

**Bridging the gap to represent:  
The EEAS and coherence in European foreign policy**

Master Thesis by Witte Wijsmuller



Leiden University  
Department of Political Sciences  
Master of Science in International Relations and Diplomacy

## **Acknowledgements**

Apart from the research that was conducted in the last few months, this thesis is the result of two years of academic guidance and inspiration brought to me by the *Master of International Relations and Diplomacy* Programme in Leiden. First of all, therefore, I wish to thank all my teachers at Leiden University and at the Institute ‘Clingendael’ for the interesting years they have offered me. A special word of thanks goes to Dr. Jan Melissen and Dr. Madeleine Hosli, who have been kind enough to supervise the process leading up to this thesis.

My gratitude also goes to the officials of the European External Action Service, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands who have been kind enough to participate in my research by giving extensive and interesting interviews. Without their help, I would not have been able to write this thesis.

## **Table of Contents**

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	2
<i>Table of Contents</i>	3
<i>Abbreviations</i>	5
1. Introduction	6
1.1. Background	6
1.2. Conceptualising coherence	10
1.3. Literature review	22
1.4. Principle-Agent theory	24
1.5. Independent variables and hypotheses	34
1.6. Method of analysis and data collection	40
2. The Agent: the EEAS	44
2.1. The HRVP	44
2.2. Mandate of the EEAS	47
2.3. Personnel of the EEAS	51
2.4. Organisational aspects of the EEAS	55
3. The Principals	59
3.1. Establishing the EEAS: hard bargaining	59
3.2. The Principals of the EEAS	65
4. Vertical Coherence	70
4.1. Practices that enhance vertical coherence	71
4.2. Information asymmetry	76
4.3. Agenda setting role	79

4.4. EEAS personnel	80
4.5. EU Delegations	82
4.6. Policy convergence between member states?	85
4.7. EEAS agency slippage in vertical coherence?	90
5. Horizontal Coherence	91
5.1. Practices that enhance horizontal coherence	93
5.2. Inter-institutional horizontal coherence: the different policy fields	96
5.3. Intra-institutional coherence	105
5.4. EEAS Personnel	107
5.5. Pillar-structure in disguise?	109
6. External Coherence	112
6.1. EEAS vs. member states and the European Commission	113
6.2. External representation at international organisations	117
6.3. EU Delegations	120
6.4. EEAS agency slippage in external coherence?	121
Conclusions	122
References	131

## **Abbreviations**

CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CODEV	Committee on Development
CoOL	Consular Online
COREU	Correspondence Européene
DG	Directorate General
DG Relex	European Commission Directorate General for External Relations
EEAS	European External Action Service
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments
HRVP	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the Commission
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MFF	Multi-annual Financial Framework
PA	Principal-Agent
PSC	Political and Security Committee
SEA	Single European Act (1987)
SITCEN	EEAS Situation Centre
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the functioning of the European Union
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background**

Over the last decades, the European Union (EU) has developed into a complex set of institutions with different decision-making structures and a myriad of different interests dispersed over member states, institutions, industries and citizens. One of the implications of this complexity is the importance of coordination, or the difficult quest to ensure that it is a *coherent* policy that rolls out of this multifaceted system of governance.

Achieving coherence is an even greater challenge in the area of EU foreign policy than in many other policy fields, because the EU's external affairs are divided over different policy paradigms.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, a coherent foreign policy is important for the EU. The EU is an influential actor on the global stage. It is the world's largest economy and the world's largest development aid donor. Thus, it is imperative that the EU conducts a coherent foreign policy in order to avail itself of the full potential of its international standing.

In the early 2000s, the need for coherence was increasingly voiced. The Laeken Declaration, which would lead to the Convention on the future of Europe, formulated a few questions to be addressed by that convention: "How should the coherence of European foreign policy be enhanced? How is synergy between the High Representative and the competent Commissioner to be reinforced? Should the

---

<sup>1</sup> Whereas the largest part of foreign policy, the so-called Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), falls under the competence of the member states, other policies with external implications, like development, trade, enlargement and neighbourhood policy, fall under the competences of the European Commission. These policies, which are dealt with at the supranational level and belonged to the former first pillar, are titled Community (or communautarian) policies. The combined set of policies may be referred to as 'EU foreign policy'.

external representation of the Union in international fora be extended further?” (Laeken Declaration, 2001).

The Treaty of Lisbon, which would in 2007 eventually provide the answers to those questions, contained a number of far-reaching provisions that were meant to improve coherence. Concerning the field of the EU’s foreign policy, the Treaty of Lisbon established the position of the High Representative of the Union for Common Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission (HRVP), which would be taken on by Baroness Catherine Ashton as from December 2009. Additionally, it created a foreign service to support the new HRVP: the European External Action Service (EEAS), which would be staffed by former officials from the European Commission, the General Secretariat of the Council and the member states’ foreign services. The newly established official and service, being part of both the intergovernmental and the supranational policy realm, were meant to increase coherence in European foreign policy. Concerning the HRVP, the new treaty stated: “The High Representative shall be one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission. He shall ensure the consistency of the Union’s external action” (Art. 18.4, TEU).

After a year of negotiations between the member states, the European institutions and Catherine Ashton, the EEAS was formally launched in December 2010. Its mandate stated:

“The EEAS shall support, and work in cooperation with, the diplomatic services of the Member States, as well as with the General Secretariat of the Council and the services of the Commission, *in order to ensure consistency* between the different areas of the Union’s external action and between those areas and its other policies (emphasis added)” (Art. 3.1, Council Decision L201).

But has the EEAS been able to actually foster the consistency (or: coherence) that is referred to? Some have argued that little is to be expected from the EEAS in this respect: “While the guiding principles and objectives should lead to an increase in coherence, the variety and number of actors involved do raise concerns about potential incoherence from the EEAS” (Quinn, 2012, p. 56).

Yet, as the legal provisions cited above demonstrate, enhancing coherence in European foreign policy was one of the most important goals of the HRVP and the EEAS.

The term ‘European foreign policy’ refers to the combination of EU foreign policy and the foreign policies of the member states. Therefore, ensuring coherence in European foreign policy requires much coordination between different actors and policy frameworks. Are the HRVP and the EEAS able to facilitate this coordination? The question is particularly interesting when focussing on the EEAS, which employs around 3400 staff members, of which more or less 2000 are diplomats, and forms the EU’s first ever diplomatic corps. Thus, this thesis will seek to answer the following research question:

*To what extent has the European External Action Service influenced European foreign policy coherence?*

I will seek to answer this question while making use of a Principal-Agent theoretical perspective.

The proposed academic endeavour seems relevant: Considering ‘coherence’ from a Principal-Agent perspective is a new undertaking. Moreover, although a considerable



amount of theoretical work has been produced on the topic of coherence in relation to the EEAS or to European foreign policy (Nuttall, 2005; Gebhard, 2011; Furness, 2011; Quinn, 2012), little research has yet been carried out in an attempt to answer the question whether the EEAS has actually lived up to its goals. The reason for this is undoubtedly the fact that the EEAS is still a very young institution.

In fact, at the very same moment that I am writing this thesis, the first EEAS review process is in full swing. This process, which is carried out by the member states, the European Parliament and the EEAS itself, will present a final report this summer (Balfour & Raik, 2013). In a reaction to the input of the European Parliament to this review process, Catherine Ashton said during a plenary session of the parliament: “Nobody defined any of this, ahead of Lisbon coming into force. So now that we have seen the changes and they have bedded down it has become easier to define the changes” (Catherine Ashton, 2013). With the present thesis, I hope to provide an academic perspective that will contribute to this assessment of the EEAS.

## 1.2. Conceptualising Coherence

### 1.2.1. Definition of coherence

Coherence is an abstract and intangible concept that is hard to operationalize. In this section, I will provide an academic perspective on the concept of coherence. I will set out by touching upon a number of definitions of the concept and shed light on the academic debate surrounding the concept. After that, I will formulate the working definition that I will use in this thesis. Thirdly, I will present a categorisation of three different types of coherence. I will finalize this section by identifying the indicators of coherence.

It might seem a perfectly logical assumption to us that coherence is an important and virtuous attribute to any given decision-making entity. Why? Mainly because an *incoherent* policy needs to be avoided, we feel. Because it is hard to pin down a single definition of the abstract concept of ‘coherence’, we thus often resort to its opposite to make clear what we mean. As Nuttall puts it:

“We should all like our policies and actions to be characterized by consistency, if only because the logical alternative is inconsistency, a concept which carries almost exclusively negative baggage. Indeed, exhortations to pursue consistency, which abound in the EU texts, are as often as not indications that someone with an axe to grind, wishes to make a point about inconsistency” (Nuttall, 2005, p. 93).

What, then, is coherence itself? Gauttier (2004, p. 40-41) regards coherence as “a principle of action and organisation”, by which he refers to the role of coherence in

building up the institutional structure of the EU. This classification is also particularly useful for giving a general definition of coherence as it acknowledges the double nature of the concept. Not only do organisational structures facilitate coherence, as we will see at length below, but coherence is also a principle of action: without the active pursuit of certain policy objectives, one would never be speaking about coherence.

Since 1987, the term ‘consistency’ appears in the European treaties. Currently, in the consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the most important mention of consistency can be found in article 21.3, TEU:

“The Union shall ensure consistency between the different areas of its external action and between these and its other policies. The Council and the Commission, assisted by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, shall ensure that consistency and shall cooperate to that effect.” (Treaty on European Union, 2012)

It is appropriate here to explain the difference between the terms ‘consistency’ and ‘coherence’. The word ‘coherence’ does not appear a single time in the English versions of the European treaties. Instead, the word ‘consistency’ is being used. In spite of this, the present thesis will use the term ‘coherence’, the reasons for which will now be indicated.

As many authors have noted, there is a linguistic difficulty considering the use of the concept of coherence in the treaty texts. Because, whereas the English versions since 1974 have used the word ‘consistency’, many other languages of the EU chose for the ‘coherence’ variant: the French version mentions the word ‘cohérence’, the German ‘Kohärenz’, the Italian ‘coerenza’ and the the Spanish ‘coherencia’. (Cremona, 2008;

Gebhard 2011; Hillion, 2008; Nuttall, 2005; Tietje, 1997). Given the fact that these words are used in translations of one and the same treaty text, it would be plausible that they are interchangeable with ‘consistency’ in English. But is this the case? Although a definite answer cannot be given, it seems not to be the case.

Hillion (2008) supplies a legal argument to prove that ‘coherence’ and ‘consistency’ do not refer to the same concept. In a Court of Justice ruling from 2005, considering the external relations policy from the Community, Germany and Luxembourg are exhorted to “ensure *the coherence and consistency* of the action and [...] international representation [of the Community]” Hillion’s argument is that because both terms were used next to each other by the Court of Justice, they could not possibly be used interchangeably (Hillion, 2008, p. 13).

Most authors consider consistency to be a more limited term than coherence. Consistency refers to the absence of pure contradiction in a literal, and often legal, sense. On the other hand, coherence is a broader and more flexible concept. It is a matter of degree, instead of a static principle (Cremona, 2008). Coherence represents the process, whereas consistency is focused on the outcome (Gebhard, 2011).

Coherence does comprise consistency, but it is much more than that. It does not only mean the avoidance of contradictions, but also encapsulates synergy and added value in the different components of EU policy. Moreover, coherence embodies a process of unification, leading up to a “united whole” (Hillion, 2008). Therefore, coherence can even be considered a political statement: it implies rapprochement by different actors and policy frameworks.

In this light, it may be clear why I chose for the term ‘coherence’ instead of ‘consistency’. As the latter term would only entail avoiding legal contradictions in the European foreign policy, it would be superfluous going through the trouble of

establishing a new autonomous body within the EU structure just to safeguard consistency.

On the contrary, the EEAS was established in order to add positive value to European foreign policy. According to Barton (2012, p. 79) it is even one of its main functions to “fill the grey zones” between the former pillar structure of the Council and the Commission. What the EEAS was pre-eminently established to do was less to avoid legal contradictions, a task left to the judiciary, than to ensure synergy and complementarity. Hence, the term ‘coherence’.

Another important property of coherence is that it is closely linked to effectiveness (Portela, 2009). The idea is that a governance structure will only be effective if its different policies are coherent, because in such a situation the different policies do not mitigate each other.

Perhaps there are also other reasons for the linkage between coherence and effectiveness: the concepts of identity and credibility. If actors are engaged in making foreign policy, they aim to maintain a clear identity in the international community. Maintaining this identity will enable them to define clear values and uniform positions on the world stage, and that is of paramount importance for safeguarding their interest in the world (Krenzler & Schneider, 1997). In other words, “[c]oherence is important for the credibility of the Union as a foreign policy actor...”(Quinn, 2012, p. 46).

The concept of coherence figures more than once in the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). One could argue that coherence therefore constitutes an obligation to the European actors. Several authors think that this is the case (Gebhard, 2011; Hillion, 2008; Portela, 2009). Not only is the principle of coherence mentioned in the treaties, it also forms an essential

part of the mandate of the EEAS (Council Decision, 2011). Coherence can thus be regarded a positive obligation for all those involved in the process of European policymaking. This makes the question whether the EEAS has indeed improved coherence even more significant.

Be that as it may, achieving coherence does not necessarily imply the unification of decision-making structures and the complete disappearance of the differing institutional focuses, which form a well-established characteristic of the European Union. “Coherence does not imply removal of differences between policies and institutional structures; rather it is about recognising the differences and ensuring that they can live together harmoniously” (Cremona, 2008, p. 32). This is a logical contention, because if there would be no differences, there would be no coherence. It is exactly this element of coherence that makes it possible to create synergies: after taking record of the differences between, say, two policy frameworks, it is possible to calculate where elements need to be moderated and where they can act complementarily.

As Gebhard has argued, “the way the ‘requirement’ [of consistency] has so far been framed in the treaties determines that while it is legally binding it is not legally enforceable” (Gebhard, 2011, p. 114). Gebhard points to Article 3 of the Treaty of Nice, which states that the Council and the Commission should fulfil the responsibility of coherence ‘each in accordance with its respective powers’. In Gebhard’s eyes, this indicates a possibility of incoherence. Moreover, this provision does not confer the responsibility of coherence to some sort of arbitrator, a “coordinating entity” (Gebhard, 2011). In the current TEU, the article mentioned above has been repealed, but its replacement (Article 13, TEU) still calls upon all EU institutions to ensure coherence while acting “within the limits of the powers

conferred on it in the treaties” (Consolidated version of TEU). Looking at it from this perspective, coherence would become more of a normative objective that needs consideration from all those who are involved, than a credible obligation.

Considering all the above, I would propose using the following working definition:

Coherence is a principle of action and organisation implying not only the absence of contradictions in primary goals of a set of policies and institutional structures, but also the clearness of responsibilities between those policies and institutional structures, avoidance of task duplication and presence of a high degree of complementarity and synergy.

It is difficult to apply this definition as such to European foreign policy. As the external action of the EU is a system of multifaceted governance, comprising different actors at different levels, it is sensible to use a categorisation of coherence when we want to find out what the state of coherence in European foreign policy-making is.

We have seen that European foreign policy is the sum of the different foreign policies of the 28 member states and the foreign policy made at the level of the EU. The latter is at its turn the product of decision-making of all the different EU institutions, but mainly the Council and the Commission.

In this complex system of policy-making, different types of coherence coexist. First, the (in)coherence of the different policies of the member states vis-à-vis the policy made at EU level. Second, the (in)coherence between the foreign policies of the different EU institutions. Third, the coherence between the different foreign policy frameworks within the system (e.g. the compatibility between the policy frameworks of development cooperation and security). Lastly, there is the coherence of European

foreign policy in representation towards the rest of the world. Different authors have applied different systems of categorisation to coherence, all undoubtedly suitable to the argument of their own academic work.

Nuttall, who was the first author to design a system of categorisation for coherence, introduced the three categories of vertical coherence, horizontal coherence and institutional coherence. First, in this system vertical coherence would represent the coherence between national policies and the EU. Second, horizontal coherence would refer to the coherence between the different EU policies. Third, institutional coherence referred to coherence “between the two different bureaucratic apparatuses, intergovernmental and supranational, operating in the field of external relations” (Nuttall, 2005, p. 97).

Six years later, Caroline Gebhard modified Nuttall’s system. She used four categories, of which only vertical coherence would retain Nuttall’s definition. Gebhard abandoned the title of ‘institutional coherence’, but this principle was now renamed ‘horizontal coherence’ and Nuttall’s old definition of horizontal coherence was not used anymore. However, Gebhard did make a distinction between *policy substantial* and *procedural* horizontal coherence. Gebhard’s third and new category, internal coherence, concerns ‘intra-pillar’ coherence: “the sound management within each . . . domain [i.e. the intergovernmental and Community domain]” (Gebhard, 2011, p. 108). Lastly, external coherence is related to the representation of the EU abroad. This external coherence is dependent on internal coordination processes and concerns all representative elements of European foreign policy: national embassies of the member states, EU delegations and Special Representatives.

For the present study, I have developed a new categorisation that will be taken in hand to investigate European foreign policy coherence. This categorisation borrows



elements of both earlier divisions. It features vertical coherence, horizontal coherence and external coherence. A concise introduction to the categorisation will follow here.

### *1.2.2. Vertical coherence*

Vertical coherence refers, as was stated above, to the coherence between the combined foreign policies of the member states and the foreign policy of the EU. It should, however, be noted that the term ‘vertical coherence’ does *not* imply that a hierarchical relationship exists between the member states and the European institutions, especially not one placing the European institutions on the upper end. After all, the policies of CFSP/EDSP remain essentially intergovernmental. Therefore, the member states have retained sovereignty on these issues.

With regard to real-time action on the international scene, vertical coherence is the most important variety of coherence and at the same time the least controllable one at EU level. As was stated, CFSP remains essentially a member state competence (Comelli & Matarazzo, 2011; Furness, 2011). Even in communitarian policy fields like trade or development, member states show a tendency to pursue their own foreign policy objectives when large interests are at stake (interview with Mr. Koetsenruijter). What is more, the governments of the member states change regularly due to elections. Therefore, the character of the foreign policy preferences is often fickle and incalculable.

### *1.2.3. Horizontal Coherence*

In Nuttall’s categorisation, horizontal coherence comprised only the coherence between different policy frameworks of the EU. An example of this is the coherence between, for example, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EU and the

development policy of the same European Commission. With Nuttall, institutional issues of coherence did not play any role in horizontal coherence. As opposed to this, in Gebhard's system horizontal coherence was only about the coherence between the different governance structures of the European institutions, whereas it did not refer to coherence between the different policy frameworks. There is a problem with both conceptions.

First, horizontal coherence should relate to the coherence between different policy frameworks, regardless of to which institutions these policy frameworks belong. This is one of the main concerns in the debate about the coherence of EU external action. As Nuttall puts it, "Different issues call forth different policy responses, which need . . . to be rendered compatible with each other; different policy-making circles and levels produce different answers to the same or similar problems, which need to be coordinated." (Nuttall, 2005, p. 93). That horizontal coherence is important within the framework of the EU was also put into words by a communication from the European Commission: "As in national administrations, even when there is sufficient political will, the EU's impact falls short when there are unresolved tensions or a lack of coherence between different policies." (European Commission, 2006). However, in the current situation it would also be academically incorrect to exclude issues of institutional coherence and dedicate an extra category of coherence to these issues. Nuttall's choice to do this is understandable, keeping in mind that the pillar-structure had not yet been abolished when he published his article in 2005. However, this did happen with the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon. Although the main decision-making procedures and the European institutions stayed more or less the same, it would not be correct anymore to speak about 'inter-pillar coherence'. Besides, procedures of foreign policy-making altered considerably with the establishment of

the HRVP and the EEAS. For these reasons, it is better to speak about ‘inter-institutional’ coherence. This leaves more room for interpretation. With regard to issues of institutional coherence, the thesis aims to answer the question whether the former pillar-structure, which was abolished by the Treaty of Lisbon, has fully disappeared or whether it unofficially still exists in practice.

Second, Gebhard introduced a category of ‘internal coherence’. In my view, this category also pertains to horizontal coherence, as it concerns coherence between different policy frameworks at the level of the European Union. A separate category is therefore not necessary. Nevertheless, the distinction between (in)coherence that crosses the boundary of its own institution and the (in)coherence that occurs within one and the same organisation, is useful and interesting. Therefore, I have included a subdivision in the category of horizontal coherence. The subcategories are: *inter-institutional* horizontal (in)coherence and *intra-institutional* horizontal (in)coherence. The first type occurs, for example, when a policy of the European Commission is (in)coherent with a policy of the Council. An example of the second type is when the organizational structures within the EEAS would be such that there would be duplication of responsibilities between different DGs of this organisation.

#### *1.2.4. External coherence*

Until now, we have only considered internal policy processes within the EU. However, arguably the most important part of foreign policy is the actual outward action: the fashion in which it presents itself to the outside world.

It hardly needs explanation that this process is especially relevant in the political context of the European Union, which features a multi-level governance system. External coherence, then, is the degree to which the European Union is able to use

this multi-level governance system to create a strong ‘single voice’ towards the outside world. This voice will be expressed through the HRVP, the European Delegations to third countries, the European representations at international organizations like the UN and, ideally, through the national embassies of the EU member states.

The ‘single voice’ needs to be coherent in order to obtain recognition from the international community. Hence, not only the coherence itself is important, but also the *perception* of coherence. According to Nuttall, “it matters a great deal if the perception of inconsistency brings the Union into contempt and thereby impairs its effectiveness to act” (Nuttall, 2005, 94).

A sub question that will be addressed by this thesis is:

*Which form of coherence has been influenced most by the EEAS: vertical, horizontal or external coherence?*

#### *1.2.5. Indicators of coherence*

Keeping in mind the above conceptualisation of coherence, we are now able to point out a number of indicators of enhanced coherence. These indicators will help us to identify coherence in the course of the research.

As was indicated above, it is easier to resort to *incoherence* when measuring coherence, as a coherent situation is the end goal and as such does not stand out. For this reason, a number of the indicators identified below are negations of indicators of enhanced *incoherence*.

Indicators of coherence:

- Unity of bureaucratic cultures (Gebhard, 2011)
- Unity in external representation (Gebhard, 2011)
- Absence of inter-institutional turf wars
- Absence of duplication of responsibilities
- ‘Sense of coherence’ of the respondents of the interviews conducted for this research.

### **1.3. Literature Review**

As it is the goal of this thesis to approach the EEAS's ability to influence European foreign policy coherence from a Principal-Agent (PA) perspective, there are several relevant schools of literature that I have consulted. While part of the literature focuses specifically on the EEAS, other relevant contributions focus on: institutional arrangements of European foreign policy, the concept of coherence in European foreign policy or PA theory in general. In this section, I will give a concise overview of literature that has been instrumental for my research.

**Nickolas Cherrier** uses a game-theoretical approach to explore how the EEAS has changed foreign policy formation in the EU. Cherrier argues that because of the information that she receives from the EEAS staff, the HRVP can play a crucial agenda-setting and coalition-forming role. Accordingly, it becomes relatively affordable for the HRVP to initiate foreign policy proposals. The member states, however, incur high costs when investing in a high investment strategy during the negotiations. Therefore, according to Cherrier, both member states and the EU benefit from the EEAS.

**Vicky Reynaert** comes to an entirely different conclusion. Investigating, like the present thesis, whether the EEAS has improved foreign policy coherence, she argues that the negotiations on the establishment of the EEAS were characterized by 'hard bargaining', with actors like the Commission and the member states unwilling to give up any of their own foreign policy competences. She draws the conclusion that the negotiations impaired the EEAS as an actor, thereby only complicating the institutional nature of European foreign policy-making and not leading to increased coherence.

Perhaps the largest academic endeavour undertaken on the topic of the EEAS is the research by **Rosa Balfour** and **Kristi Raik**. They have conducted research on the relations between the national governments of the EU member states and the EEAS. Their empirical evidence is drawn from fourteen separate case studies on different member states. One of their main findings is that the EU member states are divided into two camps, mainly between the larger and the smaller member states. Moreover, they emphasize that the foreign policy preferences of the member states will not change because of the European framework they are operating in. Member states keep ‘uploading’ the same issues to the European negotiation tables.

According to **Michael Smith**, the Treaty of Lisbon has not changed the fact that European external relations are still divided between two fundamentally different policy paradigms since the Treaty of Maastricht: the intergovernmental and the supranational ones. His argument is that the pillar-structure has implicitly survived the Treaty of Lisbon. According to Smith: “[the EU’s external relations] can be adapted to changing circumstances without losing their essentially hybrid nature” (Smith, 2012, p. 713).

In the area of PA theory, **Mark Furness**’s contribution focuses exclusively on the EEAS. He argues that the EEAS can exploit the differences among its many principals, but that the principals will not let the EEAS represent them fully on the international stage. Moreover, Furness predicts that the agent autonomy of the EEAS will vary in its different policy areas. He poses the possibility that the EEAS becomes a ‘double actor’, functioning in two paradigms: policy areas where it can wield little agent autonomy versus policy areas where it has leeway to augment its autonomy and cooperate freely with the Commission.

**Michele Comelli** and **Raffaello Matarazzo** have focused on the role of the European delegations and how this role has changed in nature since the Treaty of Lisbon. In their eyes, the main function of the delegations is to formulate common EU positions in third countries. To this end, close collaboration with the member states embassies in a third country is imperative. Comelli and Matarazzo's main point is that these intimate contacts construct a 'common institutional structure' that will lead to Europeanization and an *esprit de corps* under European diplomats abroad.



#### **1.4. Principal-Agent theory**

The focal point of Principal-Agent (PA) theory is explaining the relationship between two (sets of) actors: the principal(s) and the agent(s). A precondition, in this respect, is that there is delegation of power from the principal to the agent.

PA theory did not come into being as a political science approach. The theory was developed by economists, who sought to explain the business relationship between the capital owner (the principal) and the business manager (the agent) of an enterprise. The purpose of PA theory was to explore ways to prevent the business manager from pursuing his personal motives, instead of keeping in mind the interests of the capital owner. (Dür & Elsig, 2011, p. 328).

Later, since the 1980s, PA theory was adopted by political scientists and applied to relationships between actors in national and international politics. A primary example of a PA relationship in national politics is the relationship between the electorate (the principals) and the parliament (the agent). Since the 1990s, a considerable number of scholarly contributions have studied the different facets of EU politics from a PA perspective (Dür & Elsig, 2011, p. 328).

The starting point of a PA theoretical analysis is exploring the reasons that inspired the principal to delegate authority to the agent. The question why principals delegate authority is especially interesting when considering international organizations, because the theory might help explain why international organizations emerge in global politics.

A considerable tension in the relationship between the principal and the agent is caused by so-called ‘agency slippage’<sup>2</sup>. Agency slippage happens when an agent,

---

<sup>2</sup> In the literature, different terms are used for the concept of ‘agency slippage’, such as ‘agency shirking’, ‘agency losses’ or ‘bureaucratic drifting’.

acting independently of the principal, develops its own agenda and starts pursuing its own goals, which may run counter to the principal's preferences.

In fact, it is an assumption of PA theory that agents, once authority has been delegated to them, will show agency slippage. In most instances, the agent, being active in the field, has better access to information and networks than the principal. Thus, it can "exploit information asymmetry about the available options for action and take steps that harm the interests of the principal with minimal costs to itself" (Furness, 2011, p. 6).

An interesting topic is the relationship between agency slippage and agent autonomy. In the literature, both concepts are treated as being equal. After all, agency slippage takes place when "an agent can carve out an autonomous position for itself" (Furness, 2011, p. 5). However, agency slippage and agent autonomy are not exactly the same. Although an agent needs a small degree of autonomy even to be able to start the agency slippage process, autonomy will above all be the *result* of agency slippage. We may, however, assume that when agency slippage takes place, the autonomy of an agent is thus also increasing.

In spite of agency slippage, principals do have incentives to delegate authority to agents. Most frequently, agents can perform tasks cheaper than when the principal would have to undertake them by own means. A number of much-cited benefits of delegation of power to agents are: specific agent expertise, the creation of economies of scale through specialization, but also increasing credibility, locking in domestic reform and enhancing collective decision-making (Dür & Elsig, 2011, p. 329).

Furthermore, the principals do have tools at hand to control agency slippage. The principal can apply control mechanisms to agents, in order to stop agency slippage.

The literature makes mention of two types of controls: *ex ante* controls and *ex post* controls.

*Ex ante* controls are determined before the actual agent is created, i.e. before the principal delegates its power to the agent. The most obvious way to administer *ex ante* controls is the mandate of the agent. By creating the mandate, the principal inserts *ex ante* controls into the very institutional set-up of the agent. Examples are the procedures that agents must follow, the frequency with which it should brief the principal and the oversight procedures that will ensure *ex post* controls. It is not always possible to apply *ex ante* controls, because although the relationship between a principal and an agent does presume the existence of a certain ‘contract’, this contract need not be explicit or legalized (Drieskens, 2008). Therefore, an official mandate may not always be present.

Typical examples of *ex post* controls are monitoring and sanctions. According to Lane (2005) monitoring is imperative in order to limit damaging agency slippage. Only with monitoring can the bureaucracy of the agent be pushed out of a suboptimal position.

In spite of all this, putting *ex ante* and *ex post* controls in practice may also be disadvantageous to the principal. Indeed, implementing control mechanisms can be costly in two ways: first, it may considerably restrict the agent in performing its tasks. Second, monitoring and applying sanctions costs money and labour (Furness, 2011). Therefore, while deciding on the controls, the principal must balance the disadvantages of agency slippage to the disadvantages of controls.

Another instrument through which principals can mitigate the negative effects of agency slippage is called ‘agent shopping’. When more than one agent is present in the institutional framework of the PA relationship, then principals might, in day to

day politics, choose to entrust tasks to another agent they can rely on. An example is formed by agricultural trade negotiations powers, that were delegated to DG Agriculture instead of DG Trade of the European Commission (Dür & Elsig, 2011).

#### *1.4.1. Factors that foster agency slippage*

It is relevant to identify factors that facilitate agency slippage, for identifying these factors in a given situation will enable us to predict the likeliness of agency slippage (and therefore agent autonomy) of the EEAS.

Self-evident as it may be, the number and depth of the competences awarded to the agent is important for its potential to augment its autonomy. This is true both for procedural competences, such as the right to communicate directly with clients, and for an extension of competences on different policy fields. The European Commission forms a lighting example of how competences on more policy fields gave the organization more autonomy through the expertise that it developed in these areas. Moreover, the Commission made sure to swiftly gain expertise on the issues within its competences, thereby also *shaping* the preferences of its principals: the member states (Niemann & Huigens, 2011).

The agent's competences are naturally closely related to its mandate. The mandate itself is also a factor that can contribute to agency slippage, but in a specific way. Conceição-Heldt has argued that the agent can win considerable autonomy when its mandate is vague. "If principals give the agent a vague mandate, this increases the agent's discretion and room for manoeuvre at the international level to interpret the negotiating guidelines and to make further concessions and to move closer to the position of third countries" (Conceição-Heldt, 2011, p. 413). Hence, the vaguer the mandate, the more room for agency slippage.

Another element that influences the agent's autonomy is the number of principals that are involved in the PA relationship (Furness, 2011). When there are multiple principals involved, the control function is likely to be dispersed over more principals and therefore less stringently exercised. What is more, with a higher number of principals present, it becomes more likely that the preferences of the principals diverge from one another. In such a situation, the principals themselves will grant more authority to the agent, to serve as an arbitrary mechanism to a certain degree (Conceição-Heldt, 2011). Conceição-Heldt conducted a study on the degree of autonomy that the European Commission as an agent of the European member states enjoyed during negotiations at the Doha Round. She concludes "that preference heterogeneity with two camps of nearly equal size . . . , a vague negotiating mandate and conflicting messages from principals gave the Commission a higher level of discretion in multilateral trade negotiations" (Conceição-Heldt, 2011, p. 415-416).

Another driving force behind agency slippage is information asymmetry. Frequently, the agent has much better and more direct access to information from the field of play, as it is involved in the day to day process there. The more information it can gather, the more the agent will be able to engage in agency slippage (Dür & Elsig, 2011).

Quite logically, the amount of resources that the agent disposes of is also a determining factor in the agent's ability to increase its autonomy. More resources allow the agent to perform its tasks better, which will in turn make it easier for the other actors to accept the wielding of its increased authority. (Niemann & Huigens, 2011).

#### *1.4.2. PA theory and European foreign policy*

PA theory seems to be a particularly suitable theory to explain power relationships in the European Union, because of its ability to explain the processes present in the EU's plural government structure in a simple way. A great amount of actors are involved in EU decision-making. Moreover, these actors all have diverging stature: some are states, other European institutions or, yet another category, lobby and interests groups. "To cut through so much organised complexity one would wish to employ a simple analytical approach which identifies the key players in an interaction and classifies them as either principal or agent" (Lane, 2005, p. 30). That is exactly what PA theory does.

Since the 1990s PA insights were frequently applied to the EU, for instance to conceptualize the delegation of power from the member states to the European institutions (Drieskens, 2008).

Within the EU, many PA relationships are assignable. At present, I will limit myself to the most important delegation chains in the EU's foreign policies. The European electorate makes up the first set of principals. They delegate power to the different national parliaments of the member states. These parliaments also perform a role as principal, when they on their turn delegate powers to their governments. The governments bring their power along to the European negotiation tables in Brussels, at the European Council and the Council of the EU. There they jointly determine the CFSP and ESDP of the EU. Besides, on the field of external relations concerning former first pillar policies like trade or development, they delegate powers to the European Commission.

A separate PA relationship exists between the European voters and the European Parliament. (Dür & Elsig, 2011). The European Parliament, being the agent of the

European citizens, is a principal of the Commission, as it has powers of co-decision on a number of policy areas. Owing to the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Parliament's powers have increased. Still, the powers of the Parliament are relatively weak compared to the relationship between the member states and the Commission (Dür & Elsig, 2011). Now, we have a basic understanding of the institutional landscape in which the EEAS was established. It is time to consider the PA relationships in which this new agency is involved.

The member states are the main principals of the EEAS. They delegate authority to the HRVP and the EEAS via three PA relationships: the European Council, the Council of the EU and directly from a national level. The Council of Ministers forms the most important principal of the EEAS. It makes the largest part of the decisions that are to be implemented by the EEAS. Moreover, the decisions that the Council of Ministers take on behalf of the member states governments are much more detailed and instructive than the broad guidelines and principles that the European Council formulates.

Apart from the member states, the EEAS also receives authority from the European Commission, although its main foreign policy competences were taken away and transferred to the EEAS. However, on a number of policy areas the member states have delegated supranational powers to the Commission. Some of these areas of competence (the former first pillar policies) have important external relations implications, such as trade, development, enlargement, neighbourhood policy and the environment. The external dimensions of these policies still fall under the competence of the Commission, but the latter has to cooperate with the EEAS on these matters for reasons of coherence. Therefore, the Commission may also be considered a principal of the agent 'EEAS'.

Between the European Parliament and the EEAS, a weak PA relationship exists. The only real competence of the European Parliament over the EEAS concerns the latter's budget. Yet, on an informal basis the opinion of the European Parliament is of considerable value to the HRVP. The main channels of delegation will look thus (dotted lines denote weak PA-relationships):

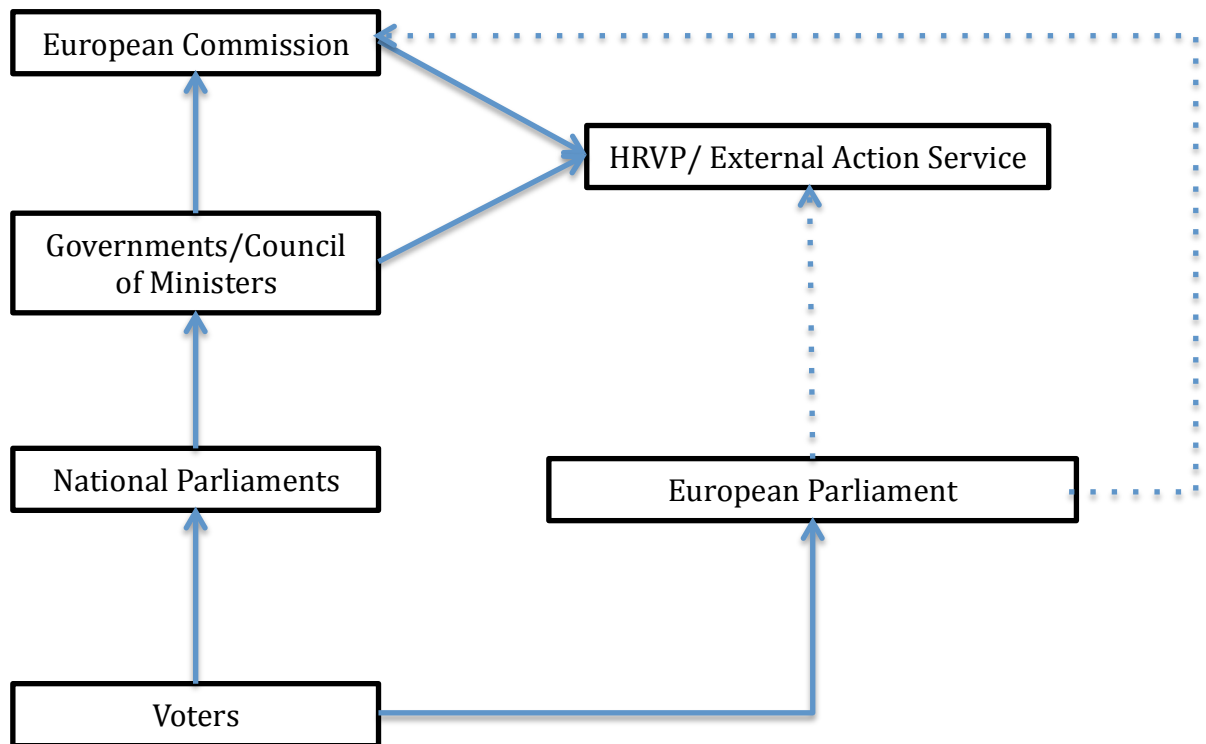


Figure 1: PA relationships in European foreign policy decision-making.

Considering the above, it may be concluded that the EEAS is an agent with many principals. An interesting question in this respect is whether agency slippage within the EEAS will vary across policy areas due to difference in principals. This is what Furness (2011, p. 24) assumes: “The prospect for agency slippage is likely to be higher in development policy than in CFSP or CDSP because the Commission acts as a principal in this policy area.” His argument is that the Commission is already



accustomed to sharing responsibilities (formerly, directly with the member states) in a policy area like development cooperation.

Nonetheless, the author doubts that Furness' assumption will hold ground because of the notorious reputation of the European Commission to protect its competences. The negotiation process on the EEAS showed no less, as will be shown in chapter 3 of this thesis.

### 1.5. Independent variables & hypotheses

Before starting the core analysis of this thesis, it is sensible to introduce a set of relevant independent variables of which a correlation with European foreign policy is expected. The previous section, which explained the theoretical framework of this study, clarifies the rationale behind choosing most of the independent variables.

The primary independent variable of this study is **agency slippage**. It is believed that a higher degree of agency slippage for the EEAS leads to more European foreign policy coherence. This contention is based upon two assumptions: First, that agency slippage leads to agent autonomy. As is shown in the previous section, this assumption may be deemed correct. The second assumption is that more agent autonomy leads to more coherence in European foreign policy. This latter assumption is a rather more problematic one. For, how can we be sure that the EEAS is even capable of producing coherent policies?

The answer to this question is that the EEAS' place in the institutional landscape of Brussels, situated (physically and institutionally) in the middle between the Commission and the Council and standing under the authority of a 'double hatted' HRVP, makes it only natural for the EEAS to ensure coherence when its role would grow. As a matter of fact, some have characterized the goal of the EEAS to act as a kind of 'mediator' between the Commission and the Council (Barton, 2012). In PA theory, it is a rule that once a new bureaucracy is created, it will pursue more power and responsibilities for itself. With the institutional set-up the EEAS has, more power to this organization would automatically entail enhanced European foreign policy coherence, as more input from the EEAS would mean more input not only into the foreign policies of the member states but also into those of the Commission and Council secretariat. In this sense, coherence is automatically generated. The question

whether the EEAS has enhanced European foreign policy coherence is therefore equivalent to the question whether the EEAS has been given enough space to function well.

The second independent variable is **the depth and number of EEAS competences**, essentially comprising **ex ante controls** and **ex post controls** of the principals on the EEAS. As we have seen, controls can play a role in constraining an agent to a considerable degree.

The third independent variable is closely related to the last one. It concerns **the depth and number of competences of the HRVP**. The HRVP, having full authority over the EEAS, can exert much influence on the functioning of the organisation.

Again closely related to the foregoing is **the mandate** of the EEAS, which will also serve as an independent variable. It is an important factor in determining the outcome of European foreign policy coherence, as a vague mandate may cause agency slippage.

The next independent variable is **the number of principals**. As we have seen, a larger number of principals may result in more autonomy for the agent. Related to this idea, was the concept of **interest heterogeneity** between the principals.

Another independent variable is the presence of **information asymmetry** between the principals and the agent.

Until present, all independent variables were inspired by PA theory. However, it seems sensible to add a small number of other independent variables, as I expect that they have a correlation with the potential of the EEAS to enhance European foreign policy coherence.

Firstly, there is the **provenance of the personnel of the EEAS**. As will be explained in the next chapter, the EEAS' personnel is made up of different groups of officials,

among whom seconded national diplomats, seconded national experts, former Commission staff and former Council staff. As seconded national diplomats return to the service of their own ministry of foreign affairs after having spent a few years at the EEAS, it might be expected that their time as EEAS official might influence the way they, and their colleagues with whom they socialise, look upon European foreign policy issues. Moreover, more seconded national diplomats among the staff of the EEAS could create an *esprit de corps* at the EEAS, through which national diplomats exchange the best practices of their member states. This could very well influence vertical coherence, as it could possibly create a veritable ‘European diplomatic culture’.

Secondly, **institutionalisation** is an important factor to consider as well. It signifies the degree of recognition the EEAS receives from other actors in the field, and also from third country actors. Therefore, an important element of institutionalisation is ‘international standing’. Institutionalisation awards the EEAS more credibility and therefore more authority to operate on the international stage, which would probably foster external coherence considerably (Bátora, 2011).

Applying the independent variables to PA theory leads to the formulation of a number of theorem’s concerning the EEAS’ capability to enhance European foreign policy:

#### *Theorem 1*

The extension of the competences of the EEAS and the HRVP is positively correlated with the agent autonomy of the EEAS and the degree to which it can foster coherence. Therefore, the application of ex-ante and ex-post controls by the EEAS’ principals would constrain its potential to establish more European foreign policy coherence.

*Theorem 2*

A clear-cut, legalized mandate will constrict the agent “EEAS” more than a vague mandate, which is more open to interpretation for the agent itself. Therefore, the vaguer the mandate, the more the EEAS will be able to enhance coherence.

*Theorem 3*

A higher degree of interest heterogeneity among the principals, will lead to more agent autonomy for the EEAS, and thus to more European foreign policy coherence.

*Theorem 4*

The amount of resources available to the agent is positively correlated with the level of the agent’s autonomy and therefore its capacity to foster coherence.

*Theorem 5*

More diversity in the provenance of the personnel of the EEAS will lead to more coherence.

*Theorem 6*

The more *institutional standing* and international recognition the EEAS has been able to rally for itself, the more power it will have as an agent and the more, therefore, it will be able to advance foreign policy coherence.

The identification of these theorems has incurred a number of hypotheses concerning the influence of the EEAS on European foreign policy. They are listed here:

### *Hypothesis 1*

The staff of the EEAS has very diverse origins, as it is made up of former personnel from the Commission, former personnel from the Council and seconded national diplomats. This diversity will predominantly enhance the EEAS' potential to foster *vertical* coherence in European foreign policy, as it is to be expected that seconded national diplomats keep in contact with their home governments.

### *Hypothesis 2*

The foreign policy preferences of the member states may be expected to vary considerably. The EEAS is expected to benefit from this interest heterogeneity among its principals, enabling it to augment its agent autonomy and foster vertical coherence in European foreign policy.

### *Hypothesis 3*

There will be more agency slippage in areas where no supranational authority has yet been delegated to the Commission, because the Commission as a bureaucracy will do anything to protect its domain. Therefore, it will be easier for the EEAS to engage in agency slippage and thus enlarge its autonomy on CFSP matters than on former first policy issues.

### *Hypothesis 4*

External representation is a competence that the member states most likely associate with their national sovereignty. Therefore, it is not likely that they will transfer enough competences to the EEAS to make external coherence a success.

### *Hypothesis 5*

As two of the hypotheses formulated above expect vertical coherence to be enhanced, whereas the other two have negative expectations for horizontal and external coherence, it may be expected that *vertical* coherence will be the form of coherence that is enhanced most by the EEAS.

## **1.6. Method of analysis and data collection**

### *Method of analysis*

The empirical research of this study will rely on process-tracing, because this method offers the most fruitful procedure to discover causal relationships between its independent variables and its dependent variable.

As George and Bennett (2005) have shown, process-tracing is a useful method for testing theories when focusing only on a single case. By examining a diverse set of sources pertaining to the case under investigation, it explores the various steps of a causal process maintained by a theory. The goal is to find out whether a proposed theoretical hypothesis is evident in the sequence of a case (George & Bennett, 2005).

For my study, the single case under investigation is that of the EEAS. The theory that I propose to test is PA theory. In line with the practice of process-tracing, I will do this by considering what influence the different independent variables, such as the number of competences of the EEAS and the provenance of its personnel, have had on the indicators of coherence that we defined in one of the previous sections.

### *Data collection*

During the course of research for this thesis, I have conducted interviews with thirteen officials. To ensure an unbiased representation of professional opinions, it was my goal to interview a set of interview respondents with different professional backgrounds, constituting a balance between, on the one hand, the institutions and, on the other hand intergovernmental or supranational inclination. To this end, I formulated a number of guidelines to which the list of interview respondents had to correspond .



First, it was my purpose to interview at least one respondent of all the relevant institutions for European foreign policy: the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of the EU<sup>3</sup>, a ministry of foreign affairs of a member state, and of course the EEAS itself.

A second objective concerned exclusively the EEAS staff to be interviewed. As the current body of EEAS staff is made up of former EU officials and seconded national diplomats from the member states, I reckoned it to be a good idea to achieve an equal balance between these two groups. See table 1 for an overview of the respondents for my research.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Provenance (EEAS)</b>	<b>Function/Policy Area</b>
1.	Mr. Koetsenruijter	EEAS	European Commission	Head of Division MERCOSUR countries
2.	Mr. Sohlstrom	EEAS	National Expert	Development Cooperation
3.	Mr. Gerbrandij	EEAS	National Expert	Development Cooperation
4.	Mr. Fernández - Mazarambroz y de Arespochaga	EEAS	National Expert	Development Cooperation
5.	Mr. Pulch	EEAS	Seconded by German MFA	Head of Division Russia

<sup>3</sup> I interviewed a member of the ANTICI group, who officially works for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, but is closely involved in Council procedures.

6.	Mr. Houttuin	EEAS	Seconded by Dutch MFA	Trade
7.	A policy officer of the EEAS <sup>4</sup>	EEAS	x	x
8.	A policy officer of the EEAS	EEAS	x	x
9.	Mr. Tibbels	EEAS	European Commission	Head of Division Regional Cooperation, OSCE and Eastern Partnership
10.	An official of the ministry of foreign affairs of the Netherlands	Dutch MFA		Direction for European Integration
11.	Ms. Gregoire	Dutch MFA  (Perm. Representation to the EU)		Member of ANTICI Group at the Council of the EU
12.	Mr. Van Baalen	European Parliament		Member of European Parliament, member of AFET Committee.
13.	Ms. Peresso	European Commission		Cabinet of Trade Commissioner De Gucht

Table 1: Interview respondents for the research leading up to this thesis.

<sup>4</sup> Three of the interview respondents preferred to remain anonymous.

The interviews explored the following range of issues:

- Organisational set-up of the EEAS.
- The role of the Delegations.
- Inter-institutional relations.
- Intra-institutional relations.
- The perceived enhancement of vertical, horizontal and/or external coherence.
- A common culture among the personnel of the EEAS.
- Member states' preferences in European foreign policy.

## **2. The agent: the EEAS**

### **2.1. HRVP**

Every analysis of the EEAS starts with an analysis of the HRVP. Without the HRVP, the EEAS would not have right of existence: the treaties delegate authority to the HRVP, *not* to the organisation supporting him/her.

As Cherrier has remarked quite accurately, “Baroness Ashton is a unique kind of ‘super-agent’ in that her office forms the link between the various principals and the EEAS” (Furness, 2011, p. 15). This phrase offers a useful description of the relations between the different actors involved: Formally, the HRVP forms the ‘institution’ with foreign policy powers, as opposed to the EEAS. However, the power relationship between the HRVP and the EEAS is reciprocal: the EEAS provides the HRVP with all the tools she needs to execute her responsibilities. Through the extensive network of EU Delegations and the policy made by the EEAS staff, she is empowered to do her functions. Therefore, it has been argued that the EEAS and the HRVP are “two sides of the same puzzle” (Cherrier, 2012, p. 1).

With respect to foreign policy coherence, the creation of the HRVP is the single most important innovation of the Treaty of Lisbon (Quinn, 2012). Much of the literature contributes the coordination potential of the HRVP to her ‘double-hatted’ nature (Quinn, 2012; Cherrier, 2012; Furness, 2011). However, it may be argued that the HRVP actually has a ‘triple hatted’ function, as she essentially combines the functions of the former High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, the Vice-President of the Commission and the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Council (Duff, 2009). The combination of these functions makes her a very powerful agent.

First of all, as the High Representative, she is the EU’s highest ranking diplomat and

in charge of the EU's representation in third countries and at international organizations and conferences (Art. 27.2, TEU). In this manner, the position of HRVP brings *unity in external representation*. This part of the HRVP's function could be brought in line with 'external coherence', as it concerns the external representation of the EU. Still, one should not forget the positions of the President of the European Council and the President of the Commission, who also have functions with external representation implications, albeit less defined. More on this topic will be said in chapter 6.

Second, the fact that the HRVP is the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Council with the right to initiate legislation endows her with considerable agenda setting powers over the most important forum of member states concerned with foreign policy-making. This 'hat' of the HRVP could be brought in line with 'vertical coherence', as it primarily concerns her contacts with the member states.

Third, as the External Relations Commissioner/Vice-President of the Commission she also has the right to initiate legislation on external affairs policies of the former first pillar (Furness, 2011). This part of the function of HRVP, lastly, could be aligned with 'horizontal coherence' as it concerns a bridging function between the Commission and the EEAS.

However, the HRVP has even more roles than described here. As she is the British member of the Commission, she also has a national advocacy role in that institution. Moreover, as the head of the EU's foreign service, she is responsible for diplomatic and military operations (Furness, 2011).

Accordingly, the HRVP has a very extensive function. Perhaps it is simply too extensive for one person to execute adequately (Quinn, 55). Before the establishment of the HRVP, her role was executed by three different persons. Merging these three

functions into one office means that the official executing the office needs an extensive supporting bureaucracy (the EEAS). Moreover, he or she will have to prioritize, as one person cannot be in three places at the same time (interview with Pulch).

Therefore, an important question during the set-up of the EEAS was who can deputize for the HRVP. The European Parliament insisted that the deputies of the HRVP would be politically accountable. Currently however, the HRVP has no politically accountable deputies apart from the foreign ministers of the member states, who may deputize for her under special circumstances.

Therefore, the HRVP has had to prioritize. In the case of Catherine Ashton, the HRVP has spent more time on representing the EU abroad by attending international conferences and visiting third countries than on coordination foreign policy within the EU. To nurture better horizontal coordination, it would be wise to exploit the role of Vice-President better (interview with Tibbels).

Moreover, it is also a widely carried opinion that Catherine Ashton is relatively low-profile political figure in comparison to the heavy and symbolic function of HRVP (Castle & Erlanger 2009).

It has been assumed that the EEAS is secondary to the HRVP, in that its success can only be judged by the effectiveness of the HRVP (Gross & Rotta, 2011). However, in the eyes of the author such a contention is flawed for it negates the importance of the organizational structure of the agent EEAS. Moreover, the concept of agency slippage implies that an agent can increase its own role and wrestle itself from the hold of its institutional environment.

## **2.2. Mandate of the EEAS**

The mandate of the EEAS essentially consists of the provisions taken up in the Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the EEAS of 26 July 2010. In the treaties, the only mention of the EEAS is article 27.3 TEU:

“In fulfilling his mandate, the High Representative shall be assisted by a European External Action Service. This service shall work in cooperation with the diplomatic services of the Member States and shall comprise officials from relevant departments of the General Secretariat of the Council and of the Commission as well as staff seconded from national diplomatic services of the Member States. . .” (Art. 27.3 TEU)

Therefore, the Council Decision is the most comprehensive legal basis of the EEAS, in which all details about process and scope are outlined. The document comprises eleven pages and determines, among other things, the organisation’s tasks, staff, budget and relations with different institutions.

A first relevant aspect in the mandate concerns the very identity of the EEAS. Article 1.2. states:

“The EEAS, which has its headquarters in Brussels, shall be a functionally autonomous body of the European Union, separate from the General Secretariat of the Council and from the Commission with the legal capacity necessary to perform its tasks and attain its objectives” (Art. 1.2. Council Decision L201).

The EEAS, then, is a “functionally autonomous body”. This means that it is not a European *institution*.

What, then, is the status of the EEAS? EU officials refer to the EEAS as a ‘service’. One interview respondent who works for the Commission even referred to the EEAS as a ‘DG’ (interview with Peresso). However, although the service does not have any powers conferred on it by the EU treaties, “it is more than just an agency with external policy responsibilities” (Furness, 2011, p. 16). The large scope of foreign policy matters handled by the EEAS and its comprehensive relations with actors like the Council and the Commission will probably cause the EEAS to be looked upon as a species of institution after all. Nevertheless, the organisation does not have the competence to take binding administrative decisions (Furness, 16). This constrains the competences of the EEAS.

The Council Document shows the signs of the hard bargaining that took place during the negotiations on the EEAS. Many of the tasks stated in the document still fall under the remit of the Commission. In fact, the indicator *duplication of tasks and responsibilities* is ingrained in the text. Consider article 2.1.:

“The EEAS shall support the High Representative . . . in his/her capacity as Vice-President of the Commission for fulfilling within the Commission the responsibilities incumbent on it in external relations, and in coordinating other aspects of the Union’s external action, *without prejudice to the normal tasks of the services of the Commission* (emphasis added)” (Art. 2.1., Council Decision L201).<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Article 2.1. of the Council Decision contains a similar provision concerning the tasks of the Council General Secretariat.



This provision risks a substantial overlap of mandate, for it is open to interpretation where the ‘normal tasks’ of the Commission begin and end. In line with PA-theory it may be expected that the Commission will set the limits of its normal tasks quite amply.

Furthermore, the Commission remains in charge of a significant share of the budgetary arrangements of the EEAS:

“ . . . The High Representative shall adopt the internal rules for the management of the administrative budget lines. Operational expenditure shall remain within the Commission section of the budget” (Art. 8.1., Council Decision L201).

And, not less significant:

“ . . . the EEAS shall draw up estimates of its expenditure for the following financial year. The Commission shall consolidate those estimates in a draft budget, which may contain different estimates. The Commission may amend the draft budget as provided for in Article 314(2) TFEU” (Art. 8.4., Council Decision L201).

The provisions quoted above show that there is considerable overlap of competences and that inter-institutional rivalry is ingrained in the very mandate of the EEAS. Especially the fact that the Commission has large powers over the EEAS’ operational budget may be the cause of *inter-institutional turf wars*.

Furness has called the Council Decision establishing the EEAS an “incomplete contract in that it provides a broad framework but leaves all important process-related

details to be bedded in over the next few years” (Furness, 2011 p. 25). I disagree with the contention that the Council Decision would constitute a vague mandate. On the contrary, the Council Decision is quite detailed in summarising the foreign policy competences of the EEAS and the other European actors. Admitted, it does not make extensive mention of the procedures to be deployed by the EEAS. Nevertheless, the freedom of interpretation it leaves on procedural issues is compensated fully by the detailed nature of the reference to the different competences. Once the areas of competence are quite meticulously delimited, the processes subsequently have less space of manoeuvre to influence the power of the EEAS.

An example of the detailed nature of the Council Decision can be article 9, which sets out the division of competences between the Commission and the EEAS on external action instruments and programming. This article, which is too lengthy to quote here, enumerates all financial programming instruments and specifies the division of labour between the Commission and the EEAS on all of them, particularising which of both actors should draw up country allocation documents and strategy papers.

Consequently, it is fair to state that the EEAS does not suffer from a vague mandate. However, it does suffer from a rather restrictive mandate. The EEAS’ number of competences could have been much larger, had it not been for the hard bargaining process during negotiations on the service. More about information about the bargaining process will be given in the next chapter.

### **2.3. Personnel of the EEAS**

The body of EEAS personnel is made up of three different ‘blood groups’: former Council personnel, former Staff personnel and seconded diplomats from the member states’ foreign services. Article 6.10 of the Council Decision states that “[w]hen the EEAS has reached its full capacity, staff from Member States . . . should represent at least one third of all EEAS staff at AD level” (Article 6.10, Council Decision L201). Currently, the EEAS employs 308 national diplomats versus 627 EU officials at AD level, which produces a percentage of member state diplomats of 32,9%. As such, the EEAS complies *exactly* with Article 6.10 of the Council Decision.

From the Council, the entire former Policy Unit was transferred to the EEAS when the latter was established in 2010. The Policy Unit comprised the supportive staff of the old High Representative for CFSP. It consisted of thematic and regional desks. Additionally, the staff of the EU Situation Centre, which would be placed within the EEAS structure, was transferred to the EEAS.

From the Commission, the entire DG for External Relations (Relex) was transferred to the EEAS. Just like the Policy Unit, DG Relex also contained thematic and regional desks. Moreover, the external service of the Commission (which headed all EU Delegation that existed) also fell under DG Relex. Apart from DG Relex, DG Development also transferred a number of staff members, in line with the split responsibilities of the EEAS and the Commission on development cooperation. However, former DG Relex and DG Development staff members who had financial and budgetary responsibilities would remain working for the Commission (Annex to the Council Decision L201). As we have seen in the previous section, it is likely that this separation of personnel will produce a rift in EU foreign policy decision-making and lead to inter-institutional turf wars.

Regarding the EEAS staff, a relevant question to address is whether a ‘European diplomatic community’ or an *esprit de corps* is emerging, for such a process could lead to vertical and horizontal coherence.

First, a theoretical perspective on this question will be considered. Bátorá (2011), who observes the EEAS from an Organisation-theoretical perspective, shows that socialisation between personnel at organisations may well lead to an ‘epistemic community’, with staff members constructing joint systems of meaning, of organisational identity and facilitating actorness. He comes to the conclusion that the demographically mixed set-up of the EEAS may well lead to, what we call here, a ‘European diplomatic culture’: “Officials with professional experience both from member states’ foreign ministries and from EU-level external relations . . . represent important micro-level links connecting the fabric of the EU’s foreign policy making system” (Bátorá, 2011, p. 8).

Similarly, Balfour & Raik argue that close contacts between national diplomats of different member states and European officials may, lead to ‘elite socialisation’. This is a process that causes national diplomats to think from a European perspective because of their intensive cooperation within the European structures over an extended period.

“Close diplomatic interaction through common institutions generates a habit of cooperation and makes an EU coordination reflex more likely. Intense contacts and regular coordination make it increasingly difficult to separate the national and European levels. Foreign policy cultures and identities become more similar and national and European interests converge” (Balfour & Raik, 2013, p. 3).

It is likely that the EEAS constitutes (or *will* soon constitute) such an institution in which national diplomats work closely together. Cherrier comes to a similar conclusion, when he mentions a “European diplomatic culture” (Cherrier, 2012, p. 25).

It may be concluded that the theoretical contributions that I consulted are quite positive about the capabilities of the EEAS staff to enhance coherence. At present, it is time to consider this from a practical perspective by turning to the experiences of the interview respondents.

Most of the respondents indicated during the interviews that a ‘European diplomatic culture’ does not yet exist. Moreover, it also seems too optimistic to speak about an *esprit de corps* among the staff of the EEAS. A problem, in this respect, is that national seconded diplomats can only stay in the service of the EEAS for two terms of four years, not longer. This period is probably too short to build a veritable *esprit de corps* or to create links and networks similar to those of a national ministry of foreign affairs (interview with Koetsenruijter; interview with Pulch).

Moreover, ideally an *esprit de corps* contains three key elements: stability, continuity and institutional memory. The EEAS itself is also still too young to comply with these requirements. Therefore, the creation of an *esprit de corps* is still very much a question of work in progress (interview with Pulch).

According to Koetsenruijter, the fact that seconded national diplomats only remain with the service for a relatively short period of time is a flaw of the EEAS structure. “I think that it would be beneficial to found a European diplomatic academy. Accordingly, we can start building a common diplomatic culture. That would foster coherence” (interview with Koetsenruijter).<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> The author translated Mr. Koetsenruijter’s answer from Dutch to English.

The European Parliament also signalled this problem. During negotiations on the structure of the EEAS, the Parliament advised the negotiators to establish a provision that would enable seconded national diplomats to join the ranks of the EEAS as formal EU officials after the end of their terms as seconded diplomat (Mahncke, 2012).

Other interview respondents are less negative. They agree with the assertion that there is no *esprit de corps*. Yet, they emphasize that creating an *esprit de corps* requires a slow and lengthy process, and that this process has certainly started. Thence, they apply the term ‘*emerging European diplomatic community*’ to the present situation (interview with Tibbels; interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespochaga).

Lastly, they also point to the fact that the professional culture of the EEAS is different from that at the former DG Relex, in that it constitutes a genuinely *diplomatic* culture. The reason for this is the participation of the member states diplomats, who have introduced a more diplomatic culture. This may foster vertical coherence, because communication between the national ministries of foreign affairs and the EEAS officials becomes easier.

## 2.4. Organisational aspects of the EEAS

### 2.4.1. Organisational structure

The EEAS consists of both thematic and regional desks, has a corporate section and an intelligence division. Moreover, it also contains a security operations desk and a crisis response room. Therefore, it is rather reminiscent of the organisation of a typical ministry of foreign affairs. “Initial empirical evidence suggests that the EU . . . seems ready to copy the organisational template . . . featuring geographical desks, functional desks and administrative support units common in the foreign ministries of modern states” (Bátora, 2011, p. 9). Moreover, seconded national diplomats also unconsciously *expect* the EEAS to develop in a species of EU foreign ministry. After all, they bring with them their standard practices and culture of state-diplomacy.

Furthermore, the socialisation of seconded national diplomats and their counterparts from the Commission and the Council, makes that the EEAS staff as a whole starts sharing joint systems of meaning and of organisational identity (Bátora, 2011). Besides, through drafting up common policy documents and strategies the staff will start using the same ‘institutional language’.

Thus, the EEAS has the structure of a genuine foreign ministry and is composed of staff that expects it to behave like such a ministry. These elements combined allow us to speak of a relatively large degree of *unity of bureaucratic culture* in the case of European foreign policy-making.

At the time of birth of the EEAS, the organisation of the service seemed to constitute an efficient reorganisation of EU diplomacy, partly because of the moderate size of its bureaucracy (Cherrier, 2012). However, has the EEAS in practice been able to develop an orderly fashioned and well-functioning organisational structure? Some

serious problems are still identified by the interview respondents who work for the EEAS.

First of all, according to three interview respondents, HRVP Catherine Ashton shows too little involvement with her employees at the EEAS.<sup>7</sup> Apart from the fact that her function is too extensive to be enacted by one person and that she is a relatively low-profile politician for the function of HRVP, another reason for doubting the aptitude of the current design of the HRVP's function is that she deals almost exclusively with people of her own cabinet and keeps away from the EEAS staff (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS). Additionally, there are also complaints from the member states about her availability at debates with national parliaments (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).

Second, the position of the HRVP's cabinet also poses challenges to the efficiency of the EEAS. The cabinet forms an additional level of coordination unknown to most national foreign ministries. The main problem is that the cabinet needs to approve all policy documents created by the desks of the EEAS. While the thematic and regional desks are narrowly specialised, the cabinet therefore has a very wide orientation. In spite of this, the cabinet wishes to micro-manage on all issues, which causes their process of approval to be very lengthy. This poses real problems when, for example, the EEAS is called upon by the Council of Ministers to present a proposal for the imposition of sanctions to a certain country. As decisions to impose sanctions are very momentous and politically sensitive, they need to be enacted swiftly. However, when the document reaches the desk of Ashton's cabinet, it may lay there for several days, is the experience of an interview respondent. The member states do not have the time to wait this long. In such situations, it is mostly one of the larger member states that

---

<sup>7</sup> On this issue, the respondents prefer to remain anonymous.



submits a draft proposal to the Council instead of the EEAS. That is a big loss for the EEAS' agent autonomy (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

Third, the EEAS lacks sufficient resources to perform its coordinating role to its full potential. During the establishment of the EEAS, it was agreed that the service would be set-up with respect to the principle of budget-neutrality (Reynaert, 2011).

In general, many interview respondents agreed that there are still problems of an organisational nature within the EEAS. These problems originate most frequently when budgets are concerned. As the EEAS is not fully responsible for its own budget, it has to rely on diverse and complex budget procedures of the Council and the Commission. Also on non-budgetary matters, there are too many guidelines of different institutions and bureaucratic layers that EEAS officials have to deal with (interview with Pulch).

#### *2.4.2. Institutionalisation*

“In the context of EU foreign policy making, one of the key issues is the development and institutionalisation of the EEAS both in terms of its embeddedness in the diplomatic system and in terms of its embeddedness in the system of multi-level governance in the EU” (Bátora, 2011, p. 9).

The text cited above refers to the independent variable ‘institutionalisation’. This concept refers to the degree to which the EEAS has acquired meanings and goals beyond its immediate function, both for the international community and for the EEAS employees and European citizens.

The process of institutionalisation is usually lengthy (Bátora, 2011). As the EEAS is still a young service, we may expect to find that the institutionalisation is still under

way or has only just started to develop itself. An illustrative example of this was provided by Koetsenruijter: “Since a long time, the European institutions organise an annual football tournament. There are teams with officials from the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council. However, when I wanted to join an EEAS team, I found out that there is not yet an EEAS team. The EEAS was not able yet to form a proper team of its own.” (interview with Koetsenruijter). This illustrates very well how the EU community in Brussels is not yet accustomed to the EEAS. The latter still has to earn a right of existence for itself in Brussels.

In this respect, a very significant symbol has been the building of the EEAS. When the EEAS set sail in 2010, the service did not dispose of a proper building yet. The opening of the new building was a real moment of glory for the EEAS. “It felt like becoming a true institution” (Interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespochaga). The building is located on the Shuman Square, where also the buildings of the Council and the Commission are located. The sense, in other words, that the EEAS deserves a spot of its own in the centre of the power in Brussels, has been very important in creating a sense of a certain commonness amongst the EEAS personnel.

This is in line with the theory of organisational locus: “The tough turf-battles between the Commission and the Council as to where the EEAS should have its official seat and the fact that it ended up in a separate building approximately equidistant from the two institutions, indicate the continued importance of physical location for wielding influence on policy making” (Bátora, 2011, p. 7).

### **3. The Principals**

#### **3.1. Establishing the EEAS: hard bargaining**

With regard to the establishment of the EEAS, article 27.3 TEU states:

“The organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service shall be established by a decision of the Council. The Council shall act on a proposal from the High Representative after consulting the European Parliament and after obtaining the consent of the Commission” (Article 27.3, TEU).

The process described above formed the framework for the intensive bargaining that took place in the first half year of 2010. The principal stakeholders were the HRVP, the EU member states (through their obvious involvement in the Council), the European Commission, the Council Secretariat and the European Parliament.

During the set-up process of the EEAS, it became clear that the negotiating actors all had large interests at stake in the process.

Although an important goal of the decision to include the EEAS in the Treaty of Lisbon had been the concern over European foreign policy coherence, the Commission and the member states seemed only interested in protecting and increasing their power instead of enhancing coherence (Reynaert, 2012). A journalist even typified the negotiation process thus: “The European Commission and the EU member states are in the middle of a nasty scrap over who is to have the most influence on Europe’s new diplomatic corps” (Phillips, 2010). But what caused this antagonistic bargaining? It is possible to identify a number of causes.

First of all, the establishment of a European foreign service was a constituent issue for the member states and other actors. Running a foreign policy is one of the primary characteristics of a sovereign state and therefore any modification to that right constitutes a domain of ‘high politics’. In high politics domains, where the interests at stake are very important for the stakeholders, actors are likely to deploy a ‘realist’ attitude to the negotiation process. (Reynaert, 2012).

Second, apart from being a constituent issue for the actors, EU foreign policy was an issue on which the European Commission and the member states already enjoyed large responsibilities. It may be expected, therefore, that giving up part of these powers might even be more difficult than negotiating over an entirely new policy domain.

Third, the rules of the bargaining process on the EEAS, as designed by article 27.3 TEU, did not facilitate the process either. Not only did it oblige the Council to obtain the approval of the European Commission but it also had to consult the European Parliament, which wielded power over the budget of the EEAS. More important still, the Council also had to take the decision by unanimity. Consequently, all actors at the table practically had a veto at their disposition. Therefore, the bargaining process followed a “non-coercive system of unanimous voting” (Reynaert, 2012, p. 216).

Fourth, the position of the HRVP during the bargaining process was relatively weak in comparison to that of the other negotiators. As Catherine Ashton only learned in December 2009 that she would be appointed as HRVP, after which the negotiations would commence immediately, she had far less time to prepare herself than the European institutions and member states. The latter were aware of the upcoming EEAS negotiations since 2007, as the Treaty of Lisbon had announced the foundation of this organisation.

Furthermore, the Commission and the member states had the same access to information as the HRVP during the process, because Catherine Ashton had invited them to join the working group on the EEAS, which was composed to provide advises on the proposal for the establishment of the service (Reynaert, 2012).

All these elements caused the negotiation process to be characterised by ‘hard bargaining’. The result of this hard bargaining was, as was stipulated in the previous chapter of this thesis, a rather restrictive and precise mandate for the EEAS.

Nevertheless, the results of the negotiation process were not exclusively negative for the EEAS. After all, the regional and thematic desks that work with CFSP matters and communitarian policies are located within the EEAS and not within the Commission (Duke, 2009). As a coordination mechanism, therefore, the EEAS may still function very well.

Moreover, compared to the former DG Relex of the Commission the EEAS occupies a more optimal place within the EU institutional architecture. Through contacts with the other institutions the EEAS may be able to gradually enlarge its functions in an informal way. In sum, the outcome of the bargaining process turned the EEAS into an organisation “that is less optimal in its function but more politically feasible” (Barton, 2012, p. 76).

### *3.1.1. Member states versus the European Commission*

The actors at the table during the negotiations on the establishment of the EEAS did not form a uniform front with the goal of limiting the power of the EEAS. In this respect, it may be useful to concisely shed light on the rivalry between the member states and the Commission.

When considering the reasons for the establishment of the EEAS from a PA perspective and looking further than the quest for more coherence in the EU's foreign policies, it can be concluded that founding the EEAS was an act partly inspired precisely to *limit* agency slippage; namely, that of the European Commission.

For, although the member states aimed to pool their resources and create a more coherent European foreign policy, they did not want to further empower the Commission by extending the scope of DG Relex. The Commission has a well-established reputation for “pushing the boundaries of its mandate” and can dispose of a large spectre of resources. Thus, the Commission already showed a large degree of agency slippage and was not easily kept under control by the member states anymore. Therefore, it made sense to remove DG Relex from the institutional structure of the Commission and to confer it to a new service (Furness, 2011).

After all, it was the goal of the member states to preserve the intergovernmental nature of decision-making on CFSP and ESDP matters. Observing the negotiation process on the EEAS from this perspective shows us that there is considerable *heterogeneity of interest* among the principals of the EEAS.

### *3.1.2. Ex ante controls*

First and foremost, the most convincing ex ante control applied to the EEAS is its limited mandate. As has been stipulated in previous sections of this thesis, the EEAS' scope was considerably constrained because of the principals' fear of losing influence. Even before the negotiation process started, the Commission had succeeded in safeguarding a number of policy areas for itself, such as trade, development and neighbourhood policy.

Secondly, the Council's appointment of the first HRVP, Catherine Ashton, was in itself a form of *ex ante* control. The reason for this is that Ashton was a relatively low-profile politician to take up the very symbolic and powerful function of HRVP. Hence, her potential to engage in *agency slippage* by increasing the EEAS' international standing, which would lead to *institutionalisation* of the EEAS, was not great (Mahnke, 2012).

A third *ex ante* control concerns the deputies of the HRVP. Whereas the European Parliament advocated a number of politically accountable deputies to be put in place, the member states succeeded in retaining this role for their ministers of foreign affairs. As such, only they, together with the Commissioners who are concerned with external relations policies, have the right to deputize for the HRVP (Reynaert, 2012).

### 3.1.3. *Ex post* controls

The EEAS is under continuous 'ex post control surveillance'. In first instance, this is done by the seconded national diplomats who are working for the EEAS. As these officials temporarily become a part of the organisational structure of the EEAS itself, they may very swiftly report processes of agency slippage to their home governments. In the second place, the European Parliament keeps an oversight of European foreign policy. However, it is the question to which extent it can exercise a solid day-to-day monitoring function on foreign policy issues. The reason for this is that plenary session debates with HRVP Ashton have little chances of becoming reciprocal. MEP Van Baalen

“It is not possible to have a substantial debate with Catherine Ashton in parliament. This says more about the institutional design of the European

Parliament than about Ashton. Apart from the ‘blue card procedure’, which is of limited value, interrupting in the debate is not really possible” (interview with Van Baalen).<sup>8</sup>

A third form of ex post control is oversight by the Council of Ministers, enacted through the committees and working groups that are comprised of member states’ diplomats.

Lastly, the member states always dispose of the threat of affecting the EEAS’ mandate by Council Decisions (Furness, 2011). That measure also constitutes an important ex post control.

---

<sup>8</sup> The author translated Mr. Van Baalen’s statement from Dutch to English.



## 3.2. The principals of the EEAS

### 3.2.1. *The Member states*

Recalling the PA relationships that were defined in chapter 1, the member states constitute the most powerful principals of the EEAS. They do not only delegate power to the EEAS via the Council, but they also delegate power to the European Commission, which is itself a principal of the EEAS. Therefore, a positive stance from the member states towards the EEAS means almost everything to the fate of the latter.

Member states' governments are political actors as opposed to the European Commission and the EEAS, which are mainly bureaucratic actors. Therefore, the main variable determining the member states' delegation of power to the EEAS is their *political will* (interview with Van Baalen; interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazambroz y de Arespochaga).

Clearly, there has been some political will to establish the EEAS, because otherwise the institution would not be functioning today. However, the reasons behind the decision to establish the EEAS have to do with more than enhancing European foreign policy coherence. As we have seen, they also have to do with limiting the powers of the Commission: an example of 'agent shopping'.

In general, the member states lack the political will to transfer comprehensive foreign policy-making powers to the European institutions. This was also visible during the negotiations on the EEAS. "Overall, the member states were simply reluctant to give the new service authority at the expense of their national prerogatives" (Mahncke, 2012, p. 36).

There are two reasons for this refusal. The first relates to the reflex of ‘bureaucratic self-survival’ of national foreign services (Balfour & Raik, 2013). The second reason is much more fundamental: it is the natural tendency of national states to protect their sovereignty.

Nevertheless, the member states’ preferences towards the EEAS are far from uniform. A first division between the member states is that between the large and small member states. This division is of a purely functional nature: The smaller member states have less resources to conduct certain areas of foreign policy themselves and therefore it is relatively more beneficial for them to pool resources with other member states (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS). An example of an area where smaller member states favour more EEAS coordination is consular affairs (Comelli & Matarazzo, 2011). Additionally, smaller member states promote a stronger role of the EU Delegations in e.g. reporting (Balfour & Raik, 2013).

In spite of this, the smaller member states do complain that they have less access to information from the EEAS than the larger member states. In line with this, diplomats of the larger member states report to have more intensive contacts with the EEAS (Balfour & Raik, 2013).

A different level of analysis is the overall stance towards foreign policy integration. Here, two camps between the member states emerge. Germany, Italy, Sweden, Poland, Finland, Portugal, Estonia and Greece seem to occupy the most positive stance towards foreign policy integration. On the other side, the UK, France and the Czech Republic, among others, are more sceptical (Balfour & Raik, 2013).

Although two camps can be identified, it must be emphasized that each country does have a specific stance on the EEAS, so variations in attitude between the members of the same ‘camp’ definitely occurs.

The above once again underlines that the *interest heterogeneity* between the different principals of the EEAS runs high.

### *3.2.2. The European Commission*

Currently, there is still institutional wariness from the side of the Commission towards the EEAS. Defending the role of the EEAS versus that of the Commission is therefore a constant battle (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

The European Commission has shown more than once that it sees the division of competences between the EEAS and itself as a zero-sum game. This was especially visible during, and shortly after, the negotiation process on the EEAS.

Perhaps the most confronting bargaining move came from Commission President Barroso in 2009, before the negotiation process started. Since 2008 the Commission and the member states had been anticipating the establishment of the EEAS, by making it clear that certain competences, like trade and enlargement, would remain with the Commission. By then, however, it was clear that the relevant services of DG Relex would be transferred to the future EEAS (Council Progress Report 10650/08). Neighbourhood Policy was one of these services. However, when the Commission was re-established in 2009, Barroso decided to move Neighbourhood Policy from DG Relex to a new DG for enlargement and neighbourhood policy. Accordingly, Barroso prevented the transfer of competences on neighbourhood policy from the Commission to the EEAS.

In fact, the Commission emerged from the negotiations on the EEAS with more competences than before (!). The Commission gained competences in the sphere of humanitarian aid and pre-accession financial assistance (Reynaert, 2012).

One should be cautious, however, not to create a too negative image of the Commission's stance towards the EEAS. It should not be forgotten that the Commission and the EEAS have been cooperating on foreign policy issues for more than two and a half years now. Although some of the interview respondents have noted that there are still some inter-institutional inconveniences, mainly concerning the traditionally communitarian policy areas, they also maintain that inter-institutional cooperation *in general* happens with collegiality and in a friendly manner.

An interview respondent who works for the Commission stated that the Commission services are working with the EEAS regional desks as if those desks were still in DG Relex and that the coordination is good over all (interview with Peresso).

### *3.2.3. European Parliament*

During the bargaining process, the European Parliament defended the position that would grant the EEAS most competence and would therefore most enhance coherence of European foreign policy. The reason for this is, undoubtedly, that the European Parliament had least foreign policy powers to lose (Reynaert, 2012).

As the European Parliament does not delegate authority to the EEAS, it cannot be considered a principal. Nevertheless, it does exercise influence over the EEAS. It does so by using two instruments. First, the European Parliament holds regular hearings with Commissioners. Second, the parliament exercises budgetary control over the EEAS (Furness, 2011).

As the HRVP is well aware of these indirect powers of the EEAS, she attempts to accommodate the position of the European Parliament as much as she can. MEP Van Baalen:

“Ashton does not want to jeopardize her good relationship with the European Parliament. For that reason, she usually pays respect to its resolutions as much as she can. Even if there would be unanimity in the Council on certain difficult issues, the HRVP would not fully disregard the Parliament, and send it a formal letter stating that its concerns will be respected as much as possible” (interview with Van Baalen).<sup>9</sup>

Be that as it may, the relations between the EEAS and the European Parliament are of an *informal* nature. On substantive issues, the EEAS is under no obligation to inform the European Parliament. Moreover, even the budgetary powers of the Parliament are sometimes put into perspective: “. . . the extent to which this right gives Parliamentarians policy leverage is unclear, as refusing approval for the EEAS’ budget would be a ‘nuclear option’ that would shut down the service completely and is unlikely to be contemplated even in the most serious of crises” (Furness, 2011, p. 19).

---

<sup>9</sup> The author translated Mr. Van Baalen’s answer from Dutch to English.

#### **4. Vertical coherence**

When examining the effect of the EEAS on vertical coherence, the key question to answer is: Has convergence occurred between the foreign policies of the member states of the European Union? The present chapter will attempt to answer this question. More specifically, the chapter will start by identifying some practices that are applied in current EEAS policy-making. After that, it will consider whether information asymmetry, EEAS personnel, the delegations and/or the agenda setting potential of the EEAS and the HRVP have had influence on vertical coherence. It will do so mainly by drawing on the information that was acquired during interviews with officials of the European institutions.

#### **4.1. Practices that enhance vertical coherence**

In order to give a good assessment of the practices of the EEAS in this respect, it is necessary to be aware of the decision-making structure in foreign policy-making at EU level, with a special focus on CFSP/ESDP matters.

The policy process starts at the European Council, which sets out the general guidelines and principles with regard to European foreign policy. The eventual adoption of the policy is done by the Council of Ministers (the Foreign Affairs Council), which also monitors its implementation (Reynaert, 213).

However, before the Council takes decisions, a considerable amount of preparatory work is executed at different levels. The HRVP has the duty to initiate policy proposals (Art. 18.2 TEU), to which assistance is given by the EEAS. These policy proposals are then considered by the member states' Permanent Representations in the many Council preparatory bodies (Committees and working groups) that negotiate proposals on CFSP/ESDP matters. Finally, when the Council preparatory bodies have negotiated a final version, the proposal is sent to the Foreign Affairs Council, where it is adopted or refused.

One of the most significant changes that the establishment of the EEAS has entailed is that the preparatory bodies mentioned above are now chaired by EEAS officials (Art. 4.4., Council Decision L201). This modification of the preparation structure has had some significant implications.

Firstly, it placed the EEAS in a convenient situation to lead the coordination process between the member states. Before the EEAS was established, representatives of the rotating Presidency of the Council chaired these committees and working groups of the Foreign Affairs Council. Frequently, these chairpersons had more interest in advertising their own states' preferences than in coordinating the member state

positions in order to create a coherent policy (interview with Koetsenruijter; interview with, Gebrandrij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespachoga). Therefore, an independent EEAS chair is in a better position to serve as a ‘mediator’ between the member states.

Secondly, through its role as the chair of the working groups, the EEAS can play the role of an agenda setter. The choice of the issues on the agenda is now motivated by the topicality of these issues and by the goal to create a coherent foreign policy. In the pre-EEAS era, the rotating presidency often scheduled issues that were of sole importance for the current president’s own member state, but of little relevance for the other representatives present.

Apart from deviating the debate from important foreign policy matters to issues that may not be of relevance to the majority of the member states, this practice also had its effects on the presence of member states during the working groups: They were often poorly attended. This changed significantly when the EEAS came into being. Especially the coordination meetings with member states at the Delegations were much better attended after the establishment of the EEAS (interview with Koetsenruijter).

Thirdly, EEAS chairpersons of working groups are in a good position to keep account of developments in other foreign policy areas that could generate effects for the topics on the table.

Finally, a very important advantage of the EEAS chairmanship of Council preparatory bodies is the fact that it improves the continuity in the working groups and committees. In the old situation it was difficult to achieve continuity as a result of the six months-term of the rotating Presidency (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).



However, the advantages of the EEAS chairmanship should be balanced by a number of more critical considerations. In first instance, the six months-term of the rotating presidency may have had negative consequences for continuity, but it did ensure the presence of pressure on the side of the Presidency to ‘push’ certain issues through the decision-making bodies before the end of its term. Yet, the rather short time-span of the chairmanship did provide for a brisker pace in the Council structures. That proactivity lacks in the current situation (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).

What is more, the presence of the EEAS at the coordinating meetings sometimes complicates the picture. According to a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU, the EEAS has already developed its own agenda on certain foreign policy areas. When seeking to promote this agenda, the EEAS resembles a ‘29<sup>th</sup>’ member state at the table, rather than an independent chairman (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU). In such a situation, the extended length of the negotiations tends to offset the profits of EEAS chairmanship.

A third observation is that the performance of the EEAS chair of the working groups is very dependent on the person who actually executes the job. Personality of a chairperson is a variable that plays a significant role in relation to the outcome of negotiations. Therefore, while prescribing the positive or negative effects of chairmanship to the new situation, one would have to account for a small margin of error created by the capabilities of independent officials (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).

Lastly, EEAS representatives only chair Council preparatory bodies that fall under the scope of the Foreign Affairs Council. However, issues at stake in other Council

formations, such as development cooperation or trade, also have important implications for EU external relations. Although these former first pillar policies do fall under the competences of the EEAS – albeit in cooperation with the Commission – the EEAS does not chair the relevant Council preparatory bodies. On such issues, it is COREPER rather than the EEAS, which disposes of the umbrella view of all policies with external implications that pass the Council of Ministers. The question remains: which is better equipped to set the agenda on matters like these, the member state holding the Presidency or the EEAS (Galeazzi, 2013)?<sup>10</sup> The relative importance of chairing working groups and committees is displayed by the EEAS’ wish to chair the Committee on Development (CODEV). As Galeazzi (2013) puts it: “The EEAS is likely to want to chair CODEV since for both political and administrative reasons it could well believe in the longer-run it would make life easier for the service in preparing the Foreign Affairs Council that deals with development.”

The same advantages and disadvantages as referred to above may be expected from the chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Council by the HRVP instead of the rotating Presidency, although here the effects may be more far-reaching. It has been noted that the Foreign Affairs Council follows a stricter regime than before the establishment of the HRVP and EEAS (interview with Pulch). The HRVP stands at the apex of a ‘policy preparation factory’ created by the EEAS. Therefore, various ‘rounds’ of EEAS coordination have been able to guide a certain issue until it ends up in the Foreign Affairs Council, where the HRVP can finish the pyramid of member state guidance facilitated by the EEAS.

Another EEAS activity that has enhanced vertical coherence when compared to the old situation is the practice of ‘joint programming’. Joint programming is a process by

---

<sup>10</sup> It must be noted, however, that the EEAS is involved in shaping these policies in an earlier stage of the policy-making process, namely during formal and informal inter-service meetings with the Commission. For more information on this issue, see the chapter on horizontal coherence.

which development cooperation is coordinated between the member states and the EU. As development cooperation is a former first pillar policy that still partly falls under the competence of the Commission, the latter also joins in the joint programming process.

Basically, joint programming involves three main activities: sharing analysis, developing a common strategic view and allocating a budget (interview with Sohlstrom, Gebrandrij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespacochaga). The aim of the joint programming process is to get the development policies of the 28 member states in line with the EU development policy, which is made jointly by the Commission and the EEAS. It does so by drafting joint country strategy documents, which should replace bilateral country strategies of the member states. These strategy documents also include a provision on the division of labour between the different member states involved. Joint programming has already led to some successes, like the application of the joint strategy document by member states in their development cooperation with Ethiopia (Galeazzi, Helly & Krätke, 2013).

It should be mentioned that the major part of joint programming takes place in the partner countries, at the EU Delegations. The Delegations play a large role in coordinating and programming together with the embassies of the member states that join in the development cooperation process (interview with Sohlstrom, Gebrandrij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespacochaga).

## **4.2. Information asymmetry**

Nearly all respondents who were interviewed during the preparations for this thesis agreed that the flow of information to the EU external relations decision-making system has increased considerably in comparison with the situation before the EEAS was established. They maintain that there is an information asymmetry between the EEAS and the member states. There are several reasons for the emergence of this asymmetry.

Firstly, the EEAS gathers information through its role as the chair of the Council preparatory bodies, where EEAS chairpersons have the platform to engage in informal talks with member state representatives while attempting to fulfil a mediating role during negotiations on a certain topic.

Secondly, the EU Delegations form a useful source of information, as they convene monthly meetings between representatives of all EU member states to discuss the situation in the host country. The outcomes of these meetings are written down in Head of Missions Reports (HOMS Reports), which are sent to Brussels in order to inform the EEAS about the member states positions (Bicchi, 2012).

During HOMS meetings, the member states voice their positions on political developments in a very early stage. This does not only improve the information supply for the EEAS, but also for the member states reciprocally. The information shared through this medium is very useful in shaping vertically coherent policies, as “you can still do most with information about each other’s position in the earlier stages of policy-making” (interview with an official of the ministry of foreign affairs of the Netherlands).

However, the HOMS reports are not the only reports that originate at the Delegations. Increasingly, EU Delegations also engage in political reporting. A political report

differs from a HOMS report in that it is not a negotiated document in which all the positions of the member states are displayed, but a short “snapshot with advice of EU Delegation staff on action to be taken by the EEAS” (Bicchi, 2012, p. 90).

Thirdly, the fact that seconded national diplomats of the member states form one-third of the staff of the EEAS provides for a steady supply of information on an informal basis about member states’ positions and decision-making procedures. The seconded national diplomats at the headquarters of the EEAS keep each other informed about, for example, when certain issues are treated by the parliaments of their member states. Accordingly, EEAS officials know better when to inform member states about a certain topic and what the preferences of a member state are (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

Fourthly, on a much more specific level the EEAS has also been able to draw information in its own direction: the service seems to have taken the lead in the distribution of COREU (CORrespondence EUropéene) messages.

The COREU system is a communication system intended to send and receive confidential diplomatic information to the key actors in European foreign policy: the member states, the Council Secretariat, the Commission and, since 2011, the EEAS. The system is much akin to communication systems of national ministries of foreign affairs. “From a technical point of view, the network can be equated to a sophisticated telex system via encrypted transmission” (Bicchi, 2012, p. 83). A study by Bicchi (2012) has showed that the EEAS sends by far the largest number of COREUs when compared to other EU institutions.

Finally, the EEAS has also increased the information flow between member states, EU actors and third country governments on consular affairs. It does so by facilitating a protected website on the internet where member states and other actors can

exchange sensitive information that may be valuable for consular cooperation, such as data of citizens located in certain areas or maps. This forum is called CoOL (Consular Online) (Bicchi, 2012). The development of CoOL, which is done by the EEAS Situation Center (SITCEN), is remarkable because cooperation on consular matters is still a very sensitive issue for some member states.

It may be concluded that the EEAS has succeeded in creating information asymmetry between itself and the member states. It has been able to do so by exploiting the unique location it occupies in the institutional architecture of European foreign policy making: standing between the member states and the Community, and drawing upon the competences that the HRVP received from the Treaty of Lisbon.

### **4.3. Agenda setting role**

Apart from the positive aspects of information asymmetry, the EEAS also enjoys the role of agenda setter on CFSP matters, with which vertical coherence can be enhanced. We have already concisely touched upon the agenda setting potential of the EEAS when drawing up policy briefs and when performing the chair's function in the Council preparatory bodies. However, the most important agenda setting role deserves a mention of its own: in a strict sense, it is not the EEAS but the HRVP who enjoys this role of agenda setter as she is the chair of the Foreign Affairs Council.<sup>11</sup> “The HRVP's role as the head of the foreign affairs council is the main means with which the coherence between the member states and the EU is enhanced” (interview with Tibbels).

---

<sup>11</sup> As was stated in chapter 2, we will consider the EEAS and the HRVP two sides of the same puzzle for the purposes of the present research. The HRVP is entitled to make decisions; the EEAS is the supporting bureaucracy.

#### 4.4. EEAS Personnel

It could be argued that the EEAS harbours a vertical coherence enhancement instrument in its very own organisational structure: its staff. As at least one third of the EEAS officials should consist of seconded diplomats from the ministries of foreign affairs of the member states, much communication takes place between member states diplomats at the EEAS headquarters. These diplomats bring along best practices and knowledge from their different foreign services. It could therefore be argued that while doing shaping EU foreign policy together, they are collectively aware of the demands and principles of the different member states foreign policies. It is my hypothesis that they can thus progressively form a 'European diplomatic culture' with an *esprit de corps* at the EEAS. This could enhance vertical coherence in European foreign policy.

The professional networks that the seconded national diplomats bring with them are being identified as the main mechanism through which EEAS personnel themselves contribute to vertical coherence (interview with Houttuin; interview with Sohlstrom, Gebrandrij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespacochaga; interview with Pulch). These networks enable the seconded national diplomats to quickly acquire feedback from national governments on certain issues.

Additionally, the easier communication between the EEAS and the member states inures to the benefit of both sides. Not only EEAS officials learn from their home ministries, but national representatives will also gain information about the process in Brussels more easily via their networks. A policy officer of the Dutch ministry of foreign affairs stated that there is frequent communication with Dutch EEAS officials about the functioning of the EEAS. Sometimes, these contacts have a policy substantial character. In such situations, the EEAS diplomats may tell their Dutch



colleagues that the Netherlands should change its position on a certain issue on which the Netherlands does not have a high interest. However, slightly changing the position might ease the European decision-making process considerably (interview with an official of the ministry of foreign affairs of the Netherlands).

These findings concerning the staff of the EEAS all confirm my hypothesis that a more diverse provenance of the EEAS personnel will lead to more vertical coherence. However, the answer to the hypothesis is far from only positive. As was noted in chapter 2, it would be incorrect to speak of an *esprit de corps* or ‘European diplomatic community’ in relation to the EEAS. According to the interview respondents, diplomats stay in service of the EEAS too shortly in order for a veritable *esprit de corps* to be created. Obviously, it is too soon to judge the organisation on its capacity to build such an *esprit de corps* as it is only two and a half years old. Therefore, time will learn whether a ‘European diplomatic community’ will be a reality once.

At present, however, we may say that the hypothesis is neither to be rejected, nor to be fully affirmed. Nonetheless, it is certain that the different nature of the personnel of the EEAS has had some positive effects, mainly concerning the networks that officials bring with them to Brussels.

#### **4.5. Delegations**

The EEAS heads a network of 141 EU Delegations that are located in third countries or at international organizations. These Delegations are the very *raison d'être* of the EEAS: they are what make the EEAS a foreign service.

There are several ways in which the EU Delegations contribute to achieving vertical coherence in European foreign policy making. A number of those we have already considered: the Delegations are a key instrument of information gathering for the EEAS through HOMS reports and political reporting. As such, the information can be used to better coordinate negotiations between member states on a certain issue, as a result of which a common position may be easier to reach.

Second, the Delegations play an important role in the process of joint programming of development cooperation. They do so by formulating divisions of labour between the member states and advising the EEAS headquarters on financial allocations.

On these areas, a precondition for the well functioning of the EU Delegations is the degree to which member states are prepared to accept their presence and activities. According to Balfour and Raik (2013), the member states generally see the Delegations in a positive light. They have even called for a more political approach of the Delegations. Moreover, EU member states are eager users of the political reporting system of the EU Delegations, which they would want to enhance (Balfour & Raik, 2013). This shows that the benefits of EU Delegations are broadly being acknowledged by the member states, which in turn gives the EU Delegation more leeway to expand their work.

It is not very surprising that the member states occupy a positive disposition towards the EU Delegations, for it is this network of EEAS postings that can in the long run produce considerable cuts in public expenditure for them. There are two main ways

through which these financial benefits could be attained: First, through co-location of embassies with EU Delegations, and second, through cooperating with EU Delegations on consular affairs. According to the comprehensive study of Balfour and Raik, “many member states have started to show an interest in the possibility of co-locating embassies with EU delegation, which saves practical costs and facilitates coordinated action” (Balfour & Raik, 2013, p. 8).

The current economic crisis may provide another incentive for the member states to cooperate with the EU Delegations on matters like these. Because of the economic crisis that struck Europe, the European governments need to cut their budgets more than ever. When one combines this fact with the establishment of the EEAS in exactly the same time frame, “it can be rationally expected that representations of Member States will shrink in size, at least where stakes are low. . . . This in turn will benefit the European service, as Member States will increasingly depend on its network” (Cherrier, 2012, pp. 25-26).

Indeed, the government of the Netherlands is at present actively seeking for possibilities of co-locating diplomatic facilities with the EEAS. However, it seems that there are still no realistic possibilities to engage in this process immediately. Before putting more effort in this possibility, the member states need to define which activities can be executed by the EU Delegations and which activities will remain under the exclusive competence of the member states representations (interview with an official of the ministry of foreign affairs of the Netherlands).

The fact that member states are actively engaged in exploring the possibilities of more intensive cooperation with the EU Delegations shows that the EU Delegations harbour an even larger potential to create vertical coherence. Cooperation with member states on consular affairs would increase vertical coherence on a procedural

level: it would entail the establishment of similar consular practice for the participating member states. Moreover, co-location with national embassies would foster vertical coherence through increased contacts and a diminution of task duplication.

#### **4.6. Policy Convergence between member states?**

Thus far, this section has identified practices and structures of the EEAS and the European foreign policy-making system that could be instrumental in improving vertical coherence. But is there evidence of actual policy convergence between the member states?

It is only possible to supply responses to this question with a mixed answer. The mixed answer comprises two dimensions: strategies and actions.

Concerning convergence in strategies, it must be said that there are still few common European strategies towards regions of the world. Many interview respondents of my research have identified the formation of common strategies as the most important area in which the EEAS can considerably augment its role (interview with Houttuin; interview with Koetsenruijter; interview with Sohlstrom, Gebrandrij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespachaga).

The HRVP has not yet been able to formulate European strategies on relations with the strategic partners, which are, however, of great importance for Europe. The only comprehensive EU strategy to date has been the memo on the Arab Spring of 2011 (interview with Koetsenruijter).

Although comprehensive and politically important common European strategies may largely be lacking, there was still enough room for the EEAS to promote vertical coherence in the positions of member states towards Russia. “The member states now have a more narrow bandwidth towards Russia. Before, a gap between some EU member states existed, for example on the issue of energy deliveries from Russia to Germany. That gap is now not totally gone, but it has narrowed considerably” (interview with Pulch).

With regard to *actions* of the member states, a few recent examples of negative vertical coherence quite easily come to mind. The most recent example is the end of the EU arms embargo on the Syrian opposition in May of this year. The arms embargo, although well supported by the majority of the member states, was abandoned because two member states wanted to be able to supply arms in the event of a civil war (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS). This example shows clearly how national considerations can break down a common stance.

Another example of an action of negative vertical coherence is last November's vote in the UNGA on the upgrade of Palestine's status in the United Nations. The status of Palestine was eventually upgraded to a 'non-member observer status', but the EU did not display a single voice: fifteen member states voted in favour of the status upgrade, eleven abstained from voting and one (the Czech Republic) voted against (Morselli, 2013). Similarly, this example shows that the EU member states still act divided on certain foreign policy issues.

When classifying the answers to the question whether the EEAS has been able to create policy convergence, a gap between the respondents who work for the member states and the respondents working for the EU institutions emerges.

EEAS officials do discern a tendency towards more vertical coherence among the member states, only they consider this process to be *work in progress*: because the EEAS is still a very young organisation, it has not yet been able to draft policies on certain issues. More time is necessary to do this. Moreover, in their eyes, the HRVP still lacks a clear EU mandate to act towards, for example, Russia and China. When these important strategic partners are involved, the larger member states themselves still use their own diplomatic channels and political representatives. This will change in due time, they state, when the EEAS has developed a solid underlying policy

framework. What is more, on issues like Bosnia the HRVP has been able to operate autonomously (interview with Koetsenruijter). Therefore, in the eyes of the EEAS officials, the current situation is already much more coherent than before the establishment of the EEAS and will continue to go in that direction.

The respondents working as national representatives point in a different direction. They emphasize the current paradigm of ‘renationalisation of foreign policy’ in international relations (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU; interview with an official of the ministry of foreign affairs of the Netherlands). The literature seems to confirm their stance.

“ . . . at a time of re-nationalization of foreign policy such as the current one, when [member states] are unlikely to seek greater integration in foreign policy as well as in other policy areas, unless they are induced to do so by an immediate necessity” (Comelli & Matarazzo, 2011, p. 4).

Indeed, member states seem to operate in a reactive manner: a concrete problem (like an emerging conflict) or initiative of another actor is required in order for them to become active. An example of this is the conflict situation in Mali, where France took the initiative to act (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).

Here, again, we should consider the *political will* of the member states to engage in European foreign policy-making. Political will of the member states is necessary to ensure coherence (interview with Sohlstrom, Gebrandrij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespachaga).

Therefore, although the EEAS may be fully equipped with ingenious organisational structures that, in theory, enhance vertical coherence, these structures mean nothing without the political will of the member states to use them. As MEP Van Baalen puts it:

“The EEAS is an organisational solution to a political problem. That is in itself a flaw of the European foreign policy-making system. In general, I identify the tendency to start reorganising the decision-making *process* when actors cannot find common ground politically. That, however, will not solve the core problems facing a common policy” (interview with Van Baalen).<sup>12</sup>

Another reason for the broadly shared contention that the EEAS has not enhanced foreign policy convergence of the member states to a considerable degree, is that the process of policy convergence<sup>13</sup> was already taking place in the framework of the Council since long before the establishment of the EEAS. Therefore, the EEAS could not really alter it (Balfour & Raik, 6).

However, the EEAS did substantially effectuate foreign policy convergence in the policies of the new member states that joined the EU with the Southern, Northern and Eastern enlargements. These governments had not been part of the process of European policy adaption yet, and therefore had to change their policies considerably (Balfour & Raik, 6).

When asked to identify the policy areas on which the foreign policies of the member states differ most, all respondents mention the Middle East and, in particular, the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

---

<sup>12</sup> The author translated Mr. Van Baalen’s answer from Dutch to English.

<sup>13</sup> Balfour and Raik (2013) call this process ‘Europeanisation’.



Thus, we may conclude, while member states are supportive of the EEAS as an institution and its Delegations in particular, they do not feel the political need to bring their foreign policies more in line with each other. Their core national preferences remain the same. Therefore, most member states do promote leadership from the HRVP in the world, but each member state would like to see this leadership in its preferred areas: for France, Africa and security and defence would constitute such areas, while the Netherlands, Slovenia and Sweden would like to see leadership in human rights (Balfour & Raik, 8).

#### **4.7. EEAS agency slippage in vertical coherence?**

As was stated above, the EEAS has, in the few years of its existence, already developed its own foreign policy agenda, which it seeks to promote during meetings of the Council preparatory bodies. Therefore, a degree of agency slippage in vertical coherence is already taking place.

Moreover, agency slippage is also promoted by the information asymmetry and agenda setting role that the HRVP and EEAS can rely upon. What is more, the EU Delegations form a suitable instrument to enlarge the autonomy of the EEAS as an institution.

Although there may be agency slippage, the foreign policy preferences of the EU member states still differ on a number of foreign policy issues. Therefore, one should not expect too much of the EEAS when it comes to enhancing coherence among the member states.

Still, the agent autonomy that the EEAS has been able to offset some of the negative effects of the diverging policy preferences of the member states and thereby create a relative enhancement of vertical coherence in comparison to a situation without HRVP and EEAS.

## **5. Horizontal coherence**

As the foreign policy-making competences of the European Union are divided over various institutions and organizations, there is a special need for horizontal coherence to ensure an effective European foreign policy.

The EEAS faces challenges of both inter-institutional and intra-institutional horizontal coherence. Problems of intra-institutional nature are normal, in the sense that every ministry of foreign affairs or large public sector organization faces them at one point or another. In this sense, the EEAS is no different.

This changes, however, when considering inter-institutional coherence, as the EEAS operates within the complex and unique structure of European Union decision-making. Apart from the member states, the entities with foreign policy competences are the European Council and its President, the HRVP with the support of the EEAS, the Council of Ministers, the European Commission and, to a modest degree, the European Parliament. It is the task of the EEAS to coordinate, initiate, prepare and implement policies of all these institutions. It should not be surprising to the reader that, given the number of actors and procedures involved, this is not an easy task.

In theory, the system is designed to function. However, if the chemistry between the enumerated people and institutions would disappear and a situation of turf wars would emerge, European foreign policy formulation would be very difficult.

Unfortunately, such turf wars have proved not to be merely a theoretical possibility. During the 1990's, inter-institutional squabbling, created by differentiated institutions' powers, led to an increasing fragmentation of EU external relations (Hillion, 2008).

Moreover, the very establishment of the EEAS went, as we have seen, accompanied by a display of great inter-institutional rivalry, particularly visible through the battle of resources during the negotiations on the EEAS (interview with Tibbels).

Arguably the most important change of the Treaty of Lisbon with regard to horizontal coherence is the establishment of the HRVP. Her function forms a horizontal bridge between the intergovernmental and supranational policy spheres.

The ‘bridge’ that the HRVP constitutes has, however, become a species of institution itself. “The . . . High Representative and its administrative substructure, the External Action Service, are meant to overcome problems by introducing further mechanisms of coordination. Indeed, by fusing existing institutions into the new High Representative and the EEAS, coordination between institutions is transferred to new institutions” (Portela & Raube, 2009, p. 19).

In my opinion, it is important legitimate to ask the question whether the involvement of more institutions in an already complex decision-making system will be able to lead to more coherence. The present chapter seeks to address that question.

Just like the section on vertical coherence, this section will start by indicating a number of EEAS practices through which horizontal coherence may be enhanced. The second section will observe horizontal inter-institutional coherence in a number of key policy areas. It is sensible to consider horizontal coherence in this fashion, because the institutional balance of powers varies greatly per policy area. It is like Hillion wisely pointed out: “the powers and role of each institution vary depending on the EU sub-order in which it acts, and on the subject-matter of the action within each of these sub-orders. (Hillion, 2008, p. 32).

### **5.1. Practices enhancing horizontal coherence**

It is now appropriate to concisely explain the decision-making procedure through which the European Commission operates, as horizontal coherence mainly concerns interactions between the Commission and the EEAS.

The Commission performs its role of executive through the ‘co-decision’ procedure<sup>14</sup>. In a very simplified form, the co-decision procedure works like this: First, the Commission presents a policy proposal. Then, the European Parliament takes the proposal under consideration and amends it where it deems that necessary. After this, the proposal returns to the Commission, which elaborates the amendments of the European Parliament into a new proposal. This proposal is send to the Council for a first reading. The Council can now adopt the proposal by different voting regimes according to the policy area of the proposal. When it does not adopt the proposal, the cycle starts again.

Politically, the most important measure that should ensure horizontal coherence between the Commission and the EEAS is the ‘inter-service consultation’. Inter-service consultation already formed a part of the co-decision procedure before the Treaty of Lisbon. It obliged the Commission, before supplying a proposal to the European Parliament for the first time, to run a consultation process among its own different departments in order to ensure that all aspects of the proposal under consideration were taken into account (European Commission website).

When the EEAS was established, the inter-service consultation came to include consultation with the EEAS on matters with external relations implications. Hence, every proposal of the Commission in the sphere of foreign policy must formally first

---

<sup>14</sup> The formal name of this procedure is “ordinary legislative procedure”.

be considered by the EEAS. Only after the signature of the HRVP is placed, may the policy proposal continue its journey through the co-decision procedure.

Politically, the inter-service consultation is significant. On a practical level, however, it loses importance because many formal and informal coordination processes exist between the EEAS and the Commission that should ensure coordination already before the definitive version of the policy proposal is drafted. Only in that fashion may true synergy among the institutions exist.

One of the most important of those coordination processes is formed by the so-called 'country teams'. For every country of the world with which the EU has relations, a country team exists. Meetings of the country teams are attended by all EU officials that deal with the country under consideration, whether working at the EEAS or at the Commission. The country teams normally convene once in the three to four months. Some officials stress the importance of these meetings for good coordination of policies and networking and socialization with officials from other institutions (Grevi, 2013). During the last years, the staff members of the Commission have proven to be loyal visitors of the country teams (interview with Koetsenruijter).

For coordination of the relations with a number of important strategic partners, a more intensive coordination mechanism exists: the 'inter-service group'. The several inter-service groups meet on a much more frequent basis than the country teams, allowing for a more comprehensive inter- and intra-institutional coordination. Attendees of the inter-service groups are heads of division of the relevant services of the EEAS and of the Commission. The inter-service group on Russia, for example, is attended by heads of division of the Commission DGs Trade, Energy, Development and Research. During inter-service groups, the state of play with regard to the strategic partner is

reviewed and particular issues at stake are discussed in order to develop common stances among all EU staff concerned.

The inter-service groups are an important innovation of the EEAS, which has been able to deliver good results on horizontal coherence. Its main merit is the ‘hands on’ and informal working atmosphere. Memos of the meetings are distributed internally, but not published. This makes the discussions during the meetings less politically sensitive (interview with Pulch). The reason that inter-service groups exclusively exist for the relations with a limited number of strategic partners is that it would cost Commission staff too much time to attend inter-service groups on all regions. It is good, therefore, to retain the ‘exclusive’ status of the inter-service group mechanism.

The inter-service group meetings are also replicated on Director-General level. These meetings, at which much less people are present than at the inter-service groups themselves, apply a broader view to the process of horizontal cooperation, in order to ensure that horizontal coherence is not discredited (interview with Pulch).

## **5.2. Inter-institutional horizontal coherence: the different policy fields.**

### *5.2.1. Trade*

Trade policy is traditionally a communautarian competence. Still today, the Commission has full responsibility on trade matters. When negotiations with third countries are purely about trade, the Commission is the only European actor present. This has enabled the Commission to engage in agency slippage and enlarge its role. “[The Commission’s] position as a negotiator offers certain advantages (in terms of information and expertise), which allows it to push through its own preferences” (Reynaert, 2012).

However, trade is a policy area with strong external relations implications. For that reason the EEAS must also be involved to ensure that the trade agreements that the Commission concludes, are coherent with the EU’s policies on e.g. human rights and other political matters.

Within the EEAS, only one person is tasked with trade coordination: Mr. Houttuin. Mr. Houttuin has been a respondent for my research and provided some interesting information on the coordination between the Commission and the EEAS on trade.

When it comes to coordination on trade, the working relations between the Commission and the EEAS are very pleasant. Mr. Houttuin has direct contacts with the Cabinet of Trade Commissioner De Gucht, with which matters are quite quickly and efficiently coordinated (interview with Houttuin).

As the Commission shows some reluctance to work with the EEAS on other areas of Community policy (like development cooperation), the smooth cooperation on trade issues seems remarkable. It might be argued, however, that cooperation on trade matters goes well because the EEAS does not constitute a serious ‘threat’ to the



monopoly of the Commission on this policy field, as only one person is tasked with trade coordination in the EEAS.

On trade matters, again, the role of the EU Delegations should not be downplayed. Before the Treaty of Lisbon was ratified, the EU Delegations consisted solely of Commission staff. In the present situation, the EEAS adds CFSP/ESDP functions to the Delegations. Therefore, automatically, the EEAS' influence on trade matters is enlarged when it comes to monitoring trade agreements and conducting negotiations in third countries.

When negotiations with third countries are purely about trade matters, only the Commission is present from the European side. However, with an increasing number of countries the EU has free trade agreements to which political agreements are attached: This is the 'new style' of EU trade policy. Therefore, the EEAS is present at most of the trade negotiations. After the conclusion of a set of negotiations, the EEAS and the Commission present a common document that presents both political and economic aspects.

A good example of how politics and trade are interwoven is the lifting of the Generalized System of Preference (GSP) for Sri Lanka.<sup>15</sup> The EU Delegation found out that Sri Lanka was violating human rights and therefore should be sanctioned by the ending of the GSP in trade relations with the EU. The eventual lifting of the GSP was the result of synergies between the EEAS and the Commission (interview with Houttuin).

Dutch MEP Van Baalen also noted that allowing the EEAS to complement the process of trade negotiations is of added value. Mr. Van Baalen was present during trade negotiations with Japan. He observes:

---

<sup>15</sup> The GSP is a tariff system applied to developing countries, which removes tariff barriers for trade with the EU.

“During those negotiations, I have observed how the EEAS can make a difference. The EU has more to speak about with Japan than just trade matters. Because of the EEAS there are now extensive contacts between the trade representative, who works for DG Trade of the Commission, and EEAS diplomats that deal with issues like security or culture” (interview with Van Baalen).<sup>16</sup>

However, Mr. Van Baalen did emphasize that this coordination process functioned well at the mercy of the fact that there are no fundamental differences of opinion between the EU member states on relations with Japan. In general, Mr. Van Baalen is therefore more positive about horizontal coherence than about vertical coherence. The reason for this is that horizontal coherence is merely a bureaucratic process, whereas to achieve vertical coherence, political agreement among the member states is necessary.

### *5.2.2. Development cooperation*

In the area of development cooperation, one of the most complex cooperation structures between the EEAS and the Commission was put into place.

Already in the era that the Commission had full competences in the sphere of development cooperation, coordination challenges existed as EU development cooperation should be complementary to that of the member states (Art. 210 TFEU). Moreover, the financial implementation of development cooperation is practiced through a considerable amount of different financial instruments.

---

<sup>16</sup> The author translated Mr. Van Baalen’s statement from Dutch to English.

The abundance of financial programming instruments poses challenges to horizontal coherence. “The complexity of the programming cycle, where both the EEAS and DEVCO are leading on different steps, makes regular information exchange and good collaboration more important – and more complicated” (Julian, 2012). However, this regular information exchange and good collaboration are still problematic in the case of development cooperation. Although the EEAS received considerable responsibilities in planning development cooperation and allocating development funds (Art. 9, Council Decision L201), the Commission generally feels that development policy still belongs essentially within its own competences (interview with Koetsenruijter; interview with Houttuin).

It is appropriate here to shortly consider the delimitation of competences between the EEAS and the Commission in development policy.

First and foremost, final responsibility on development remains with the Commission. Additionally, the *implementation* of development programmes also falls under the responsibility of DEVCO. The EEAS would have far too little manpower to do implementation, as only eleven people work in the EEAS’s development cooperation division.

The EEAS has a role in programming of financial aid instruments for the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) of the EU. This role gives the EEAS power over the contents of development policy. Two prominent development funding instruments are the European Development Fund (EDF), which is concerned with aid to the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), which finances aid to the rest of the world. These instruments themselves, however, remain under the responsibility of the Development

Commissioner. In total, there are nine instruments for which the EEAS does the programming in cooperation with the Commission:

1. ENI (European Neighbourhood Instrument)
2. INSC (Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation)
3. DCI (Development Coordination Instrument)
4. EDF (European Development Fund)
5. EIDHR (European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights)
6. IFS (Instrument for Stability)
7. PI (Partnership Instrument)
8. IPA (Instrument Pre-Accession Assistance)
9. Instrument for Greenland (interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespachaga).<sup>17</sup>

Programming for these instruments is tackled via so-called ‘complementarity meetings’. Before the establishment of the EEAS, each of the nine programmes worked independently on making budget-plans for the MFF. No coordination at all between those programs took place. Now, the EEAS brings all the programmes together in its headquarter building.

Significantly, during complementarity meetings a voice is also given to the regional desks of the EEAS, so that programming of development cooperation now happens on the basis of more background information concerning politics, the economy and the human rights situation of a third country (Interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespachaga).

---

<sup>17</sup> For more information on the planning and financing of EU development cooperation, visit: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/index_en.htm)

Once the programming documents are drafted by the EEAS and the Commission, these documents are sent to the EU Delegation in the designated partner countries, so that EU officials working there can make additional suggestions and modifications.

An example that shows why complementarity meetings are necessary is the hierarchical manner in which, before the EEAS was established, Brussels decided about the distribution of money over the different expenses of EU Delegations in partner countries. At that time, there was considerable incoherence between what the EU Delegation's policy was (based on what they saw as necessary in the country), and what the different policy funding instruments in Brussels had negotiated.

Thus, with regard to these complementarity meetings it is clear that the EEAS has positive effects on horizontal coherence. (Interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazarambroz de Arespochaga).

However, this progress is ambiguous. Sohlstrom, Gebrandij and Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespochaga, who are seconded to the EEAS as national experts concerned with development cooperation, all agree that the advent of the EEAS itself has not made the programming in development cooperation easier. In their eyes, it would have been simplest if the complementarity meetings would have been added to the old Commission structure, because in the current situation new challenges of inter-institutional coherence have emerged, which would not have been present if DEVCO would have retained its monopoly on development cooperation.

Moreover, they note that the Commission still harbours some suspicion concerning the agenda of the EEAS, although it would never admit this in official communications.

In this respect, it is noticeable that the old pillar-structure implicitly persists. "Information sharing on a certain policy area is not easy for the Commission. That is

just not something that is in the blood of the Commission” (interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespochaga).

### 5.2.3. Sanctions

The imposition of sanctions forms one of the few terrains on which the establishment of the EEAS has been evidently beneficial to horizontal coherence. This is in itself important, as the imposition of sanctions of economic, military or visa ban nature on third countries is one of the most effective instruments the EU has to assert political influence in the international sphere.

The procedure of imposing sanctions has always been characterized by a dual nature: First, the *imposition* of sanctions was determined by a political decision, taken by the member states in the Council of Ministers. Second, the *implementation* and *monitoring* of sanctions was carried out by the Commission when it concerned trade sanctions, and by the member states when it concerned military sanctions or visa ban sanctions.

This method of the imposition of sanctions has been labelled the ‘two steps procedure’. Before the establishment of the EEAS, it was one of the areas on which considerable horizontal incoherence existed (Portela & Raube, 2009, pp. 12-13). In those times, DG Relex of the Commission was not substantially involved in the process. It had merely an advising role.

However, the establishment of the EEAS entailed a legal basis for the community’s foreign service to be involved throughout the entire policy process. Therefore, the sanctions department of the EEAS eased up the process considerably.

At present, a sanctions dossier moves to the desk of the EEAS right after a political decision has been taken by the Council of Ministers. The EEAS then drafts a proposal

on the nature of the sanctions. It does so on the basis of talks with the Council of Ministers and with the Commission, both conducted by the EEAS. Once the EEAS proposal is drafted, a judicial working group considers it. After this, the proposal returns to the Council of Ministers where it may be adopted. Hence, the EEAS has improved coordination in the first half of the ‘two steps procedure’ (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

However, perhaps the most important contribution to horizontal coherence follows in realm of the ‘second step’: the implementation and monitoring of the sanctions. Although this is still done by the Commission, the Commission department responsible for sanctions policy is located in the EEAS building, on the same floor as the EEAS sanctions department. This service, the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), falls directly under the competence of the HRVP. In practice, therefore, there is no real distinction between the FPI and the EEAS sanctions department, which makes questions of coordination redundant and ensures almost complete horizontal coherence on the terrain of sanctions (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

#### *5.2.4. Neighbourhood Policy*

A similar situation exists in the field of neighbourhood policy. The EEAS department on enlargement is the only service working for Commissioner Füle, who is in charge of enlargement and neighbourhood policy. Commissioner Füle does have a Commission DG for enlargement, but not for neighbourhood policy. Thence, the EEAS serves both the HRVP and the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood policy, when it comes to neighbourhood matters. Predominantly, the European Neighbourhood Policy division of the EEAS serves Füle and Ashton, but

also other EEAS divisions that deal with the neighbourhood regions fall under both EEAS and Commission command (interview with Tibbels).

This situation has been used by the EEAS division on neighbourhood policy to push for more coherence *within* the Commission itself, by putting neighbourhood policy topics on the agenda of talks with other DGs, like DG Trade. “More than other policy frameworks could do this, we have been able to enhance inter-institutional and intra-institutional coherence” (interview with Tibbels).

On neighbourhood policy, horizontal coherence has been institutionalised through regular meetings on different levels. First, there are meetings between Commissioner Füle and the head of the neighbourhood policy team of the EEAS. Second, there are meetings between the cabinets of Ashton and Füle, and the EEAS managing directors, directors and heads of division concerned with neighbouring countries. Finally, there are meetings between the EEAS Chief Operating Officer and the head of the neighbourhood policy team to ensure that the practical aspects of neighbourhood policy are implemented correctly (interview with Tibbels).



### 5.3. Intra-institutional coherence

The question of intra-institutional coherence is perhaps less interesting for this thesis, as every public sector organisation has to deal with intra-institutional coherence. Similar to the EEAS, all national foreign ministries face the challenge of coordinating policies between regional desks, thematic desks, the postings and the other operational structures (interview with Pulch).

Nevertheless, there are some interesting observations to make about intra-institutional coherence and the EEAS.

First, there is a division between two camps of EEAS officials that have different a different opinion about the role and scope of the EEAS. One school of EEAS officials is content with the EEAS' formal role of coordinating policy processes between the EU institutions. The other school consists of officials who envision a more proactive role for the EEAS; a role of *initiating* policy and guiding the foreign policy path of the EU (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS). Hence, there is a lack of clarity about the role that the EEAS should play among the proper personnel.

Second, the different policy areas on which the EEAS is active all entail very different methods of working and procedures. On some policy areas, like sanctions and neighbourhood policy, the EEAS enjoys higher levels of agency slippage than on other areas, like development and trade. Moreover, each policy area deals with different inter-institutional balances vis-à-vis the Commission and the Council, considering levels of cooperation and budget dependence. Instead of Furness' idea of the EEAS becoming a 'double agent', the present situation may have led the EEAS to become a 'multiform agent'.

Thirdly, the staff of the EEAS is of a very pluriform nature.

Combining the above three factors, one comes to the conclusion that the EEAS is not an intra-institutionally coherent organisation.

Ironically enough, however, the EEAS may have actually fostered intra-institutional coherence in the European Commission. The coordination mechanisms that the EEAS developed in order to cooperate better with the European Commission were partly copied by the Commission and applied within its own institutional infrastructure. This happened, for example, with the complementarity meetings that the EEAS conducts when engaged in programming the financial instruments for development cooperation. After the EEAS introduced the practice, the Commission took it over and applied it to MFF budgetary planning itself (interview with Sohlstrom, Gerbrandij & Fernández-Mazarambroz y de Arespochaga).

#### **5.4. EEAS Personnel**

The interview respondents of this thesis were generally not very optimistic about the ability of the EEAS staff to foster intra-institutional horizontal coherence.

Especially at the EU Delegations, a ‘silo-mentality’ is visible among the Commission staff, the Council staff and the EEAS staff. At the EU Delegations normally only one third of the staff works for the EEAS. The rest concerns detached personnel from the Commission. The latter remain dependent on the Commission for promotion. Therefore, it is hard to bind these people to the EEAS.

Personnel working at the EU Delegations report back to their own institution, whether that is the Commission or the EEAS, rather than all reporting back to the EEAS (interview with Houttuin; interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

At EEAS headquarters, the situation is less negative than at the Delegations. The main reason is that only EEAS staff works at the headquarters in Brussels. Before, however, these people worked for the Commission, the Council or the member states. Some people who work for the EEAS now feel more ‘EEAS’ than ‘former Commission’ or ‘former Council’. A common institutional culture is thus in fabrication. This is different in the case of the seconded staff from the member states, who really feel like a different species (interview with Tibbels).

At the same time, it is still very discernable that the staff of the EEAS comes from three different sources. Staff members who formerly worked at the Commission or the Council remain using their previous networks. Hence, there is still difference between those who are in their blood more communautaire and those who favour a more intergovernmental road (interview with Pulch; interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

Moreover, the establishment of the EEAS has also made the inter-institutional exchange of officials more difficult. It is still very difficult to do a transfer from the Commission to the EEAS and vice-versa. This does not contribute to horizontal coherence, for “it is good to have a cross-fertilization of officials working in different policy frameworks”, and it is also important that sufficient former Commission staff remains employed within the EEAS, because the communautaire competences are very important for the member states (interview with Tibbels; interview with Pulch).

### **5.5. Pillar structure in disguise?**

It may be concluded that there is room for improvement concerning horizontal coherence in EU foreign policies. There is a certain degree of inter-institutional distrust, mainly from the Commission towards the EEAS. The other actors in EU foreign policy are suspicious about the actual agenda of the EEAS, and sometimes look upon the organization as an extension of the member states' preferences.

Moreover, the formally abandoned pillar-structure is implicitly still present. The former intergovernmental and supranational realms are not used to cooperating with a third actor: the EEAS. This is especially the case with regard to the more communitarian policy areas like development and crisis management. On traditionally intergovernmental areas like sanctions and defence, there are less horizontal coordination problems. The reason for this may be that the Council is less suspicious of the agenda of the EEAS than the Commission.

Additionally, the persistence of the pillar-structure is also visible in the operational procedures of foreign policy.

Firstly, although most foreign policy activities are bundled under the EEAS, budget lines are still very pillar-oriented. For example, the EEAS structure prepares EU military and humanitarian missions, but the Council pays them. Similarly, election-monitoring missions are organized by the EEAS, but they fall under the budget of the Commission (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS). In Delegations, the EEAS has to deal with different and often complex budget procedures, given different sources of the available budget. (interview with Pulch).

Secondly, the Council still employs much administrative staff that supports the member states in EU foreign policy-making. Although EEAS representatives chair most Council committees and preparatory bodies on foreign affairs, the minutes of

these meetings are still written by the Council secretariat, which also supplies the minutes to the member states (interview with a policy officer of the EEAS).

Considering the above, it is thus possible to speak about an implicit pillar-structure. According to Reynaert (2012), the implicit pillar-structure was kept intact because the existing European foreign policy actors were reluctant to give up their competences during the bargaining process on the establishment of the EEAS: “. . . because the European Commission and the EU member states already have an important influence in the decision-making processes of these different policies, we can expect the decisions regarding the transfer of responsibilities to the EEAS to be difficult for these actors” (Reynaert, 2012, p. 213-214). This why the Commission insisted on retaining its competences on e.g. development cooperation, thereby creating one of the most complicated inter-institutional programming processes thinkable.

However, the implicit pillar structure is still often being kept intact by the member states, who have come accustomed to dealing with two different paradigms when dealing with the European Union (interview with Koetsenruijter). The ministries of foreign affairs are designed to deal with both the intergovernmental and the supranational realm, but they are not yet used to working with the EEAS. The Dutch ministry of foreign affairs still telephones the European Commission when questions regarding development or neighbourhood policy arise (interview with an official of the ministry of foreign affairs of the Netherlands).

Considering all this, we have to agree with the view of Michael Smith, who argues that an “institutionalisation of hybridity” (Smith, 2012, p. 702) has been effectuated since the Treaty of Maastricht. Therefore, “the EU’s foreign policy is now characterized by an even more complex institutional framework. . . and horizontal coherence and consistency have not increased compared to the period before the

EEAS and the position of High Representative were created” (Reynaert, 2012, p. 226).

## **6. External coherence**

The European Union's bargaining power in international politics is strongly dependent on the way the EU presents itself to the outside world. It is a widespread assumption that a single voice on the world stage will increase the EU's power and leverage (Drieskens, 2008). External coherence refers to the degree to which the EU is able to utter this single voice.

Perhaps it is self-evident, but external coherence is strongly dependent on internal coordination processes. After all, before an actor can send a clear position to the outside world, it must be sure what its own position actually *is*.

Moreover, the actor needs sufficient authority to engage in proficient external representation. Along the lines of PA-theory, it means that the principals need to delegate authority to their agent so that this agent can start representing them. In the case of the EU, the EEAS is the agent of the member states and of the European institutions. Therefore, external coherence is the culmination point of both vertical and horizontal coherence.

Furthermore, in order to engage in successful representation of its principals, the EEAS also needs a basic level of recognition and acceptance from third countries and other international actors. This has not always been easy.

This section will investigate whether the EEAS has been able to improve external representation of the EU in comparison with the situation before its establishment. In the first place, it will do so by considering the level of authority the EEAS has received from the member states and the Commission on external representation. In second place, this section will consider the role of representation that the EEAS can play at international organizations. After that, it will consider the merits of the EU Delegations in external coherence.



Finally, a crucial question to answer is whether the EEAS is able to enhance external coherence while good vertical and/or horizontal coherence are still lacking. If that would be the case, agency slippage has almost certainly taken place.

## **6.1. EEAS vs. the member states and the Commission**

Concerning the EU's external representation, there has been much disagreement and a long process of negotiations between, on the one hand, the member states and the EEAS and, on the other hand, the EEAS and the European institutions.

Discussions with the member states focused on the scope of responsibilities of the EU Delegations and the competences of the EEAS and the HRVP to voice common positions on behalf of the member states.

Discussions with the European institutions were mainly about the division of competences in external representation. Whereas the idea behind the HRVP and the EEAS was to create a single voice on all external issues of the EU, the Commission insisted on keeping its own representation on communautarian matters.

Essentially, both sets of discussions concerned one issue: whether the treaties should be interpreted with regard to their broader goals or with regard to the literal formulation (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).

One of the most obvious improvements for external coherence is that it is now, formally, one person who represents the EU towards the outside world on foreign policy issues: the HRVP (interview with Van Baalen).<sup>18</sup> The HRVP has to share her position on the world stage with the President of the European Council, but he represents the Union mostly at a higher level (Art. 15.6 TEU).

Indeed, the intention behind the creation of the HRVP was supplying the EU with a single representative on foreign policy matters, similar to a foreign minister. Article 18.4 of the TEU states that the HRVP "shall be responsible within the Commission

---

<sup>18</sup> In the old situation, there were three representatives on foreign policy: the High Representative for CFSP, the rotating Presidency and the Relex commissioner.

for responsibilities incumbent on it in external relations and for coordinating other aspects of the Union's external action.”

On representing the external implications of Community policies, this leaves not much room for the President of the Commission. The latter, however, has displayed little intention of giving up his representative role on foreign policy matters since the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. This is curious, because the HRVP is also a member of the Commission. However, as Nuttall states,

“[Another EU official who would want to represent himself internationally is] . . . the president of the Commission, who could be presumed to make up a single actor with the External Relations Commissioner but with the latter gone [into a merger with the HRVP] will assert his independence vis-à-vis the [HRVP], given the latter's ambiguous position half in and half out of the Commission” (Nuttall, 2005, p. 109).

So, where some contend that it was the intention of the treaties to have the HRVP represent the EU alone, the President of the Commission has time and again joined on state visits. As a justification of his presence, the Commission pointed to its competences on, for example, trade and development in the treaties (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU; interview with Koetsenruijter).

The Commission has shown the same firmness on defending its treaty rights when it comes to trade negotiations. Instead of granting the EEAS the room to conduct (or

even be present at) trade negotiations, the Commission has made it impossible for the EEAS to perform a coordinating role here.<sup>19</sup>

Some contend that if the general disposition to the treaties would have been different from the beginning, meaning that Van Rompuy or Ashton would have been granted the leeway to represent the EU alone, this would have also had influence on the lower levels, in the sense that the European institutions would have less vigorously defended their rights on matters of representation (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).

Constructing a single voice was not made very easy by the member states either. Predominantly on the matter of EU common positions the discussions have been difficult. Especially the United Kingdom refused to accept any EU common positions on matters of national competence. The UK dismissed several proposals by other member states and the EEAS for guidelines on EU representation at international organisations and in third countries.

The result was, after more than a year of negotiation, that there was a much smaller scope for common external representation than before the Treaty of Lisbon. Finally, a set of guidelines was adopted. However, these guidelines are of a general nature and do not grant the EEAS much discretion in external representation (interview with a diplomat at the permanent representation of the Netherlands to the EU).

---

<sup>19</sup> As we have seen, the EEAS *is* allowed to join negotiations when other issues than purely trade matters are on the agenda.

## **6.2. External representation at international organisations**

The HRVP and the EEAS have the task of representing the EU at international organisations, when matters of CFSP/ESDP are concerned. The legal basis for this representation is Article 27.2 TEU:

“The High Representative shall represent the Union for matters relating to the common foreign and security policy. He shall conduct political dialogue with third parties on the Union's behalf and shall express the Union's position in international organisations and at international conferences.”

The European Union maintains contact with a large body of international organisations. A selection of the most important international organisations for the EU are the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe (interview with Pulch).

Apart from the lack of full power delegation by the member states, the EEAS faces two more problems when representing the EU at international organisations.

The first problem relates to the fact that other participants at international organisations may not support an enhanced role for the EU within the forum. Even the EU's strategic partners have opposed enhanced representation on the level of the EU (interview with Pulch). As a matter of fact, China, Russia, India, Saudi Arabia and South Africa all voted against a UNGA resolution that proposed to upgrade the EU's observer status at the UNGA (Gstöhl, 2012, pp. 160-161.)

The second problem is the fact that the EU is not a state. International organisations were essentially created by states and for states. “As such, their internal rules rarely take into account the role of supranational organisations or the coordination of policies among groups of member states” (Comelli & Matarazzo, 2011, pp. 5-6).

The problem, according to Mr. Pulch, is that other states do not understand that the EU is different from other regional organisations, in that it has truly supranational powers that other regional groupings like ASEAN lack. “The EU is a unique international organisation. For that reason, it is sometimes difficult to understand for other states why they should grant the EU space at international organisations, alongside 28 member states that also want to speak and take part” (interview with Pulch).

For the reasons stated above, the EU has gone through a long and difficult process at the UNGA in order to upgrade its status. In 2011, eventually, the EU received an enhanced observer status at the UN. This status allows the EU to participate in debates at the UNGA, to exercise the right to reply on EU positions and to circulate proposals on behalf of the member states. The EU may not, however, vote or put forward candidates (Gstöhl, 2012).

At other international organisations, like the NATO, the World Bank and the UNSC the EU enjoys no observer status at all.

On the other hand, the EU is also a full member of some international organisations, like the WTO, FAO and OECD. The latter organisations are mostly concerned with matters on which the EU enjoys supranational powers, like agriculture (FAO) or the common market (WTO).

Although the Treaty of Lisbon formally enhanced external representation of the EU by empowering the HRVP to do this, the effects of the treaty were not uniformly positive. There were advantages of the representation system prior to Lisbon, especially because the EU is not a state. Before the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon, the state holding the rotating Presidency spoke on behalf of the EU at international organisations. The Presidency, being a sovereign state, could benefit

from the rights associated with being a full member of most international organisations in question (Comelli, 2011). These benefits fell away for the EU with the empowerment of the HRVP/EEAS.

Furthermore, although EU level representation is now conducted by a special agency, this does not mean that the EU member states also bring their preferences more in line with each other than before. Taking the UN as an example, the EU member states do not necessarily vote uniformly, especially on issues concerning the Middle East. In fact, a study by Molnár showed that the Treaty of Lisbon, “although significantly changing the structure of the EU’s external representation,” did not have any effect on the voting pattern of the EU member states. Diplomatic state-centrism remained the leading paradigm (Molnár, 2012, p. 347).

Yet, the benefits of EU level representation remain considerable. The most important benefit may be the fact that one person (the HRVP) conducts the political dialogue with third parties and represents the EU at international conferences (Gstöhl, 2012).

Second, the coordinating role that the EEAS as supporting office can play is also of great value for external coherence. By chairing the Correspondence United Nations working group (CONUN) in Brussels, the EEAS coordinates the EU positions at the UN. Additionally, more than 1300 EU coordination meetings are annually conducted by the EU Delegation to the UN in New York, on top of around 1000 of these meetings at the UN in Geneva.

### **6.3. EU Delegations**

Quite obviously, the EU Delegations play a considerable role in representing the EU externally. The Treaty of Lisbon supplied the EU Delegations with more tools to become agents of the EU. As they gained a political task next to their responsibilities of ‘trade and aid’, they may now engage in political discussions with governments of the third countries in which they are stationed. Moreover, Heads of Delegations have the right of demarche over EU member state ambassadors (Furness, 2011).



#### **6.4. Agency slippage in external coherence?**

The HRVP and the EEAS have faced some resistance during the project of setting up a solid EU-level external representation. Predominantly on the issues of EU common positions and the representation of the EU at international organisations, some member states have paralyzed the process of developing a new external representation by blocking decision-making in the Council of the EU.

Additionally, the Commission has been very proactive in protecting its own external representation competences with regard to Community policies.

Therefore, it could be argued that the principals of the EEAS delegated less authority to their agent when it comes to ensuring external coherence, compared with the other two dimensions of coherence.

Nevertheless, the EEAS has displayed its capacity to enhance external coherence anyway, by coordinating the positions of EU member states at the EU Delegations and by presenting a uniform conversation partner to the outside world. Henry Kissinger's question "Who do I call if I want to speak to Europe" has been partially solved: "Call Ashton" would be a good answer.

Finally, it is also possible to ensure external coherence through means that are more modest than direct diplomatic representation. Indeed, one could argue that the EEAS has also enhanced external coherence by writing the speeches and briefing notes for performances at international conferences and meetings of both the HRVP and the President of the European Council (interview with Koetsenruijter).

In conclusion, the EEAS has been able to engage in 'agency slippage' in the field of the EU's external representation. For, where it had little and conflicting mandates from the Principals to do this, it did considerably foster external coherence.

## Conclusions

If there is one certainty, it is the fact that the coherence of European foreign policy is itself far from ‘coherent’. It is a multifaceted concept that appears to various degrees in different corners of European foreign policy.

The previous chapters have yielded some interesting answers to the hypotheses that were posed at the beginning of this thesis.

### *Hypothesis 1*

The staff of the EEAS has very diverse origins, as it is made up of former personnel from the Commission, former personnel from the Council and seconded national diplomats. This diversity will predominantly enhance the EEAS’ potential to foster *vertical* coherence in European foreign policy, as it is to be expected that seconded national diplomats keep in contact with their home governments.

Theoretical works written on the topic of organisational locus all agree with the contention of this hypothesis (Balfour & Raik, 2013; Bátorá, 2011; Cherrier, 2012). However, the situation at the EEAS’ headquarter and Delegations, where the provenance of the personnel is very diverse, shows that although there is a friendly and collegial working atmosphere, it would not be correct to speak of a ‘European diplomatic culture’ or an *esprit de corps*. However, as we have stipulated, it is correct to speak of a *unity in bureaucratic culture*. Nevertheless, this is a result of the organisational structure of the EEAS rather than the diversity of its personnel. Therefore, we cannot provide a definite answer to the first hypothesis.

### *Hypothesis 2*

The foreign policy preferences of the member states may be expected to vary considerably. The EEAS is expected to benefit from this interest heterogeneity among its principals, enabling it to augment its agent autonomy and foster vertical coherence in European foreign policy.

This hypothesis cannot be affirmed nor rejected. Although the research indeed proved that there is considerable interest heterogeneity between the principals of the EEAS, the latter has not yet been able to increase its role to a considerable degree. Nevertheless, the process of agency slippage requires some time. Therefore, only time will tell whether the EEAS will be able to better exploit the interest heterogeneity of its principals in the future.

### *Hypothesis 3*

There will be more agency slippage in areas where no supranational authority has yet been delegated to the Commission, because the Commission as a bureaucracy will do anything to protect its domain. Therefore, it will be easier for the EEAS to engage in agency slippage and thus enlarge its autonomy on CFSP matters than on former first policy issues.

Indeed, the research shows that inter-institutional relations are most difficult in policy areas where the Commission has the most competences. An example of this is development cooperation. In this policy area, it still seems hard for the Commission to share all relevant information. However, in other policy areas like trade, this seems different. Therefore, a definite answer cannot be given to the hypothesis.

Concerning CFSP policy areas, the EEAS does enjoy more agent autonomy. Here, the EEAS can conveniently set the agenda through its chairmanship of the Council preparatory bodies. This part of the hypothesis can thus be affirmed.

#### *Hypothesis 4*

External representation is a competence that the member states most likely associate with their national sovereignty. Therefore, it is not likely that they will transfer enough competences to the EEAS to make external coherence a success.

Some member states have shown great reluctance to empower the HRVP and the EEAS in areas of external representation, such as the formulation of EU common positions and the representations of the EU at international organisations. However, the mere fact that the HRVP and her foreign service now exist means a lot to the outside world.

What is more, the EEAS seems to perform well in the field of external representation. The EU Delegations play an increasing role in information gathering and reporting. Moreover, extensive cooperation between the EU Delegations and the national diplomatic posts of the member states takes place. This ensures *unity of external representation* and directly fosters coherence.

On the other hand, the representative function of the HRVP has been mitigated by the desire of Commission President Barroso to claim his international representation functions. This hypothesis can therefore be affirmed only partly. Over all, however, external coherence has been enhanced.

### *Hypothesis 5*

Combining the four hypotheses formulated above, it may be expected that *vertical* coherence will be the form of coherence that is enhanced most by the EEAS.

Weighing the results of the research that was done for this thesis, it is my contention that *external* coherence has been enhanced most by the EEAS. Therefore, this hypothesis can be rejected.

Nevertheless, vertical coherence comes in a good second place, as it has also been enhanced by the EEAS. With regard to vertical coherence, the EEAS has shown that it is capable of using its prime position with respect to, for example, information asymmetry, as it is now the largest participant in COREU correspondence. However, the main spoiler of vertical coherence is the lacking *political will* of the member states to continue integration in the area of a common foreign policy.

In the field of external coherence, the EEAS has been able to engage in agency slippage. It has been able to do so because the *ex ante controls* and *ex post controls* are directed towards the headquarters of the EEAS, not to the EU Delegations. More generally, cross-border diplomacy is a process that is harder to monitor than the behaviour of an actor situated in a building literally in the middle between its most important principals.

In 2011 the EU's observer status at the UNGA was considerably enhanced. Moreover, the EU will appoint an ambassador to the OSCE for the first time later this year.

Furthermore, significantly enough Catherine Ashton prioritizes her diplomatic function of 'High Representative' over her 'Vice President' or 'Council Presidency' functions. She constantly travels around the world to engage with global leaders at

crucial moments in order to provide the EU with a clear ‘single voice’ on the world stage and a coherent representation in the international community. In fact, at the very time of writing, HRVP Ashton is in Cairo to perform her best offices in an attempt to alleviate the conflict between the military and the government of that country. In other words: real progress is being made in the field of external coherence.

Not less important is the fact that the interview respondents also identified external coherence as the type of coherence that was improved most by the EEAS. See the table 2 for their answers to the question: “Which type of coherence has been enhanced most by the EEAS?”

<b>Interview Respondent</b>	<b>Vertical Coherence wins</b>	<b>Horizontal Coherence wins</b>	<b>External Coherence wins</b>
Mr. Koetsenruijter	x		
Mr. Sohlstrom	<i>did not vote</i>		
Mr. Gerbrandij	x		
Mr. Fernández- Mazarambroz y de	<i>did not vote</i>		

Arespochaga			
Mr. Pulch	x		
Mr. Tibbels			x
Mr. Houttuin			x
A policy officer of the EEAS			x
Official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands			x
Policy officer of the EEAS	x		
Mr. Van Baalen			x
Diplomat at the permanent representation of NL	x		
Mr. Peresso			x
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

Table 2: Respondents' answer to the question: "Which coherence was mostly enhanced by the EEAS?"

Apart from answers to the hypotheses, the research produced some other relevant findings.

First of all, the EEAS lacks enough competences to establish a high degree of over-all agent autonomy. The application of ex ante controls, during the negotiation process on the establishment of the service, is the main reason for this. Even before the negotiations started, the European Commission succeeded in retaining important competences. Consequently, the EEAS currently lacks a say over its own operational budget. This constrains its potential to establish more European foreign policy coherence. Moreover, this stimulates *inter-institutional turf wars*.

I have argued that the mandate of the EEAS is not vague. It is particularly detailed about the division of powers between the EEAS and the other actors in European foreign policy making. Additionally, the mandate ingrains *duplication of tasks and responsibilities*. Therefore, the mandate of the EEAS directly hampers coherence.

In spite of a worthy building in the middle of Brussels' centre of power, the EEAS still has to do without a high degree of institutional standing. As interview respondents pointed out, the other actors in Brussels still have to get accustomed to the existence of the relatively new EU foreign service.

An interesting finding of this thesis is that the EEAS is a very fragmented organization. Not only is the EEAS, as Furness suggested, a 'double agent', but it is a 'multiform agent', which behaves differently on various policy areas. Of course, to a certain degree this is the case with all large public sector organizations. However, the EEAS takes it to the extreme: contacts are extremely network-orientated. The way a direction is run is much dependent on the provenance of the personnel running the office. On some policy areas there is very tight and good contact with the Commission (like on trade, which is a traditional competence of the Commission),



while on development (equally so), the contacts with the Commission are slightly more difficult.

Moreover, comprehensive common strategies on important foreign policy areas still lack. That is why the behaviour of the EEAS is still very procedural: it cannot yet find the *leitmotiv* in policy choices. It has, in sum, been able to increase its agent autonomy on certain policy areas (such as sanctions and enlargement) whereas it is very constrained on others (such as development and crisis management).

Now the time has come to answer the crucial question:

*To what extent has the EEAS influenced European foreign policy coherence?*

The EEAS has improved coherence to a moderate degree and will keep doing so. However, a real difference in coherence it cannot make, because it does not have enough room to engage in agency slippage and broaden its agent autonomy: too much ex ante controls have been imposed on the agency by predominantly the Commission, itself a very 'slipped agent'.

The mandate of the EEAS does not provide it with much room to come with a proper interpretation of its competences. The HRVP is bestowed with a powerful mandate, but she is not capable to give substance to it, as the mandate is much too extensive to be executed by a single person. In the present situation, Ashton has chosen to spend more attention to the 'HR' part of her function, thereby strengthening external and perhaps vertical coherence but abandoning the essential role she could play in horizontal inter-institutional coherence as a VP of the Commission.

With respect to the indicators of coherence, ambiguity can also be observed. On the one hand, the EEAS has constituted a *unity of bureaucratic culture* and a *unity of*

*external representation*. On the other hand, it has not been able to supply an *absence of duplication of tasks and responsibilities* nor an *absence of inter-institutional turf wars*. Lastly, the *sense of coherence* among the interview respondents was present, but to a very variable degree.

We may conclude, in sum, that the EEAS has had a limited positive influence on European foreign policy coherence: It has been able to improve foreign policy coherence to a moderate degree.

It should be kept in mind that the EEAS is still a very young institution. In the future, the EEAS may well be able to advance European foreign policy coherence more convincingly. First, it should therefore continue the process of confidence building at the member states and at the other European institutions.

Lastly, a more *Europhile* paradigm in national politics of the member states would be instrumental in allowing the EEAS to increase its functions in the system of European foreign policy-making.

Witte Wijsmuller

Amsterdam, April-July 2013.

## References

- Ashton, C. (2013, June, 12). Speech by Catherine Ashton on the 2013 review of the organisation and functioning of the EEAS. Retrieved from: <http://www.ecdpm-talkingpoints.org/eeas-review-and-development-yet-another-eu-coordination-challenge/>
- Balfour, R. & Raik, K. (2013, March). *The European External Action Service and National Diplomacies* (EPC Issue Paper No. 73). Retrieved from: <http://www.fii.fi/assets/news/The%20EEAS%20and%20National%20Diplomacies.pdf>
- Barton, B. (2012). The emergence of the EEAS: A retrospective on the institutional wrangling for the soul of European diplomacy. In D. Mahncke & S. Gstöhl (eds.), *European Union Diplomacy* (63-88). Brussels: Peter Lang.
- Bátora, J. (2011). *European External Action Service as a Litmus test of the emerging foreign policy making system in the EU: An organization theory approach* (EUFORPOL WP 2/2011). Retrieved from: [http://www.fses.uniba.sk/fileadmin/user\\_upload/editors/UESMV/EUFORPOL/EUFORPOL\\_WP2\\_Batora\\_TLAC-1.pdf](http://www.fses.uniba.sk/fileadmin/user_upload/editors/UESMV/EUFORPOL/EUFORPOL_WP2_Batora_TLAC-1.pdf)

Bicchi, F. (2012). The European External Action Service: A pivotal actor in EU foreign policy communications? *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 7 (2012), 81-94. Doi: 10.1163/187119112X614666

Castle, S. & Erlanger, S. (2009, November, 20). Low-profile leaders chosen for top European posts. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/20/world/europe/20union.html?ref=catherineashton&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/20/world/europe/20union.html?ref=catherineashton&_r=0)

Cherrier, N. (2012, May). *EU diplomacy at 27: United in diversity?* (LEQS Paper no. 48/2012). Retrieved from: <http://webfirstlive.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/LEQS/LEQSPaper48.pdf>

Coéré, B. & Pisani-Ferry, J. (2007). The governance of the European Union's international relations: How many voices? in André Sapir (ed.) *Fragmented power: Europe and the global economy*, 29-31.

Comelli, M. & Matarazzo, R. (2011, July). *Rehashed Commission Delegations or real embassies? EU Delegations post-Lisbon* (IAI Working Papers 11/23). Retrieved from:

[http://scholar.googleusercontent.com/scholar?q=cache:kKZLAMRzQc4J:scholar.google.com/+rehashed+Commission+delegations+or+real+embassies,+matarazzo&hl=nl&as\\_sdt=0,5](http://scholar.googleusercontent.com/scholar?q=cache:kKZLAMRzQc4J:scholar.google.com/+rehashed+Commission+delegations+or+real+embassies,+matarazzo&hl=nl&as_sdt=0,5)

Conceição-Heldt, E. da (2011), Variation in EU member states' preferences and the Commission in the Doha Round. *Journal of European Public Policy* 18 (3), 403-419. Doi: 10.1080/13501763.2011.551078

Cremona, M. Coherence through Law: What difference will the Treaty of Lisbon make? *Hamburg review of social sciences* 3 (1), 11-36. Retrieved from: [http://www.hamburg-review.com/fileadmin/pdf/03\\_01/B\\_Cremona\\_03.pdf](http://www.hamburg-review.com/fileadmin/pdf/03_01/B_Cremona_03.pdf)

Council of the European Union (2008). *Progress Report from the Presidency to the European Council: Preparatory work in view of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty*. (10650/08). Retrieved from: <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2009/nov/eu-council-lisbon-preparatory-work-14928-09.pdf>

Council of the European Union (2010, July) *Council Decision of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service*. (2010/427/EU, L201). Retrieved from:

[http://www.eeas.europa.eu/background/docs/eeas\\_decision\\_en.pdf](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/background/docs/eeas_decision_en.pdf)

Council of the European Union. (2012, November). *Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union*. (6655/7/08 REV7).

Drieskens, E. (2008). EU actorness at the UN Security Council: A Principal-Agent comparison of the legal situation before and after Lisbon. *European Journal of Law Reform X (4)*, 599-619. Retrieved from:  
<http://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?collection=journals&handle=hein.journals/ejlr10&div=43&id=&page=>

Duff, A. (2009, December 16). All eyes on 'triple hatted' Ashton. *Financial Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/74a4df62-ea2f-11de-aeb6-00144feab49a.html#axzz2Zrj7a05Y>

Duke, S. (2009). Providing for European-level diplomacy after Lisbon: The case of the European External Action Service. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy 4 (2011)*, 211-233.

Doi: 10.1163/187119109X440915

Dür, A. & Elsig, M. (2011). Principals, agents, and the European union;s foreign economic policies. *Journal of European Public Policy* 18 (3), 323-338.

Doi: 10.1080/13501763.2011.551066

European Commission. (2006, June). *Communication from the Commission to the European Council of June 2006: Europe in the World – Some practical proposals for greater coherence, effectiveness and visibility* (COM 2006, 278 final). Retrieved from: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006\\_0278en01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0278en01.pdf)

European Commission website [website on co-decision procedure]. (2012, January, 31). Retrieved from: <http://ec.europa.eu/codecision/stepbystep/text/>

European External Action Service (2013, July). *EEAS Review*. Retrieved from: [http://eeas.europa.eu/library/publications/2013/3/2013\\_eeas\\_review\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/library/publications/2013/3/2013_eeas_review_en.pdf)

European Parliament (2013, June, 13). *European Parliament recommendation to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, to the Council and to the Commission of 13 June 2013 on the 2013 review of the organisation and the functioning of the EEAS*. (2012/2253(INI). Retrieved from:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0278+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

Furness, M. (2011, March, 3-5). *Who controls the European External Action Service? Agent autonomy in EU external relations*. Paper for presentation at the European Union Studies Association biennial conference, Boston. Retrieved from:  
[http://euce.org/eusa/2011/papers/5i\\_furness.pdf](http://euce.org/eusa/2011/papers/5i_furness.pdf)

Galeazzi, G. (2013, June, 27). EEAS review and development: Yet another EU coordination challenge? *ECDMP Talking Points*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ecdpm-talkingpoints.org/eeas-review-and-development-yet-another-eu-coordination-challenge/>

Galeazzi, G, D. Helly & F. Krätke (2013). *All for one or free-for-all?* (ECDMP Briefing Note No. 50). Retrieved from:  
[http://www.ecdpm.org/Web\\_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/A97E25401D1449F1C1257B7B004EAB4C/\\$FILE/BN%2050%20JP%20All%20for%20One%20or%20Free-for-All.pdf](http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/A97E25401D1449F1C1257B7B004EAB4C/$FILE/BN%2050%20JP%20All%20for%20One%20or%20Free-for-All.pdf)



- Gauttier, P. (2004). Horizontal coherence and the external competences of the European Union. *European Law Journal*, 10(1), 23-41. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-0386.2004.00201.x
- Gebhard, C. (2011). Coherence. In Ch. Hill & M. Smith (eds.), *International Relations and the European Union* (101-127). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- George, A.L. & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Grevi, G. (2013) The EU strategic partnerships: Process and purposes. In: M. Telo, & F. Ponjaert (eds.) *The EU's foreign policy: what kind of action and diplomatic action?*
- Gross, E. & Rotta, A. (2011, June). *The EEAS and the Western Balkans*. (IAI Working Papers 11/15). Retrieved from:  
<http://www.cosv.org/download/centrodocumentazione/iaiw1115.pdf>
- Gstöhl, S. (2012). EU multilateral diplomacy after Lisbon. More single European voice in the United Nations? In D. Mahncke & S. Gstöhl (eds.), *European Union Diplomacy* (143-167). Brussels: Peter Lang.

Ham, P. van & Schaik, L. van (2012, October) *Heeft Nederland nog wel een eigen buitenlands beleid (nodig)? Of zou de Europese Unie dit moeten overnemen?* [Web blog]. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/HeeftNederlandnogweleeneigenbuitenlandsbeleidnodig.pdf>

Hillion, Ch. (2008), *Tous pour un, un pour tous! Coherence in the External Relations of the European Union*. In M. Cremona (ed.), *Developments in EU External Relations Law* (pp. 10-36), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Julian, M. (2012, February, 3). *Spotlight on the division of labour between the EEAS and DG Devco. ECDPM Talking Points*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.ecdpm-talkingpoints.org/division-of-labour-between-the-eeas-and-dg-devco/>

Laeken Declaration on the future of the European Union (2001). Retrieved from:  
<http://european-convention.eu.int/pdf/lknen.pdf>

Lane, J.E. (2005). *Public administration and public management. The Principal-Agent perspective*. Oxon: Routledge.

Mahncke, D. (2012). European Union diplomacy: Changes and challenges. In D. Mahncke & S. Gstöhl (eds.), *European Union Diplomacy* (15-44). Brussels: Peter Lang.

Molnár, A. (2012). One actor, one too many voices? The EU at the UN General Assembly. *CEU Political Science Journal* 3 (2012), 325-354. Retrieved from: <http://www.ceeol.com>

Morselli, V. (2013) The European Union and the question of Palestine's status in the United Nations. In A. Boening et al. (eds.) *Global Power Europe 2: Global power shift*. Doi: 10.1007/978-3-642-32416-1\_5

Niemann, A. & Huigens, J. (2011). The European Union's role in the G8: a principal-agent perspective. *Journal of European Public Policy* 18 (3), 420-442.  
Doi: 10.1080/13501763.2011.551080

Nuttall, S. (2005) Coherence and consistency. In Ch. Smith & M. Hill (eds.) *International Relations of the European Union* (91-112). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Phillips, L. (2010, March, 2). Member states and EU Commission clash over diplomatic service. *EUobserver*. Retrieved from: <http://euobserver.com/foreign/29581>

Phillips, L. (2010, April, 27). Development NGOs issue legal warning over new EU foreign service. *EUobserver*. Retrieved from: <http://euobserver.com/foreign/29953>

Quinn, P. (2012). The Lisbon Treaty: Answering the call for greater coherence in EU external relations? In D. Mahncke & S. Gstöhl (eds.), *European Union Diplomacy* (45-62). Brussels: Peter Lang.

Reynaert, V. (2011). The European Union's foreign policy since the Treaty of Lisbon: The difficult quest for more consistency and coherence. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 7 (2012), 207-226.

Doi: 10.1163/187119112X625547

Smith, M. (2012). Still rooted in Maastricht: EU external relations as a 'third-generation hybrid'. *Journal of European Integration* 34 (7), 699-715.

Doi: 10.1080/07036337.2012.726010

Tietje, C. (1997). The concept of coherence in the treaty on European Union and the Common Foreign and Security Policy. *European Foreign Affairs Review* 2(2), 211-233.

*Interviews:*

Interview with Mr. Koetsenruijter (2013, May, 13). The Hague.

Interview with Mr. Sohlstrom, Mr. Gerbrandij & Mr. Fernández- Mazarambroz y de Arespochaga (2013, May, 24). Brussels.

Interview with Mr. Pulch (2013, June, 6). Brussels.

Interview with Mr. Houttuin (2013, June, 6). Brussels.

Interview with Mr. Van Baalen (2013, June, 7). The Hague.

Interview with a policy officer of the EEAS (2013, June, 17). Brussels.

Interview with a policy officer of the EEAS (2013, June, 17). Brussels.

Interview with an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (2013, June, 19). The Hague.

Interview with Ms. Gregoire (2013, June, 21). Brussels.

Interview with Mr. Tibbels (2013, July, 1). Brussels.

Interview with Ms. Peresso (2013, July, 20). By telephone.