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Kingdon's stream model for agenda-setting theory applied to the EU's
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Think tank influence on the European Union's sanction regime.

Kingdon's stream model for agenda-setting theory applied to the EU's sanction decision-making in the Russian invasions of Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014).

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What is the influence of European think tanks on the European Union's sanctions regime agenda-setting?

Abstract

The contemporary Russian invasion of Ukraine requires a reassessment of the European Union's foreign policy tools as the threat of war has not been so high in recent history. As the EU's sanction regime is one of the most important tools for the union outside influence on that is important to be evaluated. For that Kingdon's stream model is used, together with policy advisory systems theory, to analyse the influence of think tanks in the European Unions sanction regime. In this combined model a most similar system's design is applied to analyse the influence of think tanks in similar cases. A relation is found between think tank publications and the implementation of sanctions, from which is inferred that the influence of think tanks is primarily in the political stream. Consequently, as the political stream is influenced that is the weakest spot of the EU's sanction regime. As the EU consists of democratic states this is not a major issue because within the members states the decision-makers are held accountable. Moreover, the members of the European parliament are also held accountable so there are two manners that compensate this weakness.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|--|
| DIE | = Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (German Development Institute) |
| EC | = European Commission |
| EP | = European Parliament |
| EU | = European Union |
| EUISS | = European Union Institute for Security Studies |
| IAI | = Istituto Affari Internazionali (International Affairs Institute) |
| ICJ | = International Court of Justice |
| IDOS | = German Institute of Development and Sustainability (not really an abbreviation but politic philosophical term) |
| MEP | = Member of the European Parliament |
| MP | = Member of Parliament |
| NATO | = North Atlantic Treaty Organisation |
| OSW | = Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich (Centre For Eastern Studies) |
| PAS | = Policy Advisory System |
| RF | = Russian Federation. |
| TI | = Transparency International |
| Ukr | = Ukraine |
| US | = United States |

1. Introduction

After the start of last years invasion of Ukraine by Russian armed forces the leaders of Western states and institutes nearly fell over themselves in contributing (with military aid) to the defence of Ukraine (Tack, 2022). Whereas after the 2008 and 2014 invasions by the Russian Federation (RF) of respectively Georgia and, also, Ukraine the leaders of those states mainly spoke of their will to contribute while still maintaining a good relationship with the RF. The European Union in particular has felt the threat of the RF more than for example the United States (US) or Canada have as it shares its continent with Russia. All the while the EU has no own military force to protect itself, so for its protection it is dependent on separate member state forces or NATO. In this absence of a European Union grand army sanctions constitute one of the most powerful foreign policy tools that the EU has. These have been remarkably effective as the European continent has seen its longest time of peace on the continent ever (Price, 2015, para. 4). Which stands in stark contrast with what popular realism approaches expect of an institute without hard, military power (Wijk, 2015, p. 64; Tellis, Bially, Layne, & McPherson, 2000) that should be unable to protect itself from outside threats. Even if many realist scholars claim that NATO is the EU's armed forces this does not explain this unprecedented period of peace. As NATO mainly is driven by American investments and its the *raison d'être* of NATO was to protect the west from Russian interference and threats (NATO, n.d.), thus it is not a tool that the EU has ultimate power over or could use as its army as would be necessary according to realism.

Another viable explanation for this unprecedented period of peace could be found in the democratic peace theory, as that theory argues that democratic states (of which the EU consists) are more likely to live in peace with other democracies (Mello, 2016, p. 472). However, as the Russian Federation according to freedom house is a "Consolidated Authoritarian Regime" (Freedom House, n.d.) this does not apply to the case because the RF is the EU's biggest competitor on the European continent. As two significant approaches cannot explain this unique period of peace in Europe something else must be the explanation. Which could be that peace has lasted for so long because the EU uses sanctions rather than armed force (as a realist would argue to be necessary) or peaceful deliberation between democratic states (as argued by democratic peace theory) to ensure peace. A threat to the use of sanctions in a democracy is that the influence of epistemic communities warrants extra attention as they constitute to outside, unelected actors that affect the decision-making.

1.1 Research Question.

To research how epistemic communities influence the EU's sanction regime agenda-setting is a useful theory. As that approach theorizes the process leading up to the decision making about the sanctions (Princen, 2007, p. 26). This is so as what is on the agenda determines what the possibilities are that are discussed and the possibilities that are not discussed are not put up for a vote. Thus, to influence the agenda of a certain debate also means to influence the workable solutions, and by doing so also the outcome of the deliberation is influenced. From this follows the question:

What is the influence of European think tanks on the European Union's sanctions regime agenda-setting?

To investigate this question a comparative case study is done regarding the sanctions following from the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 and their invasion of Ukraine in 2014. These cases are chosen as they are quite similar to each other while they have different outcomes, i.e. in the 2008 case there were no sanctions opposed to the 2014 in which there were sanctions. To do this research the agenda-setting theory is evaluated in the theoretical framework, after which the think tanks subject in the research are selected in the research design. Finally will the model be applied in the analysis to assess the influence of think tanks on the European Union's sanctions regime. But first more context of the cases is necessary as that will help understand the cases.

1.2 Context

Russian aggression has surfaced, among other reasons, because of post-cold war NATO expansion, in contrast with understood western promises that there would be no expansion (Deni, 2017). NATO (2022) explained its expansion by arguing that "Every sovereign nation has the right to choose its own security arrangements" (para 14) and even that "NATO is a defensive alliance" (para. 13) so the RF does not have to be afraid of it. Likewise, NATO tries to protect the weak from the strong, or in other words the states that want to be secure can join and there is no willingness from NATO itself to be aggressive. However, the Russian Federation still deems the expansion to be a threat as, among others, former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev (2018) argued that "NATO expansion is a clear threat to Russia" (para. 35). The question of who is right or wrong in this situation does not really matter as the consequence still is a disturbance in the relation between the West and Russia. Moreover, the states involved still use their side of the argument to legitimize their

actions within their respective states. The important aspect of the context is that both have a rationale for a hostile relationship (i.e. sanctions) rather than who is to blame, and that even in this hostile situation still the longest period of peace in Europe has occurred.

1.3 Sanctions Regime

As from both sides hostilities crop up it is important to understand how peace still is victorious. For the EU this could mean their application of sanctions because those are hostile actions that could attract armed response but do not attract them. According to Giumelli, Hoffmann, & Książczaková (2021) “sanctions are imposed with the objective to change the behaviour of targets” (p. 3), this follows both from academic theories and reality. Sanctions are measures that are meant to adjust the behaviour of other states without the use of armed force to do so. The main aim of sanctions is to adjust another state’s behaviour in a peaceful manner. This is done as sanctions are less costly than armed conflict and can be expected to deliver a more sustainable solution as they have a bigger influence in the minds of the targets than armed conflict has. And with adjusting the minds of people in charge the logical consequence is that they adjust their behaviour in a corresponding way. By doing so they adjust the state’s behaviour as well.

The interesting aspect to sanctions is that they are the opposite of what a good democratic government must do, i.e. they need to impede on individual or communal ownership and freedom to adjust another states’ behaviour to protect their own state. This always is a difficult debate as it is important to protect the states’ own values without giving in to much on them. As otherwise the states’ values themselves are hurt by themselves and cannot be upheld for others to follow. Herein lies the danger of sanctions, as they should not be used to hamper a state’s own values but it must also be used to protect a state from its own shortcomings that follow from those values. An important threat that can influence this is the fact that there is a lot of outside influence on those sanctions.

1.4 Outside Influence on Sanctions.

One of the actors that is influential in the deliberation of sanctions is think tanks, groups of cooperating scholars that often follow the same approach and publicly argue for why they think something has to be done in a certain way (Higgot & Stone, 1994, p. 15). As they are also renowned for their achievements in the research field of international relations and sanctions people value their opinion highly. However, they are unelected so it remains debateable if their influence is necessary or even fair in a democracy as they are difficult if

not impossible to hold accountable for their actions. Thus, in this case of the longest period of peace in Europe it seems contradictory to democratic peace theory that any unelected influence has a positive effect on peace. Therefore, the decision-making process in the EU regarding the sanctions must be investigated to understand how this can happen.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Sanctions and the European Union

Because of the contemporary invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation the European Union (EU), among others, has implemented a wide variety of measures to try and ensure a peaceful end to the conflict. As there is a wide range of measures equipped there is also a diverse set of targets necessary to establish clear objectives to know when certain measures can and cannot be implemented and lifted. However, the usage of such measures is under close scrutiny by scholars (Drezner, 2011; Silva & Selden, 2020; Giumelli et al, 2021), as they represent in some cases the opposite of what a government must do, i.e. the abolishment rather than protection of property rights. They do abolish these rights when the measures require them to freeze assets of, most often extremely wealthy, citizens or foreigners who are somehow involved with the government that is to be stopped or hampered in their actions. In the scholarly work about these measures analyses are done of which measures exist, how appropriate they are, and how they should be used (Wijk, 2015; Drezner, 2011). As can be expected with such an important topic there exists mostly about the last 2 questions a lot of debate, especially because they are intrinsically normative. Therefore, when assessing how the measures are implemented it is more important to identify a typology based on the first question, which investigates which measures and tools exist to adjust another states' behaviour.

For that it is useful to consider theories about power, as power can be defined as the ability to adjust another nation's or actor's behaviour in accordance with your needs (Wijk, 2015, p. 63; Nye, 2011, p. 6). Or in other words, what is done to stop or prevent a conflict rather than what states could or should do to stop it from happening. The tools for power that are argued by de Wijk (2015) are the use of sanctions and the use of military power because states only have "limited options for exercising its power" (p. 63). Sanctions in turn have changed over time from universal trade sanctions on entire countries to smart targeted sanctions directed to the ruling elites only, which was necessary as the ruling classes were not feeling the punishment of universal sanctions enough whereas humanitarian disasters were taking place because of it (Drezner, 2011, pp. 96-101). Smart sanctions have thus presented to be much more effective in adjusting state behaviour, while simultaneously they are less damaging to the targeted society (Drezner, 2011, p. 100). An example of a smart sanction is the freezing of the assets of the political elite, thereby limiting only supporters of the targeted regime. Another option is to restrict those people access to other states.

These smart sanctions have been the European Union's greatest feature as they developed their own specific strategic culture in which "security as a unique European Union asset" (Norheim-Martinsen, 2011, p. 517) has become central. In that strategic culture pacifistic tendencies have prospered as the EU's original goal for the unification project was peace in Europe (Norheim-Martinsen, 2011, p. 517). Among other reasons this is why the European Union has no uniform military force but is dependent on separate member states being willing to deploy their forces. What the EU in turn has created is a variety of smart-sanctions that can be applied throughout the complete union, no member state can choose to neglect them once they are agreed upon as stated in the Treaty on the European Union (2012) that "Member States confer competences to attain objectives they have in common" (p. 16), and therefore, sanctions can have an enormous effect on interdependent states. This is primarily the situation for interdependent states as those have the most interactions that are hurt by sanctions. Furthermore, according to Silva & Selden (2020) economically interdependent states have even more "support for the sanctions among EU member states" (p. 229). This is seen in their second table, in which it is clarified that economic interdependence of Ireland with Russia is small (0.008) and that they oppose sanctions as they score 2 on a scale of 5 (in which 1 opposes and 5 supports the sanctions). Whereas Slovakia scores 0.097 on interdependence and supports the sanctions (with a score of 4). Thus, the interdependent state supports sanctions, while the independent state does not support it. Because it is clear that sanctions are one of the most powerful tools for the EU in international relations it is important to understand how decisions for sanctions are influenced by outside, and often nonelected parties. Those parties are most interesting because they are not accountable for their actions, unlike politicians, and thus more likely to be corrupted in one way or another (Gong, 2004, pp. 33-34; Sung, 2002, p. 141).

Expert groups for example are not elected, however, as they do not receive monetary compensation for their work (they receive compensation for travels but not explicitly for their work) (Metz, 2015, p. 57) the chance that their influence in the consultative part of the legislation is bought or affected by someone else is not big. Thus, it is not likely they are corrupted quickly. Mainly because their incentive to join an expert group is outside the financial realm, they want to solve a problem and therefore they contribute their knowledge freely. Other nonelected parties involved in the decision-making process of the EU can be identified using a number of different theories, among which the theories of agenda-setting and policy advisory system are most appropriate in the case of the EU. This is so because the

European Union is an institute in which the hierarchy is quite unclear as the member states keep part of their sovereignty whereas day-to-day executive rule is conducted by the European Commission and its directorate-generals (Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the European Union, 2012, p. 25). Over which the European Council and Council for the European Union (Council of heads of states and council of ministers respectively) have the power of controlling the agenda through the power of sovereignty. Moreover the European Parliament is the representative body controlling the 'state' or the European Commission and European Councils that also has power of budget, among others. Thus, there are plenty of levels in which agenda-setting and policy advisory systems can have an impact.

2.2 Agenda-Setting Theory

For agenda-setting theory one scholar in particular is very influential, i.e. John Kingdon, who produced the three streams model for agenda setting in 1985. The idea behind this model was that when the streams collide with each other a "policy window" (Kingdon, 1993, p. 44) opens in which policies can be made or changed. The attraction to using this model is both in its simplicity and in the fact that it is widely used, lauded, scrutinized, and criticized (Baumgartner, 2016; Rawat & Morris, 2016; Soroka, 1999) in scholarly works investigating agenda-setting. Therefore, the academic world can generalize the findings of investigations using the model easily. Moreover, the fact that the model is widely investigated decreases the possibility of something being overlooked. Because this paper is invested in researching the manner in which the EU's sanctions' regime is influenced this agenda-setting theory is also helpful as it investigates more deeply how the agenda is set. And the setting of an agenda is highly influential for the decisions that are eventually are made, as it determines what is talked about and what can be put up for a vote. Likewise, the agenda-setting frame also is open to expansions that make it more applicable to specific cases.

The three streams are separate ways in which solutions can be thought of, perceived, and framed in big organisations as governments. They are the problem, policy, and political stream, which may at first seem quite similar but have inherent differences that have a significant impact on the theory. The problem stream determines what is recognized as the problem and if it is even perceived as problematic enough to be on the agenda. The policy stream considers what the possible and likely solutions to the issue are and the political stream is about the political support, e.g. political party support, public opinion, or interest group campaigns, and if it should be put on the agenda (Kingdon, 1993, p. 41). For a new or adjusted policy to be created the model argues that first off there needs to be a topic that is

seen as problematic, then there also needs to be a feasible solution and finally there needs to be support for it. The importance of these three individual streams is that each of them must be affected enough to create a window in which the policy can be adjusted. “Windows can appear predictably (as a result of elections, for instance) or unpredictably (brought on, for example, by a sudden crisis)” (Soroka, 1999, p. 768). Which means that decisions taken to implement or initiate sanctions is the result of a policy window being open.

Thus, for the European Union to have an open policy window regarding the initiation of sanctions it means that there is a problem for which the EU has enough proposed policy solutions and enough political support. Normally it is quite easy to investigate the three streams to an organisation and identify how certain sanctions were implemented. However, with an institute as complex as the European Union this would ignore a number of influential steps that are to be taken before agreement is reached. The added level of sovereign decision-making contributes to the complexity of the institute (Hubel, 2004, p. 349). In particular the manner in which solutions are proposed and decided upon within the EU are extraordinary (McCormick, 2015, pp. 300-303) and require more in-depth analysis. Therefore an addition to the three streams model is required and for this the Policy Advisory System theory can be used, as is shown below. Because this approach also considers the system, in other words the different concerned and influential actors or organizations, that give advice to the politicians that make the decisions (Halligan, 1995, pp. 138-140). That is important within the EU as these extra actors exist in massive numbers, moreover, most of these actors have equal power in influencing the decision-making process as a veto because of a perceived sovereignty infringement is always a feasible option.

The manner in which policy advisory systems influence the way in which agendas are set is by changing the possible policy solutions there are thought of (expanding the systems ensures that there are more minds searching for solutions) and such systems have an influence on the support shown to or won from the outside. The PAS theory thus influences two of the three streams, as will be explained, and can therefore also be added to the model of Kingdon.

2.3 Policy Advisory System Theory

Policy Advisory Systems (PAS) are on the face of it clearly to define, i.e., systems or networks of actors and organisations that advise policymakers when creating policies. However, it is not that clear who belong to such systems as politicians tend to get advice from everyone (also from their families) but do they all constitute a policy advisory system?

Moreover, it is even less clear how such systems look like in the European Union as even its own citizens “do not understand how the EU works” (McCormick, 2015, p. 155). Thus, before this paper can extend the Kingdon model of agenda-setting with the PAS theory it is important to clarify the policy advisory system theory. Policy advisory systems are defined to be actors in formal positions that have access to decision-makers in officially elected positions (Destler, 1977, p. 143). Thus, PAS consists of actors or organisations that are chosen for their expertise in a specific field and are granted access to a policymaker by that policymaker. In an organisation like the EU this is expanded “toward the government as the center of PAS with multiple sources of policy advice” (Zaytsev, Kuskova, & Kononova, 2021, p. 3). In other words, the idea about sources of advice shifted to also being elected by the government, not merely by the policymaker himself.

Further change in the academic work is seen in the fact that, opposed to earlier research which identified policy advisory systems mainly exist within governments (Anderson, 1983, p. 149; Destler, 1977, pp. 143, 152-153), the more recent work also focused on systems that worked from outside governmental control (Craft & Howlett, 2012; Craft & Howlett, 2013; Halligan, 1995, pp. 138-140). The benefit of the PAS approach is that it considers more deeply the outside influence of policy advice, opposed to the agenda-setting theory that merely requires outside support to be present rather than acknowledging the importance of how it is present. On the other hand, PAS on its own investigates too little the framing of a problem, or the problem stream, for which agenda-setting theory is useful. Moreover, the division of the political and policy stream has as added benefit over the PAS approach that the different dimensions of policy are considered.

Furthermore, Policy Advisory Systems look at the flow of knowledge from both sides, i.e., the effect policy advisers have on policymakers and the effect policymakers or politicians have on policy advisers. It is important to consider knowledge flows from and to both sides as policies and advice are formed in both deductively from politicians and inductively from academia (Craft and Howlett, 2012, pp. 81-83). Moreover, it is beneficial to add the PAS approach to Kingdon’s model, because in general knowledge in politics is a two-way street for formulating policies (Stone, 2012, pp. 322-330). A top-down manner is used when governments want to promote an idea or policy amongst its citizens (Stone, 2012, p. 322), whereas the bottom-up way is used when interest groups or think tanks want to try to persuade politicians to adjust or create new policies (Stone, 2012, p. 323). In Kingdon’s model this is not really considered (Kingdon, 1993, p. 41), as it only investigates the flow of information

that builds up to ensure a policy to be chosen and implemented, through opening a policy window.

This failure to consider the two-way street of policymaking in the agenda-setting theory, the fact that knowledge brokers (policy advisors) and knowledge receivers (policymakers) are not considered, is problematic. In a representative democracy that relation should be open to anyone (Coppedge & Gerring, 2011, p. 254), so that external actors can have impact by influencing public and political discourse. Therefore, this research is more interesting to do in democratic institutions than in authoritarian states. And while the EU is not a unitary state but a “sui generis” (Baere, 2008, p. 1), or unique organisation, it highly appreciates democracy and therefore it is most interesting to see how that democratic value is protected in reality.

Especially as the EU itself has no body that implements laws on a local or regional level, for that it depends on the member states. If the EU wants to check if those member states apply the treaty they are dependent on data from those same institutes (McCormick, 2015; Metz, 2015, pp. 27-28), thus they are dependent on external data. Therefore they have to ensure that they have external advisory groups as well to ensure that those understand the data better (Metz, 2015, p. 74). Moreover, the EU has a small bureaucracy (the directorate generals) to control for everything what they should control for, as is chosen to ensure that member states remain sovereign powers. The EU has no stable majority as member states have to agree with rulings as well, they have elections at different moments. Thus, there can be no easy and stable coalition be built outside of the European Parliament, which in its turn has debatable powers to say the least. This ensures that most of the EU decisions are made through coalition-building per decision, which ensures that the policies need to be easy to agree upon. Therefore, the policies that are agreed upon often have a wide support within the member states. However, to do that also external advisory systems are required for compromises. This emphasizes the importance of external systems in the EU, and simultaneously why they must be investigated.

2.4 The Expanded Model

The Policy Advisory Systems theory and agenda-setting model can, as we have seen, together be useful to assess the manner in which policies are decided upon within the EU. To do that we first have to identify how they fit in with each other, as is done in this section.

Craft and Howlett (2013) argue that policy advisory systems are influenced by

“externalization and politicization” (p. 187), which affect two of the three streams in the Kingdon model, i.e. the policy (proposal) and the political (support) stream. The externalization of policy advice “or the extent to which actors outside government exercise influence” (p. 188) affects the number and type of proposals for policy solutions to a perceived problem. Furthermore, by externalizing policy advice the control of the government over the second stream is decreased. Whereas the ideas of politicization or “partisan-political” (p. 188) influence on policy advice corresponds with the idea of Kingdon that the third, the political, stream “is composed of changes of administration, shifts in partisan or ideological balances” (Kingdon, 1993, p. 43) in government and society.

Metz (2015) studies the effect of expert groups on the European Commission and the policy making process in her book. In doing so she uses expert groups as they are defined by the European Commission as “consultative entities set up by the Commission or its services, comprising at least six public and/or private-sector members, which are foreseen to meet more than once.” (European Commission, 2010, p. 3). Private-sector experts can in some cases also be the scholars that comprise think tanks, sometimes they even have to represent their sector (academics) in the expert groups. So it is clear that this is a one-way comparison in which a think tank can be (part of) an expert group, or equal to it. While an expert group can be something else than a think tank. Thus, typologies that apply to expert groups can also apply to think tanks, though this does not necessarily mean that it is a completely appropriate typology and typologies used the other way around are distorted. Further, to apply the expert group typology of Metz (2015, pp. 35-42), of “Substantiating use”, “Problem-solving use”, and “Consensus-building use” (p. 38), -expert groups to think tanks is useful. However, it is important to consider where the vital differences are that hamper the transfer to think tanks.

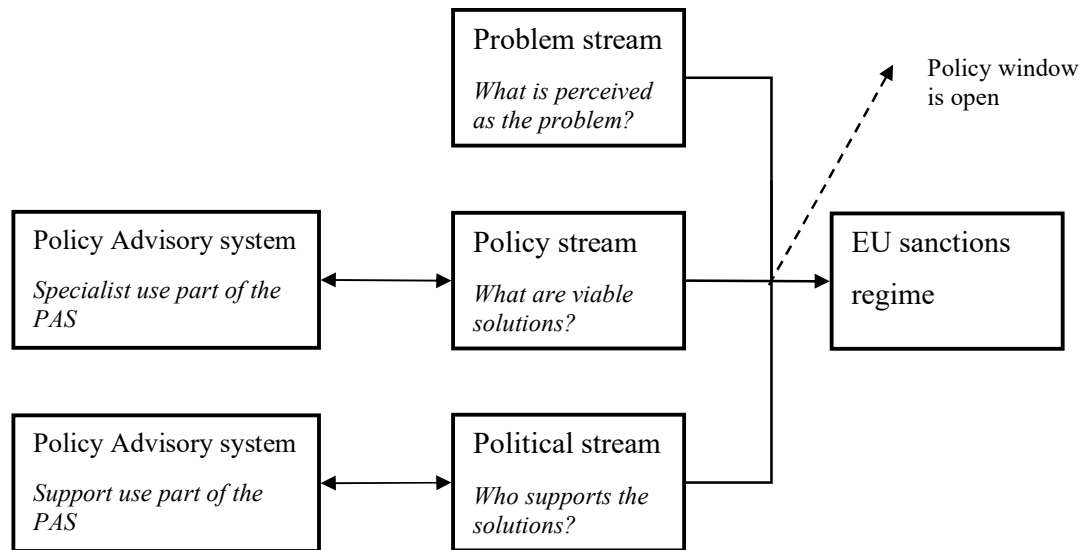
One vital difference between expert groups and think tanks is the way in which they are formed, for expert groups the European Commission commences the groups and decides when to end them. Whereas for think tanks there is not an institute required to start the group and they only stop when they have run out of money or people working there. These are vital differences as it means that think tanks have more freedom in their self-preservation and are primarily held accountable by their sponsors. This is opposed by expert groups which are accountable to their respective directorate-general, which is accountable to its commissioner (Metz, 2015, pp. 55-58), whom can be held accountable in the European Parliament (though not as easily as executives within a national government are held accountable).

However, these differences do not have a significant impact on the typology of Metz however, as her typology primarily considers the use of such groups from the perspective of the government executive. So the important remaining difference is that the executive power has ultimate control over the expert groups, which it does not have over think tanks. However, this is not really influential for this research as the objective of the research is to understand how think tanks influence sanction making (which is done by the executive power of the EU), not the other way around. Moreover, the fact that accountability is more problematic in think tanks is more important to the research as this shows nondemocratic influences on policymaking. As the crucial differences mainly have to do with aspects that are not important in the Metz (2015) typology the three groups are readily applicable to the Kingdon model, which means that consequentially a think tank division into groups is created. The problem-solving use-type is equal to the policy stream as the main goal of the “specialist committee” (p. 40) is to provide “technical expertise” (p. 41) to create (or propose) a new policy to solve an issue. Whereas the other two types are focussed on ensuring that there is or develops political support for the policy (pp. 41-42). Thus, think tanks can also be divided into two groups, i.e. the think tanks supporting the policy stream or the “specialist committee” (p. 40) -think tanks and the ones used to build political support for the decision.

If the two theories are taken together in figure 1, it can be used to understand the combination better. In the figure the policy advisory systems are added on the left of the streams from Kingdon’s model, important here is to note that the arrow between them is headed in both directions. This because the policy advisory systems are both influenced by and influential in policy decision making processes as is explained before. The three streams also are influenced by the sanctions’ result but in this case the complete situation changes rather than only one of the streams. Since the streams are not separately influenced by the outcome of the chosen sanctions those arrows point only in one direction. Moreover, the dashed line shows Kingdon’s policy window’s place in the figure, which is necessarily to know because if that is not open the theory states that it is not possible that a decision is made regarding the sanctions that are to be implemented. Following the figure a division between dependent and independent variables is also clear, with the EU’s sanctions regime as the dependent variable on the independent policy advisory systems and streams models.

Figure 1

Combined figure of how policy advisory systems and agenda-setting theory influence the European Union's sanction regime.



Note. This figure has been made with sources: Craft & Howlett (2012; 2013), Halligan (1995), and Kingdon (1993).

As portrayed in the figure above, the PAS influence two out of three of the streams, therefore, the influence of the think tanks is most likely to be in one or both of those two streams. This is so because the EU does not implement sanctions for every situation of war that is similar to the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict and as the problem stream clearly is not the fateful last straw that ensures sanctions are implemented. Apart from that it is important to keep in mind that without an existing problem there is no possibility for the policy and political streams to convert into an open policy window. Thus, the influence that might be in those two streams is not the only aspect that determines if sanctions are implemented or not.

H1: Based on Metz's typology, think tanks that are labelled as 'specialist use' exert profound influence the European Union's sanction regime.

This hypothesis is acquired as the think tanks used by the EU to create political support, which is equally important for the realisation of policies, have less possibilities to initiate policies themselves. Primarily they lack this self-determination because they are used to build political support. That can be done in similar ways as Metz (2015) argued for the expert groups, i.e. by substantiating and consensus building (p. 40). Respectively those groups

are used to give external visibility to the solution (p. 41) and as a “negotiation arenas” (p. 42) for the EU’s solution. Thus, as think tanks do not have the ability to initiate policies their influence in the political stream is limited, whereas they still can bring fresh policy options to the table. Which ensures that ‘specialist use’ think tanks exert profound influence.

H2: Based on the expansion of Kingdon’s model, the think tanks that influence the political stream are expected to exert greater influence on the European Union’s sanction regime.

This is expected to happen as the influence of policy advisory systems is thought to be stronger as for sanctions there just is not a wide range of fresh or unprecedented possibilities. Thus, the influence must be in the political stream rather than the policy stream. Another interesting aspect would be to identify if think tanks that are more involved with a government have a larger impact on the EU’s sanction regime or not. If so, that would mean that those think tanks are mainly used by their governments as a political instrument for support, rather than to bring up fresh policy solutions. Which is often what they are explicitly were created to do.

3. Research Design

In this section the method of the research is scrutinized, to highlight what is done, how that is done and what the up- and downsides to the taken approach are. This is practical as it simultaneously ensures that the data, which is to be analysed in this research, can be inspected before it is used. In this investigation a most similar systems design is applied to analyse the influence of think tanks on the EU's sanction regime. Within this design the theoretical frame of Kingdon's three streams model together with the policy advisory systems theory (as explained in the theoretical framework) is used as mode of analysis.

3.1 Type of Research

The type of research used here is a most similar system's design, which is used as this helps to investigate the difference between think tanks having success or not in adjusting or proposing new sanctions in otherwise similar situations. This is a fruitful method for this research as it clarifies why or how think tanks influence agenda-setting, and thereby decision making (Birkland, 2007, p. 63), in the EU rather than merely determining that think tanks do so. Furthermore, the fact that it is most similar ensures that the threat to the internal validity of the research is as small as possible, as is explained below. Whereas the fact that in general most similar systems designs have difficulty with their external validity (Halperin & Heath, 2017, pp. 149, 219-221) as also explained further on, is compensated significantly in this study because the model of Kingdon is widely studied. Therefore is known what parts are or are not applicable to other research and can others simply identify which new additions also can work in their research. Moreover, the EU has such a unique system that research done on it only really applies to itself (Baere, 2008) and thus will scholars only apply the findings of this research on the EU to the European Union. Both the internal and external validity are investigated more in depth in the next part.

3.1.1 Internal Validity

The internal validity of this research is strong as in this type of research the cases are to such an extend similar that the difference in the outcome of the cases must be because of the other difference that is found in the study. In other words, a most similar systems design has cases with two major differences, the outcome of the situations and the explanatory variable for why the outcome is different. In this study that is a different use of influence by think tanks, which leads to the fact that in the Georgian conflict the EU did not inflict sanctions upon the Russian Federation or (some of) its ruling class. Whereas, after the annexation of the Crimean peninsula the EU did put sanctions on some of the Russian

Federation's subjects and ruling class (European Council, n.d.). While in both situations a Government led by Vladimir Putin decided upon an illegal invasion of armed forces into another sovereign state. The invasion was illegal as in either case the ruling governments did not ask for help and even protested the invasion of armed soldiers to the Russian Federation (International Court of Justice, 2008; ICJ, 2022). What happened afterwards is not important to the research as it does not investigate the effect of sanctions, but the influence of think tanks on sanction decision-making.

3.1.2 External Validity

As written before, the external validity of a most similar systems design most often is not strong. This is so because the research often concentrates on cases with a specific set of characteristics, those sets are the same or at least remarkably similar. By doing so it limits the possible other cases that could be explained by the eventual explanatory variable as the new case could miss a number of the characteristics. However, as the study investigates the influence of think tanks in the EU, a "sui generis" (Baere, 2008, p. 1), from the outset it is clear that the outcome of the study only applies to the European Union or any future institutes that are build along the same construct. Therefore, it is not problematic that the external validity is endangered, within the EU the characteristics remain the same to such an extend that the study can be generalized to other cases of EU sanctions.

Furthermore, as the goal of this research is to investigate if the two theories, Kingdon's agenda setting model and policy advisory systems, can be used together to investigate a policy creation and decision-making process the external validity is not as important as the internal validity. Because when evaluating such a new combination of theories it is more important to ensure first that they can be combined before testing if they can be generalized. Moreover, if the outcome looks good to be generalized (if the external validity is strong) but the result of the research is uncertain (if the internal validity is weak) it still should not be generalized as it is not true.

3.2 Operationalisation and Data Collection Process

The operationalisation of this research is done following the three streams of Kingdon as is derived from the theoretical framework. However, as the proposed contribution of this paper to the academic accumulated work is the addition of policy advisory systems to the policy and political stream, as seen in figure 1 in the theoretical framework, those streams must be investigated most thoroughly. Because that is where the PAS, or think tanks,

according to the theoretical framework come into effect on the agenda setting of the EU's sanctions regime. For each of the streams it is important to determine what data can be used that fits the model and how that data reflects to the dependent variable, the EU's sanction regime, to control for any possible confounding variables. For this analysis, the think tanks are categorized in line with the theory, as shown below, so that a good set of think tanks can be chosen that are of interest. Furthermore, a selection of criteria is made that are distinctive for showing influence on the sanction's regime of the EU, which then in turn are used to analyse which think tanks have affected the sanctions.

3.2.1 Problem Stream

The problem stream corresponds to the crises or conflicts as those situations ensure that a reaction is necessary and therefore they are the direct reason for the implementation of the dependent variable, the EU's sanction regime. This is because the problem stream is what exactly is perceived as an issue and how problematic it is framed to be (Kingdon, 1993, p. 41). Thus, if something is determined to be a conflict or crisis that stream is in line to open a policy window for implementing sanctions. This is clearly done when sanctions are implemented and is mostly influenced by public perception of a situation (Robinson, 2016, pp. 186-187), thus this can be used as a sort of control variable for the agenda-setting theory in the research. That is done as without a present problem stream the policy window would not have been open for the creation of sanctions and then the other streams are not enough to lead to the opening of a policy window, or in other words the implementation of sanctions.

In this research, as stated before, the European Union's sanctions regimes following the Russian invasions of Georgia (in 2008) and of the Crimea (in 2014) are used as the problem stream is in both situations quite clearly present. I.e., in both situations one nation-state (the Russian Federation) invades another sovereign state under, to say the least, ambiguous pretences to protect the peace and its own citizens living abroad (Allison, 2013, pp. 151-156; Reeves & Wallace, 2015, p. 363). Moreover, in both cases the EU reacts in a different manner, they respond to the 2008 Georgian invasion without applying sanctions (Giumelli et al, 2021, p. 22). Whereas they implemented sanctions to a number of people thought of being part of the Russian governing elite as a reaction to the 2014 invasion of the Crimean peninsula (Giumelli et al, 2021, p. 22).

The data that is required to investigate this consists of two major parts, i.e., the database touched upon above which is assembled by Giumelli et al (2021) that summarizes

the cases and types of sanctions that were and are used by the EU from 1994 up until 2021 and are combined with the European Council or Commission statements regarding sanctions¹ to find the reason for the implementation of the sanctions. Important to see here that in both situations there are publications (Reeves & Wallace, 2015, pp. 367-368; International Court of Justice, 2008) that show that politicians in power then acknowledged it as a problem, i.e. they set the problem stream in both cases up to ensure that it could open a policy window. This was seen in the renouncement of the Russian invasion of Abkhazia in 2008 by the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (2008) and on the commission website on which all the misdeeds are summarized².

3.2.2 Policy and Political Stream Combined with Policy Advisory Systems

For the policy and political streams the case selection is similar as both the streams are influenced by policy advisory systems and in both those systems think tanks have an impact on the agenda setting is the expectation following from the theoretical framework. The crucial data in this section is the influence of think tanks on associated politicians and the existence of viable policy solutions to the problem. Different think tanks have a different *raison d'être*; thus, a categorization of these different goals is useful to categorize the think tanks in this research. This because those distinct reasons can have an effect on think tank success in influencing the policies. One manner in which that can be done is to look at which think tanks oppose and which legitimize the policies of the EU, thus this follows along from the political stream. Whereas another dimension to this difference is that the think tank can also contribute valuable fresh solutions or merely voice their (dis)satisfaction with the policy. This categorization is shown in figure 2, in which also some characteristics of the think tanks are shown. This is done as that helps determine what dimensions of the sanctions can be influenced by think tanks.

In figure 2 is shown that when one uses this typology there are three ways in which think tanks exist. The think tanks that are used in the political stream by (1) opposition to or (2) supporters of certain policies and think tanks (3) that are focused on having the best result possible. The significance of this typology is that it considers the use think tank have for politicians. Even though this might seem contrary to the goal of this research, i.e. to find the effect of think tanks on politicians, this is useful as it is the way that think tanks are used. So it

¹ These can be found on <https://www.sanctionsmap.eu/#/main?filters=%7B%7D> and <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions>

² Found on: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/restrictive-measures-against-russia-over-ukraine/sanctions-against-russia-explained/>

might seem to be showing the opposite of what is researched, but in fact it is showing the real-life situation. Therefore, the figure must be used. Furthermore, there also become clear three manners in which think tanks influence can be seen, i.e. the *duration*, *heaviness*, and *extensiveness* of sanctions. Those criteria are expanded upon in the next section and come to mind because that is how they reflect if there are new contributions or if oppose the government or not.

Moreover, the *2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report* from James McGann of the university of Pennsylvania is particularly useful as it uses objective characteristics to identify which think tanks are influential in the world, and also specifically in the EU. This is an extra outside control that assures that the think tanks that are chosen in fact do have an impact on any policy-making. Furthermore, think tanks also cannot predict the future, even if they do try to do so, thus this paper looks at publications after crises arose, and see what the think tanks their impact is on the sanctions after they are implemented. In section 3.3 this is expanded upon.

Figure 2.

Categorization of think tanks.

| | | Opposing | Legitimizing |
|------------------|-----|--|--|
| New Contribution | No | Political stream for the opposition. <i>Influential for decreasing the duration</i> | Political stream for the government. <i>Influential for extending the duration.</i> |
| | Yes | Policy stream. <i>To decrease the heaviness of the sanctions.</i> | Policy stream. <i>To increase the number of cases that are sanctioned.</i> |

Note. Made with the following sources: Kingdon (1993) & Drezner (2011).

3.2.3 Indicators of Influence on the EU's Sanctions Regime

The influence of think tanks on sanctions can be seen in a number of different dimensions, as explained above also in the *duration*, *heaviness*, and *extensiveness* of sanctions. The think tank influence on the *duration* of sanctions is that if think tanks oppose or support sanctions they can decrease or extend the duration of sanctions. This is so because their publications affect the political stream by altering a party's or the public's opinion. An example of this is the fact that the reaction of the RF is "overproportional" (Olekseyuk &

Schürenberg-Frosch, 2019, p. 877). This paves the way for politicians to support the sanctions as that is fair relative to an out of proportion action. Similarly think tanks can affect the *heaviness* by altering the type of sanctions that are in the publics or politicians' eye, thereby ensuring that they are felt more or less excessive. Types of sanctions range from embargoes on certain goods, to prohibiting someone from entering certain countries (Drezner, 2011). This reflects to the policy stream as it affects the viable solutions to the problem. For example, the reasoning that “sectoral sanctions” (Secrieru, 2015, p. 43) are useful shows that different sectors for (or levels of) sanctions are useful. Finally the *extensiveness* of the sanctions is influenced by think tanks as they can research who should be sanctioned or not, thereby they also affect the policy stream as the type of solutions are altered. The example here is found in Fischer (2020) as she argues that “Moscow’s foreign policy elite” (p. 1) is one of the actors involved which gives another target for the sanctions.

If this is combined, there are two indicators that show the effect think tanks have in the policy stream, the heaviness and extensiveness of sanctions, and there is one indicator that does so for the political stream, the duration of sanctions. This is useful as the indicators not only show that influence is employed, but also show in which stream of model it is done most efficiently. Therefore, the model could be able to determine what type of think tanks have the most influence over the European Union’s sanction regime.

Figure 3.

Indicators of think tank influence on the EU’s sanction regime and their respective impression on the streams model.

| | | Extensiveness | Duration | Heaviness |
|----------------|-----------|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Type of stream | Political | | Adjusting who supports the sanctions | |
| | Policy | Adjusting who are targeted with sanctions | | Adjusting the possible sanctions. |

Note. Made based on Drezner (2011) & Kingdon (1993)

3.3 Think Tanks Analysis

As seen before, in this study a categorization of the think tanks is done following the dimensions of contributing or opposing government policies. This is a fruitful categorization for this study as it helps show what influence can be expected. If the think tank falls within the type of contributing innovative ideas the indicator for this is seen in the extensiveness and heaviness of sanctions, whereas think tanks that fall in the type of merely opposing or supporting a government only affects the duration of the sanctions. That is so as the think tanks can influence the political and public support for sanctions, and thereby it affects the political costs of maintaining or stopping the sanction. The think tank index report of McGann (2021) is used for this to find the most influential independent and government-affiliated ones. Furthermore, the index is also used to divide the think tanks along the lines of different areas or research.

The index of McGann (2021) has different and separate think tank rankings, among which a ranking is made by region, by area of research, and by special achievement (pp. 50-52). This is useful as this ensures that a selection can be made based on multiple, objective indicators. The first dimension, opposing or legitimizing government policies, is expected to follow the lines set out in the “special achievement” (McGann, 2021, p. 51) ranking, i.e. the top government-affiliated or the top independent think tanks. which are the best “Government-Affiliated” or “Independent” think tanks (McGann, 2021, p. 51).

The other dimension, contributing fresh policies or not, is found in the ranking by area of research as that has an effect on whether think tanks contribute ideas to the pool of policy options available. The area of research clearly has an influence, as think tanks focussed mainly on for example international economy probably oppose any sanctions that harm the international market. More interesting would be to see if think tanks focussed on security or military are more or less inclined to promote sanctions relative to think tanks that investigate international affairs or international development. Thus also in this instance it is interesting and useful to apply this criterion as a filter to the search how think tanks influence sanction decision-making.

Thus, the ranking by “**special achievement**” (McGann, 2021, p. 51) is used as a filter through which the think tanks subject to this research have to fit. Furthermore, for the ranking by **area of research** the filters should be the top “Foreign Policy and International Affairs”, “Defense and National Security” (McGann, 2021, p. 50), and “International Economic

Policy” (p. 51) think tanks. This because these three consider most the different influences of foreign affairs and still have a core different point of view, i.e. economic, diplomatic, or military perspective. In this division it is expected that foreign affairs and economic focused think tanks will contribute more options than military think tanks. This is so because military think tanks are more thoughtful of the likely future requirement of the use of force. Whereas economic and international affairs think tanks investigate (economic) relations between states and actors, therefore they find new or more heavy sanction options.

3.3.1 Think Tank Selection

To make a selection out of the total 2932 European-based think tanks in McGann (2021, p. 43) the filters discussed above are used, as shown in table 1. The lists of the used rankings per division (area of research and special achievement) are in the appendix of this paper. Important to note is that in the rankings not one EU member state think tank with government involvement was ranked in table 23 for the top 85 international economics think tanks. However, as the German based think tank formerly known as *German Development Institute (DIE)*, and currently named *German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)* has a high place in the rank of government affiliation (5th) and international development (3rd) and is featured on the top transdisciplinary research think tank list (50th) it can be used to measure the combination of economic and government-affiliated think tank in this paper. This is the case as international development often is the most important reasons for economic sanctions not being implemented (Drezner, 2011, pp. 97-99). Therefore, think tanks with a focus on international development are likely to have an opinion about economic sanctions. Moreover, in this paper the old name (DIE) is used, as in the studied cases the think tank used that name and in the ranking of McGann (2021) also that name was used.

As there are six think tanks which publications of six years are to be analysed only the abstract is read to keep the amount of work manageable. This is done as within the abstract the most important ideas of the author(s) are stated and therefor also the point they want to convey to the world. The scores 1 if a think tank is in favour, 0 if the think tank is neutral, or -1 if they are opposed to sanctions. This is done as for the research it is enough to know only if they are in favour or opposing to the sanctions, thus a more diverse distribution of the fact that they are strongly or not opposing or favouring sanctions is not necessary. The neutral publications show the extend to which think tanks made the issue salient or not. In the table below are the think tanks that are placed highest in the ranking by special achievement (McGann, 2021, p. 51) and also are placed in the ranking by area of research. This is done as

the special achievement rankings are expected to have the biggest impact on think tank influence on the EU's sanctions regime.

Table 1.

This table shows which think tanks are high up in both of the rankings.

| | | Ranking by area of research | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | International Economic affairs | International & foreign affairs | Defence & national security |
| Ranking by special achievement. | Government affiliated | DIE <i>Germany</i> 5 th and not ranked. | OSW <i>Poland</i> 15 th & 49 th | EUISS <i>France</i> 11 th & 6 th |
| | Independent | Bruegel <i>Belgium</i> 7 th & 1 st | TI <i>Germany</i> 3 rd & 43 rd | IAI <i>Italy</i> 25 th & 16 th |

Note. The source for this table is McGann (2021)

4 Analysis

In this section the analysis is done, to see whether think tanks influence European Union decision-making regarding sanctions. This is done as think tanks reflect the unelected part of policy advisory systems and those systems are proven to be influential in decision-making processes (Craft & Howlett, 2012, pp. 81-83). Any unelected, but influential, part in a democracy must be placed under close scrutiny to be able to hold them accountable. Moreover, the European Union's decision making system is unclear to most of its citizens (McCormick, 2015, pp. 11-25, 207), which conflicts with its own promotion of democracy around the world (McCormick, 2015, p. 101). Therefore, the expanded model explained in chapter 2 can be used to analyse the influence of unelected actors on the EU, and in particular the EU's sanctions regime. However, first the other aspect of the theoretical framework, the problem stream, has to be studied to ensure that the cases are applicable to the stream model before the expanded model can be investigated.

4.1 Problem Stream Analysis.

For this part of the analysis the investigation needs to show who framed the conflicts, how they framed it, and why they did in that manner. This is necessary because it will show one third of the theoretical explanation for the opening of a policy window that did or did not result in sanctions (Kingdon, 1993). The point of interest in this section of the analysis is that in both situations the actions are similar (an invasion using armed forces) and the party that inflicts the perceived offense (Putin's Russia) also is similar. Thus, the remaining actors that differed are the states which were invaded and the set up of the EU's decision-making organs. As the Crimean peninsula and Georgia are both bordering Russia & the Black Sea, with a mere 500 km distance between them (Google Maps, 2022) there is not expected to be that much of a difference in how the EU, and more importantly its citizens, perceive them. Furthermore, in both situations there were people who did want to their region to join with Russia, so also in this respect there is no difference for EU citizens. Consequently this implies that for the people that framed both the crises it was of similar concern, which shows that the EU council was not encouraged to behave differently. The European Council configuration did change a lot from 2008 to 2014, however, their main goal, a secure Europe, (European Council, 2008, pp. 3-9; European Council, 2014, p. 12) did not change that much. Furthermore, their goals specific in the two cases are still the same; to promote peace and security and maintain good economic relations with both sides.

4.1.1 European Union Politicians Influence in Problem Stream

To check if in both cases this also actually led to the required problem stream one has to check what the responses of the European Union were. The EU can respond in multiple ways through multiple channels, thus these must all be considered if one wants to be certain what the EU's response is. These channels follow along the lines of the bureaucratic borders, this means that all the top institutions within the EU can make a statement and have their means of framing something as a problem. For the European Parliament (EP) this is done with resolutions that can be voted on, the European Commission (EC) publishes reports about new policies, and the European councils can publish their decisions in the council conclusions. Moreover, each institute can also leak something to the media to influence the public opinion, which is influenced by the media (Vu, Guo, & McCombs, 2014, p. 696). The EP can publish "own initiative reports" (McCormick, 2015, p. 203), which are meant to be a signal to the other institutions what has to be considered. By doing so, the resolutions identify clearly how the EP wants to frame a certain problem. Something that is important to keep in mind is that the EP that was in place in the 2014 Crimea crisis, was elected less than a year after the Georgian invasion. Therefore, the members of the European Parliament (MEP) during the Crimean conflict were chosen, among other reasons, for their response to the Georgian situation. Thus, this might influence their voting behaviour and therefor the EP cannot be used to compare the two cases.

The EC publishes reports about the day-to-day working of the EU and proposes new laws and policies (European Commission, n.d.). The European Council conclusions of the meetings are published afterwards³, and in those they frame issues in specific ways. Because the European Council is the official agenda-setter of the EC (Carammia, Princen, & Timmermans, 2016, p. 822) it is enough to investigate their framing of the issues. Because after the annexation of the Crimea there were 67 (until the 13th of January 2022) special announcements made on the consequences it is clear that they framed the situation as a problem, even more so as they created a special online timeline of the sanctions and reasons for why they were necessary⁴. Also after the invasion of Abkhazia and South Ossetia there was an extraordinary meeting of the European council (Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2008), even as those were less in numbers they still show the salience of the issue, thus, the problem stream was also present in the Georgian case.

³ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents-publications/public-register/euco-conclusions/>

⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/restrictive-measures-against-russia-over-ukraine/history-restrictive-measures-against-russia-over-ukraine/>

4.1.2 Media Influence in the Problem Stream

Moreover, the media also influences the problem stream, as they affect the public opinion (Vu, Guo, & McCombs, 2014, p. 696). Therefore, the media's publications are also influential in this stream. To analyse how the media influenced the problem stream an EU focussed outlet's publications at the time of the conflicts must be inspected to see whether they also framed them as an issue. As the emphasis is on the problem stream the important aspect researched here is the fact that the media also determined the situation to be a conflict and how strongly they did so. This is so as an issue that is deemed problematic but less salient is put on a more unimportant place on the agenda, thereby, it decreases the chance of opening a policy window. For the investigation, the EUobserver is selected as it is an independent and non-profit online newspaper. This outlet is adopted as it is independent, thus is not influenced by a (single) owner, has its focus on the EU, has existed since 2000 (thus was around for both conflicts), and has its focus on free thinking, plain speech & democracy (EUobserver, n.d.). The fact that it has such a focus means that it is more likely to also scrutinize sanctions, as sanctions are by definition a limitation on free thinking, plain speech, and democracy.

A search in the EUobserver search engine for 'Abkhazia South Ossetia' between 15-07-2008 and 31-12-2008 and 'Ukraine Crimea' between 05-02-2014 and 14-07-2014 resulted in 91 and 131 results, respectively. Which is almost one and a half time more publications in 2014 than in 2008. Important to note here is that in the problem stream it is mainly of influence that something is framed as an issue, rather than that it is framed more often. For that reason it is clear that in both cases the issue was salient as in an abbreviated period of 169 days there were a lot of publications about the issue. Moreover, this time frame is chosen as both are equally long, started 15 days before the conflicts started (Beliakov, Baxter, Campbell, & Smith, 2008; UN security council, 2016) to consider tensions from before, and both have enough time afterwards for the potential implementation of sanctions. Next the language of the publications is analysed to see whether they framed it as a big problem or not.

In both cases the EUobserver articles state that an actor "urges" (Runner, 2008; Rettman, 2014) the EU or RF to do something. Moreover, in both cases it is determined that the victim states are "invaded" (Petersen, 2008; EUobserver, 2014) by the Russian Federation. Thus, in both cases it is clear that the EUobserver determined the situations to be similarly salient, i.e. invasions. And requested it in similar fashion a response by the EU, i.e. the fact that an actor urged the EU to act. The problem is made salient and framed as problematic for the EU, so the problem stream does in fact create the situation in which a

policy window can be opened. Another framing that stands out is the fact that in the 2008 conflict there was talk of EU “peacekeepers” (Runner, 2008), whereas in the 2014 conflict NATO had to reassure that they supported eastern European states and also Ukraine in their “territorial integrity” (Nielsen, 2014). However this shows that in both cases armed reactions were discussed but that a real military response was out of the question, as peacekeepers are not meant to fight and NATO was primarily reassuring it would protect territorial integrity.

Thus in both cases it was clearly a violation of a country’s sovereignty, armed response was discussed but not imposed, and the EU was required to respond. The framing by the media of the problem was similar in both situations and was done in such a way that the policy window required for the creation of sanctions could be opened. Moreover, as seen before also in the EU the problem stream was framed similarly in both cases. Thus, the problem stream cannot be the reason for why there were sanctions in the 2014 case but not in the 2008 case.

4.2 Expanded Model Analysis

As we argue below, the policy and political streams, in line with the theoretical framework and hypotheses, are the main reasons why in the Georgian case there were no sanctions while after the annexation of Crimea there were. This follows from the fact that in the problem stream there were no major differences between the cases or how they were framed both by the EU itself and the media. Moreover, as the first stream is not the explanation one or both of the other streams logically need to be the explanation for it. To analyse in which stream the influence is, the PAS addition to the streams model is helpful. From hypothesis 1 follows that the influence will be biggest in the policy stream, whereas the second hypothesis argues for more influence in the political stream. This was argued as hypothesis 1 is based on Metz (2015), where hypothesis 2 is based on the expanded model. What follows from this is that the hypothesis that is correct shows which model works best to explain influence in the EU’s sanction regime.

4.2.1 Policy Stream

The influence of policy advisory systems in the policy stream for sanctions is seen in the fact that think tanks bring more policy options to the table, which is seen in the *extensiveness* and *heaviness* of the sanctions as is explained before. To see the influence of think tanks in this aspect the adjustments, and what type, of the EU sanctions are followed and compared with the publication dates of the investigated think tanks. If for example a

publications of the OSW about the actors involved in the war is followed by an extension of the actors on the sanctions list then one can assume that the OSW has had an influence on this. Even more so if this is compared to the crisis in Georgia, a most similar case in which no sanctions were implemented and in which only the IAI once published something, thus a relationship between think tank publications and the EU's sanction regime can be assumed.

To analyse this the publications are evaluated for certain terms that concur with each indicator for sanction regime adjustment. For the *extensiveness* indicator these are words that represent (new) actors involved in the conflicts, e.g. the article of OSW in which they determine that “in Crimea the local elite” (Olszański, 2014, p. 35) opposed the democratically elected Ukrainian government. Thereby they framed that elite as the troublemaker on Crimea and thus a possible target for sanctions. For the *heaviness* indicator this is everything that represents harsher or different means of sanctions, e.g. in the summary of an OSW publication in which the author determines that “information as a dangerous weapon” (Darczewska, 2014, p. 7) is a strong Russian tool that is difficult to protect a country from, thereby decreasing the number of sanction possibilities as information has “unlimited range” (Darczewska, 2014, p. 7). Or the information weapon of the RF is unsanctionable.

4.2.2 Political Stream

The *duration* of sanctions portrays the effect think tanks have on sanctions, as explained before, because the duration of sanctions is affected by the amount of political support that a sanction (still) has. Thus, for this part of the analysis the six chosen think tanks are examined with respect to their influence on the *duration* of the sanctions. The *extensiveness* and *heaviness* can also be affected by the support there is in the political stream for sanctions. But as the think tanks mainly them by affecting the number of policy options available rather than who supports the sanctions, they are determined to be the indicators for the policy stream only in this research.

Thus, to analyse the think tank influence in the political stream they are investigated for how they effect the *duration* of sanctions. This is done by searching for words or phrases that indicate support for a longer or shorter time for sanctions. An example for this is in a publication by DIE, in which it is stated that the annexation of Crimea has led “to severe economic losses” (Olekseyuk & Schürenberg-Frosch, 2019, p. 877). Thereby, the problem is made publicly salient as they go on to state that the losses are “overproportional” (Olekseyuk

& Schürenberg-Frosch, 2019, p. 877) to the loss of the Crimeans economy. Thus, the support must remain in favour of sanctions to compensate Ukraine, i.e. the sanctions are supported.

4.2.3 Empirical Analysis

The fact that in the conflict with Georgia no sanctions were implemented and in the case of the Crimea there were sanctions implemented (Giumelli et al, 2021) means that any difference in the behaviour of the think tanks between the two cases can be the explanation of this difference. Thus, the empirical evidence in this section will show that the think tanks, through the policy advisory systems in the streams model, affect the sanctions by publishing or not. This empirical evidence consists of the number of publications about each of the cases, the language of the cases, or in other words whether they were opposing, legitimizing or neutral to intervention. And finally what the outcome was for the EU's sanction regime, here the sanction adjustments are considered up until the start of the current war and the hostilities right before. For this the sanction extension by the EU on the 13th of January 2022 is considered to be the last adjustment affiliated with the Crimea case. This is so as that set of sanctions of the EU still referred to the Minsk agreements as its original sin, which are the failed peace agreements between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. The sanction list expansion of the 21st of February is too close on the invasion of 24th of February and is deemed to be part of the growing hostilities that led to the new invasion, i.e. the new case.

Important to note here is that the comparison is between the situations before and after the sanctions were adjusted as is shown on the European Council own website's timeline. Moreover, the publication date of articles and comments made by think tanks will be compared to the dates of the adjustments of the sanctions to see whether there is a coherent or constant influence of the think tanks in the same manner, which is seen in the timeline and database of think tank publications. From this follows that 39 out of the 68 sanction publications by the EU were preceded by one or more publications of a think tank. A further 18 of the 29 remaining sanction publications of the EU are related to the fact that they had to be extended for judicial reasons (a sanction most often has a decided period in which it applies). In those cases think tanks do not really have an influence, thus these can be ignored. In 2 further sanction publications it was necessary because of the negotiations for the Minsk agreements were taking place. Thus, were the sanctions temporarily lifted. In the final 9 cases an explanation is still not yet found, however, there is a possibility that other think tanks ensured them. As the research is limited to the six stated think tanks this remains unsure.

For all the think tanks the analysis is based upon reports, policy briefs, or other articles aimed at politicians. That is why in all the cases the analysis of the executive summary, highlights, theses, or abstract written at the beginning of the papers is the most important aspect of the paper and analysed more thoroughly than the other parts of the articles. Mainly because those are aimed at emphasizing the essential elements of the argumentation to the busy politicians. Thus, those not only summarize the entire paper but are also the main influence on politicians that read the papers. Moreover, the period is limited to 2014 until 2021 as after that the new case of rising tensions with Russia and its invasion of Ukraine might influence the results. Table 2 below is a summary of the think tanks' influence in both the policy and political stream.

Table 2

Think tank influence in the policy and political stream, summary of the terms used by think tanks.

| | | Description of terms that determined the stance of the think tank for the influence of the | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|--|--|
| | Think tank. | Policy stream | Political stream |
| Think tanks government affiliation | DIE | <i>Terms:</i> Losses ⁴ | <i>Terms:</i> overproportional, can be compensated ⁵ . |
| | OSW | <i>Term:</i> local elite ⁶ , weapon, unlimited. | <i>Terms:</i> increasingly aggressive policy ⁷ , |
| | EUISS | <i>Terms:</i> sectoral sanctions, have constrained Russia's ability to pursue ⁷ | <i>Terms:</i> slow pace, investment in reputation of credible actor ⁸ |
| Independent think tanks | Bruegel | <i>Terms:</i> recession, never a star reformer ⁹ | <i>Terms:</i> sanctions have caused recession ⁸ |
| | TI | <i>Terms:</i> weakness in accessing beneficial ownership information ¹⁰ | <i>Terms:</i> permit the application of sanctions ⁹ |

⁵ (Olekseyuk & Schürenberg-Frosch, 2019, p. 877)

⁶ (Olszański, 2014, p. 35)

⁷ (Kwiatkowska-Drożdż, 2014, p. 8)

⁸ (Secieru, 2015, p. 43)

⁹ (Dabrowski, 2015, pp. 1-2)

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| IAI | <i>Terms: Moscow's foreign policy elite, developing its Middle Eastern policy</i> ¹⁰ | <i>Terms: Russian foreign policy went from integration to confrontation</i> ¹¹ |
|-----|---|---|

Note. The sources for this table are McGann (2021), the timeline and the database in the appendix.

4.2.3.1 Analysis of DIE. This analysis is done through searching in the online archive of DIE for publications matching the words Ukraine, Russia, or Crimea during the years 2014-2021. A total of seven articles were found with a slight favour towards the implementation of sanctions (2 opposing and 3 supporting articles) as can be seen in the annexed database. The influence of the think tank on the sanctions is that the think tank argued that there were “severe economic losses for Ukraine” (Olekseyuk & Schürenberg-Frosch, 2019, p. 877), thereby it argued in favour of the adjustment of the *heaviness* of sanctions. By doing so it highlights the arena in which counter-sanctions are logical and therefore it influences the policy stream.

The political stream is affected by DIE through the same article, in which the authors argue that Ukraine is hit “overproportional compared to Crimea’s economic size” (Olekseyuk & Schürenberg-Frosch, 2019, p. 877). This shows that it does not matter how someone looks at the interference of the RF in Crimea because Ukraine is hit out of proportion to it. Thus, this strengthens the support for sanctions and by that it effects the *duration*. If the timeline and the database are compared one can see that, among other moments, the think tank published in May 2014 a paper in cooperation with freedom house that discussed the promotion of democracy within the relation between the EU/Germany and Russia. While also on the 12th of May in that year the sanctions became heavier, which is in line with the article’s indicator of heaviness.

4.2.3.2 Analysis of OSW. The analysis of OSW is done through searching in their online publications archive for matches with the words ‘Ukraine’ and ‘Crimea’ as the number of hits when Russia is added is too large. This is not a problem as the articles about Russia that did not contain Ukraine or Crimea are not useful for this case. Moreover, as the number of publications of the OSW are still quite high (68 alone in 2014), just the reports are analysed to keep the workload manageable, while still capturing the essence of the think tanks stance. The stance of the OSW is strongly in favour of sanctions as can be seen in the database, there

¹⁰ (Martini & Murphy, 2015, pp. 9, 38)

¹¹ (Fischer, 2020, p. 1)

are 15 supporting, 5 opposing and 7 neutral reports about the sanctions in reaction to the conflict. This has a score of 10 articles more in favour than in opposition to sanctions.

Their support of the sanctions is seen in the fact that they blamed the “local elite” (Olszański, 2014, p. 35) in Crimea for trying to “demand” (p. 35) more autonomy. Thereby highlighting which other groups are guilty of the conflict and influencing the *extensiveness* of the sanctions. The think tanks influence the *duration* of the sanctions by arguing that Putin’s Russia has an “increasingly aggressive policy” (Kwiatkowska-Drożdż, 2014, p. 8) regarding its place as a global power. This is so as it frames the RF as a ruthless actor that must be stopped, along with this framing comes support of people that oppose aggression. When timeline and database are compared one publication on the 7th of march about the extensiveness of the sanctions is closely followed by an extension of the number and duration of the sanctions on the 17th of March. Thus, this shows a relation, however not yet in which direction or what the strength of the relation is.

4.2.3.3 Analysis of the European Union Institute for Security Studies. For the EUISS analysis the 2 chaillot papers, which are the institute’s “flagship publication” (European Union Institute for Security Studies, n.d.), and 3 reports about Ukraine in the period 2014-2021 are used to assess the think tank’s stance on sanctions. This is done as those are the most important papers to emphasize their position, furthermore, the other 12 alerts and 15 briefs of the period 2014-2021 are considered to be in principle similar. Thus those are smaller publications that contribute to the same stance of the EUISS. Which argued in favour of sanctions in the policy stream as its articles promoted sanctions in specific sectors to be “an investment in its reputation as a credible sanctioning actor” (Secrieru, 2015, p. 43) and that those sectoral sanctions “forced Russia to de-escalate” (Secrieru, 2015, p. 42). In other words, targeted sanctions in specific sectors can be successful in hampering aggressive actions thus the *heaviness* of a sanctions’ regime matters.

The *duration* of sanctions is affected by EUISS publications about the fact that they argue that sanctions were necessary to remain a credible actor in international relations (Secrieru, 2015, p. 43). Thus, hereby the people that wanted to voice their position against it are made preposterous on beforehand, which strengthens the support for sanctions. This report, published on the 24th of September 2015 was followed by an extension of the duration of the sanctions on the 10th of October of the same year. Again a relation is present.

4.2.3.4 Analysis of Bruegel. In the analysis of Bruegel the main papers of interest are the policy briefs, as those are directed at the politicians. Thus, with those they clearly try to emphasize their position within a policy advisory system. In the studied period there were 12 publications in total, of which 7 were opposed to sanctions and only 3 were in favour, clearly an institute that is opposed to sanctions in this situation. The article by Dabrowski (2015) shows that the sanctions are effective as he argues that some of the “factors that have caused recession” (p. 1) in the Russian Federation are the sanctions of the EU and US. In other words, the author clarifies that sanctions are successfully being used, which is clearly in support of the sanctions. This touches both upon the *duration* and *heaviness* indicator as the support increases and also the sectors in which sanctions are applied have been successful, thus clarifying future places in which sanctions should be applied if they are to be fruitful.

The influential relation between public publication of the sanctions of the EU and articles of Bruegel that were published before seems to be not really strong. Mainly as most of the Bruegel publications were published after the publications, however, there still is a strong relationship between the two publication dates. Thus, another explanation for this might be that Bruegel uses the spotlight brought on by the recent publication of the EU to highlight its point. By doing so it still can influence the decision-making process. Moreover, the fact that Bruegel is opposed to sanctions only matters in the political stream as there support is required. While in the policy stream also an opposing article to sanctions can bring new policy options and be influential. Thus, this think tank shows that the direction of the sanctions only matters in the political stream.

4.2.3.5 Analysis of Transparency International. With the evaluation of TI it is important to keep in mind that this think tank’s main focus is on transparency and corruption prevention. Therefor the articles might seem directed on those cases only but that is too short, as transparency and corruption are crucial factors in the search for who or what can be sanctioned. Thus, the influence of TI is bigger in the policy stream than in the political stream as the indicators for the policy stream have to do with who are sanctioned. This is reflected in the fact that 4 of the articles only discuss possible extensions on the sanction lists. The terms that show this are found in the article, among others, written by Martini and Murphy (2015) as they state that it is difficult for relevant authorities “to access beneficial ownership information” (p. 9) in the RF. This clearly shows that it is more difficult to maintain the correct sanctions in the RF as it might be unclear that a sanctioned person or entity has started using a new one. This affects the *heaviness* and *duration* indicators both.

The correlation between TI publications and sanction expansions again is present sometimes. For example, a publication on the first of August of 2017 is followed closely by an adaptation of the sanctions by the European Union on the fourth of August. Again however, the think tank is opposed to extending sanctions as it is unclear if they are successful but still the EU extends them.

4.2.3.6 Analysis of the Istituto Affari Internazionali. The IAI publications were found using the filters Crimea and Ukraine, in the timeframe of 2014-2021. Of the 11 papers found, 7 were opposed to sanctions extension, whereas 3 papers legitimized the use of sanctions. This is seen in the terms used for instance in paper by Fischer (2020) in which she argues that “Moscow’s foreign policy elite” (p. 1) is “actively developing its Middle Eastern policy” (p. 1). Thus, the sanctions have as a consequence that Russia seeks influence in other parts of the world to circumvent them. Consequently, the support for sanctions is decreased somewhat, as they mostly assure that the Russian state pivots to other regions to replace the lost trade with Europe. This highlights the costs of sanctions on European side and will cost the sanctions support, which eventually leads to a decreased *duration* of the sanctions. On the other hand, the article provides politicians with the knowledge of how sanctions do not work, so that they can adjust them. This can be helpful in the policy stream as it shows new ways in which sanctions must be applied, thus the *heaviness* and *extensiveness* of the sanctions are both influenced.

The adjustment of the sanctions, again, also followed a bit of the pattern that the think tank publications followed. For example, a 9th of July positive publication by the IAI about the *extensiveness* of the sanctions was followed by a 16th July adjustment of the *extensiveness* of EU sanctions. The sanctions were expanded by a new set of restrictions on that day, and shortly after followed by an expansion of the legal basis. This is shown in the database and timeline which are in the appendix. As stated before, the IAI is the only think tank that also published something during the 2008 conflict. This, however, was a summary of the five (!) ongoing conflicts in the area and the influence of civil society organisations. The goal of the publication was therefore not so much to adjust something in the conflict rather than that it was meant to study civil society organisation. As that has nothing to do with sanctions the article is not influential in the agenda-setting regarding sanctions and can be neglected.

4.2.4 Overview of the Think Tank Analyses.

As also stated above, a correlation between the sanction publication dates of the EU and the publications dates of the researched think tank articles is found. If that is taken together with the fact that after the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 there was only one publication by one of the think tanks, i.e. the IAI, the relation stands out even more. Another interesting aspect is that in that publication by the IAI the Georgian conflict was only one of five cases researched and focussed mainly on the influence of civil society organisations. Not closely related to sanctions, but closely related to bottom-up resolutions rather than top-down solutions. Which is salient as sanctions are by definition top-down regulations implemented from the government upon (foreign) citizens. As this is a most similar systems design it can be assumed that the difference, think tank publications or not, is one of the explanatory variables for the implementation of the EU's sanction regime.

Something that is interesting in the relation is the fact that even if think tanks publish in a way that is determined to be opposed to sanctions still the sanctions often are continued or expanded. And as most adjustments of the sanctions are done in the aspect of extending sanctions, mainly a political affair rather than a technical policy affair, the stream in which influence is strongest is the political stream. This is in line with the second hypothesis.

4.3 Discussion

The identified correlation between think tank publications and consequent sanction adjustments, does not light on the legitimizing or opposing role of think tanks. In a situation in which think tanks oppose the implementation of sanctions, governments still often do the opposite and extend the sanctions, why this is the case is open to further investigation. However, from a theoretical perspective this might be explained by the fact that politicians mostly act on issues that are in the public eye, and by publishing about the situations think tanks make the issues publicly salient. Moreover, the publication of articles by think tanks certainly do bring the issue to the attention of politicians themselves. Especially if the think tanks are within the policy advisory systems of those politicians. For this the OSW think tank is a splendid example, as that had a high correlation with the sanction publications, a correlation with the promoted indicators and the indicators for the adjusted sanctions and is a government-affiliated organisation, thus likely part of the policy advisory system.

The fact that this research focuses on six think tanks to investigate if the model exists ensures that it cannot consider deeply enough the other possibilities at play. This means that

there also might be more and varied reasons that ensured the lack of or implementation of sanctions, an example of this could be that all extensions of the sanctions were implemented shortly after an increase in Russian hostilities or that think tanks from outside the EU have more influence. However, as this is a most similar systems design that bias is corrected for, and European sanctions are likely to be affected most by Europeans. Primarily because in the Georgian case most of the same parameters applied while the think tanks did not publish about it and the EU did not implement sanctions for it. Future research that wants to evaluate that must investigate the politicians involved at that time in the decision-making process and their relationship with think tanks.

Future research can extend the value of the expanded model by investigating how the think tanks influence the decision-making by using a more diverse scale in the analysis of think tank language. To see if think tank influence alters along with the strength of their opposition to or support of sanctions might give a better image of how the influence works rather than if it works. However, for this research it is enough to see if the model works rather than seeing how think tanks really affect the decision-making. Furthermore, it might have relevance to see another set of filters through which the think tanks are selected to see if the model still works.

The most crucial functions of think tanks in the making of sanctions is the fact that they make issues salient for a wider public and that they give the opportunity to read the argumentation from another point of view. This gives politicians the freedom to adjust their standpoint by referring their change of heart to a group of experts, which can be helpful if more political support is required. Moreover, as currently it is the longest period of peace in Europe the ability to change position for MEPs in sight of (peaceful) foreign policy tools, i.e. sanctions, can ensure that there will not come a gridlock in the EU. As the think tanks give politicians the possibility to adjust their stance without too much damage to their image. This can ensure that the period of peace is extended even longer. Another side to the outcome of this paper is the fact that the expanded streams model is successful in explaining and investigating the influence of think tanks on the EU's sanctions regime. This is quite helpful in the field of agenda-setting analyses as it also reviews the influence within the policy and political stream and can be used to identify the influence of other actors in agenda setting in other cases. Moreover, the model can also be used to assess the influence of other actors in the same cases. The division for the PAS parts in the model, as seen in figure 1, into a 'specialist use' and a 'support use' part of the policy advisory systems is helpful when

analysing the influence of a PAS on agenda setting. This is beneficial as for other types of policies other think tanks, or similar expert organisations (e.g. IT firms for cyber security), can have an influence in a different stream. And if the influence is in another stream also other safeguards for a democratic process is necessary.

This is so as everyone in a democracy should be able to contribute ideas in one way or another, thus the policy stream should be equally accessible for everyone. Thus, if an unaccountable actor is determined to have a higher influence in the policy stream than other actors this is not fair from a democratic point of view. Thus, for the actors that have an influence on the policy stream safeguards must be implemented to ensure a good working of a democratic state. An easy safeguard for this can be to limit the funding of such actors, however, not all unaccountable actors are equally susceptible to this limitation as their main sources of income can come from somewhere else. A more successful restraint could be that such organisations must increase their accountability through exposing how they arrive at certain arguments and how its income flows. This ensures that decision-makers, and citizens, can identify the exact inner workings of the actor that influences the policy stream. By identifying that they simultaneously see if the proposed policy benefits the sponsor or think tank self, which is a signal that it might not be the best solution for others.

Whereas the political stream's most important aspect is that it must clarify who supports what side and why they do so, which is necessary for an open deliberation and to keep the actors involved accountable. A PAS can hamper this as it makes it ambiguous who supports what for which reasons, which is done when a think tank, or other outside actor, for example changes a member of parliament's (MP) opinion. When no one can ever identify how or why the think tank that has done it can be the situation that the MP is paid off by the outside actor. Which is clearly a danger to a democracy. A safeguard that could prevent this is the creation of a list of which MPs have interacted with which outside actors and how it has affected their voting behaviour, to increase the accountability of the MPs.

Thus, the expanded model helps analyse in which stream the most influence is from a certain actor. If that is known it can help with determining the safeguards necessary to protect the governing style in which the agenda is set. Mostly the safeguards that can protect the democratic working within an agenda setting framework have to do with increasing transparency. That leads to an improved accountability and ensures that politicians do act in line with their own statements, as otherwise they will not be re-elected.

5. Conclusion

As we have seen so far, the interplay between Kingdon's (1993) three streams model and the policy advisory systems has been useful for understanding where the influence of think tanks can take place. This is portrayed in figure 1 which shows that the PAS are present in the policy and political stream. What follows from the analysis is that in the political stream the think tanks have the most visible presence. This is in accordance with what was expected in the second hypothesis. That was expected as from the policy advisory systems theory follows that of both sides (knowledge brokers and receivers) in the streams an influence on the other can be expected. A consequence of that is that the think tanks as a part of the PAS are both influential in the decision-making as well as influenced by the decision-makers. Therefore, it is logical that the biggest effect of think tanks is in the place where that deliberation is found, i.e. the political stream.

The consequence for the quality of democracy here is that, as the biggest influence is not in the policy stream, the think tanks are not used to adjust sanctions but to create or diversify support for them. Think tanks are used to create extra places from where support can come rather than that they have an effect on the options that exist. Thus the political stream is influenced more than the policy stream. This ensures that an agreement can be reached in more situations in which a gridlock has been reached in the normal communication channels and therefore it can be seen as an improvement of the conventional democratic transactions. Moreover, as the studied think tanks have all open and accessible archives the argument that citizens have a tough time to hold them accountable is also weakened. Mostly as they can review what the think tanks have published which allows citizens to consider actions as a response to the behaviour of think tanks. Examples of this can range from sending a formal complaint to the think tank, to starting a public campaign against it, to ultimately take the think tank to a court of law for the spread of misinformation.

To answer the question asked in the introduction, this paper has found that the influence of think tanks primarily is in the political stream of the agenda setting for the EU's sanctions regime. This influence of think tanks thus is mostly to reemphasize the salience of the viable solutions and to ensure that the politicians can use that as a reason for supporting a policy. This differs from the problem stream as the think tanks primarily raise the salience of both the problem as the viable policy solutions rather than that they only frame the issue. Thus their main target is to ensure that politicians can show why they support or oppose a

policy, rather than showing what the issue is. This is more a question of what the political cost is of supporting the policy than the economic cost (which would be in the problem stream).

5.1 Limits of the Research and Future Research Possibilities.

Here the limits of the research are discussed, which is necessary as every research has its limitations that must be clarified for others that want to use the study to prevent a repetitive bias in further research. One aspect that stands out is the fact that the think tank selection is done based on the TTCSP Global Go To Think Tanks Index from the university of Pennsylvania. The benefit from this is that it is a respected, objective, and renowned report, however, as the think tanks that are chosen score high on influence (e.g. Bruegel is the number 1 influential think tank in international economic focussed group (McGann, 2021, p. 191)) there could be a selection bias. Those think tanks are still chosen as this paper is directed at explaining and evaluating the expanded model. Still, future research can be done to see if low scoring think tanks still have a similar effect on the EU's sanction regime. A benefit of doing that research is that the framework is clear, as it is the same as the one used in this study. Moreover, it contributes to the evaluation of the expanded model as another side of it is analysed. Important to keep in mind is that the found effect is most likely to be weaker as the influence of the think tanks is weaker according to the index.

Further research in this field can develop in multiple directions. One of the most interesting directions it could go in is to do in-depth interviews with both decision-makers and scholars of influential think tanks to assess how the influence works. This helps to analyse the extent of the relation within the policy advisory system, which will ensure that the internal validity is strengthened by cancelling possible confounding variables. Moreover, when doing such interviews it can also be controlled which stream the more important influence is felt. This is done by asking the reasons for why the interviewee argued in favour or against a specific course of action. If those arguments comply with each other then the policy stream is influenced, whereas if those do not comply then the salience of the issue mainly ensured that it was on the agenda. Or in other words, the political stream had the biggest influence in furthering the issue onto the agenda.

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Appendix A.¹

| DIE. | publication date | link | topic area | score | Affected indicators | notes |
|------|-----------------------|---|------------|-------|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | 20th of February 2014 | https://link.:Cost of trade liberalization | | 0 | ----- | too close on start of annexation |
| 2. | 9th of March 2014 | https://link.:Water governance | | 0 | ----- | other subject and too early published |
| 3. | May 2014 | https://www Diplomatic actions | | 1 | Heaviness | favours democracy promotion done by EU |
| 4. | 1st of December 2014 | https://www Free trade area with EU | | -1 | Duration & Extensiveness | favours cooperation, indirectly opposes sanctions - duration and extensiveness |
| 5. | 17th of April 2016 | https://www FDI in Ukraine | | -1 | Duration & Extensiveness | favours cooperation, indirectly opposes sanctions |
| 6. | 26th of April 2017 | https://link.:Trade liberalization | | 1 | Heaviness | lower gains from cooperation than expected opening the way for sanctions |
| 7. | 21st of December 2018 | https://www Economic loss after crimea | | 1 | Duration | Ukraine has bigger losses than Crimean economy, which is a frame in favour of sanctions |
| 8. | 2021 | https://www EU greendeal | | 0 | ----- | influence of EU-RF relation on greendeal possibilities outside of the case |

search words: Ukraine, Russia, and Crimea between 2014-2021 Total: 1

| OSW | publication date | link | topic area | score | Affected indicators | notes |
|-----|------------------------|---|------------|-------|----------------------|--|
| 1. | 3rd of March 2014 | https://www Russia-German relation | | 1 | Duration & Heaviness | Russia framed as the opponent, econ interdependence exists but Germany holds the cards |
| 2. | 7th of March 2014 | https://www Ukraine internal affairs | | 1 | Extensiveness | ukraine should remain unified in eyes of ukraine and RF, frame is of bad boy RF influence |
| 3. | 22nd of May 2014 | https://www Russian information war | | -1 | Heaviness | Russia framed as the opponent, with information as a weapon to which no defense exists. |
| 4. | 3rd of February 2015 | https://www Conservatism in Russia | | 1 | Extensiveness | explains why there is friction between EU and RF, explains who might be targets extensiveness |
| 5. | 20th of August 2015 | https://www Gas corridor in the southern EU | | 1 | Heaviness | gives an option to alter gaslines, thus heaviness of sanctions is promoted |
| 6. | 2nd of November 2015 | https://www Russia enemybuilding explained | | 1 | Duration | us-vs-them' creation in russia, the necessity of sanctions - duration. Prepare for what is next |
| 7. | 22nd of February 2016 | https://www Georgia's troubles | | 1 | Duration | support - highlights the issue with nondurable solutions, warns to prevent that in Ukraine |
| 8. | 27th of June 2016 | https://www RF military & information war | | 1 | Extensiveness | extensiveness - expands the possible targets of sanctions (from security service to add military) |
| 9. | 18th of August 2016 | https://www oligarchy influence in Ukraine | | 1 | Extensiveness | extensiveness - expands the possible targets of sanctions (existence of oligarchs) |
| 10. | 7th of November 2016 | https://www Belarus as an RF influence zone | | 1 | Extensiveness | extensiveness - soft power tools of RF in Belarus explained |
| 11. | 22nd of november 2016 | https://www The issues crimea post-seperation | | -1 | Duration | one minority group that cares is left, rest of crimea and Ukraine care not or too little |
| 12. | 4th of May 2017 | https://www weak Ukrainian state | | -1 | Duration | Ukraine highly dependent on imports and is highly corrupt - duration is decreased |
| 13. | 7th of July 2017 | https://www Ukrainian military | | 0 | ----- | first ever improvements in Ukrainian army, so it can be okay to aid with sanctions, is not necessary |
| 14. | 3rd of August 2017 | https://www cooperation in Eastern Europe | | 1 | Duration | framed that there is more support in EU from eastern states |
| 15. | 11th of August 2017 | https://www Ukraine internal affairs | | -1 | Duration | framed that there is a lot of corruption |
| 16. | 13th of September 2017 | https://www soft power against RF in Ukraine | | 1 | Duration | shows the opposition to RF that lives in Ukraine |
| 17. | 28th of November 2017 | https://www context setting of Ukraine | | -1 | Duration | Ukraine has survived on its own so far. |
| 18. | 20th of March 2018 | https://www prospect of putin's 4th presidency | | 1 | Heaviness | same group of oligarchs at the top and RF is more depedent on the West than the other way around |
| 19. | 30th of May 2018 | https://www Finland scared away by RF | | 1 | Duration | RF agression ensured Finlands military reawakening |
| 20. | 11th of September 2018 | https://www Ukrainian presidential election | | 0 | ----- | outcome unclear, besides that it probably will be a new politician |
| 21. | 2nd of October 2018 | https://www Ukraine economic context | | 0 | ----- | FDI required before Ukrainian economy can grow again |
| 22. | 17th of October 2018 | https://www labour migration decelerates | | 0 | ----- | migration was and remains often for a short period only |
| 23. | 26th of July 2019 | https://www Low unemployment rate in Czechia | | 0 | ----- | |
| 24. | 4th of May 2020 | https://www Polish cultural goods in Ukraine | | 0 | ----- | Polish cultural goods in Belarus and Ukraine |
| 25. | 28th of May 2020 | https://www Nagorno-Karabakh | | 1 | Extensiveness | most important issue in the region, shows extra place for conflict resolution and to hit RF |
| 26. | 25th of January 2021 | https://www Chinese interest in Ukr | | 0 | ----- | no influence on sanctions |
| 27. | 9th of December 2021 | https://www Ukr agricultural importance | | 1 | Duration | importance of Ukrainian agrivulture, thus must be protected/aided by applying sanctions on RF |

Search word: Ukraine total: 10

| EUISS. | publication date | link | topic area | score | Affected indicators | notes |
|--------|------------------------|---|------------|-------|---------------------|---|
| 1. | 9th of September 2014 | https://www Ukraine and unravelling EURASIA | | 1 | Duration | context of crimean annexation, framed with RF as the villain |
| 2. | 24th of September 2015 | https://www EU sanctions as security tools | | 1 | All three | sanctions work and that is explained. |
| 3. | 7th of April 2016 | https://www Future of RF | | 1 | Heaviness | planning potential responses for future, promotes smart sanctions (mainly heaviness of sanctions) |
| 4. | 29th of July 2016 | https://www hostile destability surrounds EU | | 1 | Heaviness | strategic communication (from marketing to policy) are used to overcome hostilities |
| 5. | 15th of February 2017 | https://www China-Russia partnership | | -1 | Duration | analysis of RF pivot to China as a result of the sanctions regime |

search word: Ukraine between 2014 and 2021 total: 3 search filter Chaillot paper, reports, 2014-2020

| Bruegel | publication date | link | topic area | score | Affected indicators | notes |
|--|------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------|----------------------|---|
| 1. | 31st of July 2014 | https://www.uefa.com/ukraine/bad-economic-state | Ukraine's bad economic state | -1 | Duration & Heaviness | sanctions alone to RF do not yet benefit Ukraine, if Ukr does not get financial support |
| 2. | 11th of December 2014 | https://www.uefa.com/eu-rf-ukr-gas-relation | EU-RF-Ukr gas relation | -1 | Duration | EU must support Ukr to ensure fairness, sanctions are described as short term policies, so not durable |
| 3. | 9th of February 2015 | https://www.uefa.com/regional-crises | Regional crises because of RF-Ukr | -1 | Duration & Heaviness | partly started because of sanctions, to prevent innocent victims the EU & IMF must aid the entire region |
| 4. | 11th of June 2015 | https://www.uefa.com/structural-roots | structural roots of Ukr recession | 0 | ----- | EU should support Ukr with financial aid and strong conditionality to be succesful |
| 5. | 16th of October 2015 | https://www.uefa.com/structural-roots | structural roots of RF recession | 1 | Duration & Heaviness | Sanctions are only a small part of RF recession, its market was stagnating sanctions do harm RF economy |
| 6. | 21st of January 2016 | https://www.uefa.com/belarusian-economy | Belarusian economy | -1 | Heaviness | Belarus was place to circumvent some sanctions |
| 7. | 5th of May 2017 | https://www.uefa.com/effect-of-conflict | Effect of conflict in central Asia | 0 | ----- | Geopolitics have an influence on the economy in central asia, but there are other factors of influence |
| 8. | 27th of September 2017 | https://www.uefa.com/reform-in-ukr | Reform in Ukr | -1 | Duration | Reform is better than before, but still not good enough |
| 9. | 7th of February 2019 | https://www.uefa.com/rf-economic-growth | RF economic growth issues | 1 | Heaviness | shows the places where the EU can hit the RF economy. |
| 10. | 9th of December 2019 | https://www.uefa.com/energy-trade | Energy trade traingl EU-RF-China | -1 | Heaviness | RF can possibly gain more freedom to counter sanctions by trading with China, though not too much to pressure the EU |
| 11. | 17th of February 2020 | https://www.uefa.com/fdi-influence | FDI influence of EU in RF | 1 | Heaviness | sanctions are major obstacle to FDI |
| 12. | 2n of February 2021 | https://www.uefa.com/consequences | consequences of EU Greendeal | -1 | Duration & Heaviness | it affects EU's tradepartners, as we become independent from fossil exporters (RF) sanctions unnecessary in future in energy sector |
| search filters: Policy Brief, Russia, Ukraine, 2014 -202 | | | | Total: | -4 | |

| TI. | publication date | link | topic area | score | Affected indicators | notes |
|---|------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|---|
| 1. | 14th of February 2014 | https://kno1.uefa.com/corruption-typology | corruption typology in democracy | -1 | Extensiveness & Heaviness | argues that there is a problem with corruption in both Ukraine and Russia, thus difficult to apply sanctions as it is unclear how |
| 2. | 27th of October 2014 | https://kno1.uefa.com/good-practice | good practice fighting corruption | 0 | ----- | what to do to fight corruption |
| 3. | 23rd of June 2015 | https://kno1.uefa.com/anticorruption-mechanism | anticorruption mechanism SOE | 1 | Extensiveness | Shows where RF's state-owned enterprises (SOE) must report their contracts |
| 4. | 12th of November 2015 | https://kno1.uefa.com/g20-transparency | G20 transparency in firms | 1 | Extensiveness | shows to what extend Russia's archives are in order, so that politicians can know sanctions are good or not |
| 5. | 15th of February 2016 | https://kno1.uefa.com/anticorruption-ideas | anticorruption ideas | 0 | ----- | possible anticorruption strategies |
| 6. | 15th of September 2016 | https://kno1.uefa.com/corruption-assessment | corruption assessment of Ukr firms | -1 | Extensiveness | sanctions require transparency to be effective |
| 7. | 1st of March 2017 | https://kno1.uefa.com/evaluating-anticorruption | evaluating anticorruption in Ukr | 0 | ----- | evaluating anticorruption strategies in Ukr |
| 8. | 28th of April 2017 | https://kno1.uefa.com/transparency-ranking | transparency ranking in Ukr | -1 | Duration | no sense in sanctioning RF when Ukr is corrupt |
| 9. | 15th of May 2017 | https://kno1.uefa.com/danger-of-corruption | danger of corruption | -1 | Duration | no sense in sanctioning RF when Ukr is corrupt |
| 10. | 1st of August 2017 | https://kno1.uefa.com/danger-of-corruption | danger of corruption | -1 | Duration | danger of helping a corrupt system |
| 11. | 19th of April 2018 | https://kno1.uefa.com/g20-transparency | G20 transparency in firms | 1 | Extensiveness | Shows where RF's state-owned enterprises (SOE) must report their contracts |
| 12. | 30th of November 2018 | https://kno1.uefa.com/transparency-ranking | transparency ranking in Ukr | -1 | Duration | no sense in sanctioning RF when Ukr is corrupt |
| search filters Ukraine, Background & Working Papers, Russia | | | | Total: | -3 | |

| IAI. | publication date | link | topic area | score | Affected indicators | notes |
|--|-----------------------|---|---------------------------------|--------|--------------------------|--|
| 1. | 25th of February 2014 | https://www.uefa.com/review-of-ukr-problems | review of Ukr problems | -1 | Duration & heaviness | gives context and places RF in the frame of villain that must be cooperated with |
| 2. | 9th of July 2014 | https://www.uefa.com/turkish-russian-relations | Turkish-Russian relations | 1 | Extensiveness | Turkey's policy towards RF will depend upon Russian-western relations. Sanctions to RF are also followed by Turkey |
| 3. | 25th of November 2014 | https://www.uefa.com/new-cold-war | New cold war? | -1 | Duration | promotes cooperation and compares the situation to cold war, more it states that the sanctions might help Putin in the RF |
| 4. | 12th of december 2014 | https://www.uefa.com/four-pillars | four pillars of RF narrative | -1 | Duration & Extensiveness | shows that RF is 'winning' |
| 5. | 12th of december 2014 | https://www.uefa.com/eu-ukr-integration | EU-Ukr integration | 1 | Duration | reasons for why the EU should integrate Ukraine and thus why RF must be shielded off |
| 6. | 28th of february 2015 | https://www.uefa.com/update-of-new-cold-war | update of New cold war? | -1 | Duration | promotes cooperation and compares the situation to cold war, more it states that the sanctions might help Putin in the RF |
| 7. | 30th of July 2015 | https://www.uefa.com/european-neighbourhood-policy | European Neighbourhood policy | 0 | ----- | besides the abstract everything is in Italian, so not able to be analysed and the abstract is rather neutral |
| 8. | 26th of January 2016 | https://www.uefa.com/kosovo-and-crimea-comparison | Kosovo and Crimea comparison | 1 | Duration | framing the division between the West and RF, mostly in RF eyes kosovo and crimean situations are similar |
| 9. | 28th of June 2016 | https://www.uefa.com/responsibility-to-protect | Responsibility to protect (R2P) | -1 | Duration | RF did use R2P, so there is hope for cooperation |
| 10. | 28th of april 2020 | https://www.uefa.com/rf-foreign-policy-goals | RF foreign policy goals | -1 | All three | RF foreing policy pivots to China and asis, less interested in the West thus sanctions have less influence |
| 11. | 30th of April 2021 | https://www.uefa.com/how-to-deal-with-the-rf | how to deal with the RF | -1 | Duration & heaviness | status quo cannot last, EU must first look inwards before it can succesfully improve sanctions. Currently opposed future is possible |
| search filters: Crimea, Ukraine, 2014-2021 | | | | Total: | -4 | |

Georgian case:

| IAI | publication date | link | topic area | score | Affected indicators | notes |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|----------------------------------|--------|---------------------|--|
| 1. | 26th of November 2008 | https://www.uefa.com/overview-of-conflicts | overview of conflicts in 5 cases | 0 | ----- | influence of civil society organisations is researched |
| Search filter: Georgia in 2008 | | | | total: | 0 | |

Appendix B.

| Date | explanation of EU | in- or decrease | indicators | notes |
|------------|---|-----------------|---------------------------|---|
| 3-3-2014 | start of sanctions | 1 | All three | |
| 17-3-2014 | 21 individual sanctions | 1 | Extensiveness & Duration | prepared on 6 march |
| 20-3-2014 | 12 names added | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 15-4-2014 | strengthen sanctions + 4 additional names | 1 | Heaviness & Extensiveness | |
| 12-5-2014 | new set of sanctions | 1 | Heaviness | |
| 23-6-2014 | import ban from crimea | 1 | Heaviness | |
| 16-7-2014 | new set of restrictions | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 18-7-2014 | broader legal basis | 1 | Heaviness | more policy options rather than more targets |
| 25-7-2014 | reinforced EU sanctions | 1 | Heaviness & Extensiveness | |
| 29-7-2014 | specific economic sectors added | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 12-9-2014 | new economic sectors sanctioned | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 28-11-2014 | new persons added | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 29-1-2015 | sanctions extended | 1 | Duration | |
| 9-2-2015 | sanctioned list put on hold | -1 | Duration | diplomatic efforts thus measures put on hold |
| 16-2-2015 | 28 new entries on sanction list | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 5-3-2015 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | list was updated following judicial proceedings |
| 13-3-2015 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 19-3-2015 | align the sanctions regime to minsk agreement | -1 | Duration | give prospect of stopping with sanctions |
| 5-6-2015 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 19-6-2015 | extension of restrictions | 1 | Duration | |
| 22-6-2015 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 14-9-2015 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 5-10-2015 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 21-12-2015 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 4-3-2016 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 10-3-2016 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 17-6-2016 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 1-7-2016 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 9-11-2016 | 6 new additions to list (from Crimea State Duma | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 19-12-2016 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 3-3-2017 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 13-3-2017 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 19-6-2017 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 28-6-2017 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 4-8-2017 | 6 new entries on sanction list | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 14-9-2017 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 21-11-2017 | governor of Sevastopol added to the list | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 21-12-2017 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 5-3-2018 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 12-3-2018 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 14-5-2018 | 5 additions to sanctions list | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 18-6-2018 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 5-7-2018 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 31-7-2018 | 6 new entries on sanction list | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 13-9-2018 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 10-12-2018 | 9 new entries on the sanctions list | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 21-12-2018 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 4-3-2019 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 15-3-2019 | 8 new entries on sanction list + renews it | 1 | Extensiveness & Duration | |
| 20-6-2019 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 27-6-2019 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 31-1-2020 |
| 12-9-2019 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 19-12-2019 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | |
| 5-3-2020 | extension of 10 sanctioned persons | 1 | Duration | |
| 5-3-2020 | no extension | -1 | Duration | 2 persons off the list |
| 13-3-2020 | extension of EU sanctions + new prohibitions | 1 | Heaviness & Duration | until 15-9-2020 |
| 18-6-2020 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 23-6-2021 |
| 29-6-2020 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 31-1-2021 |
| 1-10-2020 | 6 new entries on sanction list | 1 | extensiveness | |
| 17-12-2020 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 31-7-2021 |
| 4-3-2021 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | 7 individuals until 6-3-2022 and 1 until 6-9-2021 |
| 4-3-2021 | no extension | -1 | Duration | 2 persons |
| 12-3-2021 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 15-9-2021 |
| 21-6-2021 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 23-6-2022 |
| 10-9-2021 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 15-3-2022 |
| 11-10-2021 | 8 new entries on sanction list | 1 | Extensiveness | |
| 13-1-2022 | extension of EU sanctions | 1 | Duration | until 31-7-2022 |
| 21-2-2022 | 5 new entries on sanction list | 1 | Extensiveness | to close on new hostilities |

ⁱ The original excel documents can be requested at s2053071@vuw.leidenuniv.nl and both are also uploaded on Brightspace.