Rethinking the European Union's common security and defence policy in the post-Brexit era

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Abstract

In Lisbon 2007, the European Union (EU) established a new policy called the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). With Brexit, the EU lost an important member state in political, military and financial terms, potentially harming the CSDP. EU foreign policy and the impact of member states leaving IOs have attracted much scholarly attention. Previous research has been published before the actual exit date or during the negotiations and therefore has not yet focused on the impact of Brexit on the CSDP. This paper aims to answer the question *"How does Brexit influence the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy?"* via a theory-testing process-tracing method. The single case study uses the theory of historical institutionalism. While the analysis provides evidence for path dependency and a critical juncture in CSDP development, there is ambiguity regarding the actual long-term impact of Brexit on the CSDP. Just months ago, the world was shaken by an unprecedented war in Ukraine, forcing the EU to accelerate its policy adjustment within this field. Which means that it is difficult to give an absolute answer to the RQ itself. However, it makes the outcome of the researched policy adjustment process quite clear.

Keywords: Brexit, CSDP, defence, EU, security

List of abbreviations

CSDP Common Security & Defence Policy

CFSP Common Foreign Security Policy

EDA European Defence Agency

EEAS European External Action Service

ESDP European Security & Defence Policy

EU European Union

GNI Gross National Income

HI Historical Institutionalism

ICC International Criminal Court

IO International Organization

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

UK United Kingdom

UKIP UK Independent Party

USA United States of America

Introduction

Over a decade ago, the European Union (EU) established a new policy mandated by the Lisbon Treaty: The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The CSDP is a policy setting the EU's defence and crisis management framework, including defence cooperation and coordination (European Union, 2021). The CSDP has given rise to internal EU political and military organizations, enabling overseas military and civilian missions and operations. It is a vital aspect of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (European Union, 2021). However, the strength of this policy stands or falls with the contributions of EU member states. That is why EU member states with more significant political, military and financial capabilities, like the United Kingdom (UK), are often looked at for leadership and guidance. Attention to the UK's relation with the European mainland increased after the UK decided to leave the EU during a referendum in 2016, also known as Brexit (The Electoral Commission, 2019). Therefore, it is interesting to analyze Brexit through a historical institutionalist lens to find out the implications on the CSDP.

Not all research starts from a puzzle but can also arise from a debate in the literature. In this case, it is a debate in the literature on the implications of Brexit on European security and safety, EU foreign policy and the impact of member states leaving international organizations (IOs) in general.

What is noticeable, is the debate among researchers and its outcomes. There are two sides to the discussion about the implications for the CSDP after Brexit. Some researchers claim that Brexit could have severe implications on the CSDP since the UK is one of the few countries with a full-spectrum army and is the highest defence spender in Europe (Cabinet Office, 2021). Moreover, Brexit could impact the EU since its member states have fewer resources at hand, weakening the striking power of the CSDP (Martill & Sus, 2021; Ozdemir, 2021; Sweeney & Winn, 2021). Also, the UK can no longer cooperate within the CSDP framework, reducing

cooperation and potentially harming the EU's security and defence. While other researchers argue that despite weakening the EU CSDP, the UK's 'Global Britain' strategy adds to the security of the Euro-Atlantic region (Martill & Staiger, 2018; Martill & Sus, 2018). As the British government stated, *"we will continue to be the leading European ally within NATO, bolstering the alliance by tackling threats jointly and committing our resources to collective security in the Euro-Atlantic region. As a European nation, we will enjoy constructive and productive relationships with our neighbors in the European Union."* (Cabinet Office, 2021). Remarkably, scholars Martill, Sus and Staiger, in their most recent literature pessimistic, were more optimistic in 2018.

The literature also explains the struggling EU foreign policy due to hesitant national governments to hand over control over defence and security issues (Hoffmann, 1966, p. 882). Furthermore, creating a single foreign policy is impossible in the intergovernmental structure (Forster & Wallace, 1996; Regelsberger, 2011, p. 17). Lastly, it is complicated to balance reliance on NATO and the mandate of EU foreign policy (Hill, 1993, p. 316). Furthermore, literature on the impact of member states leaving IOs sees more contestation from member states on authority and usefulness of IOs. This contestation potentially leads to political and financial losses (Borzyskowski & Vabulas, 2019; Hirschmann, 2021). Even though it is not very common due to high exit costs due to earlier made commitments, it can happen. Brexit is a good example of that.

Reflecting on the literature combined with a theoretical focus of historical institutionalism, the following research question was formulated: *"How does Brexit influence the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy?"*

More specifically, this paper aims to analyse the political, military and financial CSDP developments pre-and post-Brexit, compare them within the theoretical framework and provide a general assessment of future CSDP direction. The analysis tries to present the past, current and future developments and come to relevant conclusions.

This paper pursues a theory-testing process-tracing research. The causal mechanism was tested based on 'historical institutionalism' and the corresponding theoretical framework through the concepts of *path dependency*, *critical juncture* and *policy change.* This will be further explained in the theory section. HI allowed this research, instead of focusing on short periods of policy change in the field of EU security and defence policies, to investigate this topic from a different angle, emphasizing the role of historical policy development.

Brexit has increasingly attracted scholarly attention. A substantial amount of literature has been dedicated to possible new EU-UK security and defence relations and the possible implications of this. So far, the debate on future implications of Brexit regarding the CSDP, the overall functioning of EU foreign policy and the impact of member states leaving IOs is interesting. This literature has already been discussed briefly in the introduction. However, further elaboration on these scholarly works will be given in the literature review.

This paper will fill a literature gap by contributing in a practical manner to the aforementioned academic research fields. Most relevant studies on this topic were done before or during Brexit. So, this was mainly based on scenarios of what could happen. This research could provide new insights into the current literature and explore what has happened one and a half years after Brexit in the CSDP. In today's world, security and defence are becoming more critical due to an increasingly multipolar world, in which the United States of America (USA) is no longer the leader of the free world. A major consequence of this power shift is that opposing world views

collide and can spark conflict between adversaries (Acharya, 2018). A good example is the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The structure of this thesis will be the following. Firstly, a literature review will be provided. Secondly, the theory is discussed, followed by research methods and the operationalization section. Thirdly, the analysis is provided. Lastly, the discussion and conclusion section will give an overview of the study's findings.

Literature Review

Firstly, it is important to analyze the current debate on future implications of Brexit regarding EU security and defence. Secondly, since the CSDP falls under the scope of the broader Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU, it is important to examine the broader academic debate on the functioning of the EU's foreign policy. Lastly, it is crucial to examine the academic debate on the impact of member states leaving IOs since their authority is becoming more contested in the 21st century.

Future implications of Brexit regarding EU security and defence

A group of somewhat optimistic scholars like Martill and Sus (2018) concluded that Brexit would not diminish the UK's commitment to EU security and defence because of continued shared interests. Since the CSDP is one of the least integrated policy areas among member states, it will be easier to adapt to another form of cooperation. 'The UK could dispose of its awkward reputation within the EU and become a more consistent partner from without' (Martill & Staiger, 2018). There is also a group of somewhat pessimistic scholars. 'Brexit will have a negative impact on EU-UK security cooperation and will lower the quality and scope' (Sweeney & Winn, 2021). Martill and Sus (2021) formulate it slightly milder, arguing that failing to reach an agreement will not hurt diplomatic relations. However, the absence of an agreement could make cooperation more difficult. Also, Brexit will impact European foreign policy, considering that the EU will lose a significant global security player (Ozdemir, 2021).

Difficult functioning of EU foreign policy

The EU's international role has been conceptualized in several ways. The categorizations are based on the notion that the EU is a unique organization that seeks to achieve its aims via collaboration and discourse rather than a balance of power approach (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, p. 35). When dealing with significant political crises, particularly those involving military conflict, the EU has rarely functioned as efficiently as it could (Cameron, 1998, p. 66). The disagreement over Iraq (Crowe, 2003), and the prior failure in the former Yugoslavia, have

demonstrated the EU's foreign policy shortcomings. The EU cannot discard the popular notion of being an "economic giant, political dwarf" (Medrano, 2001, p. 155). The prevalent viewpoint appears that the EU cannot implement a cohesive joint foreign strategy as cooperation of nation states. Coherence is described as the lack of contradiction and synergetic effects across diverse crisis management approaches and tools commonly referred to as "consistency" (Missiroli, 2001, p. 5).

Existing literature has offered three potential explanations for the difficult implementation of EU foreign policy. One problem the EU faces is the failure to achieve a common standpoint. Member states' desire to maintain sovereignty on foreign policy decisions plays an important role. National governments are less fond of handing over control over defence and security to a supranational body (Hoffmann, 1966, p. 882). A second problem is the transnational decision-making structures (Forster & Wallace, 1996). The EU's foreign policy is supposed to develop a single policy. However, the intergovernmental system makes it impossible to create a single foreign and security strategy (Regelsberger, 2011, p. 17). Hill (1993, p. 316) debates that an executive capable of making unambiguous judgments on high-level policy problems, controlling the resources, tools to back them up, and a competent bureaucracy at their disposal, is required for a foreign policy worthy of its objectives. The third problem is that the EU finds it challenging to balance reliance and help from NATO and the USA and create its security policies and institutions. The NATO-CSDP relationship influences each institution's mandate in the current security environment (Hofmann, 2009, p. 45).

The impact of member states leaving IOs

A considerable amount of literature has been published showing that IOs play a crucial role in promoting multilateral cooperation on critical transnational issues. IOs are important instruments for international coordination and collaboration (Abbott and Snidal, 1998; Elsig et al., 2011; Mansfield and Pevehouse, 2006; Martin,1992; Schneider, 2011). Nevertheless, their authority has increasingly been contested by member states that cut financial contributions (Hirschmann, 2021) or even withdraw their membership when alternatives exist (Borzyskowski & Vabulas, 2019).

IOs are experiencing an increased resistance to their authority, international role and function, both from societies and member states (Walter, 2021; Zürn, 2018). Recent events include the UK's decision to leave the EU, the threat of numerous African nations to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the reduction of financial support from the previous USA administration to several IOs. Such built-up contestation raised a debate about whether the existing international order has been in crisis as due to the member states' growing competition (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni & Hofmann, 2020; Hooghe et al., 2019; Ikenberry, 2018).

However, leaving an IO is not very common. Existing research does, however, recognize that ultimately exiting institutions is more complicated than it seems. While constitutive treaties may contain simple rules to leave the organization, practice reveals that a ‘divorce’ is usually complex, painful, and costly. Difficulties that can arise after member states leave an IO are that budgetary settlements, institutionalized cooperation, and legal procedures must be renegotiated (Brölmann et al., 2018).

The withdrawal of some of the most powerful nations in the world, with significant political and economic influence, from universal or regional international institutions that play a significant role in the international arena poses a severe danger to the 21st century. Even though it is uncommon for member states to leave an IO for the aforementioned reasons, it happens from time to time. One of the most challenging situations of a state's withdrawal from an international organization this century is the UK's decision to leave the EU. Brexit is complicated since its consequences will not only have an impact on the UK and the EU but also on the rest of the world. The EU is not an international organization with a universal character, but it is the most significant player on the global trade scene, while the UK historically has a vast political, economic and military role in the world (Rashica, 2019). Even in this century, despite growing interdependence between nations, the influence of nationalism should not be underestimated, and the power of international organizations should not be overstated, as seen by states' withdrawals and threats to leave international organizations.

In general, the current state of art on the difficult functioning foreign policymaking of the EU, and the impact of member states leaving IOs, is quite elaborate. However, it has also been apparent that there are still some gaps within these fields, i.e., the actual impact on the CSDP after the UK left the EU, since most relevant literature was published before or during the negotiations. Since this was the first time a member state left, the EU has perhaps woken up from years of backsliding and the current threats from Russia in Ukraine. A historical institutionalist approach gives more insight into the EU CSDP development from an external perspective.

Theory

The theory and analytical framework called historical institutionalism (HI) looks at how previous events have influenced contemporary institutional structures (Fioretos et al., 2016, p. 5; Thatcher & Woll, 2016, p. 506). HI primarily emphasizes the significance of critical junctures' influencing role in understanding institutional transformation (Pierson, 1996, p. 126). A critical juncture is a brief period of time, such as a crisis or a specific event, that is vital for the development of an organization (Capoccia, 2016, p. 90; Pierson, 1996, p. 126; Thelen, 2002). An inadequate institutional structure emerges at a crucial juncture, necessitating institutional transformation (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991, p. 9). The decisions made at that time have a significant impact on how institutions will develop in the period of instability that follows (Capoccia, 2016, p. 90; Pierson, 1996, p. 126).

For a problem or crises to be a critical juncture, it must first be identified and put on the political agenda. It also has to be socially structured in order for the concern to be declared (Pierson, 2011, p. 12). In a crisis, the problem description chosen is crucial because it establishes what is deemed important and, thus, what has to be addressed by public policy (Schmidt, 2008, p. 306). Because of this, problem descriptions for crises implicitly state how they will be addressed, outlining the solutions that are being considered in the first place (Capoccia, 2016, p. 98; Schmidt, 2008, p. 306). Hence, the politics of ideas are crucial, and they may end up being the determining factor in institutional policy change (Capoccia, 2016, p. 98; Schmidt, 2008, p. 306).

The truth of the politics of ideas is that new institutional structures and policies cannot be implemented without the legitimacy that ideas bring (Campbell, 2002, p. 21; Schmidt, 2008, p. 307). Ideas here refer to changing constructs like critical junctures that are susceptible to changes in communities (Christen & Schmidt, 2012, p. 400; Schmidt, 2008, p. 303). This fluid nature becomes discrnible when applied to evolving EU policy, showing that fundamental beliefs on the purposes that policy efforts like defence and security are meant to serve could make a shift in a future stage. This variability in policymaking demonstrates how viewpoints are taken into account while making judgments (Schmidt, 2008, pp. 306-308).

According to HI, the critical juncture that interrupts path dependent behavior within an IO and results in a change in policy is the causal mechanism. The structure of the current policy status quo is unaltered because of the path dependent behavior in an IO. A critical juncture, in this instance, Brexit, causes the policy status quo structure inside an IO to be disrupted and fragmented. Because of this asymmetry, a power void can lead to a new dynamic and perhaps change the course of policy. Table 1 will show the causal mechanism used in this study. By utilizing the key concepts of path dependence, critical juncture, and policy change, HI offers a clear method to look into and evaluate this process in order to comprehend the decisions made by the UK to exit the EU and how this influences the CSDP.

Path dependency

Policy arrangements accessible to policymakers in the present are constrained by the logic of path dependence, which holds that decisions made about policies in the past have an impact on decisions made about policies in the future (Katznelson, 1997). Institutions develop strong in-house dynamics that make it hard to reform or dismantle after policies have been committed to a specific path. The principle of increasing returns in IOs says that as an increased number of countries recognize the advantages of the current functioning of international organizations and they have grown steadily, establishing more durable and better functioning IOs over time, rather

than turning their back on these organizations and choose a different course. As a result, path dependency is characterized by positive feedback on the existing IO structures, that increases institutional returns and strengthens path dependent behaviour. (Ikenberry, 2016). Hence, path dependence asserts that once choices are made, it is highly implausible to reverse them because of the associated costs.

Critical junctures & policy change

Critical junctures are frequently associated with changes in institutional political power. Critical junctures are conceptualized in a number of ways (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). In institutional, political, and policy evolution, significant watersheds (Collier & Collier, 1991) or turning points (Abbot, 1997) take place. A critical juncture is a moment of considerable change, which often happens in various ways in different countries (or other units of study) (Collier & Collier, 1991, p. 29). A critical juncture is a turning point that cannot be handled within the existing institutional framework. The ensuing unpredictability creates a policy window for new concepts and proposals to germinate. (Kingdon, 1993, p. 46).

The requirements that must be met for a situation to qualify as a critical juncture are fourfold. Firstly, it occurs exogenously with increased contingency. Secondly, it occurs over a brief period of time, - so the juncture's length must be short in comparison to the length of the path-dependent process it triggers - with a relatively low possibility of occurrence. Thirdly, compared to the likelihood before and after a critical juncture, the chance that agents' decisions affect the outcome of interest is increased. Fourthly, future path dependence results from the actors' choices (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007, p. 348).

A change in policy is likely because a critical juncture reshapes institutions and creates room for new strategies. However, policy change is not guaranteed. Fioretos et al., (2016), state four ways of institutional transition that might happen, and are likely connected to policy change types, such as:

1. Displacement → the process of replacing one set of rules with another.
2. Layering → new regulations are implemented over or in addition to preexisting ones.
3. A drift → the effects of the current laws are altered by a change in the environment.
4. A conversion → a tactical redeployment of current regulations that result in a modified enactment

Cause	**Historical institutionalist causal mechanism**	**Outcome**
Path dependency is a policy status quo that exists inside the framework of an international organization because of path dependent behaviour.	**Critical juncture** is a turning point that cannot be handled within the existing institutional framework. The ensuing unpredictability creates a policy window for new concepts to germinate in new proposals.	A **policy change** is frequently quite plausible because a critical juncture alters institutions and creates room for new actions. But a policy change does not automatically ensure change.

Table 1: The historical institutionalist causal mechanism

Research design

Case selection

To analyse how IOs common security and defence policy develops after institutional imbalance via the research question '*How does Brexit influence the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy?*', this paper conducts a single extreme case study on the CSDP and what the political, financial and military implications of Brexit are on this policy. 'Extreme' refers to 'a case that exemplifies extreme or unusual values' (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). Such cases are the most appropriate to confirm or challenge a theory (Yin, 1989). Several reasons explain why this single-case study is useful. First, Brexit is complicated since its consequences will not only have an impact on the UK and the EU, but also on the rest of the world. The EU is not an IO with a universal character, but it is the most significant player global trade, while the UK historically has a vast political, economic and military role in the world (Rashica, 2019). Second, it is the first time in the history of the EU that a member state left. The fact that this is a whole new process for the EU regarding an exit of a member state, and the decoupling of existing structures and interwoven policy areas can cause difficulties in many areas.

Pros of a single case study design are threefold: (1) it gives the researcher a deeper understanding of the exploring subject (Dyer et al., 1991) (2) researchers can question old theoretical relationships and explore new ones when a single case study is used (Dyer et al., 1991) and (3) single case studies richly can describe the existence of a phenomenon (Siggelkow, 2007). Cons of a single case study are: (1) it narrows down the area of research (Anderson, 1993) and (2) external validity can be questioned (Calder et al., 1982). This research is process focused. This implies that the process through which the EU develops its common security and defence policy will serve as the analytical unit for this study. This study will adopt an EU perspective by concentrating on the common security and defence policymaking process inside the EU. As a result, this case will also focus on a specific player in the EU (the UK) that is involved in this process. However, the EU is the primary constituent member.

Data collection

The collected data consisted of EU treaties that further institutionalized the organization's work. Furthermore, policy documents related to the CSDP and policy documents of the Council of the European Union. Also, conclusions, decisions and publications of the European Parliament, European Council and European Commission regarding the CSDP were looked at. Moreover, EU-UK negotiation documents regarding Brexit are analyzed for additional information on the negotiation process. Press statements are analyzed from earlier mentioned periods regarding the earlier mentioned bodies. Lastly, reports and publications of the British government and parliament regarding Brexit are analyzed.

The documents were selected based on keywords like *Common Security and Defence Policy* or the abbreviation *CSDP* and the keywords *security* and *defence.* The research used primary sources and the relevant documents are publicly available via the institutions' websites. The mechanistic evidence sought in the documents is twofold. The first is whether there is a path-dependent process in common security and defence policy. So, is there due to an incentive to continue down a particular path that increases cooperation in the political, financial and military fields of the common security and defence policy, which become more difficult to reverse due to the high costs involved? The second mechanistic evidence sought is whether the UK's exit from the EU will change this common security and defence policy due to policy change due to a critical juncture.

Data analysis and Operationalization

This thesis used a theory-testing process-tracing research approach to see if the predicted causal mechanism is present. Theory-testing process tracing is a research method geared to examine whether a theoretically expected mechanism is present and if it functions as expected (Beach and Pedersen, 2019). Given the uniqueness of Brexit and its implications on the overall relationship between the EU and UK and, therefore, on the CSDP, this method was well suited to test the theory and examine if the HI causal mechanism was present. Regarding operationalization, the analysis looks at how the departure of an influential member state serves as the basis for policy change which, in turn, could bear implications for the constructed importance of the CSDP. The influence of Brexit will be operationalized based on the concepts of HI. *Path dependency* will look at the increased returns and positive feedback to the EU's CSDP given by member states in the form of political, financial and military support that was provided. The *critical juncture* will examine whether the four characteristics of Capoccia and Kelemen (2007) are present. *Policy change* will look at the four possible outcomes provided by Fioretos et al. (2016). The causal mechanism with the observable manifestations per section and involved actors are displayed in table 2.

The analysis looks at three periods based on the key concepts of HI. The *path dependency* period is from the Maastricht Treaty until the Brexit referendum. This period will be from 1991-2016 and marks the period in which CSDP was established and further developed. The *critical juncture* period is from the referendum in 2016 until the EU-UK agreement went into force on 1 January 2021. It looks at Brexit as the exogenous shock causing a potential institutional change in the EU. The *policy change* period is from 1 January 2021 until 1 June 2022.

Cause	**Historical institutionalist causal mechanism**	**Outcome**
Path dependency: A policy status quo exists inside the framework of an international organization because of path dependent behaviour.	**Critical juncture** is a turning point that cannot be handled within the existing institutional framework. The ensuing unpredictability creates a policy window for new concepts to germinate in new proposals	A **policy change** is frequently quite plausible because a critical juncture alters institutions and creates room for new actions. But a policy change does not automatically ensure change.
	Observable manifestations	
Increased institutional returns and endorsements for keeping on a particular path.	Critical junctures - occurs exogenously with increased contingency, - only active for a brief period of time relatively with low possibility of occurrence. - heightened possibility that the choices of the agent will impact the result of interest - The decisions of the actor result in path dependency in the future	Policy Change: Displacement → process of replacing one set of rules with another. Layering → when new regulations are implemented over or in addition to preexisting ones. Drift → the effects of the current laws are altered by a change in the environment. Conversion → tactical redeployment of current regulations that results in a modified enactment
	Actors	
EU member states and the corresponding EU institutions related to the CSDP	- United Kingdom government and British national political parties - European Union member states	- The European Union

Table 2: The historical institutionalist causal mechanism, observable manifestations and actors involved

Analysis

The ensuing analysis explores the three individual categories of HI as applied to the case on the CSDP.

Path dependency

In order to determine whether a path dependence is present in the EU's CSDP, the policy itself must be defined. The CSDP provides the EU a framework for crisis management and defence cooperation (European Union, 2021). In order to support foreign military and civilian missions and activities, the CSDP has given rise to internal political and military formations within the EU. It is a key element of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (European Union, 2021). Moreover, the CSDP gained importance over time when the treaties of Maastricht 1992, Nice 2000 and Lisbon 2007 were used to expand and institutionalize the CSDP. The Lisbon Treaty was ratified in 2009 and was considered a cornerstone in developing the CSDP (European Union, 2009).

The first part of the analysis looks at the category of path dependence from 1991 – 2016. It marks the period in which the CSDP was established and further developed before the critical juncture. It is not logical to assume that a potential policy change will be visible within the same period as the expected critical juncture arose in June 2016 and continued through the beginning of 2021. Therefore, the year 2016 was the end point of the path dependent period.

In the Treaty of Maastricht, 1992, an ambitious but rather abstract description was formulated in the field of a common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Article B of the treaty stated: *"the Union shall set itself the following objectives: to assert its identity on the international scene, in particular through the implementation of a common foreign and security policy including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence."* (European Union, 1992, p. 4) This showed that the member states gave a clear vote

of confidence when signing this treaty. All member states agreed to the fact that the EU, from this day forward, should (1) safeguard common values, fundamental interests and independence of the Union, (2) strengthen the security of the Union and its member states, (3) preserve peace and strengthen international security, (4) promote international cooperation and (5) to develop and consolidate democracy and rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.' (European Union, 1992, p. 92) The first step was to create a more unified foreign and security policy with a bigger mandate for the Presidency of the EU, who shall represent them in those related matters.

The Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, stated the same objective as in Maastricht (European Union, 1999). Support for a common security and defence policy was reamplified, which was a sign of confidence by EU member states to continue down this path. However, this was not a groundbreaking treaty on foreign policy and common security and defence. Progress was made at the European Council meeting in Cologne in 1999 when the 'European Security and Defence Policy' (ESDP) was launched. The aim was to strengthen the CFSP by the development of a common European policy on security and defence. This required a capacity for autonomous action backed up by credible military capabilities and appropriate decision-making bodies. Decisions to act would be taken within the framework of the CFSP according. The Council of the European Union would thus be able to make decisions on the whole range of political, economic and military instruments at its disposal when responding to crises. Regarding military capabilities, member states needed to develop other forces (including headquarters) suited to crisis management operations. The main characteristics included: deployability, sustainability, interoperability, flexibility and mobility. Again, this was a step further in institutionalizing the European common security and defence policy (European Council, 1999b).

The next steps of further institutionalized cooperation regarding the ESDP were with the signing of the 'BERLIN PLUS' arrangement in 2002, which allowed the use of NATO structures, mechanisms and assets to carry out ESDP missions (European Union & North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2003). Followed by the adoption of a "European Security Strategy' in 2003 (Council of the European Union, 2003) and the creation of the 'European Defence Agency (EDA) in 2004 (European Defence Agency, 2020). During this period, significant steps were made to develop a unified approach to tackle European security and defence issues.

The Lisbon Treaty of 2007 was considered a cornerstone in developing the CSDP (European Union, 2009). This treaty founded the European External Action Service (EEAS), led by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy/ Vice-President of the European Commission. Before Brexit, the last addition to the CSDP was the "Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy." In 2016, The EU established a security and defence measures package. It was built on three pillars: new political goals and ambitions for Europeans to take greater responsibility for their security and defence; new financial tools to assist member states and the European defence industry in developing defence capabilities ("European Defence Action Plan"); and a set of concrete actions as a follow-up to the EU-NATO Joint Declaration, which identified areas of cooperation (European External Action Services, 2021).

Furthermore, it expressed the active will of the EU to extend military capabilities and troops. During the aforementioned treaties and council meetings, attempts were made to increase involvement among member states in forming a joint military/defensive group without American reliance. This seemed a realistic goal since France and the UK had the military capabilities to do so. These two countries were always forerunners in military cooperation and

innovation since both countries have the best armies in the EU. Unfortunately, the CSDP had to deal with the reticent behavior of member states that still rely heavily on the American security umbrella through NATO. This behavior was also reinforced by a long period of peace on the European continent and the use of diplomacy over military force to resolve conflicts. As a result, much attention has been paid to economic and social progress due to a lack of military threats. Europe's past has caused this path-dependent policy behaviour and created a heavy reliance on existing security and defence structures (Center for American Progress, 2021).

Lastly, it stated the active will to realize the aforementioned incentive by creating a financial framework that enables funding CSDP military and civilian operations. The provisions regulating the financing of the CFSP, including CSDP missions and operations, are outlined in Article 41 of the Maastricht Treaty. According to Article 41.3, ATHENA, the CSDP military operations finance mechanism, primarily provides funds for quick reaction operations (financing CSDP operations). The Maastricht Treaty makes a clear distinction between civilian and military operations. Military operations are charged to member states depending on their gross national income (GNI), whereas civilian operations are supported via CSFP budget provisions. In 2016, the biggest spenders on defence in the EU were Estonia (2.4% of GNI), Greece (2.1% of GNI), the UK (2.0% of GNI) and France (1.8% of GNI). In absolute terms, the UK was with 47 billion Euros by far the highest spender. Followed by France (40.7 billion Euros) and Germany (32.7 billion Euros) and Italy (21.5 billion Euros). Together, these four member states accounted for 71.3% of the total expenditure in the EU in 2016 (Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs, 2018). The EU budget cannot pay for CSDP military operations. On the concept of "expenses lay where they fall," EU member states (and third countries) that decide to contribute to an EU military operation reimburse their participation costs. To assure unity between participating and non-participating governments, it was determined to share some of the expenses of military operations. The ATHENA finance

mechanism has been funding certain shared expenditures of EU military operations since its inception in March 2004 (Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs, 2018).

The ATHENA budget was over 78 million Euros in 2014 and financed five military operations. Although ATHENA provides a permanent collective burden-sharing mechanism, its influence has been deemed limited. Because member states carry the lion's share of the expenditures, CSDP military operations still rely on their desire to engage and supply the requisite capabilities (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2016). As mentioned earlier, the urge of member states to invest in those military operations is limited due to leaning on America's defence guarantees and therefore spending their money elsewhere (Center for American Progress, 2021).

These findings support the assumption that the EU established a common foreign and security policy in the years analyzed and further strengthened it with the CSDP. The content of the treaties and councils showed repetitive support of increased returns in the form of political, military and financial institutionalization to the EU organizations to continue with this policy area. The will from the EU is there and reasonable steps have been taken over the years. Only some member states do not want to go too far since they fall under the security umbrella of NATO. But overall, these results confirm the assumption that due to the nature of path dependence, the EU stuck with its CSDP throughout the years before the anticipated critical juncture.

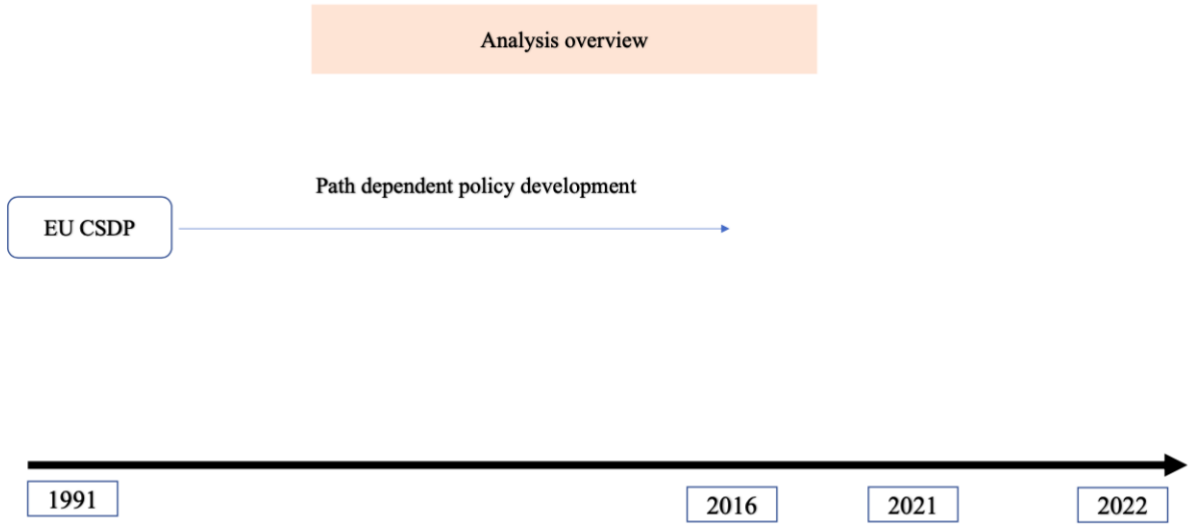

figure 1: path dependent part

Critical juncture

This section intends to determine whether Brexit verifies as a critical juncture according to the four criteria by Capoccia and Kelemen (2016).

Firstly, Brexit was an exogenous event with heightened contingency since it happened outside the institution of the EU and was the first time a member state wanted to leave the EU. What eventually pinnacled in a British exit began in 2013 when Prime Minister David Cameron delivered an EU speech announcing a referendum (Cabinet Office, 2013). But not until after the 2015 elections, since Cameron wanted to negotiate within the EU for better conditions. Cameron was re-elected on May 5, 2015, and the referendum became a reality. The referendum was not surprising since Nigel Farage's UK Independence Party (UKIP) gained popularity. UKIP rose in the polls, fishing in the same voter pool as Cameron's Conservative party. Moreover, increased Eurosceptic voices were rising within Cameron's Conservative party. Donald Tusk, the European Council president, tried to convince the UK to stay in the EU

(European Council, 2015). Eventually, the referendum date was announced, and the campaigns started. This all came together on June 23, 2016. This date proved to be a historic day in the history of the EU. The referendum on membership of the EU was held in the UK. Eventually, almost 52% of the voters wanted to leave the EU (The Electoral Commission, 2019). The result of the Brexit referendum was an accumulation of discontent among the British population fueled by Eurosceptic politicians. It became clear that the British Pro-Brexit voters wanted to set their own course on immigration, job security, foreign policy, and national sovereignty without interference from Brussels (KBC Economics, 2019).

Secondly, Brexit was a relatively short period when comparing seven years to finish the process on 65 years of the EU as an institution. In June 2016, after the referendum, the 27 leaders and EU representatives stated at an informal meeting that they declared the start of the negotiation procedure with the UK when they triggered article 50 to leave the EU (European Council, 2016). On June 19th, 2017, the negotiations started between the EU and UK, focusing on citizens' rights, financial settlement, the Northern Irish border, and other separation bodies. Surprisingly, nothing was discussed on collective security and defence. The negotiations were led by EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier and UK representative David Davis (European Commission, 2017). After a long process of eight negotiation rounds and three extensions, on 29 January, the UK ratified the negotiated withdrawal agreement, and the European Parliament approved the Brexit deal. Lastly, on 30 January, the EU ratified the withdrawal agreement. The withdrawal agreement entered into force upon the UK's exit from the EU on 31st, January 2020, at midnight (CET). The UK is no longer an EU member state and is considered a third country. The transition period was one year and was due on January 1st, 2021.

Thirdly, Brexit had a heightened probability that the actors' decision to leave the EU affected their outcome of interest and heightened contingency as it marked a crucial point in time for other EU member states' cooperation. It became clear that the unity was less stable than it seemed. Even though the aims and goals of the EU remain the same in the field of common security and defence, from now on, it is without the UK (European External Action Service, 2022a). Before Brexit, self-evident EU procedures and structures are now complicated by new agreements and more national UK interests. Even though both parties strive for economic growth, collective defence, security and sustainability (European Union & United Kingdom, 2020), the UK strongly prefers NATO over a European joint military initiative." (Cabinet Office, 2021). Moreover, the actions from Brexit triggered a certain path dependency since member states still regard the organization's institutional framework in terms of cooperation as more beneficial and efficient than another path. Especially since member states noticed the arduous and time-consuming process Brexit eventually was. Moreover, as this thesis was written, the war in Ukraine placed a big emphasis on European security and defence.

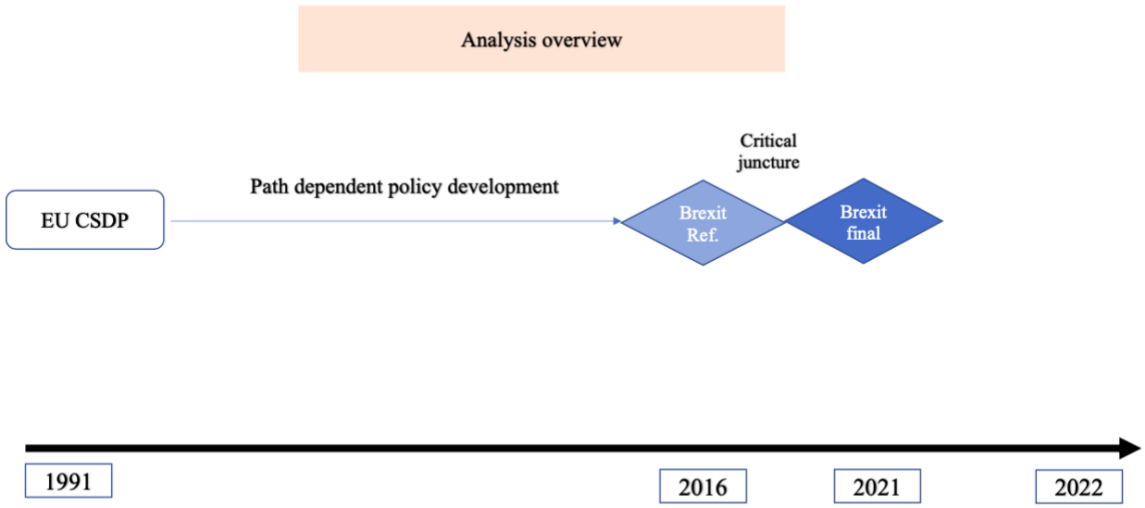

figure 2: path dependent & critical juncture part

Policy change

Lastly, the category policy change was examined from January 1, 2021, until June 1, 2022. After the UK officially left the EU, it became clear that the UK wanted to do as little as possible in terms of common security and defence through the EU. For example, no explicit decisions have been made on this topic in the EU-UK treaty (European Union & United Kingdom, 2020). Also, the UK will not become a so-called 'third country' in the CSDP mechanism but will focus entirely on NATO cooperation (UK Parliament, 2021). Opting out for the 'third country' cooperation with the CSDP means that the British government can no longer cooperate in operations or utilize the associated diplomatic and intelligence facilities of the CSDP. Nevertheless, the British government has indicated that its national policy aims to protect the Euro-Atlantic region, and London wants to increase its cooperation with EU member states through NATO (Cabinet Office, 2021).

For the CSDP, Brexit will have influence. In practical terms, the CSDP policy will undoubtedly change as there are fewer financial options. Brexit will primarily lead to losing a veto player and one of the CSDP's main shareholders. In the EU, more than 40% of public defence investments were made by just the UK and France. The UK was one of five EU member states paying 2% or more on public defence, along with Greece (2.6%), Poland (2.2%), France (2.1%), and Estonia, with its military expenditures amounting to 2% of GNI. (Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs, 2018). In addition, the absence of a highly professional British army will also be felt (Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs, 2018). Furthermore, the CSDP was created as a result of a Franco-British effort; therefore, its first political implication will be the need to reevaluate the governance model for this policy area, especially the core of EU member states that are driving it ahead. The most secure option would seem to be a new Franco-German axis. This could be happening since numerous policy and decision-makers in Berlin have advocated for more assertive German leadership in foreign and security concerns. A White

Paper on German Security Policy, published on July 13, 2016, stated that Germany is transitioning from a civilian power to one that will assume increased responsibility for global security, including military operations (German Federal Government, 2016). However, Chancellor Scholz said he will invest 100 billion Euros in the German defence force, which is an unprecedented turnaround in German defense policy. Scholz's speech suggests intensive cooperation in the field of defense, although it appears that Germany is focusing more on cooperation with NATO (German Federal Government, 2022).

As this thesis was written, the war in Ukraine placed a big emphasis on increased investments and new policymaking regarding European security and defence. The current policy changes are of such an important scale that it was deemed impossible to exclude them from this study.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU has taken a proactive role in increasing military investments and cooperation. This new military threat caused EU countries to invest significantly more in their national defence (European Commission, 2022). During the Versailles Summit of the European Council in March 2022, member states reaffirmed the commitments to take more responsibility for the EU's security, pursue a strategic course of action in defence and become more autonomous. Furthermore, the leaders stressed a continuation of strong coordination regarding security and defence with allies, including EU-NATO cooperation. Also, big investments in defence capabilities and innovative technologies were agreed upon (European Council, 2022). In a speech by High Representative/Vice-President Joseph Borrell, the need for a stronger and more capable EU in the field of security and defence was explicitly mentioned (European External Action Service, 2022b). In reaction to the Versailles Summit, a joint communication was prepared by the European Commission and High Representative, which presented an analysis of defence investments gaps and proposed new measures and actions necessary to strengthen the European defence industrial

and technological base (European Commission, 2022). Such proposals were joint procurement of military equipment and that EDA will support member states in their efforts to strengthen their military capabilities.

Furthermore, there are different types of policy change. The ones most fitting in this context are: a drift which means that a shift in the environment changes the impact of the existing rules, and layering, i.e., new rules are placed on top of existing ones (Fioretos et al., 2016). The policy changes regarding Brexit show that a drift in the CSDP environment is expected. With the exit of the UK, a shift in the organizational environment of the CSDP occurred, which could lead to a changing impact on the existing structure. In this case, it is likely that Germany could take on a new and bigger role, potentially impacting future CSDP policy. The policy changes regarding the Russian invasion in Ukraine show signs of layering, i.e., new rules are placed on top of existing ones in the field of the CSDP. The current CSDP mechanisms were complemented with increased military equipment and more coordination. The European Council agreed upon big investments in defence capabilities and innovative technologies. High Representative/Vice-President Joseph Borrell proposed new measures and actions necessary to strengthen the European defence industrial and technological base, joint procurement of military equipment and the EDA increased its military support capabilities of member states.

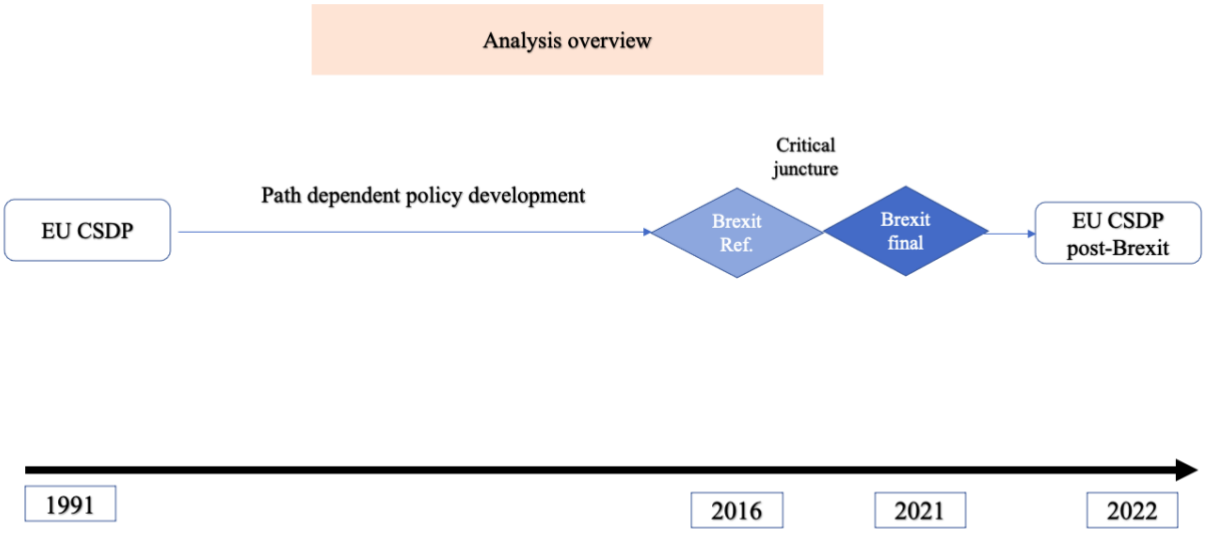

figure 3: path dependent, critical juncture & policy change part

Conclusion

This research aimed to answer to the research question, *"How does Brexit influence the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy?"*. This research looked at the theory HI of policy development in general and analyzed the historic developments before and after Brexit influencing the EU CSDP.

Based on this research, these are our main conclusions:

- From 1991-2016 the EU CSDP has developed according to the principle of path dependency, from its conceptualization in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 along the subsequent EU Treaties and Policy Statements strengthening initial ambitions and mechanisms.

- Brexit proved to be a real critical juncture on that policy development path. It meant the exit of a powerful member state from the CSDP, forcing the EU and its member states to rethink CSDP regarding security and defence goals, military capabilities, and funding arrangements.

- Scholars at that time foresaw either:
    - a maintaining of the status quo, meaning that the possible weakening of the EU CSDP due to the exit of a powerful member would be more or less compensated by the renewed commitment of the UK to the Transatlantic security and defence strategy through NATO, or:
    - a weakened EU CSDP since Brexit in itself would lead to a loss of cooperation between the EU and the UK.

- In the policy adjustment period after the finalization of Brexit (31 December 2020), however, Europe has endured another critical juncture, i.e., the Russian invasion of Ukrainian territory in February 2022. This event again forced the joint EU and the individual member states to respond by redefining security and defence strategy, commitments and budgetary limits. At the same time, the UK is struggling politically and economically, which may lead to a severely lessening influence on the European ass well as global level.

- As a result of these developments, there seems to be only one way going forward for the EU CSDP. The EU will need to strengthen its security and defence policy through improved internal cooperation and decision-making processes and increased investments in military capabilities (member states and through NATO).

Based on the aforementioned points, it can be said that the causal mechanism "path dependent behaviour within an IO was interrupted by a critical juncture that caused a policy change" tested positive. So far, this is happening in the real world caused by global events. In the near future, there will be much debate at all levels on how the EU will migrate from a forced response to these events towards a balanced policy. It will be interesting times, not only from an academic policy development point of view but also for those of us who will be active on the policy ground in member states as well as in Brussels.

Discussion

The research design of a single extreme case study and the methodology used have proven to be generally suitable for this type of analysis, as it not only provided the opportunity for a detailed analysis but also because a process tracing analysis helps to emphasize on longer periods, rather than focusing on short periods of policy change in the field of EU security and defence. Moreover, the theory of HI presented a new viewpoint on the research topic. Nevertheless, there are some limitations to this research. A case study tends to have very low external validity, especially in this context where Brexit is treated as an extreme, unusual case. Therefore, one should treat the results of this research with caution, as they might not be generalizable. However, at the same time, this presents an avenue for further research in terms of testing these results on a different case, e.g., on the Russian invasion of Ukraine, to determine if this study's theoretical frame is replicable. Overall, this paper has contributed to the existing literature, as it not only connected previous research focus by combining the research field of difficult functioning of EU foreign policy and the impact of member states leaving IOs but also shedding more light on future implications of Brexit regarding EU security and defence, which might help further understanding of the new relationship between the EU and UK regarding common security and defence.

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