Shared Vision, Common Action Explained

A Case Study of the Strategy-making Process of the European Union Global Strategy
- A Function of Liberal Intergovernmentalism or Neofunctionalism?

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Abstract
This study is an attempt to understand strategy-making in the European Union (EU). By targeting the strategy-making process of the European Union Global Strategy (EUGS), the study aims to reveal the legal provisions and the in-practice procedures of strategy-making in the area of EU foreign policy. The thesis presents two theories, liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism, from which it constructs two contrasting ideal types of policy-making. By applying the theoretical ideal types on the targeted case, that is the strategy-making process of the EUGS, the study reflects on the relationship between Member States and the EU, as well as on the inter-institutional dynamics that would come to characterize the progress and development of the EUGS.

Despite difficulties in rejecting any of the theoretical ideal types, the study finds the policy-formulation of the EUGS to be more coherent with the neofunctional ideal type than that of liberal intergovernmentalism. This is due to the central role of the European External Action Service (EEAS) which would come to conduct an innovative policy-formulation phase of the strategy and to the lack of bargaining between the Member States on the textual provisions of the strategy. The neofunctional ideal type does yet fall short in explaining for the EUGS as an initial concept and partly for the implementation of the strategy, favoring a liberal intergovernmental interpretation of how the instruments of the EUGS would come to be initiated.

The study also reflects on if the experience of making the EUGS may provide for an argument to review the presumed centrality of Member States being the ultimate drivers of EU foreign policy.

Word count: 23722

Key words: EU, strategy-making, EEAS, HR/VP, FAC, PSC, foreign policy, liberal intergovernmentalism, neofunctionalism
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>CARD</td>
<td>Coordinated Annual Review on Defence</td>
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<td>CFSP</td>
<td>Common Foreign and Security Policy</td>
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<td>CSDP</td>
<td>Common Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<td>DG</td>
<td>Directorate General</td>
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<td>EEAS</td>
<td>European External Action Service</td>
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<td>ESS</td>
<td>European Security Strategy</td>
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<td>EU</td>
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<td>EUGS</td>
<td>European Union Global Strategy</td>
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<td>FAC</td>
<td>Foreign Affairs Council</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy</td>
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<td>HR/VP</td>
<td>High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission</td>
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<td>IPSD</td>
<td>Implementation Plan on Security and Defence</td>
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<td>MPCC</td>
<td>Military Planning and Conduct Capability</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<td>PESCO</td>
<td>Permanent Structured Cooperation</td>
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<td>POC</td>
<td>Points of Contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Political and Security Committee</td>
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<td>SG</td>
<td>Secretariat-General of the Commission</td>
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<td>TEU</td>
<td>Treaty on the European Union</td>
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<td>TFEU</td>
<td>Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union</td>
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1. Introduction

Ever since its creation in 1951, back then referred to as the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Union (EU) has been subject to a wide range of different debates. One of the most recurring has been that of what the EU really is. Should the EU be perceived as an international organization similar to that of the UN or NATO, or is it close to becoming a federal state, as Member States seem to step aside from their national interests? Is the EU representing a collection of ideals of a western civilization or is it characterized by technical policy-making procedures? In an attempt to approach these questions, various schools of thought have proposed different theories on how the EU should be rightfully perceived. This study has taken stock of this ontological debate through which it analyzes how the European Union Global Strategy (EUGS) came to into being.

The elaboration on EU foreign policy has traditionally been viewed as an illustrative example of a process highly constrained to intergovernmental practices. This is because formulations of national sovereignty are embedded in the legal and institutional provisions of the EU’s foreign policy-making. The capacity of the EU to act as a strong actor in international affairs has thus been perceived to be conditioned upon the willingness of each EU Member State (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan, 2008, p. 29).

So, when Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, expressed in 2014 her interest in working towards a new strategy on EU foreign policy, many predicted a drafting process that would pass or fall in line with common will of the Member States. The strategy-making process of the EUGS would yet prove to be anything but constrained to intergovernmental platforms. Indeed, in his book on the making of the EUGS, Pol Morillas examines essential procedures of intergovernmentalism, yet an overall strategy-making process that would follow a peculiar pattern of policy-making procedures purposefully designed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) (Morillas, 2018, pp. 137, 184).

The EUGS is aimed at providing the EU with a strategic direction in foreign policy, facilitating many of the policies and instruments adopted by the EU since its publication in June 2016. Some may even argue that the EUGS could be illustrating an example of a ‘grand strategy’ similar to the European Security Strategy (ESS) which was viewed to put forward
“broad and long-term goals that had to be translated into more specific functional and regional strategies” (Biscop, 2015, p. 14).

This study will assess the strategy-making process of the EUGS by making use of two theories of policy making: liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism. The former school of thought stresses the notion of Member States’ sovereign possession in conducting the political direction of the EU. Neofunctionalism, on the contrary, tends to overlook the power of Member States as it primarily targets the implications of internal policy-making procedures, established and initiated beyond the control of the Member States.

Since many of the traditional perceptions on foreign policy-making are to be challenged by the strategy-making process of the EUGS, as examined by Morillas, it would arguably be relevant to analyze the strategy-making process of the EUGS further through theories yet not applied to the process.

By benefitting from the tenets as given by two selected theories, this study seeks to examine how the strategy-making of the EUGS may serve as a typical case of either a liberal intergovernmental or neofunctional practice. The study thus aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of strategy-making in the area of EU foreign policy.

1.1 Aim and Research Question

This study presents an in-depth examination of the development and progress of the European Union Global Strategy (EUGS). It furthermore provides an analysis of how theoretical tenets, as given by liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism respectively, account for the strategy-making process of the EUGS. By setting the institutional context and its impact on the strategy-making process at the very centre of analysis, the study examines the rapport de forces between and among Member States and EU institutions. Yet, the study also targets the in-practice procedures of the process by outlining how these were initiated and to what extent these were covered by the institutional framework, stipulated by the Lisbon treaty.

The study aims at answering the following research question:

- How do elements of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism account for the strategy-making process of the European Union Global Strategy?
The study also reflects on how the policy-making process of the EUGS may provide for an argument to challenge the presumed centrality of Member States being the direct and ultimate drivers of EU foreign policy.

The targeted case of this thesis would come to be identified at the time I was assisting the Permanent PSC Coordinator at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the autumn of 2018. As an intern at the European Correspondent’s Office (sv.EUKORR), I would gain a significant amount of insights on the procedures of policy-making in the EU, particularly in the area of foreign and security policy. By keeping the channels of communication open between the EEAS, and the desk officers at the Ministry, I assisted the PSC coordinator in making sure that the Swedish Ambassador at the PSC was enabled to deliver clear-cut positions on the topics discussed. Although this does not make me a qualified expert on EU foreign policy-making, I am confident that insights gained during my internship have enabled me to detect and assess the appearance of PSC policy-making procedures in the strategy-making process of the EUGS.

1.2 Previous Research and Relevance of Study

While many scholars and analysts have targeted the policy making process of the EU and its well-cited Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), a less developed approach has been that of bringing attention to strategy-making in the EU. This is despite the fact that the ESS and the EUGS might be considered the most relevant efforts of the EU to reflect on its strategic role in international affairs. In Morillas’ own words, EU strategies “provide the policy framework and strategic guidelines for further foreign policy and external action developments, so their policy-making reveals the policy-making processes of these areas” (Morillas, 2018, p. 13).

The literature on EU strategies as such is rich and wide in scope. While some scholars have targeted the very formulations explicitly expressed in the documents, others have focused on the EU’s overall capacity to act strategically. As exemplified by the work of Morillas, some scholars have also perceived the collection of EU strategies as a “source of inspiration for policy formulation at the global stage” (Morillas, 2018, p. 83).
The long-term visions of the EU have naturally been perceived as essential components of the EU’s strategic culture. But to conduct research on EU strategies has proven to be a demanding exercise. As the Lisbon treaty would come to introduce a single instrument known as ‘EU decisions’, it would also come to replace much of what was viewed as ‘strategic content’ on EU foreign policy. The disappearance of what was previously referred to as “common strategies” impeded the identification of EU strategies. As noted by Missiroli, “very few of the [the EU’s] most successful strategies [have not been] explicitly identified and labeled as such” (Morillas, 2018, p. 77)(Missiroli, 2014, p. vii).

EU strategies nevertheless represent essential features to anyone who aims at revealing and understanding the strategic culture of the EU as they may be devised with aspirations of “identity-building” (Mälksoo, 2016, p. 4). Booth identifies a strategic culture as something that “defines a set of patterns of and for behaviour on war and peace issues [and] helps shape but does not determine how an actor interacts with others in the security field” (Booth, 2005, p. 25).

Whether the EU is equipped with a (common) strategic culture or not is arguably up to debate. In December 2003, the European Security Strategy (ESS) would give rise to a wide range of opinions on the topic as it would explicitly stress the “need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention” (Council, ESS, 2003, p. 11). While some scholars have dismissed the practical legacy of the ESS, some have actually perceived the ESS to give rise to a joint strategic culture, representing a “codification of an already existing way of thinking and practice” (Biava et al, 2011, p. 1235). The concept of strategic culture also relates to the mechanisms of policy-making in the sense that it identifies the fundamental choices. A joint strategic culture thus provides for a sense of direction that becomes institutionalised (Biscop, pp. 133-135).

Ambitions to strengthen a common strategic culture are not stressed in the EUGS. This, however, does not make the EUGS less relevant. EU strategies, especially those regarded as being grand strategies, provide the EU with a sense of direction and purpose. As put by Venneson, strategies “present a broad vision of international security, define the nature of potential threats and risks, and identify the options and instruments that the polity considers the most efficient for dealing with those threats” (Venneson, 2010, p. 59).
Recognizing the EUGS to be representing a focal point in EU foreign policy, it would follow that the strategy-making process of the same constitutes a central case in understanding the strategic direction of the EU as an actor in international affairs. To give a practical view on the impact of the EUGS, references can be made to some instruments that would come to be initiated as a result of the EUGS. In the area of security and defence, the “Implementation of Plan on Security and Defence (IPSD)” would give rise to several initiatives for the purpose of strengthening the EU’s mechanisms on security and defence; the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), and most notably, the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). As these initiatives can be traced to the EUGS, it would follow that the strategy-making process of the same has had an inextricable influence on how and why these initiatives were set up.

The strategy-making process of the EUGS has gained a significant amount of interest from scholars and analysts interested in EU foreign policy. One of the most notable contributions has been provided by Pol Morillas who, in *Strategy-Making in the EU – From Foreign Policy to External Action*, analyzes the EUGS drafting process in relation to the theory of New Intergovernmentalism. Morillas concludes that the theory appears to fail in providing for a model that equals the actual strategy-making process (Morillas, 2018, p. 184). Taking hold of Morillas’ fairly contemporary research, this study contributes to the understanding of (grand) strategy-making in the EU by applying theoretical lenses yet not applied to the strategy-making process of the EUGS. By applying the theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism, the study aims to assess the inter-institutional characteristics of the process and how these might provide for a more nuanced understanding of strategy-making in the EU.

1.4 Limitations of Study

The study approaches the identified process and working procedures of how the European Union Global Strategy came to into being, treating the strategy-making process of the EUGS as the primary case. To ensure that the study remains reasonable in scope, it is essential to specify the boundaries of the targeted case, as of the whole study.

The case has been delimited in time, starting from January-15, ending in June-16. Yet the study has, to a limited degree, also considered the implementation phase of the strategy, starting from when the roadmap of the EUGS was endorsed by the FAC in October 2016. The
study has similarly taken into account previous events that would prove to have an undeniable impact on the strategy-making of the EUGS, most notably the experiences of drafting the European Security Strategy (ESS) and the Report on the Implementation of the ESS (RIESS).

This study does not aim to assess the EU as a whole or how the EU has come to develop itself as an actor in international affairs. Instead, the study takes a contemporary approach, using the institutional framework of the Lisbon treaty as an institutional point of reference. Nor does the study aim to present how foreign policy-making in the EU has developed historically. As revealed by the adopted research design, the study interprets the strategy-making process of the EUGS as a case that is of interest in its own right.

Definitions

Since essential and widely applied concepts may be subject to different interpretations depending on the context, some clarifying remarks are justified on how the study applies some key concepts and what they will refer to when being used.

When referring to ‘EU foreign policy’, the study makes reference to the EU’s overall toolkit of policies adopted by the EU in its desire to act as a strong and committed actor in international affairs. It thus comprises the whole of the EU’s external action including frameworks of policies as provided by the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). In some parts, the study will refer to the realm of foreign and security policy as separate from the EU’s external relations. This is because the measures and instruments associated to the CFSP and the CSDP apply to a different legal and institutional framework than those linked to the EU’s external relations.

Generally, while Member States are perceived to enjoy greater prerogatives over the CFSP/CSDP, some policy areas covered within the EU’s external relations such as trade and aid are generally viewed to be authorized solely by the Commission. External action is commonly understood as an umbrella area that covers the CFSP/CSDP and external relations. By using the ‘EU foreign policy’ term, the study seeks to cover for the whole of the EU’s policies in the area of international affairs.

The ‘Council framework’ refers to the institutional role of the European Council and the Council of Ministers (also known as Council of the European Union). Although being two separate institutions, the European Council and the Council of Ministers both encapsulate the
intergovernmental ownership of the EU’s strategic direction and decision-making. The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) is one of ten Council configurations composing the Council of Ministers, which is examined further in the fourth chapter.

Some analysts have perceived certain strategies of the EU as ‘grand strategies’. A grand strategy is, according to the definition formulated by Luttwak, reflected in the “level at which knowledge and persuasion, or in modern terms intelligence and diplomacy, interact with military strength to determine outcomes in a world of other states, with their own ‘grand strategies’” (Luttwak, 2011, p. 409). Kornprobst constructs a more extensive definition, viewing grand strategy as a tetrad that weaves together actors’ interpretations of the security environment, identity, interest and power (Kornprobst, 2014, p. 269). Despite that grand strategies have privileged the force of material interests and war historically, Nye offers an alternative view in stating that a grand strategy is about leaders’ “theory and story about how to provide for its security, welfare and identity” (Nye, 2011, p. 212). Despite not using the term explicitly, the study considers the EUGS as being a grand strategy, primarily due to its all-encompassing purpose, assembling elements of both foreign policy and external relations.

1.5 Outline

The outline of this thesis will be as follows. The following chapter presents the choice of methodology for the study. It also introduces the empirical material from which the research has assessed the strategy-making process of the EUGS. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework. It also describes how the theoretical tenets as given by liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism are applied when set in a context of policy-making in the EU. Chapter 4 outlines the institutional framework of the EU. It primarily highlights the legal provisions related to policy-making in the area of foreign and security policy, as stipulated by the Lisbon treaty. It also examines the strategy-making process of the ESS. Chapter 5 has been assigned the essential case of the study, the strategy-making process of the EUGS. This chapter is naturally followed by the analysis of the study which elaborates on the findings of the empirical material and to what extent these are accounted for by the theoretical ideal types. Chapter 7 presents the conclusion of the study which will highlight the essential points covered in the analysis.
2. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological elements of the study. It begins with a presentation of the case study design and discusses in what way the design is adequate for the purpose of answering the research question. The application of theoretical ideal types is then outlined, followed by an appreciation of the applied research methods through which the empirical material has been derived. Finally, an assessment of the applied research methods in relation to criteria of validity, reliability and objectivity, followed by a discussion on the consequences of epistemological points of departure.

2.1 Intrinsic Case Study Design

This study targets the strategy-making process of the EUGS as it provides for an analysis of how the theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism respectively account for the in-practice procedures of the process. In order to answer the formulated research question, the study undertakes a case study design. By focusing on an identified phenomenon or process, the case study design allows the researcher to obtain a “reasonably good knowledge of nearly all factors influencing a political decision” (Dür, 2008, p. 563). The case study can similarly be understood as “an exploration of a ’bounded system’ [bounded by time and place] or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (Beverland & Lindgreen, 2010, p. 57). A case study is moreover particularly suitable when answering a “how” and “why” question, especially if the study aims at uncovering contextual conditions that are assumed to be relevant to, yet not always easily distinguished from, the targeted case (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545).

Critics to the case-study design have often targeted how the design does not always enable the researcher to make generalization from its findings. To make generalizations to larger populations or other institutional contexts is, on the other hand, not something that this study has set out to accomplish. On this note, it is worth mentioning that the case study design comprises a broad spectrum of different case studies. The identified case in this study, that is the strategy-making process of the EUGS, is presumed to be an intrinsic case. The strategy-making process of the EUGS is thus not viewed to be a representative case of how the EU conducts its foreign policy. This is because it has only been drafted once and is therefore not
representative to ‘an everyday or commonplace situation’ (Yin, 2009, p. 48) (Bryman, 2016, p. 62). The principal purpose of the intrinsic case study design is to ‘catch the complexity’ of a situation. It focuses primarily on the case because it is of interest in its own right, not because it seeks to highlight what can be learned and applied to other cases (Stake, 1995, p. xi).

The central object of interest, i.e. the actual case, is the development and progress of the EUGS. The design of the case study is thus primarily deductive as it does not target the theoretical tenets as given by the theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism. Instead, it aims at providing an in-depth examination of the strategy-making process of the EUGS by applying the theories as theoretical points of departure. (Bryman, 2016, p. 61) The making of the EUGS is moreover regarded as a process similar to what Pettigrew defined as “a sequence of individual and collective events, actions, and activities unfolding over time in context” (Pettigrew, 1997, p. 338).

2.2 Theoretical Implementation of Ideal types

Scholars particularly interested in political integration of the EU have tried to explain the cause of the deepening and widening of the EU. Is the expansion of the EU triggered by independent supranational institutions like the Commission or is it simply explained by the willingness of Union Member States to yield sovereignty on behalf of common interests, making use of intergovernmental platforms such as the Council of Ministers and the European Council?

Taking stock of this debate, this study will make use of two contrasting theories; liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism. As may be revealed by its name, the former emphasizes the functions of intergovernmental institutions, in particular the European Council and the Council of Ministers. The view is that as these institutions adhere to a policy-making procedure constrained to the rule of unanimity, Member States become the central actors determining the political agenda. Neofunctionalism, on the other hand, sheds light on the internal working procedures of the EU. The social community of ‘off stage policy-makers’ are understood as key players who may foster commonly agreed policies without substantial influence from the Member States. In this machinery, the European Commission is
recognized as the essential agenda setter due to its exclusive right in proposing legislation and its strong connections with experts on certain areas of policy (Diez & Wiener, 2009, pp. 4-5).

In order to maintain a clear connection to the theories, the theoretical tenets will be operationalized by an ideal type charter portraying how the selected theories are implemented when being set in relation to the central institutions of EU policy-making. This will facilitate an analysis of how the theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism respectively account for the strategy-making process of the EUGS, as examined by the empirical material.

One can think of the ideal types as theoretical ‘rasters’ laid upon the case. Although the study aims at assessing to what extent the theories correspond to the documented procedures of making the EUGS, the study does not pursue to credit or disapprove any of the theoretical tenets as such. On the contrary, the selected theories are recognized to contribute to the understanding of the strategy-making process that paved the way for the EUGS by allowing the analysis to detect aspects that would not otherwise be recognized, if ever observed (Bergström & Boréus, 2016, p. 150).

2.3 Qualitative Content Analysis, Semi-Structured Interviewing

The research strategy has been fixed to qualitative textual analysis of secondary data and semi-structured interviewing. The document analysis has been an integral process throughout the research process and has been conducted to critically review, evaluate and interpret provisions of books and articles retrieved from online sources.

**Qualitative Content Analysis**

The applied research method for studying the strategy-making process of the EUGS is qualitative textual analysis which Bryman defines as “an approach to documents that emphasizes the role of the investigator in the construction of the meaning of and in texts” (Bryman, 2004, p. 542)

For the purpose of this study, a substantial part of the textual analysis has been devoted to reveal the contextual settings of the institutions inside the EU, detect patterns and thus portray a picture of the institutional dynamics in order to produce empirical knowledge. The information that that has been provided by the selected empirical material has ultimately been
interpreted in order to elicit meaning, develop understanding, and gain knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 1).

**Semi-structured interviewing**

As a complement to the empirical material gained from the textual analysis, a semi-structured interview has provided for additional insights on the development and progress of the EUGS. The purpose of applying semi-structured interviews is to ascertain “how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events - that is, what the interviewee views as important in explaining and understanding events, patterns and forms of behavior” (Bryman, 2016, p. 471). The interviewee was Daniel Olsson, a Swedish delegate who would take part in the strategy-making process of the EUGS by representing Sweden in the consultations at the Points of Contact (POC). Olsson would also come to work on the EUGS from that the formal strategy-making process began in the autumn of 2015. The interview took place the 29th of April 2019 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden and its main purpose was to gain a picture of how Olsson perceived the strategy-making process, acquiring meanings and insights not stressed, or even covered, by the textual analysis.

2.4 Empirical Material

The empirical material from which the analysis will be derived is primarily covered by the in-practice procedures that came to form the strategy-making process of the EUGS. Despite difficulties in acquiring the internal dimension of the strategy-making process, a few scholars have gained significant insights from people who either took part in the discussions themselves, or observed the inter-institutional dynamics from close range. It is essentially from these contributions that the empirical material of this study has been derived.

In the analysis provided by *Strategy-Making in the EU: From Foreign and Security Policy to External Action*, the author Pol Morillas presents a detailed examination of strategy-making in the EU. Only for the purpose of presenting the strategy-making process of the EUGS, he carried out 39 interviews with EU officials and representatives of EU Member States who were involved in the strategy-making process (Morillas, 2018, p. 15).

The second invaluable source from which the internal strategy-making procedures have been obtained is Nathalie Tocci’s *The Making of European Union Global Strategy*. Having been the penholder of the EUGS, Tocci unpacks the strategy-making process into four different
themes: the political context, the strategy-making process, the actual content, and the respective follow-ups (Tocci, 2017, p. 3).

In addition to the aforementioned literature, the empirical material is complemented by a consciously selected sample of books and articles covering the decision-making procedures of the EU, most notably its decision-making procedures in the area of external action, including the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

An analysis of the making of the EUGS is not easily, even less desirably detached, from an analysis of what characterized the political context in terms of external threats and challenges posed against the EU at the time. The research question does not delimit the scope of issues that may have had an impact on the final version of the strategy, but it invites the empirical material to outline how the strategy was formed and what the essential issues were behind it. That said, the study does put particular emphasis on a set of externally aligned challenges, most notably the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, and the situation of coping with large-scale migration flows resulting from a disastrous civil war in Syria.

Naturally, however, since the empirical material of the study primarily targets the institutional dynamics of the strategy-making process of the EUGS, significant events of global reach are only analytically covered insofar as these were considered by the ones who were involved in the strategy-making process of the EUGS.

An analysis of the making of the EUGS would fall short unless it made reference to the strategy-making process of the European Security Strategy, the strategic framework of foreign policy whose doctrines came to be replaced by those of the EUGS in 2016. The study aims to provide a broad picture of the ESS and how it came into being. Particular focus has been devoted to the implementation phase of the ESS.

2.5 Discussion on Applied Methodology

Naturally, since the study adopts a qualitative research strategy, the study puts more emphasis on interpreting the selected material than on measuring elements and concepts quantitively. As a result, the study does not acknowledge a single reality of absolute truths to be applicable to the targeted case. Instead, the ontological point of departure is vaguely constrained in order
to allow the research to explore a reality from which several truths can be derived (Bryman, 2016, p. 384).

Studies adopting a qualitative research strategy are to be assessed through four different criteria: internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity. Internal validity evaluates the degree of correspondence between the developed theory and the observations in the research. Through the construction of ideal types, the study has been equipped to bridge the theoretical tenets to the strategy-making process, increasing the level congruence between applied theory and identified observations. The level of internal validity is thus expected to be high as the study portrays in what way the selected theories give rise to certain procedures of strategy-making in the EU.

External validity refers the degree to which conclusions can be generalized across different contexts. Qualitative researchers are yet principally more interested in describing detailed accounts of a targeted case than to provide results that are applicable to cases in other contextual settings, producing rich descriptions of a specific culture (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). In this regard, it should be noted that the study does not express any intentions to make its findings applicable to other cases. Instead, the strategy-making process of the EUGS is viewed to be an intrinsic case, why the study falls short in presenting conclusions applicable to cases beyond processes of (grand) strategy-making in the EU.

The reliability in a study detects the degree to which the study can be replicated and how the empirical material is processed. In qualitative research, it is generally very difficult to meet the reliability criterion as one cannot “freeze” a social setting or the circumstances of a distinguished context. The study has yet intended to obtain a high degree of reliability by describing the research process as detailed as possible. The ambition has been to enable future researchers to test the findings of the study, applying the same research methods.

In recognizing that complete objectivity is impossible, the study has sought to formulate conclusions that are easily derived from the empirical material i.e. the selected literature on the strategy-making process of the EUGS. A potential drawback to consider in this regard is the “biased selectivity” of material (Yin, 1994, p. 80). While Pol Morillas is to be viewed as a fairly unbiased figure in describing the strategy-making process of the EUGS, there are reasons to contemplate on the provisions from Nathalie Tocci who would come to be the penholder of the strategy. Indeed, if the empirical material would have been delimited to that
of *Framing the EU Global Strategy*, the study would only provide one perspective on how the EUGS came into being. The semi-structured interview with the Swedish delegate Daniel Olsson represents an invaluable source in this regard, complementing the collection of secondary data with how the strategy-making process would come to be perceived by a representative of a Member State.

Adding to this the common difficulty that is associated with the case study design, that is the hazard of selecting information or choosing cases that only share a particular outcome with the applied theories rather than detecting features that contradict them (George & Andrew, 2005, pp. 22-23). For the research of this study, it is essentially from the initial case that the selection of theories has been made. In this regard, the theoretical tenets of liberal intergovernmentalism do not share any similar essential features with the contrasting theory of neofunctionalism. This makes the theoretical framework of the study well-equipped to detect a broad scope of features from the strategy-making process of the EUGS.

Regarding the selection of applied theories, the study could have applied approaches of new institutionalism, keeping the formulated aim of the study to reveal the dynamics of the strategy-making process through ideal types of historical institutionalism, rational-choice institutionalism or social institutionalism. This sort of theoretical application would be pertinent for the study if it would be targeting the national positions of the strategy, focusing on the intergovernmental negotiations of the formulations covered in the strategy. Having considered to what extent the empirical material could provide for a sufficiently detailed examination of the inter-institutional dynamics of the process, the choice was made to apply the theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism instead.
3. Theoretical Framework

One might question to what extent the implementation of theories enables us to better comprehend international relations. Why involve theories when most events seem to occur in particular contexts triggered by certain actors and decisions? Are not distinct and trustworthy observations of the real world the primary, if not the only, source of information from which we should support our conclusions?

In any analysis of international relations, it is absolutely essential to set the collection of empirical observations at the very analytical centre. Yet, the spectrum of international relations is broad and a specific issue may often be subject to a diverse collection of applicable explanations. An analysis of a certain event or sequence of international relations will therefore lack not only analytical depth, but accuracy of explanation unless it approaches the targeted object of interest from a set of multiple perspectives (Diez & Wiener, 2009, p. 4).

A well-known parallel is that of sunglasses. An individual who wears a pair of blue sunglasses will have a very different view of the world from an individual who sees the world through a pair of green sunglasses. The implementation of theory thus becomes essential for “capturing the relationship between the actions (decisions, policies etc) and the agents” (Lequesne, 2015, p. 363).

This chapter begins with an introduction of two main concepts essential for understanding the applied theories; intergovernmentalism and supranationalism. The chapter then examines the theoretical viewpoints of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism respectively including critical claims on the theories’ central tenets. The applied theories are then set in relation to the roles of essential actors of EU foreign policy-making as revealed by the theoretical ideal type charter.

3.1 Intergovernmentalism and Supranationalism in EU foreign policy

Recurring and long-lasting debates on the EU and its structure would probably lack a great deal of accuracy without reference to the contrasting concepts of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism. The concepts are essential in detecting the driving forces of the EU as they very much cover for the relationship between Member States and EU institutions.
Intergovernmentalism

A broad yet useful definition of intergovernmentalism has been provided by Nugent, referring to an intergovernmental practice as an “arrangement whereby nation states, in situations and conditions they can control, cooperate with one another on matters of common interest. The existence of control, which allows all participant states to decide the extent and nature of this cooperation, means that national sovereignty is not directly undermined” (Nugent, 2010, p. 428).

Without going into the roles of the EU’s institutions, examined later on, the European Council and the FAC are fairly accurate examples of intergovernmentalism as it is practiced by the institutions. This is particularly true in the area of foreign policy as national representatives often use these institutions to satisfy their own aims and purposes by keeping the upper hand vis-à-vis other EU institutions, notably the Commission. The degree of centralization is low and the most prominent role is endowed the Council of Ministers which sets the political agenda and conducts the decision-making process without involving any actors other than the Member States (Rummel & Wiedermann, 1998, p. 61)(Reichmann, 2015, pp. 102-103). Institutions are generally viewed to serve the purpose of the Member States who are set to “bargain with each other to produce common policies” (Stone Sweet & Sandholtz, 1998, p. 303). As directly put by Keukeleire and MacNaughtan; “since foreign, security and defence policy lie at the heart of national sovereignty, states will not integrate in these fields and an international organization cannot itself have a foreign policy” (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan, 2008, p. 29)

Supranationalism

Supranationalism is generally referred to when explaining processes not sprung from intergovernmental practices. It follows a functionalist logic where the “process of institutionalization” conditions openings of political cooperation. Nugent argues that the process of institutionalization can be traced to the leading role of the European Commission who “takes the policy lead and has monopolistic power over the drafting and tabling of legislative proposals” (Nugent, 2010, p. 295). In fact, the Commission does hold the upper hand in certain areas of external action, most notably reflected in the EU’s Common Commercial Policy over which “only the EU has the power to legislate and adopt legally binding acts” (TFEU, Art.3). Naturally, the degree of centralization is expected to be high. In
recognizing the engagement of actors other than Member States, the impact of internal networks of policy-making is also viewed to be substantial.

The contrasting views of the two concepts, making none of the concepts all-encompassing in the explaining the whole of EU policy-making, have spurred analysts to bridge the theoretical tenets. Notable provisions in this regard are concepts such as “institutionalized intergovernmentalism”, “Brussels-based institutionalism” or the revised theory of “New Intergovernmentalism”. Alternatively, it may be more appropriate to simply regard foreign policy-making in the EU as something that exists on “a continuum, going from various degrees of supranational integration, over various degrees of intergovernmental integration, to purely intergovernmental cooperation” (Morillas, 2018, p. 30)(Keukeleire & MacNaughtan, 2008, p. 31).

In the next section, the concepts of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism have been translated into the selected theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism. Despite similar elements, the concepts of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism are not to be confused with the applied theories. This is because the concepts refer to expected outcomes, while the theories provide for in-practice explanations of policy-making.

3.2 Liberal Intergovernmentalism

As a general theory, intergovernmentalism is one the most frequently applied theories in explaining European integration. Its roots are sprung from the neorealist theory with which it shares a sample of core assumptions. The international system is recognized, as in the neorealist school of thought, to be highly anarchic which triggers states to pursue strategies that increase their power to achieve relative gains. States are moreover viewed as unitary actors whose performances are explained from a logic of maximizing rational utility.

Liberal intergovernmentalism is not a theory about security and identity and it does not necessarily view states as having fixed interests. Instead it is a theory on European integration that sheds light on the pre-eminent decision-making power which has empowered states to become “masters of the treaties” (Franchino, 2013, p. 324)(Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2009, p. 68).
Liberal intergovernmentalism has refined some of the traditional doctrines of intergovernmentalism and has accentuated the national and issue-specific preferences of governments often influenced by the domestic agenda of interests. As put by Moravcsik; “the foreign policy goal of national governments vary in response to shifting pressure from domestic social groups, whose performances are aggregated through political institutions” (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 481).

A process of political integration can be analytically unpacked into a three-step procedure. It initially begins with a “domestic formation of national preferences” whereby the sovereign state positions itself in line with the interests it wants to protect. The second step refers to a process of “intergovernmental bargaining to substantive agreements”. In this phase, states come together to negotiate how they all may benefit from a commonly set agenda. Unless the negotiations get stuck, the process will finally result in a “creation of institutions to secure the agreement” (Schimmelfennig, 2015, pp. 178-179).

Integration driven by states
In an analysis of political integration, states are viewed as the primary and most essential actors. By treating states as critical actors while at the same time referring to the international context as highly anarchic, the policy-making processes of the EU become constrained to that of intergovernmental negotiation and bargaining through which the Member States strive to protect their interests and achieve their goals. Tacitly embedded in this prescription lies the assumption that states interact with one another as rational actors. In this regard, the rationalist assumption presumes that states, when being able to select from different courses of action, will strive to acquire the outcome that satisfies the domestic agenda the most (Pollack, 2013, p. 6)(Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2009, p. 68).

Political integration in the form of change in common policies, is thus viewed to be firmly conditioned to the political will, as it cannot be enforced by centralized authorities. The initiatives to establish common institutions or to stick with mutual agreements are outcomes of interdependent (strategic) rational state choices, primarily conveyed at platforms and channels of intergovernmental negotiation (Moravcsik, 1998, p. 18).

Agreement as a result of relative bargaining
Since the interests of an individual state often differ from the interests of the collective, states must always (seek to) identify in what way mutual gains are distributed among states
represented in the collective. In order to achieve this, and to avoid collectively suboptimal outcomes, states need coordination for mutual benefit. In this context of international negotiation, the collective outcome, that is whether cooperation comes about, and on which terms, depends solely on the relative bargaining power of the participating actors. States that at least need to cooperate, relative to the status quo, are seen to be more qualified to threaten others by withdrawing from previous agreements and thereby forcing other states in the collective agreement to make concessions. States that have more and better information about other states’ preferences and the institutional procedures are additionally more likely to manipulate the collective outcome to their advantage (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2009, p. 71).

**Criticism**

The potentially dangerous asymmetry in information has brought followers of the neofunctionalist approach to authorize “ideational entrepreneurs”, essentially supranational institutions such as the Commission, to play a more central role, hence decreasing the cost (and risk) of setting up intergovernmental negotiations. In response to this, liberal intergovernmentalism has pointed at the relatively equal distribution of information between and among states and institutions. Institutions (or third party actors in general) are therefore seldom equipped to come up with efficient interstate agreements since they do not possess information or expertise unavailable to states (ibid, p. 71).

Liberal intergovernmentalism is, by assumption, a theory of intergovernmental decision-making. Since it is sprung from the core premise that all decision-making takes place under anarchy, it does not explicitly theorize pre-existing institutional rules. Critics argue that the theory therefore fails to explain the whole picture of decision-making. Some have also posed criticism towards the theory and its narrow focus on “grand” moments such as treaty-creation. This complicates the application of the theory in explaining the procedures of the everyday decision-making within the EU in which supranational institutions seem to play a central role. Yet, followers of the intergovernmental school of thought have claimed that recent findings of how decision-making is practiced suggest that the theory is well applicable in decentralized settings where decisions are taken unanimously. This is because many decisions “are taken by de facto consensus or unanimity”, even when the formal rules seem to dictate otherwise (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2009, pp. 73-74).
Even if governments rationally join platforms for intergovernmental bargaining to secure gainful outcomes endorsed by all parties, they might very well do so without being able to overview “unanticipated and undesired consequences”. Indeed, major shifts in Member States’ preferences are most likely subject to the impact of national elections or the consequences of unforeseeable endogenous shocks. On this note, Sandholtz and Stone Sweet point out that supranational organizations may “work to enhance their [member states] own autonomy and influence within the European polity”. While the processes appear to be highly intergovernmental, the institutional procedures will in the long run result from a combination of random external shocks and constrained adaption that generate “path-dependent processes of integration” (Sandholtz & Stone Sweet, 1998, p. 26)(Diez & Wiener, 2009, p. 75).

3.3 Neofunctionalism

Developed in the late 1950’s, at a time when the Treaty of Rome was signed, Haas and Lindberg formulated the initial tenets of what would later be known as the neofunctionalist theory on political integration in the EU. With their thoughts, they would shed light on the “mechanisms of technocratic decision-making” and attach considerable importance on the “autonomous influence of supranational institutions” (Niemann & Schmitter, 2009, p. 46).

Lindberg viewed integration as “a process whereby nations forego the desire and ability to conduct [foreign and] domestic policies independently of each other, seeking instead to […] delegate the decision making process to new central organs” (Lindberg, 1963 in Wiener & Diez, p.47).

The Spillover Effects

The concept of spillover is essential in the neofunctionalist theory as it is considered to make reference to the driving force of political integration. According to Haas, spillovers should be perceived as cycles of feedback which occur “when actors realize that the objectives of initial supranational policies cannot be achieved without extending supranational policy-making to additional, functionally related domains” (Sandholtz & Sweet, 2013, p. 20). As examined below, three types of spillover arise from from the neofunctionalist theory.

Cultivated spillovers are primarily spurred by the additional emergence of supranational functions or institutions. An illustrative example in this regard would be the internal
community of diplomats working inside the European External Action Service. In the vacuum of distinct task descriptions, practical outcomes and procedures evolve as a matter of practice without being considerably constrained by legal provisions. The Commission’s tendency to seek and establish ties with interest groups and elites of nation states also makes the Commission more capable of providing strong impetus for integration (Fehlker, Ioannou, & Niemann, 2013, p. 111)(Tranholm-Mikkelsen, 1991, p. 6).

The second category of spillover occurs when interest groups alter their loyalties, focus and resources to a new level of governance. In the case of explaining political integration in the EU, this type of political spillover results from actors’ willingness to cope with certain issues by making use of the EU as a common platform. As a consequence, the role of the EU is strengthened as a driving force for political integration (ibid, p.111)(Tranholm-Mikkelsen, 1991, p. 5).

Finally, when it becomes impossible to achieve objectives set in one policy area without making additional integrative steps in another, the solution is often referred to as functional spillover. Financial stability in a monetary union is, for example, very difficult to manage without a common framework on financial regulation. Another illustrative case is the functional spillover from the single market to issues of justice and home affairs. At the time of completing the single market in which the free movement of people represents one of three explicitly stated ‘freedoms’, certain compensatory measures had to be made in areas of for instance visa, asylum, immigration and police cooperation. A policy field that is either highly technical or perceived as less of a contesting case by the responsible intermediaries is also more likely to be subject to spillovers than other policy fields. Yet functional spillover can also be applicable to policy areas where strong resistance from states can be expected. (Niemann & Schmitter, 2009, p. 50)(Tortola, 2015, p. 127)

While liberal intergovernmentalism points out specific moments (mainly treaty negotiations in the case of EU integration) to explain the phenomenon of political integration, the neofunctionalist theory tends to regard political integration as an ever-continuing process. These processes might undertake peculiar and unexpected directions as they evolve over time and are thus not assumed to be repetitions of the same power game, as portrayed by liberal intergovernmentalism. Political integration is moreover triggered by a diverse set of non-state actors and cannot solely be explained by the way states interact with one another, nor is it restricted to the domestic political realm but it accedes to a more pluralist system of

These “elites”, whether national or supranational, follow their own agendas of interest. In accordance with the liberal intergovernmental view, they are perceived as rational and self-interested actors. Yet, they are also well aware of the limitations of national solutions and may often shift loyalties towards new channels of cooperation. Indeed, actors’ motives are in general not constant but are likely to change throughout the integration process (Haas, 1958, p. 291).

Institutions, in which many of the ‘creatures of elites’ are occupied, are viewed to play a crucial role in fostering political integration. In fact, institutions may very well step aside from the control of their creators and, by doing this, interpret functions and responsibilities more freely. Whereas liberal intergovernmentalism views agreements as bound to a zero-sum nature, neofunctionalism frames institutions as powerful holders of mutual exchange. Haas defines this “supranational” style of cooperation as “a cumulative pattern of accommodation in which the participants refrain from unconditionally vetoing proposals and instead seek to attain agreement by means of compromises upgrading common interests” (Haas, 1964, p. 66).

Finally, in an analysis of political integration in the EU, the impact of the socialization mechanisms within the EU and its hub of institutions, subcommittees and bodies must not be neglected. By bringing thousands of national and institutional officials into frequent contact with each other, one cannot expect anything other than a complex system of “bureaucratic interpenetration”. Supranational problem-solving processes thus come into being as participants refrain from unconditionally vetoing proposals and instead seek agreements by means of compromise (Lindberg, 1963, ch. 4).

**Criticism**

Critics to the neofunctionalist theory have stressed the inappropriateness in using the neofunctionalist theory as an explanation of integration without properly taking the contextual conditions into account. The underlying neofunctionalist assumption that states are well-developed, diversified and most importantly examine democratic polities, make the theory fall short in explaining integration in and between undemocratic and authoritarian regimes.
Spillover-effects are moreover not determined to take place but occur within precise conditions to which the neofunctionalist theory seem to lack “coherent and comprehensive specification” (Diez & Wiener, 2009, pp. 51-52).

Advocates of liberal intergovernmentalism have continuously argued that neofunctionalism systematically underestimates the understanding of national sovereignty and how it inevitably conditions the environment for international cooperation. It has also been claimed that features of spillover-effects, from which additional steps towards integration originate, very much correspond to the mood and “weather” of circumstances. Under less favourable circumstances, Webb argues, states appear defensive and unwilling to embrace options favored by the ‘Community’ as a whole (Hoffmann, 1995, pp. 74-85)(Webb, 1983, p. 21).

A third aspect for which the neofunctionalist theory fails to contemplate, according to its critics, is derived from the domestic processes and structures stored in the interests of government officials. Decision-makers cannot necessarily be perceived as ‘economic incrementalists’ or ‘welfare seekers’. Instead, states’ preferred policies must be interpreted on the basis of interests stressed by domestic coalitions (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 477).

3.4 Chart of Theoretical Ideal Types

While neofunctionalism assumes integration as a self-reinforcing process, where technical spillovers foster political integration, liberal intergovernmentalism views the processes of integration within the EU to be constrained by the sum of its Member States’ interests.

Despite the contrasting views, it should be mentioned that while the two theories disagree about the causes of integration, both converge in the assumption that integration entails the “empowerment of supranational actors”. Indeed, in accordance with the theory of neoliberal institutionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism does acknowledge international institutions as essential for durable cooperation between states. It also concurs with the neofunctional doctrine that states may delegate authority to supranational institutions capable of dismissing the preferences of governments. This gesture, however, does not pave the way for interpreting institutions as independent, or empowered to step aside from the control of its creators (Bickerton, Puetter, & Hodson, 2015, p. 706) (Keohane & Nye, 1977)(Fligstein & Stone Sweet, 2001, p. 1208).
Having laid out the tenets of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism as theories of political integration, the study does not primarily apply the theories as explanations of integration, but as modes of governance. Indeed, although both theories provide notable frameworks for explaining political integration, the study applies the theories as frameworks from which technical arrangement of certain rules and decision-making processes can be derived. This “second phase” of treating integration theories raises questions like “What kind of political system is the EU?”, “How can the political processes within the EU be described” and “How does the EU’s regulatory policy work?”. In sum, integration theories are perceived as starting points “to explore the nature of the beast” as Thomas Risse-Kappen famously put it (Sandholtz & Sweet, 2013, p. 28) (Diez & Wiener, 2009, pp. 7, 10).

In the ideal type charter presented below, the theoretical frameworks have been set in relation to essential actors of EU policy-making. This enables a conversion to take place, translating the theoretical doctrines into practical roles of EU policy-making.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy-making process</th>
<th>Liberal Intergovernmentalism</th>
<th>Neofunctionalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree of centralization</td>
<td>Low: Member States officials dictate the policy-making procedures</td>
<td>High: Outcomes result from procedures developed by internal bureaucracies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of the European Council</td>
<td>High: responsible for the strategic direction</td>
<td>Neutral: may set a political direction, but does not enjoy any legislative right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of the Commission</td>
<td>Low: serves the FAC with proposals</td>
<td>High: the in-practice agenda setter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Ministers</td>
<td>High: chief decision-maker, decision-making by unanimity</td>
<td>Low: intergovernmental bargaining overshadowed by internally-aligned working procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Foreign Affairs Council, FAC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitals</td>
<td>High: extended arm serving the interest of the Member State</td>
<td>High/Neutral: could play an essential role if composed by policy-makers rather than State Officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement of other Actors: Institutes/Think tanks</td>
<td>Low: at best advisory to the Member State</td>
<td>High: essential by being part of the policy-making networks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Legal and Institutional Framework – An Overview

This chapter presents an overview of the legal and institutional elements framing the foreign policy-making in the EU. By using the Lisbon treaty as an institutional point of departure, the chapter overviews the essential actors and bodies who have been prescribed responsibilities in the policy-making area of EU foreign policy.

4.1 Lisbon Treaty

The EU has always formulated its guidelines and institutional rules in the form of commonly negotiated treaties. A treaty is approved by the heads of state and by the national parliaments in line with what is prescribed in the constitution of each member state. With the Lisbon treaty, the EU was provided with a new set of tools in the area foreign and security policy. Firstly, the EU became a legal person, which enabled the Union to enter international agreements with third countries on behalf of all EU Member States. Secondly, the position of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was initiated. In the area of foreign policy and security policy, the Lisbon treaty also provided for a single legal instrument by entrusting the European Council to adopt EU decisions (Michalski, 2014, p. 223)(Morillas, 2018, p. 77).

4.1.1 Institutional Overview

“Nothing is possible without men, nothing is lasting without institutions”

Jean Monnet 1978

The European Council

The European Council is composed of all the heads of state or government in the EU and represents the highest level of political cooperation between the Union’s Member States. It usually meets four times a year, and its main task is to set the political direction and priorities of the Union. It has therefore been referred to as “the principal agenda setter” and the “core of the EU’s executive”. In the European Council, the heads of state or government are accompanied by the president of the European Commission, the HR/VP and the European Council president, the latter being responsible for chairing the discussions. Although the European Council does not enjoy the right to decide on formal legislation, it does discuss and adopt conclusions on issues that have turned out to be unresolvable at lower levels of
intergovernmental cooperation. Decisions are normally taken by consensus, yet it sometimes adopts certain conclusions by unanimity or qualified majority\(^1\) (Union.a, 2019)(Ludlow, 2002, pp. 5, 15).

In times of crisis, the European Council has become more prominent in tackling urgent threats and challenges like the 2008 financial crisis, and the situation with large numbers of refugees seeking asylum in the Union since 2015. This is also reflected in the Lisbon treaty, in which the European Council has been prescribed a central role, increasing its significance in the policy-making procedures of EU foreign policy. In practice, it is the European Council that calls the HR/VP, or the Commission, to present proposals to the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) (Koutrakos, 2017:3, p. 32)(Michalski, 2014, p. 223).

**Article 22(1) TEU**

On the basis of the principles and objectives set out in Article 21, the European Council shall identify the strategic interests and objectives of the Union.

Decision of the European Council on the strategic interests and objectives of the Union shall relate to the common foreign and security policy and to other areas of the external action of the Union. Such decisions may concern the relations of the Union with a specific country or region or may be thematic in approach. They shall define their duration, and the means to be made available by the Union and the Member States.

The European Council shall act unanimously on a recommendation from the Council, adopted by the latter under the arrangements laid down for each area. Decisions of the European Council shall be implemented in accordance with the procedures provided for in the Treaties.

The paragraphs above grant the European Council decision-making power to therefore adopt measures under the generic title ‘decision’. This does not, however, provide the European Council with legislative or implementing power. This is entrusted to the FAC, who is responsible for framing the policies “on the basis of the general guidelines and strategic lines defined by the European Council” (TEU, 2009, Art.26(2)).

The presidency of the European Council plays an essential role in the policy-making process as it drives the work of the European Council forward, facilitating cohesion and consensus

\(^{1}\) While unanimity is reached if every state endorses a position, consensus refers to a situation in which some (or even a majority) member states decide to not make up their mind or to remain silent. (Gilbert, 1987, p. 194)
within it. The Lisbon treaty has also tasked the European Council with the appointment of the HR/VP (Koutrakos, 2017:3, pp. 33, 35).

**The Commission**

The European Commission is the formal institution responsible for proposing legislation to the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers. The political leadership of the Commission is organized around the College of Commissioners in which a president and 27 policy Commissioners are assembled. Within the group of 27 commissioners, each one is responsible for a specific policy area. There are also six Vice-Presidents, including the HR/VP. Although every Commissioner has been suggested by a member state, the work of the Commission is strictly bound to solely serve the interests of the EU as a whole. The Commission alone is also responsible for implementing the decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers by making sure that EU law is properly applied in all Member States. The Commission can thus correctly be referred to as the “politically independent executive arm” (Union.a, 2019).

The Commission may also speak on behalf of the EU in international bodies, especially in areas of trade policy and humanitarian aid. It also negotiates international agreements for the EU (Union.a, 2019). The work of the College is primarily coordinated by the Secretariat-General (SG), which is responsible for the overall coherence of the Commission. This is done through shaping policies and steering them through the other institutions of the EU. It also supports the College in its decision-making procedures in supranational policy areas of external relations. It may furthermore act as an interface between the Commission and other institutions and bodies of the EU. Encompassing the whole of the EU, the Commission is organised into several policy departments, known as Directorates-General (DG:s). It is in the care of the DG:s to develop, implement and manage policies in assigned policy areas (Union.d, 2019).

In legal terms, the Commission does not enjoy significant power in the shaping and conduct of the EU foreign policy. It is involved in the functioning of the EEAS by its substantial economic contribution which accounts for about one-third of the budget of the EEAS. Yet from a legal point of view, the Lisbon treaty does not assign the Commission a significant role of influence in the policy-making process. In practical terms, however, the Commission
has gradually developed prerogatives over some measures linked to the CFSP, most notably in areas of external relations and development cooperation (Koutrakos, 2017:3, pp. 48-49).

**High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR)**

In the multifaceted role in being the High Representative for the CFSP, the Vice president of the Commission, and the president of the FAC, the HR/VP shall “conduct the Union’s common foreign and security policy” but also be held responsible to the Commission for “external relations and for coordinating other aspects of the Union’s external action” (TEU, 2009, Art.18(2), (4)). In sum, the position of the High Representative is set to fulfill two objectives primarily. Firstly, it personifies the EU as an international actor and thus facilitates the work toward strengthening international partnerships to the EU. Second, it ensures that internal coherence occurs in the making of EU foreign policy (Cremona & Duke, 2011, pp. 55, 15).

*The Right of Initiative*

Article 30(1) TEU provides the High Representative (HR), either on her own or with the support from the Commission, with a ‘right of initiative’. This enables her to submit proposals and initiatives to the FAC. This function is yet not only granted to the HR, but to all Member States represented in the FAC. Nevertheless, by chairing the FAC, the HR is naturally sitting in the front seat in shaping the agenda and the work of the same, even if her contribution in the end very much lies in the hands of the Member States (Koutrakos, 2017:3, p. 36).

The HR also enjoys ‘executive powers’ as she is entrusted with the implementation and conduct of the CFSP. In practical terms, she is mandated by the European Council and the FAC to implement EU foreign policy by making use of Union and National resources. By acting as a focal point in the coordination of CFSP, the HR is regularly sharing information with and between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Member States. This makes her well-informed of the interests of each Member State and has the opportunity to detect common ground in contentious questions. In situations where one or several Member States invoke reasons of national policy against a qualified majority, the HR will seek common solutions, acceptable for all parties involved. It also lies in the role of the HR to ensure that the duties stipulated under title V TEU are respected by all Member States. Member States are namely legally obliged “to support the Union’s external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity” and “to refrain from any action
which is contrary of the interests of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations” (Koutrakos, 2017:3, pp. 36-37)(TEU, 2009, Art.24(3)).

Finally, it is the HR who represents the EU in dialogues with third countries and international organizations in CFSP related matters. In this role, the HR relies on the local delegations addressed by the EU to “represent the Union (TFEU, Art.221)). It should be mentioned, however, that the HR shares the responsibility of embodying the EU as an international actor with the president of the European Council who regularly speaks on behalf of the EU in policy areas outside the CFSP (TEU, 2009, Art.15(6)).

The public role of the HR is subsequently “left to be determined as a matter of practice by its holder and the various actors with whom the holder interacts and competes for power and influence” (Koutrakos, 2017:3, p. 40). Adding to this the role of the Commission and its president who in line with Art.17(1) “shall ensure the Union’s external action” yet only for cases not covered by the CFSP (Koutrakos, 2017:3, pp. 37, 39)(TEU, 2009, Art.17(1)).

The European External Action Service
The European External Action Service (EEAS) was set up in 2009 and was at the time viewed as “one of the most significant changes” introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. Its primary task is to cooperate with the diplomatic services of the Member States and to assist the role of the HR/VP who, as the EU foreign policy chief, leads the Service. The EEAS also manages the diplomatic relations and strategic partnerships with non-EU countries, the UN and other leading powers and has thus been prescribed as the EU’s “diplomatic service”. It consists of expert personnel transferred from both the FAC and the Commission, but also from diplomats seconded from the Member States (Koutrakos, 2017:3, p. 43)(Union.a, 2017).

The benefits of having the EEAS are tangible insofar as it provides for coordination to take place between the services of the EU and the Ministries of the Member States. It facilitates information sharing and may thus secure coherence between relevant policies. It also fosters a common culture of dealing with the direction of the EU as an international actor as it develops a framework within which a “common language” is spoken (Koutrakos, 2017:3, p. 44).
The Council of Ministers - Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)

The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) is the Council Configuration covering the EU foreign and security policy. It is not to be confused with the European Council which sets the strategic direction of EU policy making. The FAC is composed by each Member State’s Foreign Affairs minister, who meets their EU counterparts once a month. The Council of Ministers is the legally endowed decision-making body of the EU which makes it negotiate and adopt EU laws proposed by the Commission together with the European Parliament. In the area of foreign and security policy, however, the intergovernmental institutions within the Council framework have been granted legal jurisdiction and authority over the policy-making procedures (Union.a, 2019)(Council, 2019).

TEU Article 26(2)

The Council shall frame the common foreign and security policy and take the decisions necessary for defining and implementing it on the basis of the general guidelines and strategic lined defined by the European Council.

The FAC shall, along with the HR/VP, also work for ensuring “the unity, consistency and effectiveness of action by the Union” (TEU, 2009, Art26(2))

In the area of the CFSP, the efficiency of decision-making is very much conditioned toward the principle of unanimity. Whilst the Treaty provides for some exceptions briefly examined below, every Member State is endowed with the possibility to abstain from proposed measures.

TEU Article 31(1)

Decisions under this Chapter shall be taken by the European Council and the Council acting unanimously, except where this Chapter provides otherwise. The adoption of legislative acts shall be excluded.

If certain conditions apply, the Council of Ministers may adopt certain measures by qualified majority. This occurs if the measure is closely associated with a previous measure already unanimously agreed upon. A representative case in this regard is the European Council and how it may decide on measures necessary for the implementation of a strategic direction. Any decision that implements a decision “defining Union action or position” may likewise be taken by qualified majority. A proposal from the HR/VP may be subject to a similar situation if the proposal is being submitted upon specific request from the European Council. Qualified majority is also applied when the EU is to appoint its special representatives (Union T. E., 2009, pp. Art.31(1-2)).
If any Member State wishes to abstain from voting, it may do so by making a formal declaration. In that case, the Member State shall not be obliged to apply the decision, the decision may, however, have binding effects on the rest of the Union. A vote on a decision shall moreover not take place if a member state opposes the adoption of a decision for “vital and stated reasons of national policy” (TEU, 2009, Art.31(3)).

Finally, it should be mentioned that in terms of security and defence, the exceptions to the unanimity rule cannot be applied, making the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) strictly constrained to be built on unanimously agreed decisions only (TEU, 2009, Art.31(4)).

The Political Security Committee
The Political and Security Committee is a committee of the FAC dealing with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). When it comes to the monitoring of crisis operations, it is the Political and Security Committee (PSC) that exercises the political control and the strategic direction. The committee has thus been given the authority to take decisions on the control and direction of ongoing or initiated operations (Union.b, 2018).

**TEU Article 38(1)**
Without prejudice to Article 240 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, a Political and Security Committee shall monitor the international situation in the areas covered by the common foreign and security policy and contribute to the definition of policies by delivering opinions to the Council at the request of the Council or of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy or on its own initiative. It shall also monitor the implementation of agreed policies, without prejudice to the powers of the High Representative.

The committee, chaired by representatives from the European External Action service, consists of delegates from the 28 EU Member States who meet twice a week. Preparatory working group parties regularly assisting the PSC include the Politico-Military Group (PMG), the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM), and the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) (Union.b, 2017)(EEAS, 2016).

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2 If one third of the Member States representing one third of the population declare abstention from voting, the decision shall not be adopted.
**The European Parliament**

The European Parliament assembles 751 representatives, all of whom are directly elected by the EU Member States every fourth year. The representatives i.e. Members of Parliament are transnationally grouped based on their political and ideological views, and are together with the Council of Ministers responsible for adopting EU legislation. The Parliament moreover oversees the Commission and may dismiss it if the Parliament finds it necessary (Union.c, 2019).

**TEU Article 17(8)**

The Commission, as a body, shall be responsible to the European Parliament. In accordance with Article 234 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Parliament may vote on a motion of censure of the Commission. If such a motion is carried, the members of the Commission shall resign as a body and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy shall resign from the duties that he carries out in the Commission.

In the area of the CFSP, the European Parliament has not been granted a particularly strong role compared to other EU institutions like the European Council, the Commission, or the FAC. The Parliament is assigned, when international agreements of the CFSP are discussed, the right to be “immediately and fully informed at all stages of the procedure”. The Lisbon treaty also calls for the HR/VP to keep general consultations with the Parliament on a regular basis (TFEU, Art.218(10))(TEU, 2009, Art.36).

**4.2 Strategy-Making in the EU – An Overview**

Although this study centres upon the strategy-making process of EUGS, it should be mentioned that the EU has formulated several “sub-strategies”. In this regard, the key common element has been the provision of an action in a specific field, but the strategies have varied considerably in strategic importance (Worré, 2014, p. 155). The *EU Strategy Against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction* (WMD), and the *EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons* (SALW) are some notable cases in this regard.

The making of sub-strategies may often follow a process of consultations between the EEAS and the relevant DG:s of the Commission. This kind of ‘Joint Communications’ procedures spring from the Lisbon treaty and can be viewed as inter-service initiatives going from the
Commission and the HR/VP to the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament for adoption (Morillas, 2018, p. 81). Sub-strategies that have been initiated through Joint Communications are for example *A Strategic Framework for the Great Lakes Region* (Union, 2013) and the *Joint Framework on Countering Hybrid Threats a European Union Response* (Com & HR/VP, 2016).

Strategies in the area of foreign and security policy are exclusively drafted by the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) through traditional policy-making procedures, involving the whole spectrum of bodies from working groups of the Council, via the Political and Security Committee, to the FAC (Morillas, 2018, p. 82). Examples of provisions in this regard are the *Internal Security Strategy for the European Union. Towards a European Security Model* (Union.a, 2012) and the *EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy* (Union.b, 2012).

### 4.3 The European Security Strategy (ESS)

The EUGS is a unique strategy in multiple ways. It nevertheless replaces a framework of doctrines that in 2003 had been summed up in the European Security Strategy (ESS). The strategy-making process of the ESS was groundbreaking for strategy-making in the EU and an analysis of the development, and progress of the EUGS would therefore fall short unless it gave reference to the 2003 experience.

It is said that every strategy is the daughter of its own time, and the EU was clearly thriving at the time of producing the ESS. Optimism was underpinning the visions for a stronger EU and Member States seemed to stand closer to one another than ever before. In the Euro, the EU had set afloat its common currency, instigating a new era of financial and economic partnership. The eastern enlargement initiative was additionally spurring neighboring countries to take additional steps towards the EU. Hence, the EU was in practice invalidating the thesis that the widening and deepening of the EU were mutually incompatible. Both could be pursued simultaneously for the benefit of all EU Member States. No surprise that the opening line of the ESS read: “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure, nor so free”. That first sentence captured fully the mood of those times (Tocci, 2017, p. 8).

Yet the world would prove to be highly interconnected and global events shaking the international world order would not pass by without also involving the EU. When a US-led
coalition decided to intervene in Iraq after suspecting that nuclear weapons were developed in the country, the EU lacked both capacity and the political will to respond and position itself as a united voice in the international system. While a group of 15 EU Member States, including the UK, Italy and Spain expressed their support for the Iraq-invasion, France and Germany, positioned themselves against any kind of military intervention. The divide within the EU over the Iraq war and the contrasting views on the transatlantic cooperation were easily detected, not least in the UN Security Council were EU Member States proposed diverse doctrines on how to move forward. The political context at the time was thus in great need of a joint strategy on EU foreign and security policy that could deal with critical security threats, such as international terrorism, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of multilateralism and international law. The essential purpose of the ESS was therefore to represent a common narrative and direction that could overcome the transatlantic- and intra-European rift over the war in Iraq (Morillas, 2018, p. 111)(Olsson, 2019).

“The December 2003 ESS was.. not so much a formal strategy as the term is conventionally understood, but rather a form of sticking plaster for the EU member states to help cover their own differences, to find common ground, and to draw up a joint credo with which it could respond collectively to the Bush administration’s policies” (Deighton & Mauer, 2006, p. 28).

The project of developing a common security strategy was at the time facilitated by a collection of already set regional and thematic sub-strategies on EU foreign policy penciled in the Amsterdam treaty (although not necessarily labeled as strategies). The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) had also been in operation for four years since the European Council inaugurated it in June 1999. The ESDP was an integral part of the CFSP and it was particularly operationalized in the Balkans, with operations such as the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in the Western Balkans and the EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia- and Herzegovina. Yet the ESDP was never underpinned by any guided strategy. Many would therefore view the ESS as a potential tool that could fill the gap between the operationalization of the ESDP and the needed strategic guidance (Bailes, 2005, p. 7)(Biscop & Andersson, 2008, pp. 5-6).

4.3.1 The Strategy-making Process of the ESS

Thoughts on what would later become the ESS were initially shared at a Gymnich meeting on Rhodes in May, 2003, as the initiative to adopt a “European strategic concept” was vocalized
by then German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer. The High Representative at the time, Javier Solana, promptly acted upon the idea and rapidly submitted a document entitled *A Secure Europe in a Better World* for the European Council meeting in Thessaloniki on the 20th of June 2003. The European Council welcomed the initiative but did not formally endorse it. It would nevertheless task the HR to “bring this work forward [...] with a view to submitting a EU Security Strategy”. With this mandate, Javier Solana revised the text and presented a final version that would be adopted by the European Council in December of the same year. Although the ESS expressed a strategic vision for the EU and its role in the world, Solana did not regard the strategy as a concrete action-plan and was never particularly keen to call it a *Strategy*. In the end, the proposed draft would not commit the Member States to a specific set of actions, nor did it express any obligations targeting the Commission (Tocci, 2017, pp. 31-32).

As responsible for the strategy-making process of the ESS, Javier Solana enjoyed a wide room of maneuvers in all phases of a relatively short policy-making cycle of six months. Neither the Member States nor the EU institutions were completely cut off, but the “pen” was firmly in the hands of very few, most notably the Director General for Security and Defence Policy in the Council General Secretariat, Robert Cooper, who is anecdotally referred to as the one who drafted the ESS over a week-end. The first version of the strategy would surprisingly enough not be negotiated nor drafted by committee. Such an exercise would most likely result in a “cumbersome” drafting involving not only the FAC, but equally so its preparatory working party groups, most notably the PSC. Instead, Solana would pursue a more “personal, non-bureaucratic approach to drafting” by making use of a task force formed by members from the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit i.e the ‘Policy Unit’, and the General Secretariat of the Council. This was an approach that was welcomed by the Member States that had been part of the Rhodes agreement, sharing the notion that drafting by committee was “out of the question” (Grevi, 2004, pp. 3-4)(Brattberg et al, 2011, p. 18)(Koops, 2011, p. 234).

The Member States would have their say in a series of consultations held in the framework of the CFSP in which all Member States plus the 10³ soon-to-be Member States were represented. It was held in a highly centralized framework with “inputs flying back and forth

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1 Member States that were to be joining the EU at the time: Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary.
from Brussels to national capitals, but without the Member States knowing each other’s demands”. As a result of an agreement with Chris Patten, the Commissioner for External Action, the ESS task force would be able to draft the strategy without having the Commission in the way of the process (Morillas, 2018, p. 116).

The text would finally be published at the European Council in December 2003, entitled “A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy” (Council, ESS, 2003). It was the very first strategy of its kind and was thus very much “drafted” in what could be called a legal vacuum. The absence of a formal rulebook enabled Javier Solana and his strategy-making task force to benefit from the room to maneuver, avoiding the cumbersome dynamics of ‘drafting by committee’ and to keep Member States engaged in an innovative and more personal framework of consultations (Morillas, 2018, p. 119). As formulated by Missirolli, the groundbreaking outcome of the ESS resulted from a process in which “member states showed a considerable degree of self-restraint and allowed Solana to operate without much interference” (Missirolli A., 2015, p. 14).

4.3.2 The Report on the Implementation of the ESS (RIESS)

In connection to the presentation of the strategy, the European Council would ask “the incoming Presidency and the SG/HR, in coordination with the Commission, to present, as appropriate, concrete proposals for the implementation of the European Security Strategy” (Council.a, 2003).

If the strategy-making process of the ESS was characterized by its internal elements of smooth and strategically modified talks led by the acclaimed policy-maker Javier Solana, the road towards endorsing the Report on the Implementation of the ESS (RIESS), would become much more troublesome. Not even Solana himself seemed to be fully committed to it, as he wanted to keep the ESS as an inspirational document of doctrines from which the Member States could adopt strong policies. Bear in mind that the strategy-making process of the ESS had served the purpose of healing the European divide over the US-led invasion in Iraq and the focus had thus never been on the phase of actually implementing it. As remarked by the British diplomat Alison Bailes; “The ESS had a confidence-building function and also in some sense an inspirational one, designed not so much to embody good policy decision as to create the environment and mood for taking them” (Morillas, 2018, p. 123)(Bailes, 2005, p. 14).
The RIESS was nevertheless regarded as necessary, since the ESS had not indicated any specific means. As revealed by its name, the Implementation Report was meant to express more “actionable” ambitions than those expressed in the ESS. The consultations on the RIESS would initially be organized around the intergovernmental platform of the PSC and the FAC. This would give rise to a much more “bureaucratized” process without being significantly authorized by leaders at minister level or by Solana himself. Provisions of the text were moreover shared in advance to the Member States, enabling them to convey specific revisions on the proposed formulations. Drafts on the text were also presented and discussed at the Commission as well as in the European Parliament’s foreign affairs committee (AFET). The outcome would inevitably be a far longer and less decisive document than what was expected. The window of opportunity to foster consensus among the Member States had been shut, which is why Helga Schmid, in her capacity as Director of the Policy Unit in the General Secretariat of the Council, predicted a process destined to fall in the hands of national diplomats and “Brussels-based structures” (Morillas, 2018, p. 125)(Missiroli A. , 2015, p. 39).

The higher degree of institutionalization in the process used in 2008 for the RIESS compared to the ESS in 2003 enabled Member States to object on textual provision. As a result, the RIESS would in the end only be broadly supported, rather than endorsed or adopted when it was brought forward to the FAC in December 2008. In EU strategy-making, the RIESS would subsequently only be considered “a footnote”, with no political purpose. The hard truth, that consensus in the traditional framework of policy-making is achievable only when “everything objectionable to anyone is removed and everything which is important to someone is included” seemed to have been illustrated. The strategy-making team of the EUGS thus drew the conclusion that a broad and formal drafting process had to be avoided, otherwise the EUGS would be doomed to fail (Morillas, 2018, p. 125)(Tocci, 2017, p. 32).
5. The European Union Global Strategy (EUGS)

“When a strategy bereft of tactic is the slowest route to victory in foreign policy, is not tactic without strategy just the noise before defeat”

- Sun Tzu

5.1 Background

The EUGS had to respond to an international world order that was far from similar to the one that had initiated the ESS in 2003. Comparing the writings of the strategies as such, one can easily derive the stated visions to the challenges present at the time of producing the strategies.

Five years after the EU’s failure to accede to the 2008 RIESS, experts affiliated at European think tanks⁴ (under the auspices of their respective foreign ministries) published a report entitled ‘Towards a European Global Strategy’, resulting from a series of publications and seminars demanding a new strategic direction on EU foreign policy. As a result, the broader foreign policy community of think tanks and institutes would come to provide the EUGS with substantial input. However, even if research on the EUGS were published regularly, the community of national institutes and think tanks would not enjoy significant power in the formal strategy-making process (Brattberg et al, 2011)(Biscop, 2011 and 2012)(Dennison et al, 2013)(Morillas, 2018, p. 135)(Olsson, 2019).

Right before being officially appointed as HR/VP, Federica Mogherini would refer to the ESS in her hearing at the European Parliament in 2014: “The experience from the 2003 European Security Strategy indicates that the process of reflecting strategically and collectively on EU foreign policy is crucially important to define how we want to act in the world. In light of the radically transformed global and regional circumstances we live in, a joint process of strategic reflection could eventually lead the way to a new European Security Strategy” (Mogherini, 2014).

This chapter provides a detailed presentation of how the European Union Global Strategy came to be produced. It particularly sheds light on the relationship between the EU institutions and Member States and explains how an innovative strategy-making process

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⁴ Instituto Affari Internazionali, Polish Institute of International Affairs, Elcano Royal Institute, Swedish Institute of International Affairs
paved the way for the final version of the EUGS. But before examining the making of the EUGS, the political context with its embedded challenges and issues posed against the EU needs to be described. The following section offers a presentation of the events and factors that would implicitly form the agenda of international affairs and how the EU would be set in situations that required responsive, yet commonly agreed positions.

5.2 An International Context Straining the EU

If there was only one principal cleavage to consider when producing the ESS, namely the international rift over the Iraq war, there were at least three substantial cleavages between and among Member States and EU institutions at the time the EUGS was produced. The divisions were essentially linked to the challenges of increasingly large migration flows and the security threat emanating from the Russian federation after its military intervention in Ukraine.

*The Arab spring and its aftermath*

The emergence of the Arab Spring and the diverse consequences of its evolution would pose a significant risk against the EU and its external borders. The migration crisis that followed as a result of the civil war in Syria, spurred by an ever-disintegrating Libyan state, challenged the EU’s ability to act in a resolute manner while at the same time act in line with its founding values. Since its first entry into force, the Dublin regulation, subsequently revised in 2003 and 2013, had stipulated that refugees arriving in the EU were obliged to apply for asylum in the first EU country of arrival. Despite the large number of refugees arriving in southern EU Member States, most refugees would be hosted by countries like Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. The imbalance resulted in a call upon the southern Member States to be more generous in absorbing the continuous flow of people fleeing from war via life-threatening migrant routes (Tocci, 2017, pp. 19-20).

In southern Europe, however, the effects of the Eurozone crisis were still impacting the economies in a situation where countries like Greece, Italy and Spain were among the most affected. Southern European economies were simply not in a position to absorb large numbers of people. The Eurozone crisis coupled with the imploding Middle East and security threats emanating from the region of Sahel broke the logic that had underpinned the Dublin system. It would eventually become clear for most Member States that the logic of the Dublin resolution
could not provide suitable instruments to the EU in its common effort to deal with the situation (Henry & Ferrucio, 2014, p. 29).

The Russian Annexation of Crimea

As the EU approached the completion of an association process with the Eastern Partnership countries, it would strain an already troubled link between the EU and Moscow. In the case of Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin would win over the then Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych to abstain from signing the ‘Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU’ by promising the Ukrainian government 15bn in aid plus a one-third reduction in Russian gas prices. Triggered by Yanukovych’s backtracking from the EU, a diverse collection of popular movements were gathered in the Maidan square of Kiev demanding the Ukrainian president to resign. After months of escalating protests, the Yanukovych government would ultimately collapse in February 2014 (Tocci, 2017, p. 14).

Five days after the removal of Yanukovych, unidentified men began to seize essential locations in Crimea by blocking parts of the Crimean airport and by taking control of the administration building. In March 2014, Russia would approve a bill on recognition of Crimean independence and from now on claim the Crimean peninsula as Russian territory.

In the eastern part of Ukraine, a military conflict would eventually erupt between diverse groups of Ukrainian nationalists and Russian separatists. In a response to this, the EU would make strong remarks against the Russian intervention and reaffirm that the EU was “committed to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine”. The European security order would nevertheless be continuously threatened by the defiant position pursued by Russia following the annexation of Crimea and the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine (Morillas, 2018, p. 135)(Council, 2014).

Despite general unity in how the EU addressed its positions on Russia after the annexation, some Member States insisted on referring to Russia as a “strategic partner”. Some southern Member States also viewed the eastern neighborhood countries as regions in which Russia could claim to possess a “zone of influence”. This position was strongly dismissed by countries like Sweden, Poland and the Baltic countries. Fortunately, for the strategy-making process of the EUGS, the scarring divide on how the EU should position itself towards Russia would eventually ease before the drafting of the EUGS was set in motion (Tocci, 2017, p. 19).
To sum up, three political cleavages are especially important to highlight; the north-south divide over the economy, the east-south/west divide over Russia, and finally the north-south/west divide on how to deal with a common migration policy. Hence, the opening line of the ESS, “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure, nor so free” was never more incompatible than in 2015 when the first step was taken towards a new strategy. In order to refine action mechanisms and pave the way for better results in foreign policy, a wide set of institutional actors had to be brought together far more systematically. A ‘Global’ Strategy was meant to achieve precisely this and the strategy-making process thus had to become a ‘whole of the EU endeavor’ (Tocci, 2017, pp. 20, 24)(Olsson, 2019).

5.3 The Strategy-making Process of the EUGS

In her capacity as the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini had already felt a lack of continuity and direction in how European leaders and policy-makers were handling situations of crisis. People responsible for policy-making tend to “put out one fire, only to discover that the next one had already broken out”. Indeed, EU foreign policy would still result from reactions to unforeseen events and unpredictable crisis. But with a strategy the policies and instruments would be more credible, more conjoined and responsive. In sum, the EUGS was purposed to indicate the EU’s ‘broad goals and address the necessary means to achieve these’. It would moreover strengthen the EU’s practical abilities to act in line with its stated ambitions (Tocci, 2017, p. 16).

Soon after her formal appointment, Mogherini would, confirm her intentions towards a new strategy at the 2014 Munich Security Conference, stating, “We need a sense of direction. We need an ability to make choices and to prioritize. We need a sense of how we can best mobilize our instruments to serve our goals and in partnerships with whom (...) We need a strategy” (quoted in Morillas, 2018, p 138).

Although the formal strategy-making process would begin in the summer of 2015, it was prefaced by the active involvement of a group of Member States\(^5\) stressing the necessity of revising the ESS years before Federica Mogherini was entrusted with the role as HR/VP.

\(^5\) Countries stressing the necessity of revising the ESS: Sweden, Finland, Poland, Italy and Spain
Naturally, when Catherine Ashton left her position as HR/VP to Federica Mogherini, the idea and concept of an updated strategic framework on EU foreign policy could finally enter a new phase (Olsson, 2019).

The story of the EUGS is examined through the model on policy-making developed by Young. By splitting the process into four phases, the model aims at shedding light on the compulsory and ever present elements of policy-making. Although the model has been applied to point out essential elements of the strategy-making process of the EUGS, some features may very well correspond to several phases and thus bridge the model-assigned phases. As examined below, the model consists of four phases: Agenda-setting, Policy formulation, Policy output, and Implementation.

1. **Agenda-setting**
   In the initial phase of the policy-making process the relevant actors simply “decide what to decide”, not seldom “in a context where there is a great deal of uncertainty” (Young, 2010, p. 52).

2. **Policy formulation**
   Having decided on the “framing” of the process, the policy drafting begins. Actors interact with one another and “policy networks” evolve. These are defined as “sets of formal and institutional and informal linkages between governmental and other actors around shared if endlessly negotiated beliefs and interests in public policy-making and implementation” (Rhodes, 2006, p. 426).

3. **Policy output**
   The policy output may result in an official public document but may also end up in conclusions internally drawn in a phase of discussion. The output phase often comprises a procedure of “choosing what (not) to do” (Young, 2010, p. 56).

4. **Implementation**
   The implementation phase of the EUGS presents how the policy output, that is the final version of the EUGS, came to be received by the European Council and the FAC. It also points out how the strategy set in place a set of instruments and mechanisms in the area of EU foreign policy.
5.3.1 Agenda-setting

The working group of the EUGS would become more coherently composed than the working group responsible for the ESS. The breadth of the working group, including representatives from the EEAS, the Commission, the Council Secretariat and the European Council, signaled a willingness to produce a conjoined strategy influenced by a comprehensive range of actors. In particular, the involvement of the Commission enabled the HR/VP to use her “two hats fully”, making Mogherini able to conduct a strategy-making process that encompassed the whole of the EU’s external action. As a result, the strategy-making process would be aimed at promoting coherence across policies and at pursuing a global rather than a security strategy only (Morillas, 2018, pp. 136, 140).

For the drafting of the EUGS, Mogherini appointed Nathalie Tocci as an external advisor. Having worked within the European think tank community, Tocci was well-known among experts on EU foreign policy. Under the supervision of the HR/VP, she led an EEAS drafting-team that would coordinate the necessary buy-in from the Member States while at the same keeping the strategy-making process centralized and under the control of the EEAS. While the EUGS was in the official care of the HR/VP, Nathalie Tocci came to be the in-practice penholder of the strategy. She was primarily assisted by the Head of the Strategic Planning Division of the EEAS, Alfredo Conte (Morillas, 2018, p. 144).

Federica Mogherini initiated a process of ‘strategic reflection’, aimed at “creating the time and space to look ahead”. It started in January 2015 with the ‘strategic assessment’ which would fall into the formal strategy-making process in June of the same year. It enjoyed political support from the European Council, who in December 2013, had invited the High Representative\(^6\) to “assess the impact of changes in the global environment and to report to the Council in the course of 2015 on the challenges and opportunities arising for the Union, following consultation with the Member States” (Council, 2013, p. 4). An informal working group composed by officials from the EEAS, the Commission, the Council Secretariat, and the European Council was formed. Member States were also duly informed through briefings at PSC and FAC, yet the process was overall and thoroughly controlled by the EEAS and its Strategic Planning Division. During this preparatory agenda setting phase, however, Member States would adopt “a listening mode” as they did not interpret the exercise as something

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\(^6\) According to Tocci, the invitation was meant to the “HRVP”, yet the wordings of the conclusions refer to “High Representative” only.

The strategic assessment was primarily aimed at regenerating a degree of unity without which no common policies could be agreed, even less a grand strategy. As a result of the Union’s mediocre record in handling multiple crises, the Union had lost its bearings and exacerbated divisions between Member States, not to mention between Member States and the EU. The divisions fed and fueled siloed policy responses which were far from adequate to tackle the politically multilayered crises at the time. The strategy-making process of the EUGS was thus set to be a ‘siloto-breaking exercise’ from which better policies could be agreed. A shared narrative, offered to the Union in the form of strategy would enable the Union to navigate in the surroundings of multiple crises. This would in turn contribute to the breaking of policy and institutional silos and thus seek to deliver a more responsive EU foreign policy (Tocci, 2017, p. 25).

A second reflection on the framing of the strategy-making process covered the legal provisions of the Lisbon Treaty which had mandated the EEAS to serve as an interface between the Member States’ interests and the Commission on foreign policy. This ‘diplomatic service agency’ was led and coordinated by the HR/VP who would simultaneously possess the role of the Vice-president of the Commission while chairing the FAC. This enabled Mogherini to set out a strategy-making process that would bring together both the EU Member States and the EU institutions, making way for a far more comprehensive strategy than in the case of the ESS (Tocci, 2017, p. 24).

According to Morillas, Mogherini interpreted the June 2015 European Council conclusions way more generously than the Member States. Through the strategy, policy fields that were regarded as highly intergovernmental, such as the CFSP and CSDP, were now intended to be brought together with the supranational external relations, mainly owned by the Commission, forming an all-encompassing strategy. This was at least the interpretation made by the HR/VP; she had been entrusted to sit in the driving seat of a new strategy with “member states giving her a wide room of manoeuvre for delineating the contours of the process and the actors involved”. The European Council conclusions did not, however, indicate any active role for the Commission, and most Member States viewed the mandate as something that had been assigned Mogherini in her role as High representative, not necessarily in her role as HR/VP. It was moreover stated in the very same Council conclusion that Mogherini had been given the mandate to lead the process “in close cooperation with Member States”. From Mogherini’s point of view, however, the mandate entrusted her to fully involve the Commission in the strategy-making process under the leadership and centrality of the HR/VP. By using her right of initiative, the HR/VP strengthened the degree of autonomy of the EEAS which would have great implications upon the policy formulation phase of the EUGS (Morillas, 2018, pp. 140-141). In her own words: “The treaty of Lisbon entrusted the Union with a powerful set of external action instruments [so] my task as a HR/VP, in collaboration with the EEAS, is to bring these together in a coherent whole” (Mogherini, Preface, 2015, p. 5).

5.3.2 Policy formulation

In 2016, the EU lacked a joint narrative that could provide for a strategic direction on foreign policy. It jumped from one crisis to another without having a shared, at least not well-stated, vision on its role and commitments (Tocci, 2017, p. 34). In the foreword of Nathalie Tocci’s Framing the EU Global Strategy, Federica Mogherini refers to an inclusive yet incisive strategy-making process. Inclusive insofar as the team responsible for the drafting process strived to bring in ‘as many voices as they could’ while at the same time securing a smooth process which did not get stuck in reciprocal vetoes (Mogherini, in Tocci, 2017).

The policy formulation process was designed from the start as a “highly centralized” process and the traditional working methods of drafting by committee thus had to be avoided. The policy networks were established in ways that enabled the process to be legitimized by the
Member States, yet the strategy would be considered a failure if it merely presented a ‘lowest common denominator’ agreement. Beside the risk of ending up in a vaguely formulated strategy, there was also the risk of including intergovernmental negotiations i.e the traditional working methods too early in the strategy-making process. This ‘Christmas tree approach’ referred to a process whereby the interests of the different actors were included in the text as a result of joint drafting too early in the policy-formulation phase. The view was that in order to achieve a comprehensive EUGS, the strategy-making process could not get stuck in any ‘lowest common denominator’ or a ‘Christmas tree approach” (Morillas, 2018, pp. 143-144).

In the policy formulation phase, the EEAS came to set in motion an ingenious twofold policy formulation track that on the one hand secured the ownership of the Member States whereas it also ensured the necessary buy-in from the Commission. The involvement of the Commission in the early phase of formulating strategic policies was considered crucial in paving way for an approach that encompassed the whole of the EU.

**Member states policy formulation track**

An unorthodox system of consultations was initiated for the formulation track that aimed at securing the ownership of the Member States. The consultations would take place within a *points of contact*-framework (POC) which regularly gathered diplomats from the capitals, representing either the national strategic planning departments or the European Correspondent of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (Lopéz-Aranda, 2017, p. 74).

The meetings within the POC covered a broad spectrum of different aspects. Before every meeting, however, a series of questionnaires summarizing the topic to be discussed was sent from the EEAS to the participating representatives. From the inputs received from the questionnaires, the EEAS was able to set the agenda and lead the discussions in ways that targeted a common denominator desirable from the EEAS point of view. The questionnaires thus enabled an early decomposition of the proposed formulations and kept the POC away from having “general and thorough discussion of its contents”. Instead of drafting the EUGS through a drafting by committee-process, from which only the lowest common denominator could be expected, Mogherini enforced a process that would set the EEAS in the driving seat, while at the same time ensuring national ownership of the text (Morillas, 2018, p. 145)

In total, five different meetings were arranged. The idea of having consultations in the framework of the POC was perceived as something that strengthened the ownership of the
Member States, as it enabled national policy-makers to present their views, instead of letting people associated with the committees in Brussels drive the process forward (Olsson, 2019).

As a well-acquainted voice familiar with the process put it; “the consultations via the POC’s were the only possible compromise to obtain a high degree of ownership by the member states but not the full ownership that a negotiation process would have had” or, in other words, “to have the member states on board without giving them a formal say on the document”. Although discussions on strategic and foreign policy and security matters were assigned to take place within the PSC format, the EEAS enabled itself to circumvent the often cumbersome discussions within the PSC by avoiding a drafting by committee-process. The discussions held at the PSC were known to reproduce national positions on the basis of what had been earlier expressed in the FAC or its preparatory bodies, this instead of providing for a long-term vision necessary for what the EUGS was meant to convey. Thus, by working directly with capitals within the framework of the POC, the EEAS could preserve its leading role in the strategy-making process (Morillas, 2018, p. 146).

At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, a positions paper was drafted targeting 10 priorities of what Sweden wanted to be covered in the strategy. This was subsequently sent to Nathalie Tocci, signaling interest in taking part in the strategy-making process. Other Member States formulated equivalent documents that were sent to Tocci. Some Member States were keen on making the process more formal as the strategy-making process could not end up as an informal exercise only. Hence, the PSC and the FAC had to be involved so that national positions could be communicated. At the same time, Member States were aware that a process of jointly drafting the strategy was avoided (Olsson, 2019).

On this note, some Member States would nevertheless express concerns on what was by them perceived as a move from intergovernmental policy to supranational external action. In contrast to Mogherini’s view on the need for a “global” strategy, some Member States did not accept the broader conception of external action whereby the supranational institutions of the EU enjoyed larger prerogatives. The EEAS managed the situation by removing all the “red lines” as soon as these were expressed in the summaries sent to the penholder (Morillas, 2018, p. 147).

POC became a platform for consultations yet it was never used as a platform for intergovernmental negotiations. It was more of an “intellectual debate” whereby Member
States were able to bring forth ideas. The consultations at the POC are thus not to be identified as negotiations but as opportunities of intellectual reasoning (Olsson, 2019).

The strategy was also discussed at the PSC and the FAC several times. As no traditional negotiations took place, however, the discussions were only aimed at proposing input on the strategy. As put by Olsson on the PSC consultations, “There was no drafting, but formal discussions and comments on the structure”. Furthermore, documents that were distributed in advance did not provide any distinct formulations of the strategy. So, even if Member States were able to comment on the structure of the strategy and its general direction, none of the ambassadors at the PSC could turn to a certain page to propose textual revisions (Olsson, 2019).

Some PSC ambassadors were firmly displeased with what would be perceived as a “take it or leave it approach” to the text, insisting on the necessity to not only be briefed on the contents of the strategy but also contribute to them. Member States were left with the choice to either accept “faits accomplis” or to adopt a confrontational attitude, the latter being generally avoided. Nathalie Tocci would eventually present a first draft of the strategy in order to identify additional “red lines” from the Member States. The series of consultations that ensued were held on a bilateral basis with fixed groups of Member States. The EEAS thus continued to keep the upper hand in the strategy-making process as Member States would now only get to read certain parts of the text. Moreover, they could not be guaranteed that their opinions would be automatically reflected in the final text. Instead, the EEAS would collect their input and work on a revised version of the strategy. With the major red lines respected in the final version of the EUGS, the strategy would eventually be considered to provide enough ownership to the Member States. Yet, some PSC ambassadors would also come to reflect on the strategy-making process as a “messy process” of “pseudo-consultations” (Lopéz-Aranda, 2017, pp. 74-75)(Morillas, 2018, pp. 148-149).

**Commission policy formulation track**

It was assessed by the HR/VP, that if the process of drafting the EUGS would be incapsulating the whole of the EU, the Commission had to be involved from the beginning of the process. In her capacity as being the vice-president (VP) of the Commission, Mogherini would be able to inform, and abstain from informing, not only the Brussels based ambassadors representing the Member States, but also essential functions of the Commission. Despite holding the position as vice-president, the process of producing the EUGS would
never become a “supranational endeavor” authorized by the Commission, although moderate buy-in from the Commission would be taken into account (Morillas, 2018, pp. 150-151).

The Commission had perceived the Mogherini mandate declared by the European Council conclusions as a mandate entrusted to the High Representative specifically. As a result, the Commission expected formal inter-service consultations to take place within the framework of the traditional “community method”. On the side of the Commission, however, the EEAS would convene a rather informal policy formulation track. In a joint contribution that contained input from all Directorate Generals, the Secretariat General of the Commission delivered their viewpoints on the versions that came to be discussed. This contribution, however, did not seek any approval of the College of Commissioners (The College). The College discussed the main elements of EUGS but it also authorized Mogherini to “uphold a political vetting” so that she could continue to pursue the drafting of the strategy in her capacity as vice-president of the Commission (Morillas, 2018, p. 151).

The policy formulation-phase was thus neither conceived nor practiced as a joint initiative between the EEAS and the Commission, but as a political priority of Mogherini which the Commission would not oppose. If formal inter-service consultations had taken place, it is likely that the strategy-making process would have ended up in an endangered “Christmas Tree” procedure. The EEAS therefore preferred to secure the leadership of the Commission at the top level, knowing that it would then moderately trickle down to the different services of the Commission (Morillas, 2018, p. 152).

Having endorsed a ‘global’ interpretation to the mandate for a new strategy, the HR/VP managed to initiate a collection of innovative steps what would come to replace an intergovernmental method of drafting by committee. Throughout the policy formulation phase, the EEAS drafting team would conduct a formulation process in which neither the Member States nor the Commission would end up in the driving seat. Instead of confronting this novel policy-making method, national capitals and the Commission adapted to it, increasing the autonomy of the EEAS within a traditionally intergovernmental policy area (Morillas, 2018, pp. 152-153).
**Policy-making phase of the EUGS**

To summarize, the strategy-making process of the EUGS came to be highly controlled by the EUGS drafting team lead by the HR/VP who made full use of her right of initiative. In contrast to the traditional perception that EU foreign policy is constrained to intergovernmental institutions such as the European Council and the FAC, the policy formulation phase of the EUGS demonstrated a process in which none of these institutions were specifically involved. That said, Member States would come to convey their positions at platforms of consultation, be it within the framework of POC or at the intergovernmental decision-making bodies in the EU, hence securing the necessary buy-in from the Member States. Intergovernmental drafting on the textual provisions of the strategy was yet never organized and Member States would never come to accept any formulations of the strategy before the strategy was presented at the European Council in June 2016.

From Mogherini’s point of view, the strategy had been agreed “line by line by all 28 member states and the Commission” why it could not be perceived as a “wish list of the HR/VP” (International Spectator, Interview with Nathalie Tocci, p. 8).
5.3.3 Policy output

After the policy formulation phase had come to an end, the strategy was presented at the European Council in June 2016. The presentation would yet be greatly overshadowed by the Brexit referendum. Some Member States even declared that the presentation of the strategy had to be postponed due to a feared lack of attention that the presentation would gather. On the initiative of the HR/VP, the strategy was nevertheless brought forward as planned. The European Council would not, however, adopt the strategy but only ‘welcome’ it; “The European Council welcomes the presentation of the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy by the High Representative and invites the High Representative, the Commission, and the Council to take the work forward” (Morillas, 2018, p. 155)(Council, 2016, p. 7).

Despite the European Council’s weak approval of the final version of the strategy, the direction and priorities raised in the strategy would nevertheless become quickly applied as the EUGS became a focal point in EU foreign policy-making. Hence, although some Member States disliked the way the policy formulation process had unfolded, it would not come to have a significant impact on the implementation of the strategy.

5.3.4 Implementation

While some have perceived the EU to lack authority in implementing many of its strategic goals, the implementation of the EUGS would indeed challenge this view. As one of Morillas’ interviewees put it, “while the ESS was a symbol not a tool, the EUGS has become a symbol and a tool”. The approach was that the “whole of the EU” would be part of the implementation, bringing together the intergovernmental CFSP and the Commission charged with external relations under the same umbrella, by working with a wide range of EU institutions. Despite the fact that the EUGS never became a binding document and thus not a de jure reference in external action, it became the de facto one (Morillas, 2018, pp. 156-157).

When proposals for implementing the EUGS were brought to the FAC in October 2016, the EUGS came to be acknowledged as a strategy that would “guide the EU’s external action for the years to come”. The FAC moreover endorsed the by the HR/VP proposed “roadmap for implementation” which targeted five priority areas for the EU’s external action (Union, 2016) (Roadmap on the follow-up to the EU Global Strategy).
The five priority areas covered in the roadmap proposed by the HR/VP.
- Resilience building and integrated approach to conflicts and crisis
- Security and defence
- Strengthening the nexus between internal and external policies
- Updating existing or preparing new regional and thematic strategies
- Stepping up public and diplomacy efforts

In connection to the implementation of the EUGS, the HR/VP was mandated to take the work forward “drawing on all available instruments and policies in a comprehensive manner” (Union, 2016).

Backed by the conclusions of the FAC, an implementation steering committee was set up by the EEAS and the cabinet of the HR/VP. The roadmap would not only be endorsed by the FAC, but also by the College of the Commission. Since the Commission covered a broad range of services that bridged multiple areas of activities, the endorsement of the Commission was crucial in securing a “whole of the EU” also in the implementation of the strategy (Morillas, 2018, p. 159).

In the area of security and defence, the implementation of the EUGS would result in the “Implementation of Plan on Security and Defence (IPSD) which included references to three initiatives for the purpose of strengthening the EU’s mechanisms on security and defence: the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), and the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). Although, the EEAS had taken the lead in formulating the initiatives, the Member States were keen to resume a word-by-word negotiation on the FAC conclusions. Indeed, as the EUGS was once again brought to the table at FAC in November 2016, the conclusions would be firmly negotiated following the traditional intergovernmental method involving FAC working groups, PSC and FAC. This as a result of Member States reminding the HR/VP that the procedure had to be done “within the order” (Morillas, 2018, pp. 160-161).

In the overall implementation phase on security and defence, however, the role of the EEAS would prove to be instrumental. The HR/VP took full advantage of her right of initiative to reinforce the EEAS and its role on the initiatives on security and defence. In sum, while the
intergovernmental method still applies for some security and defence matters, it also benefits greatly from the input provided by the EEAS and the HR/VP (Morillas, 2018, p. 162).

In the area of Resilience building, the role of the EEAS would become even more instrumental than what it was in the area of security and defence. The EEAS had provided a draft of a joint communication that came to be refined through a traditional policy-making process involving a broad range of bodies within the Commission. This was likely because of the many external relations policies that were covered in the draft. The Secretariat-General of the Commission (SG) coordinated inputs from the DGs, thus revising the draft which would be approved by the College of Commissioners. The draft was then sent to be discussed at the FAC. Although Member States were consulted on an informal basis, the process of drafting the joint communication was thoroughly coordinated by the EEAS, the Commission, and, to be more precise, the HR/VP herself (Mogherini, 2017)(Morillas, 2018, p. 164).
6. Analysis

In the following analysis, the theoretical ideal types are merged with the strategy-making process of the EUGS. Furthermore, the analysis provides an answer to the formulated research question of the study as it goes into how elements of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism account for the strategy-making process of the EUGS. Targeting both the legal provisions and the inter-institutional dynamics of the strategy-making process, the analysis presents two essential themes, each assigned a specific reflection on how, or if, the applied ideal types of policy-making account for the strategy-making process of the EUGS.

The first reflection presents an assessment of how the applied ideal types account for the EUGS as an initial idea and concept. Next, a reflection on the policy-formulation phase of the EUGS, analyzed from the same theories follows. The analysis will finally present a reflection on whether the experience of making the EUGS may provide an argument to review the presumed centrality of Member States as the ultimate drivers of the EU and its foreign policy.

Reflection on the Agenda-Setting phase of the EUGS

By applying the theories on the Agenda-Setting phase of the EUGS, an analysis can be made on how well the theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism respectively account for the EUGS as an initial concept. Liberal intergovernmentalism would predict a scenario whereby the necessity of replacing the ESS was pronounced by one or several Member States within the Council framework. In contrast, neofunctionalism would assume the EUGS as a concept pronounced by officials of more functional bodies such as the EEAS.

From the initial working procedures on the EUGS, we are evidenced with the central role of the European Council and its mandate to the High Representative to prepare a strategy “in close cooperation with the Member States”. The necessity of replacing the ESS with a revised, more updated strategic framework on foreign policy had moreover been regularly stressed by a group of Member States years before the post of the High Representative was assigned to Federica Mogherini, favoring a liberal intergovernmental interpretation of the EUGS as a concept originating from the European Council, and driven by the involvement of engaging Member States.

If one delimits the empirical material of interest to the legal and political elements of the Agenda-Setting Phase, it is difficult to encounter features favoring the neofunctional ideal
type. The mandate of entrusting the High Representative could, however, be viewed as an appearance of neofunctionalism. Federica Mogherini would additionally come to perceive the assigned mandate as something that had been entrusted to her in her triple-hatted role, a broad interpretation relative to how the factual mandate was formulated, and perceived by most Member States. Mogherini would also initiate the ‘strategic assessment’ exercise which would come to serve the framing of the EUGS and what it essentially would represent. This exercise was moreover conducted by the EEAS Strategic Planning division who would come to involve public actors such as think tanks and research institutes, involving actors beyond the intergovernmental platforms of the EU. Presumably, all these features fall into the story as depicted by the neofunctional ideal type. Yet, it is important not to disregard the European Council mandate through which the overall exercise enjoyed its political support. The European Council thus came to serve as a political driver in bringing forward the idea of the EUGS without being actively involved in the exercise itself.

In short, none of the ideal types generated by the theoretical premises can cover for the whole of the conceptualization of the EUGS as elements of both theories are traceable from the empirical material of this study. Yet, the study finds the Agenda-Setting phase to be more coherent with the ideal type sprung from liberal intergovernmentalism because of the neofunctional incapacity to account for the European Council mandate and the active involvement of Member States who would come to stress the necessity of updating the ESS with an updated strategy on EU foreign policy.

Reflection on the policy formulation phase of the EUGS
The ideal type of liberal intergovernmentalism would predict a strategy-making process whereby the Member States’ input were constrained to be expressed within the intergovernmental platforms of the EU, either at the PSC or at the FAC. In practice, common policies would result from a drafting by committee procedure, inviting all Member States to propose formulations on the text at the PSC. In case the negotiations would get stuck at the PSC, the policies would be negotiated at the FAC under decision-making rules of unanimity.

The policy-formulation phase, as depicted by the neofunctional ideal type, is brought forward by the role and centrality of the EEAS and the Commission, working with the ministries of the Member States through procedures not initiated nor overviewed by the intergovernmental platforms of the EU. Neither the PSC nor the FAC would enjoy significant leeway in
formulating own policies. Instead, formulations of policy would result from internal working procedures and embedded mechanisms of socialization between ‘off-stage’ policy-makers. As a result, the prospects to reach consensus in intergovernmental institutions such as the European Council, the FAC and the PSC would be conditioned to the coherence of policies between national interests and the strategic direction set by the functional body of the EEAS.

The policy formulation of the EUGS, as revealed by this study, does primarily give evidence to the neofunctional interpretation of policy-making. This is due to the absence of intergovernmental bargaining between Member States and to the innovative procedures of the EEAS in collecting input from the Member States, securing an intergovernmental ownership without withdrawing from the role of driving the policy-making process forward.

The idea of involving the Member States via the points of contact (POC) is to be viewed as a distinguished neofunctional feature. The meetings were arranged in ways that enabled the EEAS to take national red lines into account before every meeting. These were interpreted by the answers of the questionnaires that had been distributed in advance before every meeting. As a result, the EEAS was able to set an agenda that targeted common denominators instead of letting the meetings fall into “general and thorough discussions” on textual provisions. Even if the POC only served the strategy-making process as an ‘intellectual exercise’, comprising no negotiations between the participating Member States, it would nevertheless play a central role in ensuring the national ownership of the strategy. The informal settings of the POC and the way the EEAS kept the upper hand throughout the policy-making process go in parallel with the theoretical tenets, as depicted by the neofunctional ideal type.

Liberal intergovernmentalism would rightfully point at the frequency of consultations that indeed took place at the PSC and the FAC. To describe the policy-making process of the EUGS as a process in which the intergovernmental platforms only acted as passive followers would indeed be misleading. The consultations at the PSC and the FAC would nevertheless only come to equip the HR/VP, as represented by Nathalie Tocci, with important themes and inputs on the structure of the strategy, once again without presenting textual provisions on the strategy itself. As a result, the buy-in from the Member States enabled the Member States to own the strategy but not the process.

It is up to debate, however, the extent to which the avoidance of drafting is to be traced from the leadership of the EEAS or from the Member States’ entrustment to provide Mogherini
with a room of maneuver. We know from liberal intergovernmentalism that policy changes take place only if enforced by the common will of Member States. If the drafting by committee procedure was avoided as a result of Member States realizing it would result in a far less comprehensive strategy (Olsson) there might be reason to counter the neofunctional emphasis on the role of the EEAS. The leadership of the EEAS might yet be reflected in how some PSC ambassadors would sum up the strategy-making process as a “messy process” of “pseudo-consultations”, favoring an interpretation of the process as being principally lead by the EEAS.

If tenets of neofunctionalism are evidenced by the exercise of the POC, the same neofunctional theory seems to fall short in explaining the temperate role of the Commission. Although Mogherini, as vice-president of the Commission would come to lead the policy formulation phase, the formulation of policies would never become a joint initiative between the EEAS and the Commission as she would never come to enter any formal negotiations with the Commission. The process would allow the SG to coordinate input from the DGs, yet the College would never come to approve or dismiss any textual provisions, denying the interpretation to regard the policy formulation of the EUGS as a supranational endeavor. The College would only come to authorize the HR/VP to “uphold a political vetting”, legitimizing a room of manoeuvre for Mogherini to lead the policy formulation process forward. Having side-lined the College, the autonomy of the HR/VP would also come to be reinforced vis-à-vis the supranational institution of the Commission.

The lack of inter-service consultations within the ‘traditional community method’ counters the neofunctional interpretation of policy-making as well as the neofunctional view of the Commission as the in-practice agenda setter. This brings the study to interpret the policy-making process of the EUGS as a functional, yet not a supranational process, characterized by innovative policy-making procedures initiated by the EEAS.

Translating the policy-making phase of the EUGS into the applied theories, it is evident that the tenets of liberal intergovernmentalism fall short in covering for the central leadership of the EEAS and its twofold policy formulation track, in which neither the Member States nor the Commission would end up in the driving seat. Although Member States would enjoy the opportunity to make statements and express their opinions at intergovernmental platforms, they would never come to negotiate on any textual provisions, be it in the framework of the POC, at the PSC, or at the FAC. As a result, the policy formulation phase of the EUGS would
never come to provide for any situations of intergovernmental bargaining. This counters the most distinguished feature of liberal intergovernmentalism that is the necessity of Member States to enter agreements based on the relative bargaining power in contexts of international negotiation.

The ideal type depicted by liberal intergovernmentalism also fails to capture the impact of functional bodies of the EU in initiating and producing policies as to capture the different phases of inter-institutional dynamics. Member States were never excluded from influence during policy formulation, but policy formulation would come to be firmly circumscribed in the Council secretariat, and not the intergovernmental bodies of the FAC or in the European Council. This highly institutionalized policy-making process resembles the scenario as illustrated by the neofunctional ideal type. In that Federica Mogherini was entrusted with the mandate to coordinate the strategy-making process of the EUGS, she would come to place herself in the in-practice driving seat of the process. By making full use of her triple-hatted figure, leading the EEAS, chairing the FAC, and acting as vice-president of the Commission, HR/VP Mogherini would overview the influx of input and lead the formulations of policy forward in the centrality of her role. Instead of confronting this novel policy-making procedure, Member States and the Commission adapted to it, increasing the autonomy of the EEAS and the HR/VP.

The intergovernmental platforms of the EU thus served the policy formulation phase as a source of input from the Member States, providing for the legitimacy required to secure an intergovernmental ownership. Then, an ambiguous process would ensue in which the necessary buy-in from the Member States was secured without the very same Member States being anywhere close to owning the process that would drive the policy-making process forward. The buy-in from the Member States enabled them to own the strategy, not the process. As remarked by Mogherini, summing up the strategy-making process of the EUGS, “a strategy everyone owned but no one negotiated” (Morillas, 2018, p. 168). Considering the various intergovernmental platforms through which Member States would own the strategy, the strategy itself is easily viewed as an intergovernmental product. Yet, the strategy-making process was far from intergovernmental as it did not comprise any bargaining in the context of negotiation. This brings the study to interpret the EUGS as an intergovernmental, yet unnegotiated product.
The intergovernmental adaptation in the policy-making of the EUGS is reflected particularly in how the ambassadors at the PSC would come to be confronted by a “take it, or leave it approach” to the textual provisions of the strategy. Member States would come to be left with a choice to either accept “faits accomplis” or to adopt a confrontational attitude, the latter being generally avoided. As a result, the EUGS would come to represent a direction on EU foreign policy, also for Member States who opposed the policy-making process. Is this a feature that shares a parallel with what Haas defined as a supranational cycle of cooperation, acknowledging a system in which “participants refrain from unconditionally vetoing proposals and instead seek to attain agreement by means of compromises”? This study would argue that it is, favoring a neofunctional interpretation of the policy-formulation phase.

The premise of liberal intergovernmentalism to regard the EEAS as a tool of coordination rather than a trigger of “own” policies is here being challenged. The European Council would endow the High Representative with a fairly clear cut mandate to prepare a strategy. Yet, Mogherini’s own interpretation of this mandate would result in a document with wide effects on the whole of the external action system, connecting areas of security and defence that from the legal provisions were expected to be firmly conditioned the common political will of the Member States - and the external relations of which the Commission had established special prerogatives.

Avoiding both an intergovernmental drafting by committee procedure and a traditional method of College-approved documents, the HR/VP would counterbalance the policy interests by letting herself and the EEAS to be at the centre of the policy-making process. The intergovernmental ownership of the Member States was secured through regular yet informal consultations and by red lines that were taken into account. As a result, the policy formulation phase of the EUGS would comprise features not proper of pure liberal intergovernmentalism or supranationalism, but by the novel and functional mode of policy-making in which the EEAS and the HR/VP gained autonomy during the process.

**Reflection on the implementation phase of the EUGS**

After the HR/VP had been mandated to “take the work [of the strategy] forward” by the European Council, she would propose a strategic ‘roadmap’ at the FAC in October 2016, targeting five priority areas. FAC received the roadmap and would once again express confidence in the role of the HR/VP who would be mandated to draw “on all available
instruments and policies in a comprehensive manner” in order to secure an implementation process that went in line with the themes covered in the proposed roadmap.

The EUGS would never become a binding document, yet it would initiate several significant instruments as evidenced by the implementation phase of the EUGS. In the area of security and defence, Member States would lead an intergovernmental process in which the formulations of implementation would be firmly negotiated at the PSC and the FAC. Although the EEAS had taken the lead in formulating the initiatives, Member States were keen to resume a word-by-word negotiation on the practicalities of the initiatives. The intergovernmental method of drafting the textual provisions through a drafting by committee procedure counters the neofunctional interpretation of viewing the intergovernmental institutions as passive followers of the process.

If the implementation of the EUGS in the area of security and defence was constrained by the common will of the Member States, the implementation in the area of resilience building would come to involve more functional bodies, notably the EEAS and the Secretariat-General of the Commission (SG). The EEAS provided a draft of a joint communication which would be subject to input from the DG:s of the Commission. After the draft had been approved by the College of the Commissioners, it was finally sent to be discussed at the FAC. The process of implementing the EUGS in the area of resilience building was thus thoroughly coordinated by the HR/VP, who would come to make full use of her triple-hatted figure, consulting the Member States on an informal basis only.

Because of the active involvement of the EEAS and the SG of the Commission, it is not difficult to consider the implementation of resilience building as an illustrating case of a neofunctional exercise. Yet it is important to recognize the well-established prerogatives that the Commission actually enjoy in areas of external relations, most notably in terms of development cooperation in which resilience building constitutes an essential theme.

Despite the fact that elements of both ideal types are traceable from the overall implementation phase of the EUGS, the study arrives at the interpretation of viewing the liberal intergovernmental ideal type as more illustrative than that of the neofunctional ideal type. This is primarily due to the capacity shown by the Member States in the area of security and defence to regain the formulations as subjects of a drafting by committee procedure, securing an intergovernmental ownership of, not only the formulations, but of the process.
Reflection on how to interpret foreign policy-making in the EU post EUGS

The EUGS is nowadays representing a focal point in EU foreign policy, providing the EU with a direction and a framework for itself as an actor in international affairs. Reflecting on the (rightfully) presumed centrality of the intergovernmental ownership in EU foreign policy, it is striking how the strategy-making process of the EUGS, despite being sprung from an intergovernmental mandate, would come to follow a policy formulation process purposefully and strategically designed by the functional body in the EEAS. The neofunctional policy formulation of the EUGS therefore provides us with an argument to review the presumed centrality of the Member States as catalysis of policy-making. Be that the rules of unanimity in the FAC and the European Council prevail from a legal and institutional point of view, the formulation of policies in the strategy-making process of the EUGS is nevertheless reflected in the central role of the EEAS and the autonomy of the HR/VP.

The in-practice procedures of formulating policies of the EUGS have not been illustrated by Member States reaching consensus through intergovernmental bargaining but by Member States adapting to a novel policy-making process, led and initiated by the functional body of the EEAS. If the policy formulation of the EUGS is not to be derived from procedures of intergovernmental bargaining, why stick with the view that EU foreign policy is constrained to the common will of EU Member States, expressing national interests at the intergovernmental platforms?

The strategy-making process of the EUGS has shown that the EEAS, lead and executed by the autonomous figure of the HR/VP, does not only facilitate consensus through innovative methods of policy-making, but it also acts as a driver of new political endeavors. The conclusion to be drawn is that the machinery of the EEAS may be representing a new centre of policy development whereas the Member States seem to lack engagement in securing stressed policy formulations.

From the implementation of the EUGS we learn that the EU Member States seem to prevail in making the process follow a more traditional method of word-by-word negotiations, particularly in the area of security and defence whereby the settings of the IPSD would be firmly scrutinized by the intergovernmental platforms in the PSC and the FAC. How should we perceive EU foreign policy if its instruments are set by the Member States, but the
underlying policies from which the instruments are derived, are set by the autonomous role of the EEAS, as revealed by the strategy-making process of the EUGS?

The strategy-making process of the EUGS has shown that the autonomy of the HR/VP and the EEAS may enhance progress in EU foreign policy, also in the area of security and defence, without being backed by formal adoption mechanisms from the European Council. But an implication of this is to be found in the mismatch between the HR/VP having the right of initiative and Member States still deciding by unanimity in the area of security and defence, given TEU article 31(4), making the CSDP strictly constrained to be built on unanimously agreed decisions only. As an official interviewed by Morillas put it: “perhaps we only see big waves of intergovernmentalism, but there is an undercurrent that is much more nuanced” (Morillas, 2018, p. 192). This study has proposed that elements of this “more nuanced” undercurrent are to be found in the tenets covered in the theory of neofunctionalism. This is due to the policy-formulation phase of the EUGS whereby Brussels-based personalities and bureaucracies would come to exert greater influence than depicted by the ideal type of liberal intergovernmentalism.
7. Conclusion

This study has examined the strategy-making process of the European Union Global Strategy (EUGS) and analyzed its conceptualization, policy-making process and implementation through two theoretical ideal types of policy making in the EU. While the ideal type of liberal intergovernmentalism stresses the intergovernmental ownership in the policy making procedures, as reflected in the role of the European Council and Council of Ministers, the ideal type of neofunctionalism puts more emphasis on the procedures covered by the internal dynamics of policy-making.

The study finds the conceptualization of the EUGS to be more coherent with the ideal type sprung from liberal intergovernmentalism because of the incapacity of the neofunctional theory to account for the European Council mandate of the EUGS and the active involvement of Member States who would come to stress the necessity of an updated strategic framework on EU foreign policy.

The study does also conclude that the central and autonomous role of the EEAS, led by the HR/VP, provides for evidence to regard the policy formulation phase of the EUGS as a neofunctional exercise. The policy-making process of the EUGS would never come to provide for any situations of intergovernmental bargaining. This counters the most distinguished feature of liberal intergovernmentalism that is the necessity of Member States to enter agreements based on the relative bargaining power in contexts of international negotiation.

Considering the various intergovernmental platforms through which Member States would be able to bring forth input on the strategy, the strategy itself is perceived to be an intergovernmental product. The in-practice procedures of formulating the policies of the EUGS have not been illustrated by Member States reaching consensus through intergovernmental bargaining but by Member States adapting to a novel policy-making process, led and initiated by the functional body of the EEAS. The intergovernmental buy-in from the Member States enabled the Member States to own the strategy, not the process.

In analyzing the implementation phase of the EUGS, the study comes to the conclusion of viewing the liberal intergovernmental ideal type as being more illustrative than the ideal type of neofunctionalism. This is primarily due to the capacity shown by the Member States in the
area of security and defence to regain the formulations as subjects of a drafting by committee procedure, securing an intergovernmental ownership of, not only the formulations, but of the process.

Having analyzed the strategy-making process of the EUGS, the study draws the conclusion that the findings of the process provide an argument to challenge the presumed centrality of the intergovernmental ownership in the making of EU foreign policy. The strategy-making process of the EUGS has shown that the EEAS, does not only facilitate consensus through innovative methods of policy-making, but it also acts as a driver of new political endeavors. The conclusion to be drawn is therefore that the machinery of the EEAS may represent a new centre of policy development in the area of EU foreign policy.


**Electronic Sources**


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