THE EU COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY SINCE 2016

A REALIST PERSPECTIVE

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Abbreviations

CARD	Coordinated Annual Review on Defence
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
EDAP	European Defence Action Plan
EDF	European Defence Fund
EI2	European Intervention Initiative
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EUGS	European Union Global Strategy
MPCC	Military Planning and Conduct Capability
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PESCO	Permanent Structured Cooperation
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Introduction

"The times in which we can fully count on others are somewhat over, […] we Europeans must really take our destiny into our own hands"- Chancellor Merkel, 2017

Chancellor Merkel's quote symbolizes the essence of European developments in the area of security in the past two years: a quest for more European autonomy in defence matters. Since the release of the 2016 European Union Global Strategy (EUGS), the European Union (EU) has pursued 'strategic autonomy' in order to become a more credible Union and 'global security provider' (EEAS, p. 1-9). This research aims to provide insight on the rationale behind this sudden quest for autonomy in defence and security matters.

According to the EUGS, the sense of urgency to achieve strategic autonomy responds to an increasingly unstable environment and 'fragile world' which imposes 'challenges with both internal and external dimensions' on the EU and thus undermines the peace and stability in the continent (EEAS, 2016, p.20). While certain authors believe that this refers to the Crimean Annexation and Russian increasing assertiveness (Galbreath, 2015), other authors point at the increasing reluctance of the Trump administration to provide for EU security (Besch, 2016), the consequences of the Arab spring (Garcia Cantalapiedra & Barras, 2016) or at the institutional crisis sparked by Brexit (Larik, 2017). However, there is not a consolidated consensus on what precisely triggered such a strong reaction from the European Union.

In light of this deteriorating environment, the Global Strategy reformulated the Union's foreign and security "principles, interests and priorities" in order to prepare itself to address the challenges of the future(EEAS, 2016, pp. 3-4). For this purpose, the EU has developed initiatives that revise and further develop its security and defence structure, such as the convergence of defence plans through the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the implementation of a command centre for military training missions (MPCC), or the development of a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) to deepen defence cooperation and create formations of multinational armed forces (EEAS, 2017a, pp. 1-2; EEAS, 2017b, pp. 2-3). Despite the general reluctance of certain national governments and the academic world to regard these initiatives as successful, since defence integration has

been a recurrent yet unfulfilled ambition since the EU's inception, the swift implementation of these initiatives between 2016 and 2018 suggests a serious and significant interest in achieving European strategic autonomy (EEAS, 2017a, p. 2; EEAS, 2018).

In the realm of international relation theories, developments in the European defence and security policy have traditionally been studied from liberal and constructivist approaches, due to the assumption that defence coordination was just another step of the European integration process (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 266). Hence, these theoretical approaches base their studies on the gradual institutionalization of the EU as the main motive for defence cooperation, or on the construction of a common identity as a catalyst for shared defence projects (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 266; Howorth, 2004). However, these theories fail to take into account the external actors and factors that influence defence policies, which are explicitly mentioned in the Global Strategy (EEAS, 2016m p.20). Thus, in order to cover these neglected factors, this study will explore CSDP developments since 2016 in light of realist notions of bandwagoning and balancing.

Realist theoretical framings were predominantly applied to the phenomenon of European defence in the first decade of the 21st century, upon the creation of the first Common Security and Defence policies (CSDP), creating two explanatory notions: balancing and bandwagoning. In brief, while balancing considers the rise of EU defence institutions as a result of countering the US' might, bandwagoning argues for the complementarity of EU defence to US interests in order to preserve the security guarantees and other gains that it provides (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012). These notions are still considered relevant for the analysis of defence and security policies by the author of this proposal, since their consideration of external factors could surpass the explanatory power of liberal and constructivist approaches and may give better insight into the current developments. For this reason, the central research question of this study is:

To what extent can CSDP policies and initiatives developed between 2016 and 2018 be explained through realist notions of bandwagoning and balancing?

This research concretely examines the initiatives and policies developed between the summers of 2016 and 2018, since particularly during this period of time the Union saw an

upsurge of defence and security efforts, following the release of the Global Strategy in 2016. Furthermore, this attempt to develop closer defence coordination between member states is rather interesting in contrast to previous efforts, for it seems that for the first time in a decade considerable progress is being achieved in the field of security and defence (EEAS, 2017d).

RELEVANCE OF THE QUESTION

The topic of research has both academic and societal relevance. To begin with, the notion of a common European defence policy has been continuously debated since the inception of the European Union. The motivations behind its creation have been widely researched by scholars, particularly since the inclusion of the term 'common defence' in the 1993 Maastricht treaty (Ricketts, 2017). However, European defence and security policies, and similarly academic discussions on its progress, have seen much change since then.

In the last decade of the twentieth century and first decade of the twenty-first century, many scholars researched the motives and potential of European defence. Although at first realist perspectives were used to analyse the security and defence system evolving in the aftermath of the Cold War (Waltz, 2000; Schweller, 1994), soon defence became framed as an additional aspect of European integration and thus became mainly explored through constructivist and liberalist lenses (Howorth, 2004; Smith M. E., 2004). Hence, this research has academic relevance since it rescues the analysis of European defence and security policies from a realist perspective.

Additionally, the developments in CSDP policy since 2016 have been hardly observed by scholars through theoretical lenses, as they seem to be reluctant to comment due to past unachieved initiatives in the same policy area and the seemingly same trajectory of these initiatives (Bickerton, Irondelle, & Menon, 2011, p. 6). However, this researcher deems that the new developments have already made considerable progress, and thus they constitute a significant shift in the security landscape that is worth studying. Additionally, this study considers that not only internal, as liberal and constructivist approaches deem, rather also external factors and threats have prompted these initiatives. Thus, there is

further academic relevance in the analysis of additional factors considered to have impacted the renewed interest in European defence and autonomy.

Furthermore, the societal relevance of the question derives from the general interest that the dynamics of EU defence attracts. The EU's geographical space is of considerable interest to its neighbours in the west, east and southern flanks, and thus great powers have an invested interest in the stability of the region. The Union's recent concerns in regards to its security and significant focus on the integration of defence, along with its intention to reposition itself in the international arena as a global security actor, may have implications for other global actors as it will surely have on its member states. By examining external factors and internal processes influencing CSDP policy, the conclusion of this research may offer further insight into the areas of focus of these new defence initiatives, their nature and the future role of EU in the world.

As a result, the following paper will contribute to the academic literature on EU defence by bringing back traditional realist notions of bandwagoning and balancing to the analysis of CSDP developments. Additionally, it contributes to the multidisciplinary field of security management through the explanation of the impact that external and internal factors have on the EU defence policy. Furthermore, the conclusion will have societal relevance due to the insight that it will provide on the role of the European Union as a security provider, not only for its citizens but also for its neighbouring area since the High Representative of the European Union argued that 'security at home depends on peace beyond our borders' (Bickerton, Irondelle, & Menon, 2011, p. 380).

READING GUIDE

This research will address the reasoning behind CSDP developments since 2016 through the realist approaches of bandwagoning and balancing. According to these theories, CSDP developments can result from a desire to counterweight (or balance) US power or threats in the region, or can correspond to alignment (or bandwagoning) of US interests in order to achieve security and other gains from its ally. In order to resolve the central question of this paper, there is a need to first discuss the concrete defence and security developments

of the European Union, to then address the main external and internal factors that may have influenced these EU developments, as to later analyse both the initiatives and the factors through a realist lens.

The research will be presented to the reader in various chapters. Prior to the content chapters, the study will explain the research design devised to undertake this project in a brief methodology section. Subsequently, Chapter One will discuss the theoretical framework in which the research is placed, including a detailed explanation of the notions of bandwagoning and balancing as applied to European defence developments prior to 2016. After the theoretical framework is introduced, Chapter Two will present the main CSDP strategic documents, initiatives and projects undertaken between 2016 and 2018 will be described. Furthermore, due the theoretical framework's examination of external factors' influence in the policy, the external actors and threats to the European Union will be described. In this Chapter Three, some external factors discussed are the gradual withdrawal of the United States from European security, the Ukraine crisis or the emergence of conflicts in the southern neigbourhood of the Union, which directly affect the EU security environment (Koenig & Walter-Franke, 2017, pp. 5-8). Furthermore, this section will include some very relevant internal matters of the EU that also encouraged the sense of urgency to develop further security and defence policies, such as the leaving of the main defence power, the United Kingdom (Koenig & Walter-Franke, 2017, p. 3).

After these three rather descriptive sections, Chapter Four contains an extensive analysis of the policies and external as well as internal factors based on the premises of the theories introduced in the theoretical framework. The analysis aims to answer the central research question of whether these bandwagoning and balancing theories can explain the rise in defence policies between 2016 and 2018. Finally, the concluding chapter summarizes the research and provides an answer to the central research question in light of the analysis.

Methodology

This qualitative research aims to provide insight into the motivations behind EU defence developments between 2016 and 2018. In order to achieve this understanding, these defence developments are examined in light of realist notions of bandwagoning and balancing. The following section will firstly explore the reasoning behind the choice of case study, and then introduce the research design utilized to gather and analyse the data necessary to respond to the central research problem.

HOLISTIC CASE STUDY DESIGN

In principle, case studies serve the purpose of giving comprehensive insight on a particular phenomenon. In this study of EU defence, the period of time between 2016 and 2018 has been selected since it saw an upsurge of defence policies after years of rare progress in the field of security and defence. Furthermore, the selection of this period of time facilitates a concrete focus on the specific factors that influenced the concrete policies developed just between these years.

DATA COLLECTION

The study of the potential external and internal factors influencing the development of EU defence policies requires various types of information. In the first place, one must understand the nature of the EU policies, their aims and ambitions. Subsequently, global and regional developments, as well as internal dynamics that could affect the EU's perception of security must be identified. The gathering of this information has been conducted through two methods, the review of primary and secondary sources, and semi-structured interviews with experts and renowned academics on the field.

Primary and secondary sources.

The review of primary and secondary sources serves two purposes. On the one hand, primary sources from the European Union institutions - mainly press releases, European Council conclusions, strategic documents and policies establishing these initiatives- will be analysed as to achieve an understanding of the objectives of the recent EU defence policies. For example, some of the documents discussed are the European Union Global

Strategy, the Implementation Plan for Security and Defence, the European Defence Action Plan or the Council Conclusions establishing the Permanent Structured Cooperation framework.

Furthermore, secondary sources will be examined in order to review the main lines of thought of commentators and the academic world on these policies, as well as to identify the multiple factors that could have influenced them. There is a myriad of literature on the topic of European defence, and thus only the literature and reports addressing the specific initiatives that emerged between 2016 and 2018 and the events leading up to them will be taken into consideration. External analyses of the situation often paint a different picture than the one that official documents portray, which will allow to develop a comprehensive overview of the EU defence situation, avoiding the bias of only official documents. Furthermore, the secondary sources from think tanks and academic journals will facilitate the narrowing of external and internal factors to take into consideration for this analysis.

Semi-structured Interviews

The information gathered through document analysis will be complemented with various semi-structured interviews. These interviews aimed to provide with additional insight for the analytical section of this research and with a deeper level of understanding of the Union's dynamics in the realm of security and defence. For this purpose, the researcher has conducted two types of interviews.

The first type of interview conducted was with an expert in the area of defence and security. This interview was conducted with Ms. Carlein Boers, the Head for International Military Cooperation at the Royal Netherlands Army. The interview was conducted face-to-face and provided insight on the reasoning behind the ambition for strategic autonomy in the past years, the extent to which the EU policies are achievable and other intricacies about these policies. Unfortunately, the interview could not be recorded due to being conducted in the Ministry of Defence, which is considered as military ground and does not allow for any type of recordings. However, the questions guiding the interview have been included in Apendix II, and Ms. Boers, after reading the mentions about our interview included in

Chapter 3, has signed a form of Informed Consent allowing for the information to be used. This form can be found in Appendix I.

The second type of interview conducted was with academics that had published scholarly articles on the EU defence developments in the past two years. These interviews aimed to discuss the developments in light of theoretical approaches. The interviews were conducted with renowned scholars in the field of EU defence and security.

The first interview was conducted with Dr. Jolyon Howorth, a British scholar of European politics and military policy, currently working at the Harvard Kennedy School. Dr. Howorth has conducted extensive research on European defence in the past decades. His most recent publications concern the EUGS and its impact for the future. Some of these articles are: *EU Defence Cooperation after Brexit: What Role for the UK in the Future EU Defence Arrangements? (2017), EU-NATO Cooperation: the key to Europe's security future (2017)* or *European defence policy between dependence and autonomy: A challenge of Sisyphean dimensions (2017).* This interview was conducted via Skype and has been recorded and transcribed. The transcription of the interview has been included in Appendix III. The Informed Consent form has been included in Appendix I.

The second interview was conducted with Dr. Alice Pannier, a French scholar specialized in security and defence matters in Europe, France and Britain. While Dr. Pannier has focused mostly on French and British defence arrangements within the European context, some of its latest publications include: *Macron's "European Intervention Initiative": More Questions than Answers (2017)* or *Institutionalised Cooperation and Policy Convergence in European defence: lessons from the relations between Germany, France and the UK (2014).* This interview was conducted via telephone call and has been recorded and transcribed. The transcription of the interview has been included in Appendix III. Furthermore, the Informed Consent Form allowing to use information discussed during the interview has been signed by Dr. Pannier and included in Appendix I.

The last interview conducted was with Prof. Dr. Hanns Maull, German scholar and Senior Distinguished Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP). As a leading academic and foreign policy analysts, with vast expertise in German foreign

policy, Prof. Dr. Maull has various publications on the latest EU defence developments such as *Sadly, the EUGS Reads More like a Symptom of the Problem than Part of a Solution for Europe's Deep Crisis (2017)* or *Less and better is more, Plea for a renewed European Union (2016).* This interview was conducted via Skype, and it has been recorded and transcribed. The transcription of the interview can be found in Appendix III and the consent to the recording was expressed during the interview email, as evidenced in page 86 of this report.

The recordings of the last three interviews were recorded with a phone or another laptop and have been saved in a USB with a password, but are available for the Supervisor and Second Reader of this thesis upon request.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data gathered has been analysed through a theory-testing process, meaning that the foundation of the of bandwagoning and balancing realist perspectives are used to analyze and attempt to explain the behavior of the European Union in defence and security matters since 2016. Theory testing has been used to give a new perspective to the analysis of EU defence, since previously it had mainly been explored from constructivist and liberal theoretical approaches.

While Chapters Two and Three are rather descriptive with analytical aspects, Chapter Four is purely analytical and addresses all of the realist hypothesis that can apply to the current European Defence situation in light of the data gathered in the two previous chapters. These hypothesis address that the EU defence developments can correspond to balancing efforts from the EU towards the United States or towards other threats, while the bandwagoning approach presumes that the EU has aligned with US interests since the end of the Cold War as to maintain its traditional security guarantor, NATO. These hypothesis are checked against the data gathered in Chapter Two, the ambitions asserted in the EU defence policies, and Chapter Three, the factors that could have sparked this sense of urgency to react and strengthen the Union's security and defence structure.

Lastly, in Chapter Four and the Conclusion of this research, the theory testing turns into theory building by merging diverse factors from the realist theories to create a comprehensive overview of the current EU defence and security situation.

There are various limitations that influence the results of this research. In the first place, due to time restrictions the researcher has decided to focus on the six most important external and internal factors influencing EU defence developments, despite a myriad of other influences that could be identified. The factors included have been decided on the basis of reviewing extensive literature, or due to their specific mentioning in the strategic documents of the EU. Therefore, although there could be more factors addressed, and although this research does not include all of them, it has attempted to include the most influential as to provide with the best research outcome to the central question. Furthermore, the single case study methodology over two years is not generalizable to past attempts for defence integration of the EU, nor to other defence integration processes of other regional frameworks, for they are based strictly on the period of time between 2016 and 2018 and the concrete circumstances that the European Union experienced. Lastly, the interviewee's bias cannot be completely excluded from the result this research, although the researcher has attempted to provide through the differences in the interviewees the most diverse amount of insight on the same topic, as to avoid as much as possible the interference of bias with the final outcome of this research.

Chapter 1. EU Defence in previous Academic Research: Realism, Balancing and Bandwagoning.

This chapter presents the main theoretical approaches used in the study of EU defence in the past. Subsequently, the following sections will clarify the theoretical choice and give further insight into the realist approaches used in this research's analysis of recent EU defence developments.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH APPROACHES: LIBERALISM AND CONSTRUCTIVISM

The creation of the first Security and Defence Policy in the 90s prompted an increase in academic research about its nature and purpose. More concretely, throughout the first two decades of the twenty first century, academics sought to research the motives and incentives for European states to pursue a common European defence and security policy (Pohl, 2013, p. 353). These first studies of European defence and security examined policies and developments through the lenses of neo-liberal institutionalism and constructivism, due to their presumed ability to grasp the nature of the Union and its continuous integration process, and the assumption that EU defence was the next logical step in such a process (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 266).

Michael Smith is considered to be one of the main scholars behind the neo-liberal institutionalist approach to foreign policy coordination and cooperation (Smith M. E., 2004; Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 266). This scholar contends that the process of institutionalization that began in the 1970s is the main cause for EU foreign policy cooperation (Smith M. E., 2004, p. 96). More concretely, Smith presumes that the instutionalisation of communicative action and creation of forums -such as the former European Political Cooperation (EPC) and current Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)- are responsible for the alleged "intensive cooperation" in the fields of security and foreign policy (Smith M. E., 2004, p. 124).

Constructivist scholars, on the other hand, attribute the increase in cooperation and coordination to social interaction and ideational factors, such as the sharing of common

ideas or the construction of a common identity (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 266; Howorth, 2004). The European Union is considered to play a major role in the dissemination of common norms and beliefs among member states. The reiterated practice of communication and discourse allows for the convergence of understandings by elites in Brussels and the formulation of common interests and identities (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 266). There are two schools of thought in the constructivist approach, those that focus on the construction of a common identity (Howorth, 2004) while others believe in the social interactions of policy makers in Brussels (Risse, 2009). However, according to Smith (2004, p.96) the constructivist literature neglects to explain how collective goals are made to persist over time and thus influence future behavior, which according to Smith are the processes and consequences of institutionalization (Smith M. E., 2004, p. 96).

In regard to the contributions from these theories, while it is important to acknowledge their explanatory power for certain policy areas, it is imperative to also realize their flaws, namely the sole analysis of internal factors to the European Union and Member States (Oswald, 2006, p.147). As a result, one may consider that realist theories address additional, and to some extent more relevant, external factors for the analysis of foreign politics and defence policies than liberalism and constructivism (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p.266). This does not imply that internal factors should not be taken into account, since some realist authors emphasize the need to include political pressure and other internal factors in the analysis of security interests(Waltz, 2000, p. 29-34), rather that external factors have greater relevance to analyse defence and security policies, since they are often designed to react to external challenges or be protected from external threats. Thus, the author of this research considers that a realist perspective, and consequent analysis of external actors and factors, could give additional insight in the topic of security and defence policies.

The following sections will introduce the main realist theoretical approaches that have addressed the topic of defence in Europe since the 1990s.

THE POST-COLD WAR ORDER: MAIN REALIST DOCTRINES ABOUT EUROPEAN DEFENCE

The realist perspective presumes that since there is no world central authority to regulate conflicts and disputes in the world, there is anarchy in the international political system (Schweller, 1994, p. 85; Waltz, 1993, p. 59; Waltz, 2000, p. 16). Thus, each state fends for itself, with or without cooperation, in this self-help system (Waltz, 1993, p. 59). Structural realism further claims that changes in the structure of this self-help system, such as change in the balance of power or in their position in the international system, affects how states provide for security and their behavior in the international system (Waltz, 2000, p. 5; Waltz, 1993, p. 45).

Neo-realist scholars generally share a common perspective on the balance of power in the post-Cold War system (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 267). Fundamentally, there was a widespread belief that the victory of the United States implied that the international system had become unipolar and dominated by the US primacy (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 267). This resulted from the weakened condition of the Soviet Union, which meant that the United States was no longer 'held in check' by any great power as during the Cold War (Waltz, 1993, p. 52). Nonetheless, the United States' power superiority did not signify the disappearance of other great and upcoming powers. In fact, some scholars viewed unipolarity as a temporary phenomenon and suggested that the structure of the international system would change due to the presence of other great power candidates within the international system, such as Japan, Germany, China, the European Communities or India (Waltz, 1993, p.64-71; Waltz, 2000, p.30-31; Paul, 2005, p.46).

The formulation of the first common European Security and Defence Policy in the 90's intrigued scholars and sparked a debate about the influence of the presumed post-Cold War unipolarity on the rise of EU defence policy developments (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 267; Pohl, 2013, p. 370). The following sections will introduce the two main theoretical approaches used by realist scholars to explain foreign and defence policy in the European Union: balancing and bandwagoning.

THEORETICAL APPROACH: BALANCING

Realist scholars have mainly analysed the development of European security and defence policies in the Post-Cold War era through the concept of balancing (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 264). The balance of power theory claims that because states are in an anarchic environment, they have an interest in maximizing their long term survival (security), and thus they will check the concentrations of power (hegemony) by building up their own capabilities (internal balancing) or by aggregating their capabilities with other states in alliances (external balancing) (Brooks & Wohlforth, 2005, p. 77). For example, in a unipolar world, led and dominated by a victorious state, there is an imbalance of power. As a result, weaker states or alliances may feel threatened and begin to strengthen their position as to 'balance out' the power in the international sphere (Waltz, 2000, p.25). The lack of capabilities could otherwise have crucial security implications (Layne, 1993, p. 12).

There is a strong correlation between unipolarity and great power emergence or power balance, since weaker powers tend to balance the unipolar power by seeking to change their relative power position (Layne, 1993, p.31). The notion of balancing has been extensively applied to EU defence developments. For example, at first scholars such as Mearsheimer, believed in power balancing dynamics within European states and believed that a dominant military power would emerge within the European continent (Pohl, 2013, p.356). However, once this proved not to occur other scholars began applying the notion of power balancing to the relation between the EU and external actors, such as the super power US (Pohl, 2013, p. 356). As a result, academics such as Kenneth Waltz (1993, p. 28) and Cristopher Layne (1993, p.31), have used this concept to predict that the European Community would one day seek to balance the unipolarity of the US.

Additionally, scholars differentiate between balancing for power, which implies balancing the capabilities of another state, or balancing for threats, against the most dangerous threats to the state's survival (Schweller, 1994, pp. 75-78). The most recent literature in the topic, however, distinguishes between two sub approaches: balancing for autonomy and soft balancing.

Balancing for Autonomy

Structural realism argues that the emergence of the unipolar international system, and demise of the common threat to their territoriality, implied that European states could finally focus on increasing their defence capabilities and would not be prevented from becoming a single great power (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 267). Thus, the launch of the ESDP and other EU defence initiatives began to be considered as a balancing reaction, as a European search for autonomy against the unipolar power (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 268). European powers were said to have an incentive 'to slip free from the hegemon's (US) leash-like grip' (Layne, 1993, p. 29). Jones (2007, p. 183) further clarifies that:

> "In Europe, the risk for states – including Germany, France and Britain – is that a failure to aggregate military forces increases the likelihood that they will be dependent on the preponderant power".

Other authors argued that although ESDP objectives were not necessarily directed against the United Sates, the behavior was motivated by the pursue of autonomy and balancing of the great power of the United States (Posen, 2006, p. 159). This theory was subsequently coined balancing-for-autonomy and is considered to occur when three criteria are observed: concern for autonomy, sincere commitment and effective increase of capabilities (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 268).

Soft Balancing

A second stream of thought that emerged in the aftermath of 9/11 was the so-called 'soft balancing', mainly coined by Pape (2005) and Paul (2005). This deviation from the initial balancing-for-autonomy developed because of the lack of evidence of the EU, other states or coalitions, countervailing the US power (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 268). Paul (2005, p.47) for example, argued that Russia and other great powers had not increased their defense significantly nor portrayed a strong reaction to the US effort to expand NATO, since they did not fear losing sovereignty and territorial or existential security (Paul, 2005, p.53). Evidently, this article was written before the Ukrainian conflict, which illustrated Russia's reaction to an expanding West.

Soft balancing thus claims that hard-balancing, implying military capacity buildups, cannot always explain great power behavior, and instead sometimes countering the hegemon's power involves states adopting policies that make the unipolar state's exertion of power more difficult (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 269). Hence, countervailing power dynamics are often based on limited arms buildups, ad hoc cooperative exercises and collaboration in regional or international institutions against the super power (Brooks & Wohlforth, 2005, p. 73). Consequently, as Stephen Walt claims "successful soft balancing today may lay the foundations for more significant shifts tomorrow" (Brooks & Wohlforth, Hard times for Soft Balancing, 2005, p. 74).

Franz Oswald (2006, p. 146) argues that the most successful soft balancer of the US supremacy has been the European Union through the pursue of economic integration and the claimed security role in the region. While Brooks & Wohlforth (2005, p.83) argue that Russia, China and India's partnerships represent the strongest case of soft balancing, Oswald (2006, p.146) emphasizes the role of the European Union. The gradual reallocation of security responsibilities and geostrategic roles began right after the demise of the Cold War, when the EU claimed a security role with the adoption of the CSDP at the Maastricht conference (Oswald, 2006, p.147). He further asserts that the launch of the European Security Strategy in 2003, the decline of Atlanticist orientations in European political culture and the consolidation of European defence industries and initiatives constitutes a balancing act to the United States and transforms transatlantic relations (Oswald, 2006, p.150-157).

Thus, while the balancing for autonomy stream analyses the intention to balance capabilities in order to gain strategic autonomy, soft balancing focuses on more diplomatic concepts of countervailing power (Cladi & Locatelli, Bandwagoning, Not Balancing: Why Europe Confounds Realism, 2012, p. 269).

Criticism to the Balancing Stream of Thought

Despite the widespread use of this approach to the analysis of EU defence, there are multiple points of criticism. In the first place, the assumption that CSDP is a tool to

collectively balance against the US implies – and falsely validates – that all behavior that does not oppose, undermine or constrain America's preferred policies, must have been designed to back American foreign policy (Pohl, 2013, p. 357). This hypothesis is thus untenable and invalid to explain foreign policy movements, since states' movements do not always counter the hegemon's power, rather can aim to balance threats or other revisionist state's power. EU defence cooperation could simply represent the EU's willingness to deal with its own regional security needs (Brooks & Wohlforth, 2005, p.76)

Furthermore, Brooks & Wohlforth (2005, p.74) argue that soft balancing fails to consider alternative explanations to the circumstances it observes, which could simply be conventional policy disputes and diplomatic bargaining (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 271). Hence, soft balancing actions may amount to contributors but not drivers of EU defence initiatives, and the same actions could be used to advance other gains and aims than constraining US power (Brooks & Wohlforth, Hard times for Soft Balancing, 2005, p. 80)..

Lastly, Cladi and Locatelli (2012, p.275) establish that although it is safe to say that European states invested in ESDP in the hope of building the capabilities they needed to act independently from the United Sates, it does not qualify ESDP as a balancing act since it does not attempt to match those capabilities (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 275).

THEORETICAL APPROACH: BANDWAGONING

Although the balancing approach is most predominant in the analysis of EU defence matters, several authors advocate for the realist notion of bandwagoning as a useful tool of analysis of the ESDP (Cladi and Locatelli, 2012, p. 281). Bandwagoning is a theoretical notion that draws on the phenomenon that occurs when states gravitate to expanding power and preserving their security by aligning with a stronger power (Schweller, 1994, p. 74). The most influential contribution to the theory of bandwagoning comes from Schweller (1994), who elaborated on the works of Waltz, Walt and Jervis & Snyder. However, Schweller (1994, p.81) rejects the traditional definition of bandwagoning as a subordination to the dominant power and willingness to tolerate actions, rather points at

the description of bandwagoning as siding with the stronger, not only in search of security but also of gain (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 281; Schweller, 1994, p.81).

Cladi and Locatelli (2012, p.282) claim that through the foreign, defence and security policies, the EU states respond to systemic pressure to align in security priorities and measure with the US, but not only due to concerns about their lack of autonomy, but also for the opportunity to share the gains – whether this be stability and peace in the neighbouring regions or something else. Furthermore, Cladi and Locatelli (2012, p.282) indicate that the EU efforts have generally been complementary to NATO, for the capabilities acquired complement –rather than replace- American and NATO assets (Cladi & Locatelli, , 2012, p. 282). This can be further illustrated through Europe's focus mainly on low intensity missions, as the design of the ERRF and Battlegroups evidence, and which are complemented in high intensity missions by NATO (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 282). The complementarity of these instruments points, according to the authors, to clear signs of bandwagoning.

Lastly, Tom Dyson (2013) introduces a transformed notion of bandwagoning to evaluate the current situation of European defence integration, known as 'reformed bandwagoning'. This notion responds to the changing international environment and inability to completely bandwagon or rely on allies such as the US, due to a shift in US strategic priorities since the end of the Cold War away from Europe in order to take advantage of the unipolar moment (Dyson, 2013, p. 388). Consequently, he argues, this led to a reform in Europe's bandwagoning, as to deal with the threat of abandonment and entrapment in US strategic interests (Dyson, 2013, p. 388; Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 282). CSDP policies can be thus seen as policies designed to meet security challenges within Europe's geopolitical neighborhood that the US is unwilling or unable to tackle, and at the same time as the European pillar complementing the Atlantic Alliance (Dyson, 2013, p. 389). It may thus appear that the best way to avoid being abandoned by the US is to prove themselves useful and aim for some autonomy (Cladi & Locatelli, 2012, p. 282).

Criticism to the Bandwagoning Stream of Thought

Certain authors, such as Pohl (2013), have criticized the bandwagoning argument in light of what they consider overanalyzed and weak links to European defence developments.

In order to illustrate the invalidity of this theoretical approach, Pohl (2013, p.360 - 365) analyses diverse CSDP operations and the motives behind the three main EU security powers (GE, FR, UK) in order to identify balancing or bandwagoning behavior. He concludes, that although some of the European member states may have at times bandwagoning behavior, such as the UK, this does not imply that the overall strategy of the EU aligns with US foreign policies, for there are other considerably powerful member states, such as France and Germany, that would counter the decisions if not beneficial for the rest of the EU (Pohl, 2013, p.360 -365). This however does not imply that the interests of the US and EU may at time converge and thus their actions align but assuming that is an outcome of bandwagoning represents again false validity, since when the overall European interests align with those of the US, it is usually immediately considered as bandwagoning without taking into account other potential factors (Pohl, 2013, p. 365).

CONCLUSION, HYPOTHESES AND LOCATION OF THIS RESEARCH IN THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

Previous studies of EU defence had examined the policies and initiatives from constructivist and liberal theoretical perspectives, due to the belief that progress in European defence cooperation amounted to yet another step in the European integration process. However, with the creation of the security and defence policies in the 90's and 2000's, realist scholars increasingly devoted attention to the evolution of EU defence and commenced to analyse it through a realist lens. This resulted into the development of two notions to explain the evolution of EU defence from a realist perspective: balancing and bandwagoning. Previous research from these realist bandwagoning and balancing perspectives, however, mainly focuses on European defence policy developments at the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-firts century. There is thus a lack of research on current developments in the EU defence policy through realist perspectives.

However, realism has an additional explanatory value in contrast to constructivist and liberal theories, for it analyses the external factors and changes in the international environment affecting defence policies.

While previous EU efforts in defence and security prior to 2016 were not considered to be 'real credible military forces' and were considered civil capabilities rather than military (Howorth, 2007, p. 102), the recent proposals put forward in the European Union since the release of the 2016 EUGS define ambitious goals to enhance military coordination and to further integrate the defence systems of all Member States. These new initiative imply a shift in the nature of EU defence towards further military convergence, and thus merit a renewed analysis in light of theoretical perspectives of bandwagoning and balancing.

Various hypothesis can be derived from the application to these approaches to European security and defence developments. On the one hand, it could be considered that the EU increasing defence developments aim to counterweight (or balance) either the US might, or other threats. Additionally, the EU could be simply balancing for autonomy from the US or soft-balancing and making its exertion of power more difficult through political disputes. On the other hand, the bandwagoning approach can be applied to the European Union circumstances in two manners. The European defence developments could imply a bandwagoning of the US for the security that it provides and other shared gains, or represent a reformed-bandwagoning by which the EU would be aligning with US priorities while taking care of its regional security needs. These hypotheses will be explored in Chapter Four, after the outlining in Chapter 2 of the main defence policies and their aims and achievements, and in Chapter 3 of the external and internal factors that could have influenced the increment of defence policies between 2016 and 2018. The following chapter will thus introduce the most relevant and ambitious EU policy developments in the past two years, in order to later explore these hypothesis in Chapter Four.

Chapter 2: EU Defence Policies since 2016

We can talk about a new phase in the CSDP, since defence policy is moving towards more common action (Maull, Interview, 2018).

Defence integration has been part of the European project since its inception. In the 1950s, the first proposal for a European Defence Community was put forward by French Prime Minister Pleven. This proposal was later rejected by the French Assemblée Nationale, which scarred the Union for the next half century (Juncker, 2017, p. 1). Although the ambitions for common defence mechanisms were revived in the 90's with the Saint Malo summit and European Security and Defence Policy, subsequent efforts in the field of defence and security were less bold, incremental and advanced slowly (Juncker, 2017, p. 11).

The second decade of the twenty-first century was a turning point for European security and defence. Suddenly, after years of hopelessness, the European Union aimed to become a global actor and have influence over the 'deteriorating security environment' (Juncker, 2017, p. 2). The official concerns about EU security began in 2013, when the European Council decided that it was time to determine defence priority actions for the first time since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (European Council, 2018). Defence and security policies gained a renewed sense of urgency and the EU institutions demanded further effectiveness and impact from the Common Security and Defence Policy (European Council, 2013, p. 2). Furthermore, in 2014 new personalities with ambitious projects for European integration were appointed as heads of important EU institutions, namely Jean-Claude Juncker in the Commission and Federica Mogherini in the External Action Service (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018). The combination of these factors eventually led to the request for another Security and Defence strategy in 2015 that would establish new priorities and embody the new ambitions adjusted to the "changing world" or "challenging times" (Foreign Affairs Council, 2016, p. 3). As a result, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP) devised the European Union Global Strategy in 2016, which aimed for the European Union to "play a major role (in the world), including as a global security provider" (EEAS, 2016, p. 6). The two years that have followed the release of the EUGS have been characterized by a wave of pragmatism in the

area of defence and security, as illustrated by the first year implementation report which argues that 'in this field, more has been achieved in the last ten months than in the last ten years' (EEAS, 2017d).

According to the realist perspective, these accomplishments merit to be examined in light of the external environment, since state reactions in foreign and defence policies correspond to changes in the international environment (Waltz, 1993, p. 59). Hence, the EU's renewed interest and impetus in the area of defence and security could potentially originate from changes in the environment and consequent wishes to balance or bandwagon new threats or world powers. However, in order to determine the motivations behind the latest EU defence developments, these policies must be first introduced to the reader as to illustrate the remarkable progress and advancement that they signify.

This chapter will introduce the main EU defence developments since the release of the EUGS. In the first place, the EUGS's ambitions and aspirations on defence and security are summarized. Then, the three main initiatives deriving from its implementation – the EEAS' Implementation plan on Security and Defence, the NATO-EU Joint Declaration, and the Commission's European Defence Action Plan- are presented, in order to take a look at the concrete proposals that aimed to achieve the EUGS' ambitions. Lastly, the four main accomplishments and practical outcomes resulting from the initiatives will be briefly examined, namely the Military Planning and Conduct Capability, the Permanent Structured Cooperation, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, and the European Defence Fund.

THE EUROPEAN UNION GLOBAL STRATEGY

The European Union Global Strategy (EUGS), preceded by the 2003 European Security Strategy and its review in 2008, is the latest episode in a series of high-level documents that set out the grand lines and ambitions of EU foreign policy (Larik, 2017, p. 7). Published in the aftermath of the Brexit referendum, it aims to adjust EU interests, principles and priorities to the new challenges facing the EU (European Council, 2016a; High Representative, 2016, p. 7). Although the priorities set out in the EUGS go further than

security and defence into foreign policy areas -including societal resilience or cooperative regional orders- this chapter will mainly focus on the security and defence guidelines.

The Global Strategy regards the wider region as increasingly unstable or insecure and calls for a larger role of the European Union in the world as a global security provider (EEAS, 2016, p. 3). Peace and stability in Europe are no longer a given, with geographical as well as non-geographical threats challenging the European security order at its core (EEAS, 2016, p. 33). In terms of geographical priorities, the EU focuses on the stability of the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa, cooperation with Atlantic partners and the Asian continent, and sectoral cooperation with Turkey and the Gulf (EEAS, 2016, p. 35). However, it shows also concern for non-geographical threats, which transcend national boundaries, such as terrorism, hybrid threats, organized crime, economic and energetic insecurity (EEAS, 2016, pp. 34-50). It further emphasizes that internal – terrorism or migration- and external security aspects – violence in the neighbouring regions- of the European Union are more intertwined than ever and thus "our security at home depends on peace beyond our borders" (EEAS, 2016, p. 7).

In order to be able to react to these internal and external threats, the Strategy proposes pursuing an appropriate level of strategic autonomy (EEAS, 2016, p. 9). However, the notion of strategic autonomy, the overarching aim of the EUGS, was not described in this document, which led to confusion among member states and commentators (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018). The level of ambition in autonomy varied depending on the Member States' interpretations from 'a foreign policy posture, whereby the Union maintains an independent outlook in its external relations with respect to the Union's core interests' to a full 'capacity for collective defence' (Camporini, Hartley, Maulyn, & Zandee, 2017, p. 11; Maull, 2016, p. 35). The EU finally defined the notion in the subsequent Implementation Plan as 'the ability to act and cooperate with international and regional partners where possible, while being able to operate autonomously with credibility where necessary' (High Representative, 2016, p. 4). Therefore, the Strategy claims that the EU needs to step up its contribution to Europe's collective security, while also working closely with partners such as NATO (EEAS, 2016, pp. 9-11). However, in order to fulfill these responsibilities, the EUGS further recognizes the need for the European Union to buildup

capabilities in order to act more autonomously, for “in this fragile world, soft power is not enough; we must enhance our credibility in security and defence” (EEAS, 2016, p. 44).

Although the EUGS establishes that the specific strategies shall be defined by the Council, it highlights some areas for upcoming work necessary for strategic autonomy such as Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance programmes, or the development of high-end military capabilities (EEAS, 2016, p. 45). In order to achieve this and due to the insufficiency of national defence programmes to address capability shortfalls, the EUGS advocates for moving towards defence cooperation as the norm, recommending initiatives that focus on reviewing national defence plans, joint development of capabilities and military operational structures (EEAS, 2016, p. 46-48).

Lastly, in regard to partnerships and alliances, the EUGS reiterates its commitment to the transatlantic partnership and aims to foster cooperation with other international organizations (EEAS, 2016, p. 34). In regards to NATO, it establishes that “when it comes to collective defence, NATO remains the primary framework for most Member States. At the same time, EU-NATO relations shall nor prejudice the security and defence policy of those Members that are not in NATO” (EEAS, 2016, p. 20).

INITIATIVES

In the months following the presentation of the EUGS, there was a widespread urgency to reinforce the security and defence mechanisms of the European Union. A shift in the perception of the European Union’s role became apparent, since in the past the European Union had a rather reconciliatory and economic character, but for the first time in years the conclusions of the EU Bratislava Summit admitted that *"we need the EU not only to guarantee peace and democracy but also the security of our people."* (European Commission, 2016).

The implementation of the EU ambitions was structured around a threefold scheme that included the work from different institutions on the same objectives: the EU-NATO Joint Declaration, the Commissions’ European Defence Action Plan (EDAF) and the European

External Action Service's (EEAS) Implementation Plan (Foreign Affairs Council, 2016, p. 3; High Representative, 2016, p. 2).

EU NATO joint declaration – July and December 2016

The EU-NATO joint declaration was signed at the NATO summit in Warsaw scarcely two weeks after the presentation of the EUGS, in July of 2016 (European Council, 2016c). The declaration aimed not only to reassure transatlantic partners that the pursue of European strategic autonomy would not imply a divorce from NATO, but also to strengthen cooperation in areas of joint interest, such as hybrid threats, maritime operations and countering unprecedented challenges from the East and South (European Council, 2016c). However, the subsequent proposals for implementation evidence that rather than addressing challenges from the East and Southern neighbourhoods and developing concrete joint projects, the proposals focus on information sharing, strengthening dialogue between both organizations and pursuing coherence in capability development programmes and other programs of similar nature in both frameworks (Council of the European Union, 2016, pp. 6-8). Thus, the East and Southern neighbourhoods emerge as areas for the EU developing security mechanisms to address on its own, since the NATO proposals for cooperation do not see much operational cooperation in these regions (Pannier, Personnal Communication, 2018). In June of 2017, the first progress report on the implementation of these proposals was released, arguing that there had been a cultural shift in the now more regular interactions between the organizations and gradual progress in the fields of maritime cooperation and countering of hybrid threats (European Council, 2017c, p. 2).

Implementation Plan on Security and Defence

In order to translate the rather abstract EUGS guidelines into concrete action, the Council adopted the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence in November 2016 (European Council, 2016). The Implementation Plan outlined the priority areas of work as to achieve

strategic autonomy, namely building capabilities, deepening defence cooperation and responding to external conflicts and crises (Foreign Affairs Council, 2016, p. 4). Each priority entailed various initiatives or projects.

a. Capability Building. Since 80% of defence investment in Europe is spent nationally, there was a need to gradually 'synchronize and mutually adapt national defence planning cycles and capability development practices' according to the EUGS (EEAS, 2017a, p. 1).

In order to achieve this, the Plan proposed to review military requirements stemming from the EUGS and identify future challenges as to determine capability development priorities (High Representative, 2016, p. 5; EEAS, 2017a, p. 2). This would be accomplished through the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) which sought to examine defence budgets in order to identify capability shortfalls and duplications, thus avoiding inefficiency and increasing the synchronization of defence plans and budgets (High Representative, 2016, pp. 5-22). The trial run of this initiative was set to start in Autumn 2017 and the capability priorities could subsequently be included in a Capability Development Plan (CDP) (EEAS, 2017a, p. 1).

b. Deepening Defence Cooperation. Moreover, the Implementation plan suggested enhancing the EU structures for situational awareness, planning and conduct of operations. Situational awareness, which is especially important for conflict prevention was to be done through the merging of intelligence mechanisms such as the EU Intelligence and Situation Centre (INTCEN) and the EU Military Staff Intelligence Directorate (EUMS INT) in order to create a single European hub for strategic information. Furthermore, the EU planned to collaborate with key partners in surrounding regions (High Representative, 2016, p. 13).

c. Responding to external conflicts and crises. In regard to this priority, three projects stood out: the MPCC, Battlegroups and PESCO. There was a need to review the structure and capabilities for planning and conduct of CSDP non-executive military missions for a moreclear an efficient Chain of Command. As a result, the Plan introduced the idea of creating a Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), thereby creating a military chain of command. Additionally, the Plan encouraged strengthening the usability and deployment of EU Battlegroups and thus the need to revise the Athena mechanism, which

is the funding mechanism for military operations (High Representative, 2016, pp. 5-6; Foreign Affairs Council, 2016, p. 13). However, despite the French and German support for permanent financing of Battlegroups under this mechanism, and further agreements at the Council, the final decision continues to remain under discussion two years later (EEAS, 2017b; EEAS, 2018, p.2).

Lastly, the plan also drew on the full potential of the defence cooperation articles enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty, which explore the possibility of developing a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in defence matters for future demanding EU military operations (High Representative, 2016, p. 29).

European Defence Action Plan – November 2016

The last of these guidance documents was the Commission's European Defence Action Plan (EDAP), published in November 2016. The projects within this initiative had been already devised by the Commission prior to the release of the EUGS, but the urgency for defence and security matters that developed after its publication impulsed the initiative beyond its initial scope (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018).

The EDAP was developed as to respond to the fragmentation, insufficient industrial collaboration and shrinking budgets in Europe, in comparison to the improving defence sectors of other global actors such as China, Russia or Saudi Arabi (European Commission, 2016a, p. 2). These facts alerted the European Commission, which declared that "without a sustained investment in defence, the European industry risks lacking the technological ability to build the next generation of critical defence capabilities" (European Commission, 2016a, p. 3). Thus, the European Defence Action Plan aimed to ensure that the European defence industrial base would be able to meet Europe's current and future security needs (European Commission, 2016; European Commission, 2016a, p. 3). The Plan's main project consisted of creating a European Defence Fund (EDF) to support investment in joint research and development of defence equipment and technologies, but other projects aimed to foster investment in nontraditional suppliers to the defence industry through the

European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) (European Commission, 2016a, p. 3).

THE ACHIEVEMENTS: DEFENCE AND SECURITY PROJECTS

Despite the ambitious objectives set by the Global Strategy, only a few of the initiatives have been fully established as of June 2018. However, these envision great progress and enhanced cooperation in the field of defence. The four most relevant projects in the area of security and defence will be presented below, and they cover capability research, funding and development of capabilities, and military structures in order to enhance the strategic autonomy of the Union.

The EU's Military Planning and Conduct Capability

One of the key areas for upcoming work mentioned in the EUGS was the need for an institutional structure that would enhance military operational planning and conduct structures. Until 2016, EU non-executive military missions had been commanded by a Mission's Commander deployed on the ground, thus merging strategic, operational and tactical levels of command (EEAS, 2017). Through the Council Decision EU 2017/971 taken in June 2017, the MPCC was established, thus creating a static, out-of-area military command and control structure within the EU Military Staff, part of the European External Action Service (EEAS) (Council of the European Union, 2017c). The most important result from this project was the division between operational and strategic command, which allows the mission staff in the field to concentrate on specific activities of their missions with better support from Brussels, and from the separation from the Civil Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) (Council of the European Union, 2017c).

Permanent Structured Cooperation launch

Additionally, the EUGS states the need for more 'hard power', defence integration and further military cooperation among EU member states (EEAS, 2016, p.44). This deficiency was better expressed by President of the Commission Juncker, who declared that the

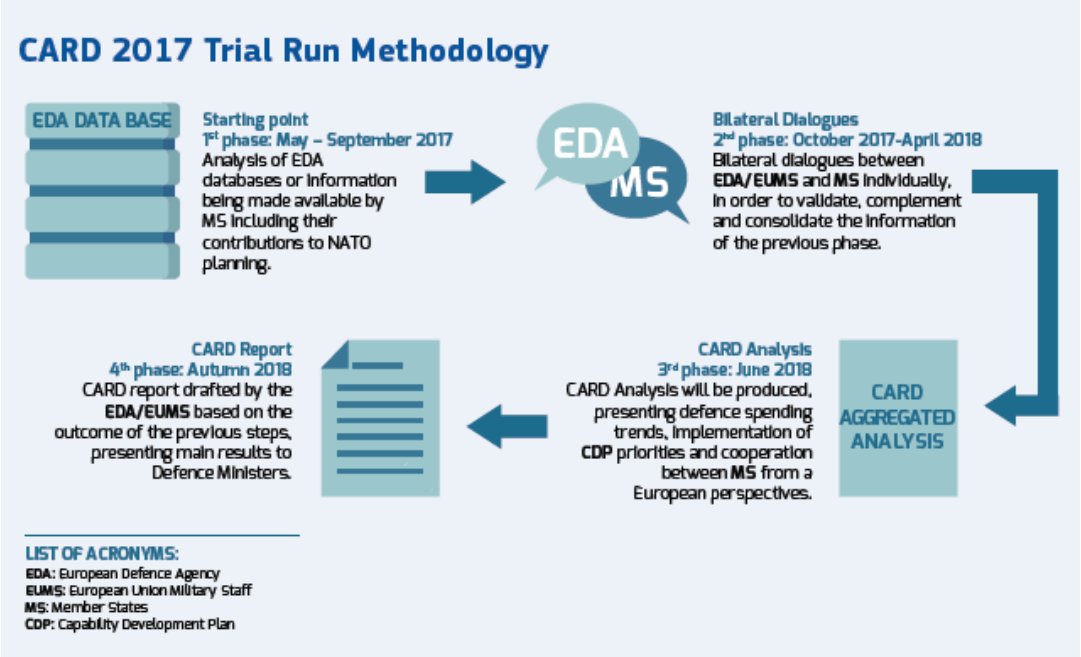
European Union already possessed the legal means "to move away from the current patchwork of bilateral and multilateral military cooperation to more efficient forms of defence integration". (Juncker, 2017, p. 3). He was addressing the so-called "sleeping beauty" of the Lisbon Treaty, the permanent structured cooperation included in the 2009 Treaty (Juncker, 2017, p. 3). At the end of June 2017, only a few weeks after Juncker's speech, EU leaders at the European Council agreed on the "historic step" of launching the permanent structured cooperation (PESCO), a treaty-based permanent framework and structures process to gradually deepen cooperation among Member States, and potentially create multinational forces (European Council, 2018). However, as of June 2018, the PESCO group is formed by all of the member states except the United Kingdom, Denmark (due to its defence opt-out clause) and Malta (European Council, 2018).

A further significant step was the outlining of twenty common binding commitments, that the PESCO members would have to abide by, which entailed objectives such as an increase in defence investment, harmonization of military defence capabilities and enhancement of interoperability (PESCO, 2017, p.7). These commitments are evaluated through an annual assessment process of the progress by the national implementation plan in fulfilling the commitments made (EEAS, 2018a). The first seventeen projects undertaken in the PESCO framework were finally adopted by the Council in March 2018 and cover areas such as training, capability development (Maritime Surveillance, European Cyber Rapid Response Teams, European Crisis Response Operation Core) and operational readiness (European Medical Command, Military Mobility, Strategic Command and Control Systems) in the field of defence (European Council, 2018). Two of the projects that have drawn special attention from leading countries are the Military Mobility project, initially a NATO project that was instead handed over to the European Union (Boers, Personnal Communication, 2018), and the German-led EUFOR CROC, which aims to develop an interoperable force similar to the later French European Intervention Initiative proposal (Pannier, Personnal communication, 2018).

(European Council, 2018)

CARD

The Coordinated Annual Review (CARD) is the mechanism designed to meet the 'gradual synchronization and mutual adaptation of national defence planning cycles and capability development practices', an objective enshrined in the EU Global Strategy (European Defence Agency, 2018, p. 1; Fiott, 2017, p. 1). It aims to review national defence plans and address shortfalls and duplications, as well as ensure the optimal use and coherence of defence spending plans (European Defence Agency, 2018, p. 1). The CARD's trial run started in Autumn 2017 and has since analysed all information made available by Member States, in order to then engage in bilateral dialogue, validate and complement the initial information. The current phase of the trial run (until June 2018) consists of analyzing the information gathered and gather trends, priorities and identify opportunities for defence cooperation, as to create the first CARD Report (European Defence Agency, pp. 1-2). These will be later developed into a Capability development plan that can be addressed with the European Defence Fund within the PESCO framework for projects.



(European Defence Agency, 2018)

EDF

Lastly, the European Defence Fund (EDF) is the main project designed by the Commission to tackle the lack of cooperation between Member States in area of defence research, development, and procurement (European Commission, 2018, p. 2). As the Commissioner for Internal Market and Industry argued, Europe "*must become a security provider*. *The Fund will support collaborative research in defence and the joint development of defence capabilities. It will therefore be a game-changer for the EU's strategic autonomy and the competitiveness of Europe's defence industry"* (European Commission, 2017).

The Fund would consist of two distinct financing 'windows', one to fund collaborative defence research projects and another to support the joint development of defence capabilities (European Commission, 2016a, pp. 6-7). The research projects are fully funded from the EU budget and must be collaborative with participants from at least three Member states (European Commission, 2018, p. 2). In fact the first five research projects have already been approved since the inception of the EDF: strategic technology foresight research granted to Engineering Ingegneria Informatica S.p.A (European Commission,

2017a), technological research in the naval domain for Ocean 2020, adaptive camouflage for soldiers for ACAMSII, research the complex system of soldier devices for GOSSRA, and creating protective clothing for soldiers for Vestlife (European Commission, 2018a; European Commission, 2017a).

Furthermore, in instances where Member States cooperate on joint development of equipment and technology, there are incentives of co-financing from the EU budget (20%) and the Member State's budget (80%) (European Commission, 2018, p. 1). Additionally, PESCO projects may be eligible for a higher rate of EU co-financing (30%) (European Commission, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The present chapter has introduced the reader to the main strategic documents, initiatives and projects undertaken under the CSDP framework since summer of 2016.

Throughout the EU official documents there seems to be an overall consensus regarding the circumstances in which these initiatives emerge, as they continuously mention that the "security environment is deteriorating" turning the world into a "challenging geopolitical environment" and repeatedly advocate for more defence cooperation (Juncker, 2017, p. 2; High Representative, 2016, pp. 12-18). Furthermore, the texts repeatedly address the nexus between external and internal security, meaning events taking place outside our borders – such as some terrorism, civil wars and migration- impact directly the EU's security (EEAS, 2017, p. 7).

In light of this instability, the documents reiterate the need to have a "stronger and more credible Union" that "takes greater responsibility for their security means" (European Commission, 2016a, p. 2; European Council, 2017, p. 4). In order to achieve this credibility, the Union's Institutions emphasize the need to enhance defence cooperation and act as a security provider and global strategic actor, not only with its traditional soft power, but also ready to use hard power (Foreign Affairs Council, 2016, p. 1; European Commission, 2016a, p. 2). These aims have been translated into the notion of 'strategic autonomy',

which is repeated throughout the Global Strategy and implies the ability to act and cooperate with international and regional partners where possible, while being able to operate autonomously with credibility when and where necessary (High Representative, 2016, p. 4; EEAS, 2016, p. 4).

In order to respond to the Strategy's call for more credibility and enhanced cooperation, in the past two years various initiatives and projects have been developed to tackle the needs and lacks of EU defence. More concretely, three complementary and mutually reinforcing tools have been developed: CARD, EDF and PESCO (EEAS, 2018, p. 3). While CARD systematically monitors national spending plans and identifies opportunities for new collaborative initiatives, the EDF provides financial incentives for member states to research and develop the capabilities, and PESCO provides the framework to jointly develop capabilities and create multinational formations where needed (EEAS, 2018, p. 3). Furthermore, the MPCC, a unified command for CSDP military operations, has been developed (Council of the European Union, 2017c). Lastly, the official documents continue to regard NATO as the primary security actor, but do not mitigate the ambitions of strategic autonomy, at least rhetorically (European Commission, 2016).

Despite an overall reluctance from scholars and commentators on the durability of all this attention to defence policy, the momentum for European defence initiatives does not seem to decline. This is evidenced not only by recent proposals from the French President Macron to further converge the strategic cultures of member states and create a European Intervention Initiative (Pannier 2017), but also by the support to these initiatives expressed by Chancellor Merkel in June 2018 (Maull, Personnal Communication, 2018; Tagesschau, 2018), two years after the Global Strategy was released.

Chapter 3: Internal and External Factors

Europe will be forged in crises and will be the sum of the solutions adopted for those crises. (Jean Monnet, 1978)

One of the fathers of the European Union, Jean Monnet, once expressed that the Union would be shaped by the multiple crises that it would survive (Monnet, 1978). The current circumstances are not different, since in the last decade the European Union has faced multiple crises in its environment that have directly affected its security, and consequently also its security policies. This is evidenced by the various ambitions and concerns included in the key strategic and political documents released since 2016 and discussed in the previous chapter, in which the EU continuously addresses the need to become a global actor and security provider to face the changing and 'deteriorating' security environment (Juncker, 2017, p.2; EEAS, 2016, p. 6). Furthermore, there seems to be increasing concern about the direct impact of the security environment and external crises on European security, directly affecting domestic politics and internal crises (Council of the European Union, 2017, p. 2). The Global Strategy, the primary strategic document, thus aims to bring up to date the referential guidelines in years of profound changes at a regional and global level (Garcia, 2016, p. 218).

According to the realist bandwagoning and balancing approaches, state and alliances react to global and regional changes, in order to adapt their behavior in the international stage and the manner in which they provide for security (Waltz, 1993, p.59). As illustrated in the previous chapter through the analysis of EU defence initiatives, the European Union aims at changing their behavior in the international stage – becoming a 'global actor'- and how it provides for security –becoming a global security provider (Foreign Affairs Council, 2016, p.1; 2016, p.6). However, none of the strategic documents of the European Union clearly explains, beyond vague mentions, which international changes influenced the need for a restructuring the area of defence and security. Therefore, this Chapter will examine the main factors and crises deemed to have affected the reevaluation of European ambitions and concerns, as well as the need to pursue 'strategic autonomy'.

Since realist theories argue that foreign and defence policies react to external changes in the international environment, this chapter will address the main exogenous factors that have influenced the rise in EU defence policies, namely Russia's increasing assertiveness in the Ukraine conflict, the EU's partnership with US and NATO, and the turmoil in the EU's neighbouring regions. Furthermore, since realist scholar Waltz (2000, p.24-29) deems that internal actors also serve to analyse and explain changing security interests, and the EUGS refers to the links between internal and external security, a few internal factors will be also included, namely the impact of Brexit, domestic pressures and member states discrepancies.

EXTERNAL ACTORS

Russia and the Ukraine Conflict

One of the most important external factors affecting the heightened sensitivity for security in the European Union was the Ukraine conflict and subsequent Crimean annexation in 2014. These incidents demonstrated that war and conflict were not matters of the past and inspired the Union to build its credibility as a global actor with the capacity to influence its neighbouring regions (Nieto, 2016).

The Ukraine region, and more specifically the Crimean peninsula, are important geostrategic areas not only due to its natural resources but also due to its location, with access to the Black Sea and as a transit country between the Russian Federation and the rest of Europe (Nieto, 2016, p. 207). The Ukraine conflict occurred once the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, which were supposed to be signed with the European Union in November of 2013, were annulled or postponed in favor of Russian commercial agreements, possibly under Russian pressure (Ikani, 2018, p. 3). The demonstrations and rallies that followed outed Ukrainian president Yanukovych. Subsequently, pro-Russian forces seized the Crimean capital – an area predominantly conformed of Russian minorities- and organized a secessionist referendum. Despite challenges to the legality of the referendum, the ballot was followed by the Russian

annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in the first months of 2014, violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine (Ikani, 2018, p. 4).

The Ukraine crisis consequently challenged not only the EU neighbourhood policies, as the political instability and military conflict undermined integration initiatives in the region, but also it perception of security, for territorial integrity in the European continent had been threatened for the first time since the Cold War (Ikani, 2018, pp. 1-2). Additionally, EU member states that shared a border with Russia, such as Poland or Lithuania, were reminded of their vulnerability to potential Russian aggressions, which continued to increase its military presence in the Baltic and Black Seas despite the Minsk II processes (Ikani, 2018, p. 1). In reaction to these events, the European Commission and the HRVP called for a revised neighbourhood policy that would "better address the security threats that arise from conflict situations" and multinational NATO forces were deployed in the Baltic States, as to prevent and protect from further Russia intimidatory actions, (Ikani, 2018, p. 2; Nieto, 2016, pp. 203-210; Galbreath, 2015).

The friction with the Russian Federation, although reached its climax with the Crimean annexation, had been deteriorating long before the Ukraine conflict. While the former European Security Strategy highlighted the importance of the energetic and commercial partnership with Russia, in its aftermath the relations began to worsen due to various factors (Nieto, 2016, p. 214). On the one hand, the US had been negotiating the establishment of an anti-ballistic missile system with in Poland and the Czech Republic, the former sphere of influence of the USSR (Nieto, 2016, p. 208). Furthermore, although Russia firmly opposed EU association and NATO membership agreements, Croatia and Albania joined the Alliance in 2009, and Ukraine and Georgia had submitted accession pleas (Nieto, 2016, pp. 201-214). Additionally, Russia maintained a combative attitude in international negotiations on the Syrian conflict, in which it had been participating since beginning 2014 (Nieto, 2016, p. 203). Putin's Russia was slowly becoming a geostrategic player discontent with the EU's expanding influence in the region and seeking to counter balance as to protect its interests in the post-Soviet space, which led to worsening EU-Russia in the wake of the Ukraine crisis and midst of the EUGS drafting (Ikani, 2018, p. 6). Thus while Russia remains a priority in the CFSP and the EUGS, it is also a clear competitor (Ikani, 2018, pp.

5-7). In relation to the Ukraine and its neighbouring regions, the 2016 EUGS includes as a conclusion that the EU has "learnt its lesson: my neighbors and my partner's weaknesses are my own weaknesses" (Ikani, 2018, pp. 5-7). Thus, Ukraine can indubitably be considered as one of the external factors affecting the EU's development of defence initiatives.

United States and the North Atlantic Tre aty Organization

According to Howorth (2017, p.139) perhaps the biggest challenge to a more strong and autonomous defence and security realm in Europe in the past was the parallel existence of NATO, since there was an almost instinctive reliance on the Alliance as a security guarantor since the end of the Cold War (Maull, Personnal Communication, 2018). What once begun as a temporary security assurance soon became an encrusted habit that would prove extremely difficult to break (Howorth, 2017b, p.19). In fact, several EU member states, among which are Central and Eastern European states continue to express concerns about the weakening of NATO in case of an ambitious pursue of autonomous CSDP (Kellner, 2017)

The latest domestic affairs and foreign politics of the United States have however also affected the EU's increased interest in autonomy. US demands for the transfer of NATO leadership to the EU and for the EU to assume greater responsibility for the stabilization of its volatile neigbourhood and its own security had been present since the end of the Cold War (Howorth, 2017a, pp.456-457). However, these demands did not really begin to materialize until the Obama Administration, in which the traditional American foreign affairs focus on Europe began to shift towards the Asian continent, slowly leaving the EU to come to terms with its security and defence needs (Howorth, 2017a, pp.456-457; Garcia, 2016, p.228). These demands were further verbalized after the election of Trump, who continuously disregarded the NATO security partnership by labelling it as 'obsolete', and who's election took European leaders by surprise (Besch, 2016, p. 2). Although his words on the dissolution of NATO never materialized, tensions with the Atlantic ally appeared, not only in terms of security but also in other policy areas, such as climate change (Kellner,

2017). These tensions led to increased questioning in the EU about America's unconditional security guarantee to Europe, which became most evident when German Chancellor Merkel stated that "the times in which we could count on one another are, to a certain extent, over" (Kellner, 2017; Besch, 2016, pp. 7-8). Thus, the Trump presidency further motivated the EU to invest in autonomous defence: on the one hand to demonstrate their value to the United States and on the other to protect their ability to act autonomously, should American policy diverge from European interests (Besch, 2016).

Tensions within the Alliance, however, were not limited to strain over leadership and insufficient EU military capabilities for collective defence rather there was an agglomeration of existing tensions, which had continuously made cooperation more difficult (Howorth, 2017a, p.457). One of the main other existing source of tension between NATO and EU derives from the conflict between Turkey and Cyprus conflict, which persists up until nowadays, but there are also considerable differences between the EU and NATO's decision-making structures, which leads to failed attempts to cooperation in certain fields (Garcia, 2016, p. 224; Howorth, 2017a, p. 456). These constraints slowly translated into an EU-NATO relation with tensions but continued informal relations in the past decades, until the Trump administration addressed these openly in international fora such as the G7 (Garcia, 2016, p. 224).

The relaunch of the EU's security and defence project, in the wake of Brexit and the election of Donald Trump, focused the spotlight again on the relationship between NATO and the EU (Howorth, 2017a, p. 454). In fact, a few days after the publication of the Global Strategy, the EU-NATO Warsaw Declaration was signed, which encouraged dynamism and communication between both organizations and called for cooperation in a wider range of fields (Howorth, 2017a, p.455). However, some of this new impetus was more rhetorical than substantive and while the Global Strategy recognizes NATO as the main collective defence guarantor, it simultaneously encourages and puts forward initiatives that seeking for further European autonomy in security matters (Garcia, 2016, p. 234; Howorth, 2017a, p. 455).

Neighbouring Regions

The EUGS largely focuses on the need for peace and stability in the neighbouring regions to the European Union to safeguard the security and stability of the Union. More concretely, the Global Strategy mentions that "in the European Union's neighbourhood, a set of concurrent and heightened crises create an arc of instability" and that it "will have implications for the Union and the wider world for many years to come" (EEAS, Global Strategy, 2016).

In contrast to the current EUGS, the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) did not view its neighbourhood's problems as substantially affecting the European Union nor its member states, although it admitted that a well governed periphery was desirable (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, p. 6; Garcia Cantalapiedra & Barras, 2016, p. 175). Although the 2008 review attempted to further focus European security attempts on the neighbourhood region by raising concerns about the situations in Syria and Libya, the challenges addressed in this review never resonated due to other more pressing EU concerns at the time such as the Georgian war and internal efforts to reform the treaties (Garcia Cantalapiedra & Barras, 2016, p. 187; Maull, Personnal Communication, 2018).

The next attempt to revise the needs of EU defence and foreign policy was requested by the Italian, Polish, Spanish and Swedish ministries after the reorientation of US foreign policy towards the Asian continent and changes in the international environment, such as Afghanistan, the Arab revolutions and the Libyan intervention (Garcia Cantalapiedra & Barras, 2016, p. 179). The predominant perception within the EU was that the eastern and southern neighbourhoods had gone from one crisis to the next since 2011 (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, p. 1). In the east, the conflict of the Ukraine has not only caused armed clashed but also turbulence in Eastern Europe. In the Southern neighbourhood, the conflict in Syria and turmoil in post-Qaddafi Libya have added to EU concerns about escalating violence, the rise of the Islamic State and large refugee flows (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, p. 1). In one of the reports on neighbourhood policy, the European Commission even referred to 2013 in particular as a "year of crises due to political instability in the neighbouring regions, the increasingly assertive Russian policy, rising extremisms, terrorism and economic upheaval across North Africa ad Middle East" (European Commission, 2014).

In other words, and as stated by Commissioner for the Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn, the European Union was surrounded by a 'ring of fire' (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, pp. 7-8).

Through the two first decades of the twenty-first century, the EU slowly realized that it was facing regional challenges (Garcia Cantalapiedra & Barras, 2016, pp. 184-185). As a result, the subsequent reports on which the EUGS would be based not only addressed the need for change in security and defence policies but called for more focus on the neighboring regions to the EU, which were of importance due to their proximity but also in terms of energy supply, natural resources and migratory flows (Garcia Cantalapiedra & Barras, 2016, p. 186). Therefore, the EUGS concern with stability in the EU's neighbourhood developed as a result of not only the crises affecting the neighbourhood area, but also the direct impact and spillover effects they had on the EU and its member states, which generated a strong sense of physical insecurity within the Union and created challenges for its member states (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, p. 2).

INTERNAL ACTORS

In addition to the external factors, internal dynamics within the European Union have helped focus attention on the need for a stronger European defence and security. These dynamics, together with new pro-European leadership figures in the Commission –Jean Claude Juncker- and External Action Service –Federica Mogherini- as of 2014, reinforced the perception that there was a need for further integration in defence matters (Pannier, 2017). The following sections will introduce the main three factors influencing EU defence policies: Brexit, domestic pressures and national interests of the member states.

Brexit: a failure or an opportunity?

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union has been one of the EU internal factors that prompted renewed interest in strategic autonomy. Some even say that

Brexit managed to achieve what almost twenty tears of CSDP negotiations did not: to impulse the integration process in defence and security (Garcia, 2016, p. 235).

The UK has traditionally played an ambivalent role in European Security and Defence policymaking (Howorth, 2017, p. 191). For fifty years (1949–1999) it prevented Europeans from engaging in this policy area. Later, it played a major role in the initial launch of the CSDP in 1999, partly because London feared that without a serious European military capacity, Washington would disengage from NATO (Howorth, 2017, pp. 191-197). However, Britain has continued to prioritise its relationship with the US and thus mainly vetoed proposals for EU defence progress (Besch, 2016, p. 2). As a result, with Brexit, the EU has been liberated from constraints imposed by London on CSDP, but it has also lost one of its two serious military players (Howorth, 2017, p. 191).

In the aftermath of the vote, both sides asserted their wish to maintain a strong cooperative relationship after Brexit (Howorth, 2016, p. 191). Both sides have a political interest in furthering cooperation, as the Chairman of the 2018 Munich Security Conference stated, "between 25 and 30 per cent of overall EU military capabilities fly the Union, which is too modest for the United Kingdom to stand alone, and too much for the European Union to do without" (The Times, 2018). Furthermore, the UK has an interest in remaining attached to Europol, the Schengen Information Industry and EU funding opportunities for the defence industry (Howorth, 2017, p.196). However, a future partnership appears complex, since third country agreements usually imply that other countries can contribute to the established aims of the mission but have restricted access to decision-making, which is not the preference of the UK (Oppenheim, 2018, p. 3).

Paradoxically, Brexit, the integration crisis, produced a reactionary phenomenon that catalyzed a process of defence integration within the remaining countries of the EU (Kellner, 2017). Member states such as France, Germany, Italy or Spain, have taken this as an opportunity to achieve considerable progress in the CSDP and reach certain autonomy, as well as to strengthen a sense of common identity (Garcia, 2016, p. 219). In sum, Brexit has brought with itself many challenges to European core values, legitimacy and integration process, but also an opportunity to emphasise European solidarity in the field of identity, defence and security.

Domestic Insecurity and Pressures

The internal and external factors aforementioned have collectively created a sense of perceived insecurity and have reinforced the public threat perception (Koenig & Walter-Franke, 2017, p. 5; Besch, 2016, p. 2).

According to Johansson-Nogues (2018, p.4), the Union is experiencing "ontological insecurity", which appears when a combination of traumas –or external threats– combined with declining trust levels –internal factors- propell the subject into anxious feelings as the community's narrative is threatened and destabilised (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, p. 4). Thus, the EU's security narrative of peace and stability in the continent has become undone not only in light of the regional instability but as well due to a raising "crisis of democracy", or challenges to democratic forms of government such as EU scepticism, political radicalization, illiberal forces and populism (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, pp. 5-7; Maull, Personnal Communication, 2018).

These insecurities and challenges to democracy have gained strenght in the face of the migration crisis and a latent terrorist threat (Johansson-Nogues, 2018, p. 8). According to polls, since May 2015 immigration and terrorism were considered the "two most important issues facing the EU" (Koenig & Walter-Franke, 2017, p. 5). This happened at a time in which the refugee crisis was at its peak, as terrorist attacks in France, Germany and Belgium had occurred, while the migration flows emerging from the breakdown of functioning states overwhelmed the EU institutions, bringing a perceived physical insecurity to the member states (Koenig & Walter-Franke, 2017, p. 5; Kellner, 2017; Maull, Personnal Communitation, 2018). This resulted into a sense of urgency in terms of security and defence, since the 2015 EU Barometer from the European Commission states that 75% of Europeans were in favor of stronger common security defence policy (Kellner, 2017).

The importance of defence policies was also sensed through the national elections of the following years, as it played a much more important role than in the past. This was seen throughout the French presidential elections in summer of 2017 -with Macron's strong support for EU defence cooperation-, in the parliamentary elections of the UK in summer 2017 – with May pledging for higher defence spending- , or the German elections in

autumn of 2017 – with Merkel's commitment to increase Germany's defence budget to 2 per cent of GDP (Kellner, 2017; Miethke, 2017; Merrick, 2017). This is particularly revealing in the case of Germany, as it has traditionally rejected the use of force (Miethke, 2017). Furthermore, the increase of defence policy's significance would not hold any weigh if its finances would not be increased at both national and EU level. Despite having struggled for years and being specially undermined by the financial crisis, Europe began to reinvest in defence in 2014 and 2015 and raised budgets back to the levels prior to the crisis, due to an improved financial situation across the continent but also the increased threat perceptions (Beraud-Sudreau, 2018; Besch, 2016, p. 5).

Member State Interests (and Discrepancies)

Lastly, it is crucial to understand the member state dynamics in the area of security and defence within the European Union. Member states interests can be enablers as well as constraints to the achievement of strategic autonomy in the upcoming years, despite the mentioned EU efforts. Generally, there are two types of divergences, in terms of the regional focus of these initiatives and regarding the defence framework to employ.

There are important discrepancies on the geographical focus of the policies. On the one hand, member states in Eastern and Central Europe claim that Russia's threat to territorial integrity is most important, while the Southern members are worried about the instability and migratory flows coming from the MENA region (Nieto, 2016, p. 205). For example, Poland, the Baltic States and Romania had raised concerns about Russian actions in the Central and Eastern European regions long before the Ukraine conflicts (Michnik, 2017, pp. 158-163). In the meantime, French President Macron, and other southern states, advocate for a refocusing of European foreign and security policy on the Mediterranean, an area previously neglected as to not see its crises which have had subsequent impact on the EU (Garcia Cantalapiedra & Barras, 2016, p. 175; Macron, 2017, p.7).

These discrepancies are also felt in regard to the security and defence mechanisms that should ensure European security. In general terms, there are those that advocate for more reliance on NATO structures while others promote European defence mechanisms

autonomous from the Alliance. Although Brexit will weaken the EU's Atlanticist camp, it will not make the long-standing divide between Atlanticists and Europeanists disappear (Koenig & Walter-Franke, 2017, p. 8; Kellner, 2017). Atlanticists are mainly concerned about the complementarity with and non-duplication of NATO structures. Therefore, they advocate for CSDP proposals to fit within NATO's existing structures, as well as for the need of a division of tasks between the Alliance and EU defence mechanism (Besch, 2016, p. 9). For example, Atlanticist states such as Latvia and Lithuania initially opposed ideas of EU operational headquarters – which ended up being the Military Planning and Conduct capability-, arguing that it would imply a duplication of NATO structures (Besch, 2016, p. 4). On the other hand, member states such as France and Germany, together with Spain and Italy, support a vision of "more coherent and assertive Europe on the world stage" (Koenig & Walter-Franke, pp. 1-3; Besch, 2016, p. 6). This does not imply per se, as Atlanticist argue, the duplication or undermining of NATO, rather an institutional logic at EU level that the EU must fend for its interest and only collaborate in areas of common interest, such as hybrid threats and cyber security (Pannier, Personnal Communication, 2018). The Franco-German couple has now emerged as leading the momentum for an autonomous European security, mainly due to the fact that France is the only country left in the EU that can credibly project force abroad, and in fact it was the main lobbyist for the notion of strategic autonomy to be included in the EUGS, and simultaneously the evidence that not many initiatives succeed in Brussels without Germany (Besch, 2016, p. 8; Pannier, Personnal Communication, 2018). However, not all EU member states, and particularly the Visegrad states, are particularly pleased with this leadership due to diverging interest in terms of defence integration (Smith, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Jean Monnet's predictions about the European Union becoming the combination of solutions to crises seem to grasp the essence of recent EU defence policies: reacting to crises. The EUGS was released to reflect the changing and complex international environment surrounding the EU, an "arc of fire", and it was mainly driven by the recognition of unprecedented challenges, both endogenous and exogenous to the Union.

In light of the mentioned internal and external actors, the emergence of EU defence policies seems to result from dual dynamics of these factors. On the one hand, external factors made the EU acknowledge its lack of ability to react to events in its neighbourhood and spread a sense of instability, while internal factors such as the impact of migration and terrorism increased the perception of insecurity, which led the EU citizens becoming increasingly worried about security and defence matters. Both of these factors pushed the long-term processes of European (defence) integration into addressing the new European security situation (Pannier, Personnal Communication, 2018; Maull, Personnal Communication, 2018).

A variety of external actors made Europeans realize that war and conflict are not issues of the past, and that the Union must be able to defend its core values, interests and territory. Among the most important actors are the Ukraine crisis, which brought back the concern for territorial integrity of the Union, especially in its northern and eastern regions. Furthermore, the Atlantic security guarantee has been questioned due to diverging interests between EU states and their main Atlantic ally, the US, at the same time as they grow reluctant to pay the price of EU security. Lastly, but not least, neighbouring crises and their spillover effects have deeply affected EU notions of security and stability within its territory.

As for the internal aspects to the EU that have increased support for defence and security policies, they mainly concern the perceived growing instability at a national and EU level. Brexit has both liberated but also complicated the achievement of a more integrated defence due to its military power character yet obstructionist nature. Secondly the, Union's widespread insecurity, due to the incapability to properly manage the migration crisis and the increasing terrorist threats, has raised doubts about the common values of integration, the legitimacy to govern and its efficiency in protecting the Union's citizens. As a result, defence and security issues have become more important, as reflected in national dynamics and elections. However, a noteworthy challenge to the defence integration, are the diverging interests and opinions of the Member States regarding the geographical scope and institutions that shall carry out these ambitions.

All of these developments, challenges, and factors have sent the EU "into emergency mode", a situation that explains the rise in defence initiatives and renewed interest in autonomy (Michnik, 2017, p.170). The EU's pursue of autonomy insecurity matters as a reaction to global changes and challenges further conforms with the realist premise that actors will respond to changes in their international system by changing their power position and ways of providing security.

The following chapter will elaborate on the theoretical discussion of these events and their link to the EU defence initiatives. This will be done through the analysis of internal and external factors as potential motivators of the EU defence policies that emerged between 2016 and 2018 in light of the realist notions of bandwagoning and balancing.

Chapter 4: Defence Policies from a Realist Approach

INTRODUCTION: PURSUING AUTONOMY IN A CHANGING WORLD.

For most of history, the world was characterized by a multipolar international order, with differences between periods of balanced polarity and unbalanced polarity (Howorth, Personnal Communication, 2018). In the last fifty years, the international system promptly shifted from a period of bipolarity during the Cold War to the emergence of what many analysts called unipolarity (Howorth, Personal Communication, 2018). This unipolar moment lasted roughly until the Iraq war in 2003, when emerging powers and regional regimes, such as the EU, gradually also became centers of power in a multipolar world (Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018). Nonetheless, the strength of the poles is not balanced, which has turned to what some call unbalanced multipolarity (Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018), or uni-multipolarity, whereby there is only one super power but multiple regional powers (Huntington, 2003, p. 8). With the changes of polarity in the world, the type of security risks that Europe faced have also varied (Howorth, 2017b, p.21). From the need for deterrence against a singular existential threat, namely nuclear weapons and the USSR, the environment shifted towards multiple limited, yet plural, risks (Howorth J. , 2017b, p. 21).

The EU initially thought that it was capable to manage these smaller risks (Howorth, 2017b, p. 21). However, throughout the past decades and its crises, such as the 1991 outbreak of the Yugoslavian wars, the European states were forced to confront reality and their lack of military capacity to face the new challenges that the post-Cold War would bring (Howorth J. , 2017b, p. 21). These inadequacies lie behind the creation of the ESDP in 1999. However, the subsequent Common Security and Defence Policy has proven also almost completely irrelevant when posterior crisis have broken out, such as the Georgian War , the Arab springs at the southern borders, or the Libya and Mali crises (Howorth J. , 2017b, p. 23). The Union's documents seem to only begin to recognize again the lack of hard power to influence in the 2013 European Council, when new European priorities for security and defence were set due to the rise of conflicts in the southern neighbourhood (European Council, 2013). However, the inadequacy of the EU to address crisis was demonstrated yet

again with in the outbreak of the Ukrainian conflict in 2014. Nonetheless, this time it brought back old fears and new threats to sovereignty and territorial security at the Union's borders, which became increasingly portrayed in European strategic documents, and prompted the release of the European Union Global Strategy in 2016. The Strategy finally acknowledged that 'security at home depends on peace beyond our borders' (EEAS, 2016, p.7).

This context matches the realist assumptions that the world order is characterized by an anarchic international system in which states and alliances –such as the EU- have to fend for themselves. As a result of the security circumstances surrounding the Union, new EU defence initiatives began to foresee military arrangements, whether operational (PESCO, EI2, EUFOR CORC) or to develop capabilities (CARD, EDF), in conjunction with technological progress and the enhancement of the European defence industry. Although these are yet at an early stage of development (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018), it is reasonable to argue that they constitute an active effort from the European Union to increase its power and position in the international system, in order to become "a global actor" (EEAS, 2017, pp. 5-9). These EU developments thus merit to be discussed in light of realist notions of bandwagoning and balancing, as to identify the rationale behind their emergence in 2016.

This chapter will apply the realist bandwagoning and balancing perspectives to the EU security and defence context between 2016 and 2018. In the first place, the author will address and reject bandwagoning explanations of EU actions since 2016. Next, the balancing approach and its hypotheses in relation to the same EU developments will be explored, and discarded as well. To conclude, the author will introduce a mixed approach, combining characteristics from both streams, which may help better analyse the contemporary EU defence and security efforts.

The Bandwagoning Approach

The bandwagoning approach, or the notion that states side and align with stronger powers' interests as to preserve their security and other gains, could be applied to the current EU

security and defence context in two manners: on a member state basis or institutional basis. Either certain smaller or weaker member states within the EU could be bandwagoning bigger states for more security and gains; or the EU as a whole could be bandwagoning the United States, its traditional security ally and main partner in NATO.

The first hypothesis of bandwagoning within the European Union seems to have explanatory power to examine the internal alliances formed within the EU to put forward the current initiatives in legislative contexts. At a member state level, it could be said that countries such as Italy and Spain bandwagon the big three (or now big two: France and Germany), or that countries such as Eastern and Central European countries align with the US due to their judgement that it remains a more trustworthy security ally than the EU (Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018). However, the observation of these internal dynamics will not help, or in a very minimal manner, towards the clarification of the research question of this report, for it focuses on dynamics within the European Union as an entity and not on its relations with the international system.

On the other hand, within the bandwagoning approach the main assumption refers to the European Union alignment with the United States interests through the North Atlantic Alliance Organization in order to preserve American guarantees of European security and other gains. This research opposes this hypothesis on the basis of three arguments: the ambitions expressed in the EU defence initiatives, the intentions behind the improved cooperation with NATO and the relationship between both organizations.

In the first place, there is no evidence that the EU initiatives follow US strategic interests. Instead, this research has found that the European Union defence initiatives represent the Union's willingness to deal with its own regional security needs after the realization that ultimately the defence of the continent is their own responsibility (Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018). The recognition of the need to manage its own security matters developed as a result of various contextual factors, such as the 'wider region becoming increasingly unstable" (EEAS, 2016, p.3) or also known as an "arc of instability", and the return to geopolitical tensions with its powerful neighbor, the Russian Federation (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018). Furthermore, the Union realized its security inadequacies once again, since military and defence cooperation had been focusing on bilateral

partnerships (Boers, Personal Communication, 2018), which could not tackle these larger threats on their own. Therefore, through its latest actions in EU defence, the Union was not aligning with US strategic interests, rather pursuing its own. This initial sense of urgency was further emphasized by both Brexit, the withdrawal of one of the biggest EU military powers, and the fact that NATO no longer shared some of those concerns – such as the southern neighbourhood's crises and their consequences on EU domestic dynamics. This is evidenced by the speech of German Chancellor Merkel, in which she states that the US and EU had diverging interests and thus "Europeans must take their destiny into their hands", and by the continued demands of Washington since the Cold War for Europeans to "assume greater responsibility for the stabilization of its volatile neigbourhood" (Howorth, 2017a, pp.456-457).

Secondly, the pursue of their own interest through the new institutions and initiatives did not imply going against, competing or undermining NATO nor the US (Pannier, Personnal Communication, 2018). In fact, the cooperation with NATO was reassured through the Warsaw Declaration, signed merely two weeks after the release of the EUGS (European Council, 2016c). The fact that the EU limited its cooperation with NATO to areas of common interest and envisioned its own autonomy in other areas again demonstrates that the EU is considering strictly its own strategic interests- to react to events happening in its neighbourhood- rather than aligning by those of the US or any other power. Contrary to Cladi and Locatelli's (2013, 281) assertion that the development of European capabilities was related to the pressure received from the US to increase its contribution to the Alliance – which could have been the case in past quests for autonomy- this research provides that the development of capabilities is associated with the focus on its own needs, rather than playing a more influential role in the North Atlantic Alliance.

Lastly, further evidence of the lack of bandwagoning in the EU-NATO relationship lies in the explicit opposition of various member states to US strategic interests in various occasions. For example, two of the three military European powers (France and Germany) opposed the backing of the 2003 US armed intervention in Iraq both in the United Nation and the European Council (The Guardian, 2003). This evidences, once again, that the NATO remains a close partner and good ally for certain actions and EU member states will

collaborate with the USA (whether through NATO or in another framework) when it matches their interests (as seen as well in the case of the UK support to the intervention) but not at all costs in any occasion. European powers take into consideration their national interests and those of the Union before those of the United States. As a result, the theoretical approach of bandwagoning is not suitable nor valid to explain the current EU approach to defence and security.

When discussing the European current situation, it is crucial to address the role of the EU-NATO relations in the provision of future European democracy. First of all, although their cooperation does not amount to bandwagoning due to the divergent ambitions and aims of the US, NATO and EU, including the fact that not all EU member states are part of NATO, the Alliance is still a key security partnership in the continent. The North Atlantic Alliance has traditionally been the main guarantor of EU security, yet after the Second World War, its missions to act as deterrence towards the USSR was fulfilled with the demise of the Soviet Union (Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018). Thus, NATO had to diversify its tasks and expand its role into other geographical areas (Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018), such as the Yugoslavia conflicts and later the Middle East. 2014 saw NATO's traditional role, the protection of Europe and more specifically Eastern Europe, resurface after the challenge to Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity (Howorth, 2017a, p. 458). The role of NATO is currently being discussed both at the political and scholar level. However, despite the high ambitions of the Warsaw Declaration, current cooperation is limited to information sharing and convergence of projects such as defence planning (Council of the European Union, 2016, pp. 6-8). Nonetheless, according to Howorth (Personal Communication, 2018) and the majority of Atlanticist states, the CSDP and NATO relation shall continue to coordinate and guide the development of EU capabilities. It its argued that otherwise, the development of EU capabilities independently of NATO could lead to the duplication of instruments and institutions. However, those that encourage EU autonomy in defence argue that the parallel development of capabilities could also just serve different purposes than those of NATO, thus not imply a waste of national resources (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018). This could potentially also serve to achieve increasing importance and leadership within the Alliance, leading to a gradual shift of responsibilities toward the EU or what some call the "Europeanisation of

NATO" (Howorth, Personal Communication, 2018; Howorth, 2017a). This coordination and blending process, the achievement of EU autonomy through growing leadership within the Alliance, offers an interesting alternative to the quest for strategic autonomy separately from NATO and US. However, it does not seem that rhetorically the current initiatives developed by the EU aim for increasing EU responsibility in the NATO framework, except perhaps the Warsaw Declaration which has rather limited ambitions. Nonetheless, in practice, current projects and dynamics within the European initiatives, such as the project of Military Mobility (formerly a NATO plan) within PESCO, envisions joint efforts and coordinated activities (Boers, Personal Communication, 2018). Through the (potential) success of these projects, the Union could increasingly become a "global actor" – as the EUGS envisions- in security and defence matters, instead of only a global actor in terms of commerce and trade. Nonetheless, the evolution of NATO and the EU's role in the alliance remains to be seen in the aftermath of Brexit, since it will become the main platform for multilateral security and defence action for the United Kingdom (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018).

A suitable alternative to the traditional concept of bandwagoning could be the notion of "reformed bandwagoning", coined by Tom Dyson (2013, p. 388). This alternative explanation of EU defence takes into consideration the changing international environment - and arc of instability – surrounding the EU in combination with the shift in the US strategic priorities towards the Asian continent to argue that the EU can no longer completely rely on its traditional security allies such as the US. CSDP policies are thus developed to meet regional challenges (Dyson, 2013, p. 389). Whereas the author of this research agrees that the changing international environment has partially triggered the development of defence initiatives and recognizes the rationale of developing capabilities to meet regional challenges, once again the motive of balancing the US is confounded with the attempt to address its own strategic interests, that coincidentally do not deviate from those of the US.

To sum up, the bandwagoning approach does not explain current developments in EU defence, for it falsely believes that the EU has aligned its interests to those of the US in order to preserve the guarantee of security from NATO. However, these efforts are not

aligning with US interests, and in fact only cooperate with NATO in a few common interest areas, rather aim to address the regional challenges facing the EU that are not of interest to the US, such as turmoil in the Southern Neighbourhoods to the European Union.

The Balancing Approach

In the case of the balancing approach, which implies the counterweighting of dominant powers or threats through military and capability buildups, the analysis of the EU defence and security context could also take to two approaches. Balancing in the current European situation could refer to the development of capabilities to counterweight US military power -what is known as balancing power-, or to readjust to the multiple threats in the EU's neighbouring environment – known as balancing of threats.

In the past, scholars such as Walt (1993, 64-71) and Paul (2005, 46) predicted that great powers such as Japan, China, or India would raise to balance the United States superpower that emerged after the Cold War, for states could feel endangered if one state would hold all of the power. The European Union figured among the multilateral organizations that could amount to power-balancing the US as well. Thus, the European Union efforts to develop a certain extent of strategic autonomy in defence and military matters have often been categorised as balancing effort against its main security ally, and most powerful defence nation, the United States. The current situation is not different. Since the contemporary defence and security initiatives of the EU aiming for more autonomy were strongly lobbied by France (Pannier, Personnal Communication, 2018), a traditionally balancing state, it could be assumed that they correspond to a balancing attempt. However, the latest EU initiatives do not amount to a balancing effort against the US, rather as previously mentioned, the recognition of security weaknesses and fulfillment of necessary actions to revert this trend and revise its security structure and efforts. Thus, the Union collaborates with the US and NATO to the extent of mutual interests, and otherwise it aims to act independently. Furthermore, if the EU wished to balance the US and felt at any type of risk in this alliance, it would aim to match the US capabilities, which the recent EU defence efforts clearly do not amount to nor consider (Cladi & Locatelli, 2013, p.275).

Additionally, some commentators argue that EU balancing of US efforts responds to the shift of US interests away from the European continent and pivot towards Asia (Garcia, 2016, 228). This factor, combined with the Trump presidency's dismissive comments of the Alliance would have made the EU question the American security guarantee to Europe and provoked European insecurity (Kellner, 2017), causing a balancing effect against its trigger, the United States. Despite the contributing effect to increased interest in EU autonomy, the assumption that the presidential election of Trump triggered the initiatives for EU defence is flawed. To start with, the United States' demands for increasing EU responsibility for its security have been going on for decades, but most particularly they were reflected by the Obama and Bush Administrations before the US Administration (Howorth, Personal Communication, 2018; Boers, Personnal Communication, 2018). Some even argue these demands have existed since the demise of the Cold War (Howorth J. , 2017b, p. 14). Furthermore, the demands should not be confounded with a US diminishing interest in the stability and security of the European continent -for it continues to be among the strategic priorities of the US- rather understood as a continuous fatigue to guarantee and pay the price for the security of a continent full of wealthy states (Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018). Thus, the rationale that the renewed interest in EU defence has developed as a result of balancing against the United States does not hold true, since if anything, it alleviates the US burden of providing for European security. While in the past, similar "autonomy-driven" initiatives –such as the CSDP launch in 1999- were partially initiated – at least by the UK- with a view to increase EU capabilities to contribute to NATO and in fear that the United States would otherwise disengage from the alliance (Howorth, 2017, pp. 191-197); the current initiatives directly address the European needs and although foresee a cooperation with NATO, they do not focus strictly on the division of tasks and the European contribution to the Alliance.

The alternative balancing hypothesis of EU developments amounting to an adjustment to regional threats seems to hold the most explanatory power, since the second decade of the twenty first century seems to have been dominated by turmoil at the EU's borders that directly affected the European Union's security and instability. It is thus likely that the European Union's upsurge of defence policies since 2016 results from a dual dynamic (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018). On the one hand, there was already a dormant

integration process within the European Union aiming to improve defence and security, which was impulsed by the incorporation of Jean-Claude Juncker to the Commission and Federica Mogherini to the External Action Service and their personal ambitions to further the Euro-project (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018). This laid the foundation for future defence policies. However, the rationale behind the release of the Global Strategy in 2016 corresponded to more critical factors, those of the crises unraveling in the northern (Brexit), southern (Arab spring and civil wars) and eastern (Ukraine) flanks of the European Union and their consequences in the domestic affairs of the Union. For example, crises in the southern neighbourhood of the European Union, such as those in North Africa and the Middle East, have not only sparked violence at the EU borders, but also distressed the bordering countries with migratory pressures, which in turn create instability and senses of insecurity in domestic politics. It thus does not come as surprising that some of the member states most invested in developing defence operations are the states from the south: Spain, Italy, France (Garcia, 2016, p. 219). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the EUGS began to be drafted in the aftermath of the Ukraine crisis, which took EU leaders by surprise and sparked fears in Central and Eastern Europe over their territorial integrity, and was published a few days after the Brexit referendum, which posed yet another challenge to European identity and its integration processes. Hence, if the internal processes of the Union had laid the foundation, these crises unleashed insecurities in national governments and anxiety at the Union's institutional levels, which ultimately led to the realization that the EU needed a stronger and more capable defence and security system to address all of the strategic interests and threats facing the Union and its Member States (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018; Howorth J. , Personal Communication, 2018).

Within the balancing stream of thought, there are two additional variants: soft balancing and balancing for autonomy. Soft balancing, which suggests the increase of covert divergences in negotiations and policies from the dominant global power, can be discarded on the basis that there are no visible confrontations between US and EU policies in terms of security (except perhaps the increase of budget for NATO but not in terms of contradicting strategies), rather a focus of each on their own set of priorities. However, the balancing for autonomy stream, denoting the EU search for autonomy from the US, may have some explanatory power (Cladi and Locatelli, 2012, p.268; Layne, 1993, p.92). While

again rejecting the theory's assumption that the EU aims for autonomy from the United States per se, and instead arguing that it intends to counterweight threats, the current EU defence initiatives fulfill at least to an extent the three criteria of the balancing for autonomy approach. These are concern for autonomy, sincere commitment and increase of capabilities (Cladi and Locatelli, 2012, p.268). The evident concern for autonomy is demonstrated not only by the rise of defence policies and new strategic guidelines within a short period of time but also through the addressing of the main EU deficiencies in the Implementation Plan and other documents. Furthermore, the joint development (or increase) and coordination of military capabilities is under way through the three-pronged process: CARD for defence research, EDF for funding and PESCO for execution of defence and security projects. Perhaps the most difficult criteria to confirm would be sincere commitment to the pursue for autonomy. However, with the affiliation of twenty-five out of twenty-eight of the EU member states to the PESCO project, which holds twenty binding commitments including increased investment in defence, there seems to be common ground on the initiatives. However, it may be too early to evaluate the commitment of all member states (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018), since issues tend to appear in the practical stages when commitments need to be translated into resources. For example, there are already appearing duplications of efforts in the EU due to continued divergences in the type of projects of interest, since Macron's France is advocating for the European Intervention Initiative while Germany is simultaneously leading the EUFOR Crisis Response Operation Core within PESCO (Pannier, Personal Communication, 2018). However, balancing for autonomy still comes the closest to explaining realistically the latest EU defence developments, considering the readjustment of its aims from balancing the US to balancing threats.

CONCLUSION

As the realist theory postulates, the explanation of the international system as anarchic remains valid, as illustrated by the Ukraine conflict among other regional conflicts. While the European Union has not necessarily been existentially threatened, its lack of control and influence over its neighbouring regions, conflicts and partners could have crucial

security implications, since the European Union still does not hold the capacity to defend its interests in the region. The recognition of these inadequacies have pressed the implementation of EU-wide defence initiatives in the past two years, which aim to tackle these deficiencies, jointly develop capabilities, invest on interoperability between national defence systems and engage the EU defence industry. As stated in the latest strategic document of the Union, the Global Strategy, through these actions the EU aims to play "a larger role as a global security provider" (EEAS, 2013, p.3). The nature of these ambitions has been discussed from realist perspectives of bandwagoning and balancing.

In the case of bandwagoning, internal bandwagoning is disregarded because it does not contribute to the clarification of the central question to this research. Furthermore, the notion of US bandwagoning its flawed in the current context, for the EU is developing capabilities to further its own interests, which simultaneously yet not intentionally, match the US interests. The EU simply aims to address its regional needs. Although the more modern notion of reformed bandwagoning continues the false belief that EU capability developments are meant to please US's priorities, it better represents the international phenomena that have mobilized the EU to take measures and halt the free-riding to the US and NATO.

The balancing stream can also be rejected, since the common assumption that Trump's dismissive comments on NATO – which surely deterred Chancellor Merkel- and the US strategic interest in Asia triggered the EU defence developments is flawed. Although these factors contributed to increased interest in autonomy, they were not per se the cause for renewed attention to defence and security policies. Hence, the rationale behind the balancing for threats approach describes best the current EU defence context: it was the – mainly external but consequently also internal- crises that finally impulsed long-term processes of defence integration in the EU to materialize into concrete initiatives and a renewed interest in security and joint defence.

In order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the present situation of Defence and Security policies in Europe, perhaps it would be best to merge the characteristics of three of the approaches above explained - balance of threats, reformed bandwagoning and balancing for autonomy- into a consolidated approach. On the one hand, the theory of

balance of threats offers insight into state or alliance behavior, and its aim not to counter other powers (such as the US or NATO) rather threats, which can evolve and change in nature as they do in the twenty-first century in an unbalanced uni-multipolar international system. Thus, it allows us to explore more specifically what are the exact challenges that European security faces, without narrowing it to simply powerful states, which may be our allies and an erroneous hypothesis. Furthermore, the reformed bandwagoning approach explains the nature of the relationship between NATO/US and EU without categorising it as balancing. This transformed cooperation develops as a result of divergent priorities in the security regimes of both entities, that do not urge them to competing rather limits their cooperation to only areas of common interest to both. Additionally, the balancing for autonomy perspective contributes by presenting the criteria that would amount to reasonable intent to increase power and influence in the international system: sincere commitment, buildup of capabilities and concern for autonomy. Through the establishment of these criteria, the loose indications of approaches such as soft balancing which would allow for anything and everything to be considered a balancing act, would be avoided.

Conclusion

This research has analysed the European Union's efforts in defence and security from a realist perspective in order to identify the possible motivations behind the renewed interest in strategic autonomy. In order to determine the motivations, the research firstly addressed the most relevant policies developed in the field of defence since 2016 and the internal and external factors that led to the sense of urgency to develop these policies. The conclusions drawn from these chapters will be firstly summarized, as to later present the outcome of their analysis in light of the theoretical approaches of bandwagoning and balancing.

The renewed attention to defence and security matters between 2016 and 2018 resulted in a myriad of initiatives and projects designed to boost defence integration and cooperation in the European Union. These developed from the aims and ambitions included in one strategic document, the European Union Global Strategy. Perhaps the single most important ambition in the Global Strategy is the notion of strategic autonomy, which refers to the Union's ability to act autonomously when it desires, while encouraging collaboration with other security partners. In order to reach this ambition, the initiatives –such as the Implementation Plan and European Defence Action Plan -acknowledge the need for the European Union to become a global actor, and for this purpose they call for the development of hard power – or military power- to complement the already existing soft, economic and diplomatic power of the Union. The achievement of this hard power is designed around various initiatives and projects. On the one hand, collaboration with NATO is reinforced through the Warsaw Declaration, mainly in fields of common interest such as information sharing, cyber security or hybrid threats. Furthermore, a three-pronged approach has been developed in order to accomplish the enhancement and development of military capabilities and further defence cooperation. This interinstitutional approach comprises the CARD, which coordinates defence plans to identify duplications and deficiencies, the EDF, which offers financial assistance for the research and joint development of military capabilities, and the PESCO, which is designed as a framework for military cooperation, in both the operational and the capability development senses. Either the definite or the trial versions of these initiatives have been running since 2017, and although various experts have expressed that it is yet early to determine their success

or failure, it seems that ‘there is a new phase in the CSDP’ (Maull, Personnal Communication, 2018).

The mentioned initiatives repeatedly call for the enhancement of defense integration in view of a ‘deteriorating security environment’ (Juncker, 2017, p.2). The emergence of EU defence policies seem to result from dual dynamics of factors both endogenous and exogenous to the Union. While the institutional logic for defence integration was already existent, with the incorporation of pro-European leaders in important EU institutions in 2014, external factors, sometimes with internal consequences, further increased the sense of urgency for defence integration. On the one hand, the US ambivalence on the NATO partnership questioned the traditional European security guarantees, while the Ukraine conflict had recently prompted renewed concerns about territorial sovereignty in the continent and the crisis in the southern neighbourhood such as the Libya and Syrian civil continued to have internal consequences for the EU in the form of a migration and domestic crisis. On the other hand, internal factors also contributed to an increased inclination towards defence autonomy. Brexit simultaneously liberated and complicated the achievement of autonomous military power in the Union, since in the past it had mainly obstructed EU defence integration policies, but also was one of the biggest military powers in the Union. This gave impetus to the idea of autonomy and offered an opportunity to some of the EU states that had long wished for further communitarian and autonomous defence. Lastly, the widespread perceived insecurity at a national level emerging from overwhelming migratory flows and increasing terrorist threats, and exploited by undemocratic movements, increased the threat perception thus advocating for further focus on security for the citizens. As a result, Jean Monnet’s prophecy about crisis and their solutions forging the European Union regained explanatory power.

The developments in EU defence and taking place in the EU’s security environment are subsequently examined in light of bandwagoning and balancing perspectives, as to identify what were the driving forces behind the renewed interest in autonomy. In the first place it is established that the realist perspective is valid for the analysis of these circumstances, for the international system has been proven to be anarchical, as evidence by the myriad of conflicts – such as the Ukraine crisis- that are not regulated by a world authority. Thus,

states and alliances, such as the EU, must fend for themselves. Furthermore, the international system is uni-multipolar, meaning the existence of a super power and multiple other great powers, and thus power dynamics -such as balancing and bandwagoning- may appear.

In principle, neither of the traditional notions of bandwagoning and balancing apply to the current European situation. In regard to the bandwagoning approach, both the hypothesis of bandwagoning within EU member states and bandwagoning with the United States are disregarded; the first one due to its lack of explanatory power for this research question, and the second due to the fact that the EU's regional needs may align with US interests, yet this does not entail an implied alignment with US strategic priorities. Thus, EU capabilities emerged to pursue the Union's needs, such as the multiple crisis in the southern neighbourhood in the last decades, that in fact did not correspond to either US nor NATO's interests. As for the balancing approach, the main hypothesis asserting that the EU is counterweighting US power due to the latter's shifting priorities away from European security is flawed, since the development of EU capabilities alleviated the EU security burden for the US and in any case, the capabilities developed do not amount to those of the US, hence not constituting in any case a realistic case for balancing. Besides, there is continued and increased cooperation in areas of common interest between the US and EU in the context of the NATO framework.

However, a combination of certain aspects of more contemporary approaches of the bandwagoning and balancing notions may draw a clearer picture of the current situation. The streams that better represent the current situation are balance of threats, reformed bandwagoning and balancing for autonomy. The balance of threats stream demonstrates that the behavior of states or alliances in the international system may not only be a response to menacing powers but also to threats. This perspective allows to explore more specifically the exact challenges to European security, rather than narrowing it to powerful states. Furthermore, threats evolve and change over time, perhaps even quicker than powers, which would give an adjusting character to the analytical capacity of this merge of theories. As seen in the European environment, the powers have remained rather constant, but threats such as neighbourhood conflicts in Eastern Europe and North Africa and their

consequences have changed from one year to another, forcing the European Union to change its perspective. Another interesting insight is drawn from the reformed bandwagoning approach, since is explains the nature of the EU-NATO/US relation without categorising it as balancing due to the diverging interests. The transformed EU-NATO/US cooperation results from a divergence in priorities that limits their cooperation to fields of common interest, but does not align the remaining and differing interests, such as the US-Asia and the EU-North Africa strategic priorities. Lastly, in order to determine whether the EU efforts amount to a serious intent of autonomy, and to avoid misleading notions such as soft balancing, the balancing for autonomy stream offers three criteria which are applicable to the EU attitude towards defence developments since 2016: concern for autonomy, sincere commitment and capability buildups. Together, these three streams may give a more comprehensive overview of the current state of European security: aiming for autonomy through military buildups and capability development in order to face external threats and challenges, while open to partnerships that are not defining of its interests but act on areas of joint interests.

LIMITATIONS AND AVENUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

These results represent a considerable contribution to the realm of academic research on security and defence policies, since it is the first report to comprehensively apply realist theories to European defence developments that emerged between 2016 and 2018. Nonetheless, a few limitations may be discerned in regard to the analytical tools and other aspects of this research. To begin with, the research acknowledges in Chapter One, where the theoretical framework is expressed, that the analysis of more internal factors could contribute to a more comprehensive outcome. More specifically, it would be interesting to merge both realist and already researched institutional logics of Defence Integration in the European Union. However, the research also specified that due to the lack of realist analysis of EU defence policies in the last decade, this research – due to time and resource restrictions- would mostly focus on external factors influencing EU security.

Two more limitations are worth mentioning in the case of this research. In the first place, the single case study methodology implies that the outcome of the research, the merge of theories to explain EU defence, may not be applicable nor generalized to other cases of

defence cooperation and integration in other regions or regional frameworks. Furthermore, the analytical as well as content sections of this research have been partly based on the structured interviews undertaken for the purpose of this research. This implies that, although the researcher has tried to filter the potential bias and verify the information from the interviewees, it is not possible that some may have still transpired into the final outcome of this research.

Lastly, further research on the suitability of the realist notions of bandwagoning and balancing is recommended once the EU defence initiatives and projects are at more advanced stages and the first outcomes hopefully appear, as to assess whether the ambitions set in the EUGS were fulfilled and contrast it with the outcome of this research.

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