Mali crisis were generally very much in concert. Similar to the EU reaction, the majority of press releases and official statements were condemning the violent acts and voicing concern over the crisis situation. This finding also goes hand in hand with the fact that the international reaction to the Mali crisis was very congruent, with a general agreement on assisting the new regime to democratically advance and reestablish the rule of law. Also within the EU and among the member states, this consensus was given. The only differences that became apparent after analyzing the press releases throughout the 1.5 years under analysis of the 27 Foreign Ministries, as well as press releases by other state officials and heads of the states, was difference in the number of press releases per country devoted to the Mali crisis. Therefore, differences in national attention towards the crisis can be noted. Most obviously, the Southern member states, including France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus issued more press releases than other member states. This can be explained by the geographical conditions because these countries do not only have economic interests in this region, but also fear instability in the region which might directly affect their state with flows of refugees.

There were of course two major issues regarding the crisis from an EU perspective: Firstly, the fact that France was so predominant in the crisis and pushed for a military intervention and secondly the decision to implement an EUTM. Regarding the first point, it has to be noted that France is a country with major interests in this region – being the former colonizer country -, which is also not challenged by any other member state. As the situation was deteriorating, and Islamists advanced towards the capital, Bamako, and threatened it, France intervened militarily on its own. According to the two EU diplomats, previous to that France was trying to make the EU commit and involved in a military mission. However, Germany and the UK were very hesitant to do so, as well as some Nordic states. Further, another big member state, namely Italy, was pushing to first agree on a whole Sahel-strategy and not just intervene in Mali. Other Southern member states, including Spain, Greece, France and also Belgium, were on the French side of a quick military intervention. While Italy was joining this side, Germany and the UK still needed some time to be persuaded for the need of a mission. In the end, a diplomat confirmed, Hollande's decision to intervene was quite surprising for many of the EU states since he took the decision on his own without consulting other member states. After the intervention, however, France was trying to involve and include the EU right away.

A second aspect that has to be noted in the Mali crisis concerning the EU involvement, is of course the EUTM. Even though only 20 out of 27 countries contribute to it, it is backed

by all member states. A representative of one small EU member state, which did not send any personnel, explained that for such missions everyone is asked to contribute. For smaller member states, however, it is sometimes difficult to nationally agree on involvement, given other engagements and contributions, and sometimes also some political reasons regarding the destination of the mission are decisive. Therefore, some smaller member states try to exert influence by insisting on certain issues that have to be included in the mission, such as human rights or gender issues. Subchapter three in this chapter discusses some of these fundamental positions of some of the member states.

The initial position of the EU and France with respect to Mali was in addition to that very different in nature. An EU diplomat claimed that "the Africans themselves in some cases really look at France to come and help as their former colonizer that they know well and that they hate and trust." Consequently, it is not the EU they that is expected to take action even though geographical proximity might be given. In this situation it seems that France was urged to intervene and did not have much room to maneuver. Only when it became clear that an EU response would need more time, and Germany was at that moment not yet convinced that a military intervention would be a good solution, according to an EU diplomat, France decided to operate on its own.

To sum up, even though the Mali crisis was characterized by initial disagreements, which made quick acting impossible, later during the crisis congruence was given again. Further it has to be noted that France gave up its leading role after the intervention to make way for an EU involvement.

b) The Syrian Crisis

The Syrian crisis is a still ongoing conflict between two opposed groups either supporting or seeking to oust the Ba'ath government in power. Essentially, the protests were part of the movements in North African and Middle Eastern countries, commonly known as the Arab Spring. During March and April 2011 popular protests against the regime marked the beginning of the crisis. Already in April 2011 the Syrian army started to intervene in order to quell the protests. Yet, after months of ongoing sieges by the army, the conflict evolved into an armed rebellion. In 2013 Hezbollah entered the war taking the side of the Syrian army; the same is true for Iran and Russia at the end of 2013. The rebels are supported by the United States, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

First of all, the EU's response to the crisis will be covered and I will then continue with the member states' positions, which were much more diverging than in the Mali crisis. During the time of analysis over 300 press releases related to Syria were published by the EEAS; these included, besides updates on new EU regulations amending the sanctions regime, mainly condemnations of violence and calls on the Syrian regime to end the violence. The first condemnations of the violence were issued as early as March 2011 and in early May 2011, on 9 May 2011, the first sanctions of the EU against the Syrian regime were put into force (for an overview of the restrictive measures see table 2 on the following pages). Starting off with an arms embargo, namely the prohibition of selling, supplying and exporting arms or related material to Syria, in the following months individuals and companies as well as state entities were put on a blacklist, which meant the issuing of travel bans and asset freezes. In September 2011 an oil embargo was added, followed by a ban on all disbursements and payments of the European Investment Bank to Syrian targets. During 2012 the sanctions regime was extended to other dual use goods, technical assistance and the import of luxury goods. Difficulties of keeping the arms embargo became apparent at the end of 2012 when the Council Meeting in the end of November 2012 could only agree on an extension of three months of the sanctions. The FAC in February 2013 showed the same outcome, an extension of three months instead of a renewal of the sanctions for another year. At the end of May 2013, the arms embargo was lifted; now the export of arms was regulated by a Common Position from 2008.

Date		Restrictive Measures on	Blacklist (added to)
9-5-2011	Council Decision 2011/273/CFSP	sale, supply or export of arms or related material	
9-5-2011	Council Regulation No 422/2011		13 persons
23-5-2011	Council Implementing Regulation No 504/2011		23 persons
23-6-2011	Council Implementing Regulation No 611/2011		7 persons, 4 entities
1-8-2011	Council Implementing Regulation No 755/2011		5 persons
24-8-2011	Council Implementing Regulation No 843/2011		15 persons, 5 entities
2-9-2011	Council Implementing Regulation No 878/2011	import ban on crude oil, ban on investment in Syrian oil industry	4 persons, 3 entities
13-10-2011	Council Regulation No 1011/2011		1 entity
15-11-2011	Council Regulation No 1150/2011	prohibition of European Investment Bank disbursement or payment, suspending of Technical Assistance Service Contracts for projects in Syria	
15-11-2011	Council Regulation No 1151/2011		18 persons
2-12-2011	Council Implementing Regulation No 1244/2011		12 persons, 11 entities
18-1-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 36/2012	export of telecommunications monitoring equipment for use by the Syrian regime, participation and investment in certain infrastructure projects, transfers of funds and the provision of financial services	
24-1-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 55/2012		22 persons, 8 entities
27-2-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 168/2012	asset freeze on Syrian Central Bank, ban on transactions of gold and other precious metals, cargo flights by Syrian carriers	7 persons, 1 entity
23-3-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 266/2012		12 persons, 2 entities
23-3-2012	Council Implementing Decision 2012/172/CFSP	total of 126 persons and 41 targeted entities on blacklist	
14-5-2012	Council Implementing Decision 2012/256/CFSP		3 persons, 2 entities
15-6-2012	Council Regulation No 509/2012	export ban of luxury goods, ban on export of dual use goods, certain dual use goods subject to authorization	
25-6-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 545/2012	ban on technical assistance on goods and technology listed in the 'Common Military List', goods or technology	1 person, 6 entities

		which might be used for internal repression	
23-7-2012	Council Decision 2012/420/CFSP	vessel and aircraft bound for Syria to be inspected by member states within their territories for sanctioned items	
23-7-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 673/2012		26 persons, 3 entities
16-8-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 742/2012		1 entity
15-10-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 944/2012		28 persons, 2 entities
29-11-2012	Council Decision 2012/793/CFSP	extension of restrictive measures for 3 months	
30-11-2012	Council Implementing Regulation No 1117/2012		1 entity
28-2-2013	Council Conclusions (3222nd Foreign Affairs Council Meeting)	extension of sanctions for 3 more months, loosening measures on non-lethal support and technical assistance for protection of civilians	
10-4-2013	Council Regulation 325/2013	allowing certain equipment for Syrian opposition for protection of civilians	
22-4-2013	Council Implementing Regulation No 363/2013	update of blacklist: all in all 179 persons, 53 entities	
27-5-2013	Council Declaration on Syria (3241st Foreign Affairs Council Meeting)	possible export of arms to Syria only for the use of the Syrian opposition forces, criteria to be used Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP	
31-5-2013	Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP	most measures of arms embargo lifted, prohibition on equipment that can be used for internal repression, export ban on equipment for monitoring of communications, and import ban of arms from Syria	

Table 2: Chronology of EU Sanctions on Syria (source: own compilation on the basis of foremost content analysis of Council Conclusions and Regulations, but also press releases by the EEAS, European Parliament press releases, Commission reports and information on their websites on the crisis, FAC meeting press releases, newspaper articles (amongst others: *European Voice*, *EUobserver*))

The individual member states' positions were much more pronounced than in the Mali crisis. There were three major points of initial disagreement during the Syrian crisis, and some more individual points raised by specific member states. First of all, the early sanctions and the plan to include economic sanctions was viewed reluctantly by some Southern member states. Especially Italy, Cyprus and Greece, which have big economic interests in the region, as well as involvement in the sectors of oil and banking, voiced concern. An additional factor was that these countries had been hit especially hard by the economic crisis and that bans on exports to Syria would have only worsened their situation. Two months after the outbreak of the violence, however, an agreement could be reached and the first restrictive measures were issued.

Another crucial aspect of the Syrian crisis with regards to the EU response was the question of the arms embargo. Already at the end of 2012 the UK and France had voiced their opinion that they were not in favor of an extension of the embargo. In May 2013 on the PSC, the initial situation was that 23 countries were in favor of prolonging the arms sanctions, according to an EU diplomat, three member states were more or less flexible and one member state wanted to change the embargo, namely the UK. The UK's proposal was to change the wording of the embargo in order to allow the export of certain weapons, as well as stating that the EU supports the delivery of certain weapons. According to this diplomat, the UK exerted immense pressure on the other member states, so that at the beginning of the FAC one day later, it was a group of nine member states that wanted to uphold the arms embargo. At the end of the first day of the FAC meeting, it was only one state that insisted on keeping the arms embargo, namely Austria. Indeed, already in 2012 and also in March 2013 Foreign Minister Spindelegger had claimed that weapon deliveries to Syria were not acceptable and that Austria would not be deterred in its position. Eventually, this member state blocked the agreement on a new wording of the arms embargo and thee final conclusion was to let the embargo expire. Actually, Austrian experts had argued that also this expiration would mean an effective arms embargo since the Common Position of 2008 would apply, which prohibits weapon deliveries into conflict areas. According to the diplomat, also the UK came to the conclusion that deliveries are impossible in this situation, when looking at the legal implications a week after the FAC. Furthermore, also in the parliament of the UK no majority for weapon deliveries could be found, so that it voted against it a couple of days after the FAC. Up until now, no weapon deliveries have been issued by any EU member state.

Further, the issue whether the Syrian regime should be referred to the ICC also never reached consensus amongst the EU member states. An initiative of the four member states

Austria, Slovenia, Ireland and Denmark, which was published in early 2013, was later on backed by other members. However, the whole EU was not ready to issue such a statement.

Lastly, also individual member states had voiced opinions diverging from the EU. For a detailed overview on all positions of the 27 member states, see table 3. One member state in particular voiced its concern about the refugee situation and the internal solidarity with regards to that. This member state was Bulgaria, which is in a difficult position concerning its geographical position when talking about refugees from Syria. Throughout the whole time of analysis the Bulgarian Foreign Minister as well as the Bulgarian President, publicly stated their concerns and asked for help and support from the other member states.

Country	**Position**
Big member states	
France	special attention on the condemnation of violence against Christians (e.g. the convent in Maaloula); directly supplied non-lethal material to the opposition forces; open opinion about the supply of weapons if it can be ensured that they will not be used against the suppliers; would back a US military strike
Germany	very hesitant to deploy military force; against weapon deliveries (note that Germany has historical reasons for its restraint concerning military intervention); called for cooperation with Russia and to involve it in the dialogue
Italy	more humanitarian role (note the strong Italian involvement in Lebanon); offered help when the Assad regime should fall in the sectors justice, training, public administration, recovery and conservation of artistic and cultural treasures; Air Force plane and equipment for an UN observers mission
Poland	took over diplomatic interests of US in Syria; Polish UN delegation drafted proposal for a second investigation into the crackdown of protesters
Spain	attempted to offer asylum to Assad in July 2011 to solve the conflict but withdrew the proposal as violence worsened; concerned about refugee situation; against military solution
United Kingdom	non-lethal equipment suspended to Syria; would not join a US military intervention in Syria; promoted strongly to end the EU arms embargo for Syria
Small member states	
Cyprus	strongly against military intervention, due to geographical proximity; close relations with Lebanon; special relationship with Syria, volunteered to convey positions of the EU to Syria
Estonia	participated to the fund to destruct Syrian chemical weapons; deployed military observers and civilian experts; education project for Syrian refugees in Jordan

Latvia	contribution to Trust Fund of OPCW; emphasis on energy issue with regards to Russia and including it for cooperation on the Syrian crisis
Lithuania	very concerned about the weapons of mass destruction (called on Syria to join the Chemical Weapons Convention and ratify the Biological Weapons Convention, further to let UN experts investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons); in favour of ICC trial; energy as priority and urges for dialogue with energy suppliers, especially bringing Russia into the dialogue again
Luxembourg	together with Australia urged at UN Security Council to adopt the resolution for the destruction of chemical weapons; against military intervention at this point due to lack of evidence (August 2013)
Malta	against military intervention; special relations to Arab League; continuously raised concern over the humanitarian situation and the Syrian people, more urgent than topic of weapons of mass destruction
Slovenia	called for Syrian Crisis to be referred to the International Criminal Court

Medium member states

Austria	outspokenly against the end of the arms embargo; hesitant about military intervention; catalogue of demands on human rights in Syria handed to Syrian ambassador to Austria; called for Syrian Crisis to be referred to the International Criminal Court
Belgium	appeal for access to healthcare in Syria, supported by 28 other countries and Commissioner Georgieva; deployed military observers and civilian experts to Syria
Bulgaria	particularly concerned about the refugee situation and illegal immigration, stressing the need of support by the EU; Bulgarian-Turkish border control issue should be addressed on a higher political level and given more importance; first European country that voiced that Syria would face serious problems in the future
Czech Republic	national medical program for Syrian refugees (MEDEVAC); as of mid-2011 the Czech Republic represented the US's interests in Syria
Denmark	took actively part in transport of chemical weapons out of Syria, leading the maritime operation; supported the police and justice sectors in areas controlled by the Syrian opposition; first donor to Syria Trust fund; called for Syrian Crisis to be referred to the International Criminal Court
Finland	deployed their military observers and civilian experts to Syria; took part in transportation of Syrian chemical weapons with a maximum of 20 soldiers; contributed to trust fund for destruction of Syrian chemical weapons; in favor of referring Syria to the ICC; called for stronger sanctions (July 2012); against military intervention
Greece	call for intensifying EU-Russian cooperation; drew attention to migration problem; stated that it would follow NATO and UN obligations but would favor a political solution over a military one
Hungary	focus on migration issue; participated in destruction of Syrian chemical weapons by sending military advisors; represented Canada, Australia, and the UK in Syria in consular and political matters
Ireland	EU Presidency in 2012: made Syria a priority; contribution to destruction of Syrian chemical weapons; called for Syrian Crisis to be referred to the International Criminal Court; against deployment of weapons
Netherlands	one of the first states to propose sanctions; call for tightening sanctions in summer 2011; mediating role during discussions on arms embargo

Portugal	ensured alignment with NATO partners, however hesitant about effect of a military strike; drew attention to refugee situation
Romania	"prudent" approach to Syria, as the Foreign Minister called it: in support of military intervention by UN after the use of chemical weapons but would not contribute itself
Slovakia	initially did not support the lifting of the arms embargo; offered assistance to the US to destroy the Syrian chemical weapons
Sweden	concerned about refugee issue since one of the most popular EU countries for asylum seekers; opens doors to asylum seekers eventually (only EU country), granting them permanent residence

Table 3: EU Member State Positions on the Syrian Crisis (source: own compilation on the basis of content analysis of press releases by the Foreign Ministries of all 27 member states, and newspaper articles)

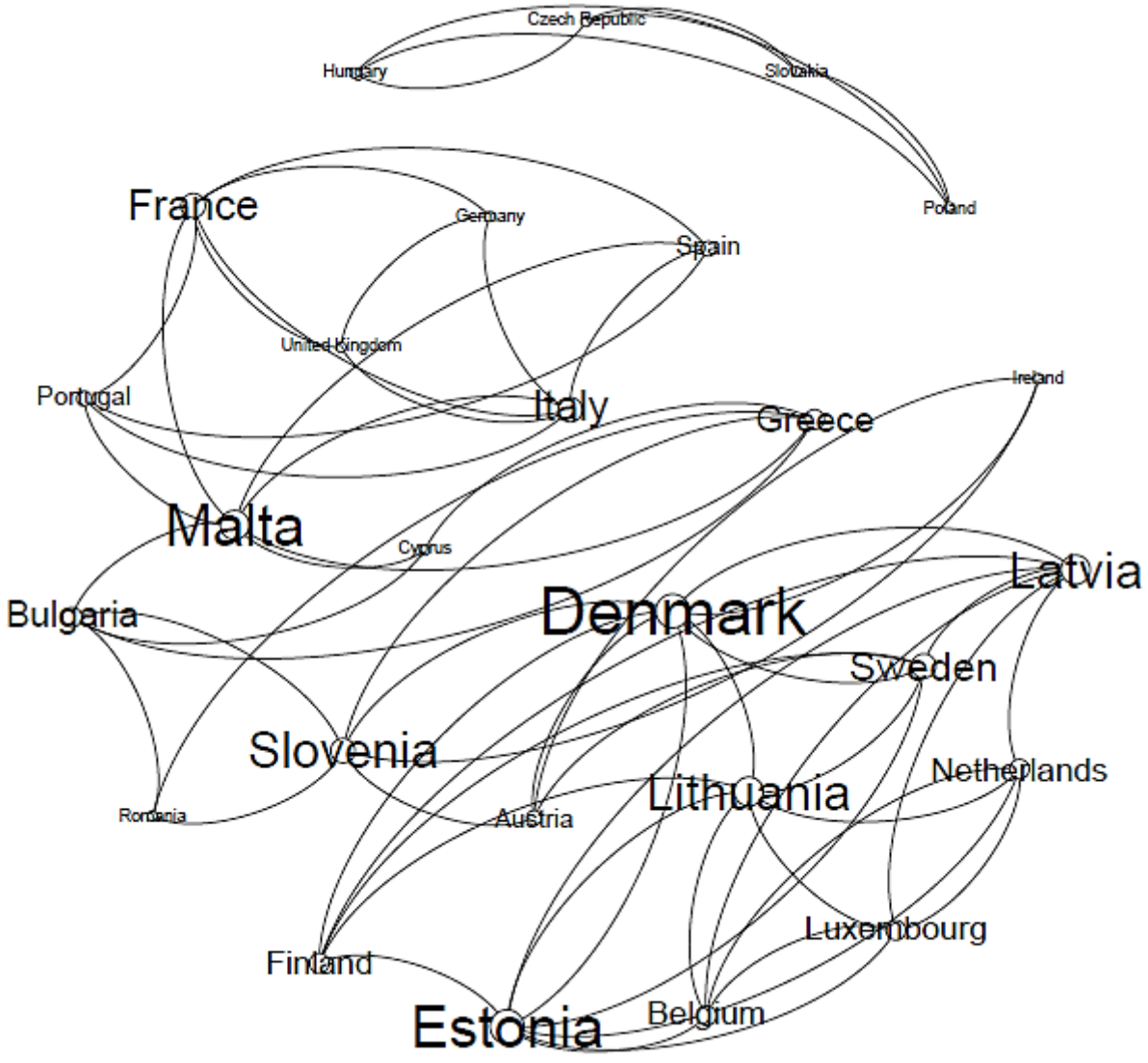
c) Ally countries, Multilateral Meetings and Coalitions

During the course of research, and while coding the member state positions, it became obvious that the EU member states do not only use the FAC and the PSC meetings to exchanges views. It is rather fora, informal meetings and already established unions between groups of states that were used in order to meet, discuss and coordinate and eventually also publish common statements. Indeed, one country official of a member state confirmed that normally "we contact our likeminded colleagues to get more information, to learn about their positions, and to see where we can work together. And then of course you work together in different fora, and only one of them is Brussels." Related to the Syrian and the Mali crisis, this happened throughout all stages of the conflicts.

Some of these multilateral meetings were totally unrelated to the EU, also including countries beyond the EU borders, and some meetings were actually attended by all EU member states plus Commission officials. Amongst the latter were the meetings of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Australia Group. On other occasions, only a subset of the EU member states joined meetings and issued statements. In September 2013, for example, 28 Foreign Ministers and Commissioner Georgieva published a joint article in international media, calling for fast protection of civilians, medical personnel, facilities and transport in Syria. However, out of these 28 countries, 19 of them were EU countries, including the Commissioner for humanitarian aid, Kristalina Georgieva. While it is natural that countries cooperate, especially during crises times it might serve as a way to bypass the EU. Especially the role the High Representative should play, representing external affairs issues for the whole

of the EU, gets undermined when groups of member states team up and issue common statements.

In graph 3 a network analysis of these forms of cooperation between the member states is displayed. Only multilateral meetings and cooperation, which had resulted in some form of an issued common statement, were coded even though of course also bilateral meetings were held during the time of crisis. However, a meeting between two states cannot necessarily be interpreted as cooperative behavior. The graph shows all 27 member states and their relation to each other during both the Syrian and the Mali crisis. If two member states were present at the same meeting, they are connected by a line. The node size and font size are corresponding to the number of connections a country has: the bigger the node and the font, the more connections. Malta, Denmark and Estonia seemed to be central in this network,



Graph 2: Network Graph of EU Country Cooperation during Both Conflicts (source: content analysis of the press releases of the Foreign Ministries of the 27 EU member states)

meaning that they are central and influential actors. It is not surprising that two of them are small in size, and Denmark is a medium-sized country, plus all three of them are situated at external border regions of the EU. Bigger and more centrally located member states might be able to exert their power more easily and cooperation and coordination, thus, might be more important for certain small member states.

The cooperation between member states that is displayed in graph 3 includes a meeting between Cyprus, Greece, Israel, Malta and Bulgaria, a 5+5 meeting of European and other Mediterranean states. In the right upper corner, the Visegrad Group is located, consisting of Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland. Other fora and groups displayed in the graph are the BENELUX states, a cooperation between the BENELUX and the Baltic States, an informal African Mediterranean countries, a cooperation between the Baltic and the Nordic states (NB8). Further, the initiative between Slovenia, Austria, Ireland and Denmark to refer the Syrian case to the ICC is included, as well as a cooperation between the UK, France and Germany and a SEECP (South-East European Cooperation Process) meeting, including the EU countries Bulgaria, Slovenia, Romania and Greece.

Even though this kind of cooperation between states does not necessarily mean that EU member states would not act in concert with the EU, it is still a forum for coordination outside the framework of the EU. Especially for groups of smaller member states, such as the Baltic countries, it is an important way to coordinate and team up with like-minded countries. After all, if a group of countries speaks up in FAC meetings, their leverage is higher than when a single country voices a diverging opinion. Thus, the results of this network analysis cannot be interpreted as a clear bypassing of the EU, nevertheless it is a sign for the necessity of coordination amongst groups of member states, and it is also undermining the role of the High Representative.

6. Activeness: An Evaluation of the EU's Crisis Response and Involvement

As mentioned above, for the assessment for activeness Kressel's 1972 classification will be taken, classifying the crisis management behavior into reflective, non-directive and directive behavior. Essentially, the question "How hard did they try?" will be answered, no matter what the actual outcome or current situation of the crisis is.

As for Mali, the EU response was quite comprehensive. The EEAS had made the Sahel a priority region in 2012, developing an inclusive strategy. Amongst others, this included a CSDP mission to Niger. The deployment of the EUTM to Mali has to be noted

foremost. Even though it is quite small in size, its influence is considerable, and also the dual concept of a civilian mission training military and police forces allows to indirectly exert power in a military way. Also Head of Unit C. Wittebrood's impression of the EUTM was that "it's good: it was rapidly deployed, it is sufficiently staffed. And the first impressions that I have seen were very positive." Another action undertaken by the EU was he Brussels Conference, 'Together for a new Mali'. It brought together 108 delegations and representatives of local authorities, civil society, the Malian diaspora, women and the private sector in May 2013. €3.285 billion were pledged during the Conference to put Mali back on track, out of which €1.35 billion from the EU and its member states.

So, even though the international response was quite slow in general, and unity was especially not given in the beginning, the EU exerted quite decisive and influential steps. Two diplomats, as well as Head of Unit C. Wittebrood share this view, Wittebrood stating that

> "in all my time with the Commission and having dealt with so many other crisis in the world, this was one of the few crisis where there was hardly any opposition to the course of action. There was one or two, but that was not even important – that was small hiccups, because some people could not understand and for once everybody was on the same wavelength. […] So I think the international community, and the EU can congratulate itself on the way it has responded to Mali. This really is a good case to study if you want to learn lessons for the future."

The only thing that is lamented, is a lack of influence of the High Representative. All six experts shared the opinion that she had other priorities at that time but that her Service was very active under her authority. This obviously caused a lack of visibility. Also the European Foreign Policy Score Card, the scorings of which are based on expert opinions, gives the EU a high score (4/5) for the resources factor. Combining all these aspects, the EU crisis management behavior in Mali seems to have been slightly directive. Considering that there are member states that are hesitant about involvement in Africa, and the strong involvement of the African Union, the EU was a considerable player in this conflict.

Regarding Syria, the situation was very different, with respect to the paralyzed Security Council through vetoes issued by China and the Russian Federation. So, the international community was not united. As for the European Union reaction, the establishment of the Sanctions regime was considerably fast, starting in May 2011 and also unprecedented by other international players. The EU's initial position was to promote democratic reform and to persuade President Bashar al-Assad to show restraint. After the violent crackdown of demonstrations, the general position changed to a call for Assad to step down. At the end of

the year 2012, France, Spain and the UK were the first European countries to recognize the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces as the legitimate representation of the Syrian people, a move which was coordinated with the US and Turkey. Other member states followed suit, and the EU recognized it formally on 19 November, a few days after the United States and France had done so. However, the EU failed to effectively influence the Russian Federation to endorse a UNSC resolution for a more stringent sanctions regime by the UN.

Besides this political and diplomatic involvement and the sanctions, which were tightened throughout 2012 and loosened throughout 2013, humanitarian aid was of course provided by the EU. Head of Unit C. Wittebrood explained that humanitarian aid is at times the only possibility to make a difference when political solutions seem too far away:

> "For many reasons, like in Syria, where politically one can do not much because the situation in the Security Council is frozen and no one has sufficient leverage or lack of political will. So, in fact the only ones being able to do something on the ground are the humanitarians. And sometimes the humanitarians are expected or asked to make up for the lack of action from the political part. So, humanitarians are always important in understanding the full picture."

After the outbreak of the crisis, a total of €265 million in humanitarian aid was mobilized to support the population. Further, under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Program (ENPI), €10 million special measure in 2011, €23 million in June 2012 and €20.9 million and €30 million in April 2013 were adopted, mainly targeted at Syrian refugees. The Instrument for Stability also mobilized a total of €28 million to assist those affected by the Syrian crisis.

Summing up, the EU had tried to exploit its leverage during the time of analysis. The sanctions as such, however, were not as ambitious as they could have been (Commission official, EU diplomats), since by nature they represent the lowest common denominator that could be agreed upon. On the global stage, however, other players such as the Arab League and the US as well as the grouping Friends of Syria were the more important and influential actors during this crisis. In the Foreign Policy Score Card, the EU is given 3/5 points for the involvement in Syria in 2012 on the resources score, thus scoring lower than for the Mali crisis. Also the factors mentioned above, suggest that decisiveness was only at a moderate level, and while the sanctions regime seemed promising when set up, the sanctions were watered down in the course of 2013. The classification for the EU in the Syrian crisis was therefore *non-directive* to *slightly directive* behavior. The leading roles, however, were taken up by others.

Yet, an official of the Foreign Ministry said that "sometimes the EU should also settle with the role not being in the limelight but being in a very strong enabling role." Thus, in general the EU played an important role in supporting the process on all the elements that were key during the Syrian crisis.

7. Evaluation and Policy Recommendations

Revisiting the hypotheses of my study, the Lisbon aspect and the expectation that a high degree of congruence should be given on all three levels, has to be rejected. Initial congruence was not high in both crises, whereas procedural-tactical cohesion and the outcome cohesion was high. The possibility to be the only member state who blocks a decision, is very much feared in the FAC and PSC. Also the Foreign Minister of Belgium, Didier Reynders, stated that it had been important to first discuss and sound out the European attitude on the representation of Syria in Europe, and Belgium in particular, before adopting a position for Belgium. Both diplomats also confirmed that great pressure is put on member states with diverging positions and that a no consensus decision is rarely happening. And indeed, during both crises and dozens of Common Positions that got adopted, only the arms embargo question resulted in a stalemate. Therefore, *H1a* and *H1b* can be confirmed for the two case studies at hand. *H2*, however, has to be rejected, as congruence was high during the Mali crisis, whereas for Syria congruence decreased while the crisis unfolded.

With regards to the type of member states, *H3* and *H4*, as well as *H6* can be confirmed, whereas *H5* has to be rejected. As has been shown, bigger member states tend to be more outspoken, also taking the leading role, than smaller member states. This became apparent in the Mali crisis regarding Germany, preventing the possibility of an EU intervention, and of course also for France, which even decided on its own eventually. For Syria, especially France and the UK headed for a confrontation on the issue of the arms embargo. However, when some vital national interest is at stake, as for example for Bulgaria in the Syrian crisis, also small member states do voice their opinion. Also, new member states adhered to the common EU position. Yet, with this hypothesis one has to note that most new member states are smaller member states in fact, and that this aspect might have influenced the outcome.

As for the hypothesis on the influence of cohesion on activeness, one can say that this hypothesis got confirmed for these two cases. In the Malian crisis the cohesion and unity was higher than in the Syrian one, and indeed for Mali a higher activeness can be constituted than

for Syria. However, this might also be susceptible to the circumstances because Mali was indeed a fortunate situation for involvement since no other player wanted to exert leading power, and France took initiative in the beginning. Also Head of Unit C. Wittebrood notes that "this was a favorable case but Lisbon made it possible for all of us to speak with one voice."

So, how can it be ensured that the EU can exert its power effectively in future crises? First of all it has to be noted that up until now the High Representative has not used all of the possibilities she has been given by the Lisbon Treaty. Most apparent is the role of acting as a leader of the Commission, which would add great influence to the High Representative. This, of course, might just need some time to develop. In addition to that, more outspokenness and decisiveness, e.g. the High Representative taking the lead also before emergency PSC or FAC meetings have taken place, would certainly also add to the importance of the role. This would also mean that member states should give room and, above all, not bypass the head of the EEAS. Even more important, when member states stated their opinions on the Mali and the Syrian crises, it could be seen that they addressed the international community and urged it to act more often than they urged the EU to take action. If the member states would start to identify their international role to be represented foremost through the EU, also more pressure would be exerted internally on the representatives of EU foreign policy issues. Thus, it seems that on many levels the EU foreign policy still needs time to wholly exploit its capacities.

On a related note, also increased capacities would give the EU more stance on a global stage. As an EU diplomat said, the first step would have to decide on a bigger diplomatic service, considering the total corpse of EU diplomats is about as big as that of a medium-sized member states. The second step, according to him would involve more financial means for CSDP missions and operations. As a third point, in order to be seen on the same level as other international players, it seems vital to have military capacities. As the diplomat put it, "it would be good to have this in your back pocket so that people know that you can use it."

Another issue that I encountered during my research was the incoherence inter-institutionally on the role of humanitarian aid. On the one hand, the Commission officials stressed that the humanitarian aid and its role should not be regarded as a foreign policy tool since their working becomes ineffective as soon as humanitarian aid is used as a political instrument. On the other hand, country officials and also EU diplomats, who are also representing their home country in Brussels, frequently pointed at the discrepancy between the amount of humanitarian and development aid the EU is paying, and the lack of

international influence. Indeed, this discrepancy and the problematic nature of politicized humanitarian aid had been recognized by external organizations, such as the Caritas Europa which issued a report on European humanitarian aid and humanitarian principles (cf. Caritas Europe 2011), as well as the NRC conference "Principles in Practice: Safeguarding Humanitarian Action" at the end of 2012. Keeping these principles of humanitarian aid up, thus, will also become a crucial aspect in the years to come, including effective communication with the member states and its country officials.

Thus, if developing and continuously improving on these three levels, the EU might become one of the big players on the global stage: exploiting the institutional possibilities, increasing capacities and financial means for foreign policy, and working on effectively communicating internally and externally. Yet, the member states would have to be willing to also let the EU speak on their behalf and represent European ideals for them internationally.

8. Conclusion

As has been shown in this paper, the unity among member states in a crisis situation indeed had an influence on how active the EU's role was during the crisis. Concerning the coherence aspect, actorness was higher in the Mali crisis than in the Syrian crisis; however, it has to be noted that the Mali crisis provided a favorable initial situation, with agreement among the international community. Also activeness was more pronounced during the Mali crisis as compared to the Syrian crisis. The institutional aspect, questioning if the institutional structures set up by Lisbon made a difference, proved to be important as well. Particularly during the phases of procedural-tactical negotiations and of final policy-making, coherence could be reached also in the Syrian question. What is more, also certain characteristics of a member state country, including size and the amount of time they have been member states, had an influence on their likelihood to adhere to the EU position or voice diverging opinions. Smaller member states, as well as new member states are more likely to show cohesive behavior. The network analysis of coordination between the member states outside the realm of the EU also showed that particularly the combination of small, new member states and geographically located in the external bordering regions of the EU coordinated extensively with ally countries and through other coalitions.

As for future research, my research has shown that humanitarian aid was regarded as a foreign policy instrument by some actors. The inter-institutional frictions between understanding of the role of the humanitarian aid by the Commission and the understanding of

this issue by country representatives will certainly be an issue in the future. These contradictions between the roles of humanitarian aid and how different actors within the EU view that would lend itself to future research, also touching upon the aspects of the concept of cohesion, namely institutional horizontal cohesion. Furthermore, obviously also a direct comparison between Pre- and Post-Lisbon cases would lend itself for future research. Especially change – if any – the degree of actorness, but also in the concept of active behavior during crisis situations before and after the installation of the EEAS and the new role assigned to the High Representative, could potentially provide valuable insights. Another possibility would be choose a case with a longer timeframe as single case study, investigating the member states' positions and their cohesive behavior in a crisis with EU involvement before and after Lisbon.

The general question, however, if the EEAS and the High Representative are able to function as a uniting voice, is still to be answered in the future. Increasingly, one can see that the EU is seen as one of the big players in the world, representing the member states, such as in the case of Iran, and the Kosovo. It is true and has been shown in this study that not all member states always make way for the High Representative. Since this is a field of intergovernmental policy there, ever member state is completely entitled to want the EU to act in line with what it wants. On this topic, an EU diplomat voiced that he "would prefer it if member states have their own views, they voice them primarily within the EU to make sure that we agree in EU policy that's suitable to all and they don't have their own go at things around the EEAS or around the High Representative, so to say. And I think this happened in the beginning but it's reducing. And that increasingly member states' voices are rather reinforcing EU policy than contradicting it."

Further, another EU diplomat acknowledged the importance of this unity: "I think also for the role of the EU in the world, it's very important the EU works together. Because we […] can scream and shout about issues that we find as important. But if all 28 would scream and should, the world would hear a little bit better." As has been shown, in the two cases that were analyzed, unity was crucial to exert power in Mali. However, also in the Syrian case the EU tried to exert influence and successfully did so up to a certain level. The differences in activeness could, in addition to the congruence aspect, further be due to the difference in importance of the countries for the EU. Syria falls under the Neighbourhood policy, whereas Mali has special ties with its former colonizer, France. Moreover, the country that is affected also heavily influences a crisis:

The Future of EU Foreign Policy, therefore is susceptible to institutional developments and institutionalization processes as much as it is to the external circumstances. Regarding the first, very much depends on how much the future High Representative will take up the role of a Vice President of the Commission, coordinating the Commission in all fields of external affairs. This would not only grant her more visibility, but also more internal influence and assertiveness by taking up this leading role. Further, as can be seen by one of the newer member states, Poland, also external circumstances such as the Ukrainian crisis influence the developments. An EU diplomat shared his insight into the crisis by stating that "if you look at Poland now, they have been growing into the routine of being a member state. Now their national interests are vitally touched on, so they are really taking a leading role on some issues of Foreign Policy - what they haven't done before or that clearly. So they are really like becoming a big member state, also in the sense of impact in discussions."

Finally, the stance that the EU should take up a more decisive role internationally is advocated by both EU and state officials. For the latter it is of course also an issue of giving up more sovereignty to the EU. But, as Javier Solana phrased it in 2002: "[i]t is my belief that in this global age a Union of our size, with our interests, history and values, has an obligation to assume its share of responsibilities. […] The question, therefore, is not whether we play a global role, but how we play a global role".

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Appendix

Guiding Questions for the Expert Interviews[11]

Please note that as per definition for semi-structured interviews, adjustments were made during the interviews depending on the course of the conversation.

A) Representatives of the Foreign Ministry

1 Can you describe the procedures undertaken by your Foreign Ministry in the situation of a crisis?
2 What are the instruments at play at the different stages of crisis management?
3 How do you coordinate with other EU member states, and other allies?
4 What are your common ally countries amongst the EU member states?
5 Can you elaborate on how PSC and FAC meetings are prepared?
6 What were the priorities by your member state in the Mali Crisis?
7 After the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty, quite important changes have been made in the institutions dealing with Foreign Policy. How has this influenced your work?
8 Compared to earlier crisis management situations, do you think Lisbon made a difference? If so, in what way?
9 What was your member state's role in the discussions of a military intervention in the Mali crisis?
10 What is your member state's position on the EUTM?
11 How would you evaluate the role of your FM during the Mali crisis? How would you evaluate the role of the EEAS during the Mali crisis? High Representative? EU performance in general?
12 How active and decisive was the EU in the course of the Mali crisis management also vis-à-vis other international actors, such as the UN, US, NATO?
13 What was your role in the discussion on the sanctions on Syria?
14 What was your member state's position in the discussion on the lifting of the arms embargo?
15 How would you evaluate the role of your FM during the Syrian crisis? How would you evaluate the role of the EEAS during the Syrian crisis? High Representative? EU performance in general
16 How active and decisive was the EU in the course of the Syrian crisis management also vis-à-vis other international actors, such as the UN, US, NATO?

B) Commission Officials

1 Can you describe the procedures undertaken by your DG in the situation of a crisis?
2 What are the instruments at play at the different stages of crisis management?
3 How do you coordinate with other DGs, and Units?

[11] The transcripts of the six interviews could unfortunately not be added since anonymity could not be ensured if doing so as the officials' roles and positions would have become apparent.

4 How do you coordinate with the EEAS? Council? Individual member states? (Other players)
5 Which EU institutions are involved in responding to the Mali crisis?
6 What were the priorities by the EU in the Mali crisis?
7 After the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty, quite important changes have been made in the institutions dealing with Foreign Policy. How has this influenced your work?
8 Compared to earlier crisis management situations, do you think Lisbon made a difference? If so, in what way?
9 How would you evaluate the role of your DG during the Mali crisis?
10 How would you evaluate the role of the EEAS during the Mali crisis?
11 How would you evaluate the role of the High Representative in the Mali crisis?
12 How active and decisive was the EU in the course of the Mali crisis management also vis-à-vis other international actors, such as the UN, US, NATO?

C) EU Diplomats

1 Can you briefly describe how the FAC and the PSC work? How do you coordinate with your government in [capital of member state]?
2 How do you coordinate with the EEAS? Experts from the Commission? Individual member states, apart from home country?
3 After the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty, quite important changes have been made in the institutional setup dealing with Foreign Policy. How has this influenced your work?
4 Compared to earlier crises situations, do you think Lisbon has made a difference?
5 In the Syrian crisis it seems that the agreement on the economic sanctions and sanctions against indivudals and certain sectors in the beginning 2012 was relatively easy. Given that you have been at the negotiation table, can you describe the different positions back then?
6 Can you elaborate on the question of the arms embargo, especially with regards to the UK and France early in 2013?
7 Were there any other disagreements you remember?
8 How would you evaluate the role of the EEAS during the Syrian crisis? High Representative? EU in general?
9 How active and decisive was the EU in the course of the Mali crisis management also vis-à-vis other international actors, such as the UN, US, NATO?
10 The common academic perception is that the Mali crisis would have been a crisis "made for" the CSDP, but the EU's international role was not exploited well enough. What were the dividing lines between the member states in the Mali crisis?
11 Could you describe the discussions prior to the French decision to intervene on its own?
12 Any other disagreements you remember?
13 How would you evaluate the role of the EEAS during the Mali crisis? High Representative? EU in General?
14 Can you give some examples on topics where certain allies of countries are normally cooperating on?