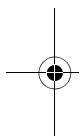STUDIA DIPLOMATICA LXVIII-4 (2017)
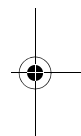
EGMONT **Royal Institute
for International Relations**

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The End of Rhetorics

LGBT policies in Russia and the European Union

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Introduction

Since the signing of the PCA in 1994, EU-Russia relations have been imbued with pro-European rhetoric. The 2004 enlargement and the emergence of the power vertical under Putin however led to a more nationalist, state-first external policy. One could say that with the expiration of the PCA in 2007, and the gradual deterioration of East-West relations, Russia not only abandoned its policy of pro-European rhetoric, but added a norms and values component to this rhetoric that actively counters the European Union.

The commotion about Russia's legislation on gay propaganda is but one example that illustrates the definite shift in EU-Russia relations that has become a reality. Russia's irritation about the EU's political and normative conditionality toward the former communist states (albeit through enlargement processes or European neighborhood and Eastern partnership initiatives) increased considerably since 2004. Especially the fact that the EU coined the term European values as a condition for EU rapprochement while Russia considers itself a European country with distinctly different 'European' values, has at times led to resentment in Russia. Come what may, Russia has moved

from complaining about the EU usurping European values to openly propagating its own values, which do not include a respect for LGBT rights.

Russia's LGBT policies are particularly interesting because it illustrates how precarious the position of the Central European member states in the EU-Russia debate has become. Since their EU accession in 2004, post-communist states like Poland, Latvia or Lithuania have been very vocal in their critique of Russian policies (gas crisis, colored revolutions, and now Ukraine). Yet at the same time, when it comes to the norms and values debate, the former communist countries themselves struggle with giving LGBT rights its place in society. The political will to defend these rights is not as present as in Western Europe – and often needs some persuasion through EU legislation. This leads to situations where countries like Poland or Latvia harbor a deeply critical position vis-à-vis Russia on the political-economic level, but might fail to uphold this staunch criticism when it comes to norms and values.

In this article, I will start out from the concept of European and Russian organisational fields (Verpoest, 2008). Based on Powell & DiMaggio's theory of institutional isomorphism, the added value of the concept of organisational fields lies in the fact that it provides an analytical framework to assess LGBT policies in both the European Union and Russia, with attention for other institutional initiatives in the area that influence or corroborate these policies. In the first part of the article, I will assess how the EU as an organisational field can influence national approaches to LGBT policies, as was the case in Poland. In the second part of the article, the LGBT case in Russia will be used to assess the emergence of a 'Eurasian' organisational field, the strategy, goals and objectives behind it, and especially, to seek an answer to the question whether Russia has ambitions to export this Eurasian take on LGBT rights to other post-communist states, as part of the strategy to form this 'Eurasian' organisational field.

The concept of organisational fields

Given the current context, it is interesting to study EU-Russia relations and their different stance on LGBT rights from the perspective of organisational fields. The concept of organisational fields was initially developed as a part of Walter Powell and Paul DiMaggio's theory on institutional isomorphism (1983, 1991) which describe how different organisations converge into organisational fields and interact in order to obtain more legitimacy. An organisa-

tional field is generally defined as 'those organisations that constitute a recognised area of institutional life'; key suppliers, regulatory agencies, a legal system, an intergovernmental or supranational organisation (Powell & DiMaggio, 1983: 148).

An organisational field emerges when different organisations start interacting and cooperating on a certain level (politically, economically) and attempt to coordinate their actions. However, one should not forget that an organisational field is always an *analytical construct;* its definition depends on 'the phenomena in which one is interested' (DiMaggio, 1983: 149). Therefore, an organisational field does not necessarily correspond with an existing field like the European Union or NATO, but is more an aggregate of organisations that have certain *interests in common*[1]. Apart from common interests, the *centralisation of resources* is another aspect that stimulates the structuration of an organisational field[2].

Keeping in minds these two aspects – common interests and centralisation of resources – one can distinguish in the context of EU-Russia relations a 'European' and a 'Eurasian' organisational field. I will illustrate the differences between these fields by describing their stance on the LGBT issue.

The power of conditionality: LGBT policies in the European Union

Prior to the eastward enlargement of the European Union in 2004, LGBT rights were not as big an issue yet as they are now. Quite the contrary: in 2004, 'the actions of the EU were timid, ill-focused and stopped short of realizing the potential for change offered by the legal context of enlargement preparation' (Kochenov, 2007: 460). One of the reasons for this is that the 2000 Charter of Fundamental Rights, in which non-discrimination on the basis of sex and the right to assembly is proclaimed, only became legally binding with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. Other explanations pointed to limited Community competences on this topic and the 'questionable gay rights record of the ECJ (European Court of Justice)' at the time (Kochenov,

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[1] In this sense, it is rather a 'network of interaction' consisting of e.g. cultural organisations, industries, or countries (DiMaggio, 1983: 149).

[2] In his essay on organisational fields, Paul DiMaggio puts forward an interesting proposition on this topic: 'The more centralised the resources are upon which organisations in a field depend, the greater is the degree of interaction among organisations in that field. Centralisation of resources gives organisations a common focus of attention and, potentially at least, a common adversary.' (DiMaggio, 1983: 149).

2007: 460). Overall, a legally binding policy on the topic of LGBT rights was not yet a big issue on the enlargement agenda in 2004 and 2007. However, the possible repercussions of not putting LGBT issues on the enlargement agenda were grossly underestimated at the time, since the EU was expanding into former communist territory where homosexuality was illegal up until 1991. Problems emerged soon after the enlargement, when it turned out that the societal support for e.g. gay pride parades was very limited. Even more worrying maybe was that also state level-actors showed little support for gay rights in their country.

The case of Poland

In Poland for example, it was the President, supported by the Sejm, who stalled the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007 on moral grounds and eventually signed it after securing a special protocol opting out of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. When he was still major of Warsaw, Lech Kaczyński had earlier prohibited the Polish Gay Pride marches in 2004 and 2005[3]. His brother Jarosław publicly described homosexuality as a sexual abomination and said that gays and lesbians should not teach (Uitz, 2012: 242). Ironically, the Polish plenipotentiary for Equal Rights Elżbieta Radziszewska (2008-2011) shared this opinion. In 2010, she affirmed that a Polish directive contained provisions for catholic schools to discriminate against teachers on grounds of their sexual orientation. Radziszewska opined that schools would be right to do so[4], and was later chided by the European Commission and European Parliament about this incident who reported she 'must acknowledge that she was wrong on this occasion – and that the Commission, EU law, and EU jurisprudence all disagree with her'[5]. It also took a European Court of Human Rights ruling in 2010 to allow same sex couples equal housing rights in Poland (European Court of Human Rights, 2010).

More recently in Poland, the discussion about same-sex marriages led to even more debate after the 29 December 2013 publication of the annual pastoral letter of the Bishop's conference to Poland. This letter stated the Bishop's

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[3] At that time, the now defunct Polish eurosceptic party Liga Polskich Rodzin was openly homophobic, and protested against gay pride marches (Shibata, 2013).

[4] http://www.lgbt-ep.eu/parliamentary-work/meps-ask-urgent-question-polish-secretary-of-state-for-equal-treatment/ (8 November 2013)

[5] http://www.lgbt-ep.eu/parliamentary-work/meps-ask-urgent-question-polish-secretary-of-state-for-equal-treatment/ (8 November 2013)

conference opinion that 'attempts to impose a different definition of marriage and the family on us by supporters of the gender ideology (...), must raise the highest concern' (Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, 2013). It added that since they were 'confronted with increasing attacks against different aspects of family and social life coming from this ideology, we are compelled to speak out clearly in defence of the Christian family, and the fundamental values that support it on the one hand, and, on the other, to warn against the threats stemming from propagating new forms of family life'. What is interesting in this long epistle about family values and traditional matrimony is the fact that they label what threatens these traditions in their eyes as 'gender ideology'. Gender ideology is described as 'the product of many decades of ideological and cultural changes that are rooted in Marxism and neo-Marxism endorsed by some feminist movements and the sexual revolution. This ideology promotes principles that are totally contrary to reality and an integral understanding of human nature'.

The Bishop's Conference's apparently sees some sort of gender conspiracy sneaking up on society, unbeknownst to common, innocent Poles: 'without the public knowledge or Poles' consent for many months now the gender ideology has been slowly introduced into different structures of social life: education, health service, cultural and education centres and non-governmental organizations'. Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Plenipotentiary for equal rights from 2011-2014, rebutted these suspicions and stated that there were no programs in schools promoting 'gender ideology' and accused the bishop's conference of inventing the term 'gender ideology' as an imagined enemy (Luxmoore, 2014). The letter reverberated on the political level, however. A parliamentary group 'Stop Gender Ideology' was created in the Polish sejm in January 2014, with the support of Prawo I Sprawiedliwość politician Beata Kempa. Interestingly, in an interview about the work of the 'Stop Gender Ideology' parliamentary group, Mrs. Kempa remarked that the group intended to map the 'flows' of public means used for promoting gender ideology and immediately identified these as partly EU means[6].

Despite the criticism, EU membership and the binding nature of the Charter of Fundamental Rights since 2009 has led to legal enforcement of LGBT rights. This might point to the ricochet process as described by Holzhacker, in which transborder and interinstitutional circulation of information and argumentation can lead to change (Holzhacker, 2013). Despite the unwillingness of

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[6] ⟨http://sunday.niedziela.pl/artykul.php?dz=spoleczenstwo&id_art=00990⟩ Niedziela 7/2014. The PiS rhetoric is countered however by other political parties like Twój Ruch.

individuals, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the effects of rulings on individual cases brought before to the European Court of Human Rights rulings had a ricochet effect on state-level LGBT policies in states like Poland, but also Estonia and Hungary.

This ricochet effect points to the influence of an organisational field on states. Not only during the accession procedure, the Central European countries incorporated the EU acquis communautaire in order to increase legitimacy within the European Union. Also after their EU accession, maintaining this legitimacy remains important for these member states. Despite the fact that LGBT rights weren't as high on the agenda in 2004 as they are now, being part of this organisational field implies acknowledging the importance the EU attaches to these issues. Many former communist countries that joined the EU in 2004/7 were confronted with this phenomenon retroactively. With the recent strong focus on LGBT rights as part of the European norms and values debate, distancing oneself from what is perceived as common interests of the organisational field thus may decrease one's legitimacy within the field (e.g. Hungary).

Despite its clear advantages, this ricochet effect may however fail to reach beyond the state level. Even when the legal means are in place to ensure respect for LGBT rights and counter homophobia, public acceptance may not follow. In this sense, extrajudicial violence cannot be prevented. As Ungar puts it in his article on state violence, "violence against LGBT people highlights the three principal closely related types of state violence: 'legal' violence, police violence, and extra-judicial violence" (Ungar, 2000: 62). Despite the fact that legal violence is rendered impossible by regulations on the state and EU level, extrajudicial violence remains a risk, and the latent role of the state should not be overlooked: "though rarely sponsored by the state, such activities [of extra-judicial violence] are often directed by off-duty officials and either ignored or tacitly encouraged by a government with a constitution al responsibility to do the opposite" (Ungar, 2000:62).

Since their 2004 accession, Central European governments have come a long way in battling homophobia. The legal will and means seem to be in place to ensure respect for LGBT rights. If the legal will is not present, a country risks to lose legitimacy within the European organisational field because it does not subscribe to its common interests, norms and values. Two examples illustrate this. After the incident about considering homosexuals unfit to teach in schools, for example, the Polish Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment Radziszewska was removed from the Jury for an Award against Discrim-

ination by the European Commission. After the voting of Hungary's recent constitution which does not ensure fundamental rights like freedom from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and defines marriage exclusively as a union of a man and a woman, the EU started discussing ways of enforcing observance of fundamental values set out in the EU Treaty in August 2013 (Buckley, 2013).

The loss of legitimacy may have adverse effects, however. It can increase the appeal of other organisational fields – not economically, but on the level of norms and values. The isomorphic effect of the organisational field may elude eurosceptic groups within Central European societies, because they do not identify with the common interest of the organisational field. As a consequence, they might be tempted to look for different norms and values systems that they identify more with. For some groups within the post-communist societies, the legal enforceability of LGBT rights might thus have enhanced the appeal of the Eurasian organisational field. This shows the limits of the ricochet effect of LGBT rights in the European organisational field. Although inter-organisational cooperation among e.g. the Council of Europe and the European Union has increased out of the common interest to create the legal respect for LGBT rights, in some countries, public will has not followed suit.

From rhetorical westernisation to the Eurasian organisational field: Russia's different take on norms and values

Russia, one might say, has evolved in exactly the opposite direction. In 2012, the organization of gay pride marches in Moscow was officially banned for the next 100 years. This was followed up by a law that prohibits 'gay propaganda' to minors (July 2013). A law proposal to forbid homosexual couples to adopt children was submitted and withdrawn again; it was announced however that this law proposal would be resubmitted in Spring 2014; more conveniently after the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi. The fact that the law on gay propaganda was initially city legislation adopted by Archangelsk, Ryazan, Kostroma and Saint Petersburg was consequently adopted state-wide is remarkable and says much about the public approval of this new federal law in Russia. While Putin has had to defend this legislation on pretty much every visit abroad since adopting it, the Russians themselves generally condone the law on gay propaganda. A June 2013 poll of VTsIOM showed that 88% of the citizens support a law against gay propaganda, and only 12% oppose it (VTsIOM, 2013). Even

Aleksey Navalny, a leading opposition figure who is generally critical of almost every aspect of Putin's social and economic policy, does not support the adoption of children by gay couples. The public approval for these laws, as well as the backing of the orthodox church, gives government the legitimacy to claim its righteousness and ignore the western criticism.

In stark contrast with the nineties, Russia has thus given up its pro-Western rhetoric and replaced it with a determination to establish its own norms and values system. This was once more confirmed on 12 December 2013, when Putin delivered his State of the Nation address (*Poslanie*) to the members of the Russian Federal Assembly. In this speech, for the first time openly stressed Russian values and opposed them to Western values:

> "We know that in the world, more and more people support our position on upholding traditional values, which for millennia have been the spiritual and moral basis of civilization, and every nation: the traditional family values, true human life, including religious life, a life not only of material but also spiritual values of humanity and diversity of the world" (Putin, Poslanie Prezidenta, 2013)

Basing internal and external policies explicitly on traditional, self-proclaimed conservative values, constructs a norms and values based field that defines legitimacy in a whole different manner, especially when looking at the LGBT case: intolerance has been institutionalised and conservatism has become part of the norms and values system of the country.

If one would perceive homophobia as a litmus test for Russian democracy, as Igor' Kon described (Kon, 2007) – the democracy test has so far failed, and if measured by Russia's position on LGBT rights, the future democratic outlook is even bleaker. As in some Central European countries, homophobia is historically rooted in the fact that up until the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991, homosexuality was prohibited by law[7]. Apart from a crime, it was also considered a mental disorder and a product of a bourgeois lifestyle (Kon, 2010: 17). It is clear that until this day, many people in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, still explicitly associate homosexuality with paedophilia (with gays commonly called *pederasty* or *pidorasy* in Russian). This limited knowledge and 'fear of the unknown' has never really disappeared in modern day Russia. The

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[7] Stipulated as a crime in art. 121 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

logical low visibility of homosexuality in such a hostile environment resulted in the fact that in the general Russian perception, homosexuality is still perceived as something perverted and foreign (Dirix & Verpoest, 2014: 2).

Given the recent legislation, one might conclude that homophobic hostility in Russia has increased. It certainly has become more visible. One can distinguish between 'ordinary' and 'political' (state-sponsored) homophobia. The former is often expressed by neonazi and neofascist movements. In 2013, organisations like Moskovsky Skin Legion or National Socialist Group 88 declared 'hunting season' on and homosexuals. Another Russian homophobic group named 'Occupy Pedophilia', led by the infamous neo-nazi Tesak (real name Martin Martsinkevich) kidnapped, abused and humiliated gay men they lured into meeting via online ads. Graphic video's of these torture still circulate on the internet.

As for 'political' homophobia, the Russian state itself has evolved from a passive to a more active stance, especially as the link between church and state was reinforced over the past decade. As mentioned earlier, the state's non-interference in homophobic violence can also be perceived as a form of state violence; especially the *militsiia* (police)'s attitude during Gay Prides is very dubious. During the first Moscow Gay Pride in 2006, for example, the police did not interfere in the aggressive counterdemonstrations of skinheads, religious orthodox and radical nationalist groupings, even not when these demonstrators resorted to violence (Finn, 2006). During the 2007 Gay Pride, not only lgbt activists but also diplomats and EU MEPs who had turned out in support of the Gay Pride were the subject of verbal and physical abuse (Levy, 2007). Here also, the police arrested and prosecuted the lgbt activists under attack, whereas the attackers walked free undisturbed (Kon, 2010). From 2012 onwards, a 100 year ban on organizing gay prides in Moscow has gone into effect (Ria Novosti 2012).

Another example of a more active anti-gay stance is of course the 2013 law against 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations to minors'[8]. Fines for gay propaganda range from max 5000 rubles for individuals to max 50,000 rubles for public officials and 1,000,000 rubles for organisations. The offense is consider graver (and the fine will be higher) when propaganda is spread via

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[8] Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offenses, Art. 6.2: "*Propaganda is the act of distributing information among minors that 1) is aimed at the creating nontraditional sexual attitudes, 2) makes nontraditional sexual relations attractive, 3) equates the social value of traditional and nontraditional sexual relations, or 4) creates an interest in nontraditional sexual relations*" Kodeks ob administrativnych pravonarushenijach http://www.zakonrf.info/koap/6.21/

media, in cause the internet. The vague definition of propaganda leads both to a juridical 'smoke curtain' that room for interpretation for police officers or judges (Verpoest & Dirix, 2014), as to an atmosphere of permissiveness among the already hostile broader public which could lead to further abuse of gay activists. An example of this is the case of Kirill Kalugin, who was abused by Russian servicemen when on 2 August 2013, right after the anti-gay propaganda law was voted, he unfolded a rainbow flag with the inscription 'this is propagating tolerance'. Aggressive taunting and vile abuse by the parading paratroopers was what followed, but in the end, it was Kalugin who was arrested. Unfazed, Kalugin returned to Saint Petersburg Palace Square exactly a year later, this time unfolding a rainbow flag with the slogan 'My freedom defends yours'. Again, he was arrested[9]. Another example of the Russian authorities putting their gay propaganda law into action is Yelena Klimova, the founder of an online support group for LGBT youngsters (Deti 404) who was fined 50,000 roubles (780$) for gay propaganda; the Deti 404 website, a refuge for many LGBT youngsters in Russia, was pulled offline (Tetrault Farber 2015).

It is clear that over the past decade, Russia has gradually given up its policy of 'declarative westernisation' vis-à-vis the EU. Whereas up until 2008 it silently recognised the legitimacy of the European organisational field and upheld a cooperative stance, especially on legal and economic issues, recent years and especially recent actions have shown that Russia has retracted this 'rhetoric' isomorphism (Verpoest, 2008), which mainly entailed limited an selective institutional and policy copying. When it comes to LGBT rights, it is logical that the EU does not have the same normative pull vis-à-vis Russia, a country that never had any membership aspirations. Yet the fact that this country is now actively countering EU policies in Eastern Partnership countries that do harbor membership aspirations by formulating a 'conservative', anti-LGBT alternative is cause for concern among EU policymakers.

So do the EU's and Russia's LGBT policies compete in the post-communist territory? In the last section of this article, I will assess whether Russia is aiming to export these self-professed 'conservative' norms and values to other former Soviet States in the Caucasus or Central Asia, thus using the public approval for its harsh stance on LGBT policies as a legitimacy tool for constructing a new 'Eurasian' organisational field.

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9 ⟨https://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2014/10/my-freedom-defends-yours-propaganda-and-truth-about-homophobia-russia/⟩

Russia and the EU: competing paradigms

Recent events seem to confirm that Russia's message on gay propaganda reso-
nates in the CIS member states. After several Ukrainian MEPs declared their
intention to draft a law on gay propaganda as early as 2012; the voting of such
a law was shelved in 2013 because one feared it might damage Ukraine's pros-
pects for a successful Association Agreement with the EU. The shelved drafts
have been definitely taken off the Rada agenda in January 2015. Also worrying
is that anti-gay rhetoric is being used for political purposes. A recent example
of this occurred in Ukraine in the run-up to the November 2013 Eastern Part-
nership summit, when former lawmaker Viktor Medvedchuk – with close
personal ties to Putin – "formed an organisation called Ukrainian Choice, that
is posting billboards in Ukraine claiming that association with the EU will
mean the legalisation of same-sex marriage" (Coalson 2013). Unfortunately,
the regime change after Euromaidan and the explicitly pro-European orienta-
tion of the new government has not resulted in the improvement of lgbt rights
or a change in attitude towards lgbt people. In October 2014, Kyiv's oldest
cinema Zhovten burned down after smoke grenades and firecrackers were
thrown during the screening of a gay movie. A couple of weeks later, another
screening of an lgbt movie was disrupted by masked men with Pravy Sektor
insignia, and there were several attacks on gay blubs in Kyiv and Kharkov
(Kenarov 2014). Moreover the fact that Maidan hero and new Kyiv mayor
Vitaly Klitschko has said that he will protect human rights but will not stand
up for gay and lesbian people increases the earlier mentioned risk of state
violence[10].

Russia's anti-gay rhetoric reverberated similarly in another Eastern Part-
nership country. The May 2013 adoption of a 'gender equality law' in Armenia
(in the run-up to Armenia's signing of an Association Agreement and DCFTA
with the EU in November 2013) caused a public outcry in the country. Organ-
isations like the 'Pan-Armenian Parental Committee' started a smear
campaign against this law in the press and on social media. Also facebook
groups like 'No to "Gender" law! No to national treason!' illustrate the rather
aggressive discourse on gender equality: 'Gender is perversion. We won't let it
be. Gender = transvestite. Gender = homosexuality'. As in the Polish' bishop's
letter, gender is linked to homosexuality here, and is depicted as a foreign

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[10]   'Vitali Klitschko: I will not stand up for gays and lesbians', *Gay alliance Ukraine*, 8 November 2014
        http://upogau.org/eng/inform/uanews/worldnews_1622.html

concept, 'an extremely exotic and alien phenomenon' (Martirosyan, 2013) aimed at destroying national values and traditions. Moreover, Armenian politicians also linked gender with homosexuality. In the summer of 2013, MEP Khachik Stambolcyan complained that a meeting of homosexuals would be organised in Armenia financed by 'some European organisation', clearly framing homosexuality as something 'foreign'. As Samson Martirosyan (2013) pointed out, Stambolcyan was referring to the youth project of the Armenian progressive youth NGO called 'Gender perspectives in Europe', organized by the EU-funded 'Youth in Action'. Also in parliament, the use of the term 'gender' in the law was disputed. Some interpreted the notion of gender as 'implying socially consolidated acquitted behavior, meaning a man that feels like a woman' (Mkrtchyan, 2013). As a result, all references to 'gender' were replaced by 'men and women' in the law n. 57 on 'Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women'[11].

Also in Central Asia, it seems like a new conservative morality has created leeway for new proposed legislation. In Kyrgyzstan (where homosexual relations are legal since 1998), we can see the country drawing closer to the Eurasian Economic Union[12] while simultaneously proposing an anti-gay propaganda law similar to that of Russia. Like with Armenia, that joined the Eurasian Economic Union on 1 January 2015, being or becoming part of this new, 'Eurasian' organisational field seems to coalesce with a ricochet effect of predominant norms & values in this region, which the Russian legislation claims to be in line with.

In Kazakhstan, some MEPs of the Majlis (Kazakh parliament) are reputed to be working on a new version of the Family and Marriage code that will ban 'gay propaganda' and prohibit people known to be gay from holding public offices and serve in the army. As for other Central Asian States; homosexual relations are prohibited in Uzbekistan (penal code 1994-95, revised 2001) and Turkmenistan (since 1998); whereas they have been legal in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan since 1998 and in Armenia since 2003. Still, the legalisation of

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[11] In August 2013, Armenian police briefly published a draft amendment to the Administrative code on the official website of the police department proposing to place high fines on individuals or organisations spreading propaganda on non-traditional sexual relationships (Littauer 2013, Ana 2014). Although this draft was quickly abandoned due to unspecified shortcomings, the fear that this type of legislative proposal might be picked up again now that Armenia has become a member of the Eurasian Economic Union (since 2 January 2015) has risen again.

[12] An accession agreement was signed on December 2014. Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambaev hopes that his country will become full member of the Eurasian Economic Union by May 2015. ⟨http://www.rferl.org/content/kyrgyzstan-signs-eurasian-union-deal/26759237.html⟩

homosexual relations in these countries generally does not imply an atmosphere of public or official tolerance. In Armenia for example, LGBTs have little legal protection from the state; the country does not have legislation describing homophobia as a hate crime, and anti-discrimination laws in Armenia do not apply to LGBT individuals (Ana, 2014). In Kyrgyzstan, the attitude towards LGBTs ranges from intolerance to outright violence. In January 2014, Human Rights Watch published a report on homophobic violence in Kyrgyzstan, mapping verbal and physical abuse and the increasing climate of intolerance and limits to freedom of expression. Along with the report, HRW released a video of several victims' shocking testimonies about severe police violence towards gay men[13].

Conclusion

Just like the EU, the post-Soviet region has seen multiple initiatives of economic and political cooperation, several of which have since 1 january 2015 been pooled into the Eurasian Economic Union. Can we hypothesize that just like in Western Europe, the cooperation of a few post-Soviet states will eventually extend into a 'Eurasian' organizational field beyond Russia and beyond norms & values?

The 'Eurasian' organisational field can be delineated as consisting of the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union, and several subregional integration initiatives like the Russia-Belarus Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and even Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Common values and interests were the central factors in the structuration process, as was the notion of path dependent copying, since USSR disintegration was instantly followed by CIS integration. In the face of the implosion of the USSR, common interests were however not only to be interpreted as idealistic, but also as a matter of survival and damage control in the face of possible crisis. As for the centralisation of resources, The 1991-92 Belavezha and Alma Aty agreements and the 1993 CIS Ustav were the first sign of collective definition of the CIS in the early nineties upon which subsequent subregional integration initiatives were built. This gradual centralisation of resources, along with an increased sense of common values and interests indicates that one could speak of a second, Eurasian organizational field on the European continent.

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[13]   http://www.hrw.org/node/122474

There is however an important difference between the European and the Eurasian organisational fields: unlike in the EU, Russia plays a major, quasi hegemonic role in each and one of the organisations in Eurasia; the Collective Security Treaty organisation, the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union, etc. This divergence between the organisational fields echoes the situation between Western and Eastern Europe. The fact that one country can play such a big role in a region somewhat differs from the current situation in Western Europe.

Another reason for concern, or at least apprehensiveness, is that Russia has started explicitly contrasting the difference in norms and values in its foreign policy rhetoric vis-à-vis the West. Simultaneously, the common interests ànd common values of the Eurasian organisational field are stressed. The LGBT case and the positive reception of the law on gay propaganda is a good example how rejecting 'western' values and even condoning several levels of state violence seems to have a ricochet effect in the region, where several law proposals on gay propaganda are drafted and will be voted in the near future.

And last but not least, quid Ukraine? After years of balancing between East and West, regime change in Ukraine led to a decidedly pro-European choice. On the level of LGBT rights however, there is no governmental support. As mentioned earlier on, the fact that Maidan hero and new Kyiv mayor Vitaly Klitschko has said that he will protect human rights but will not stand up for gay and lesbian people increases the earlier mentioned risk of state violence. This selective pro-western stance that still gives leeway to homophobia could become one of the Achilles heels of Ukraine's europeanisation. Ironically, Russia simultaneously has an active policy of depicting Ukraine's western turn as gay and the new Ukrainian government as a gay club. One of the Russian 'Antimaidan' movement's leaders even suggested to call the movements 'Stop Pidorasy' (pederasts).

In this sense, both for the EU as for Russia, LGBT policies risk to become increasingly instrumentalised. For the EU, it can become benchmark for testing Ukraine's readiness to embrace (and enforce?) European fundamental values. For Russia, LGBT policies can be instrumentalised not so much a foreign policy tool, but a tool to strengthen internal policies that increases legitimacy and constructs a common interest within the Eurasian organisational field.

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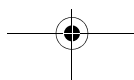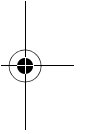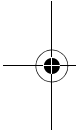
The effects of austerity policies on gender inequality in the PIIGS

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Introduction

Our aim is to understand the gender impact of the EUd austerity policies in Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain, or the PIIGS countries.

These austerity policies were a response to the global crisis that began in 2007 with the collapse of the mortgage system in the United States and spread to other countries (Chesnais, 2008). In 2015, its effects are still alive.

The PIIGS governments adopted severe measures in order to solve economic problems, in particularly making cuts in public spending (called austerity measures). The purpose of these measures was to reduce the deficit and at the same time achieve a balanced budget. However, according to several authors, there was no general plan and these measures were not suitable for solving structural problems (Álvarez, Luengo y Uxó, 2013).

Nevertheless our interest is focused on indicators related to gender equality after the austerity measures' implementation.

We use the feminist economics methodological approach, which aims to find the different effects on women and men of economic decisions (Galvez & Rodriguez, 2012). For example, the feminist perspective analyses what kind of investments become facilitators of equity.

In order to understand the link between the crisis and gender politics, we have chosen the countries within the PIIGS group. The reason is obvious: they are (and continue to be) the countries that have suffered most dramatically

from the economic crisis within the EU, and have been forced to implement severe measures to cut public spending and tackle tougher internal devaluation, even reaching their health care systems. In fact, some authors believe that this crisis could be identified as a shock to the health care system.

Perhaps the worst situation is Greece which, since the beginning of 2007, has suffered more severely than all other EU countries. To highlight some figures, we could mention that adult unemployment rose from 6.6% in 2008 to 16.6% in 2011, and debt grew from 104% in 2007 to 143% of GDP in 2010.

The crisis undoubtedly has many consequences, including implications for health. For example, in Spain and in Greece cases of mental disorder and suicide have increased (Bernal, Gasparrini, Artundo and McKee, 2013; Karanikolos et al., 2013). Not only has the health care system been affected, but many other people have health issues as a result of the reduction in the levels of quality of life.

The situation in relation to the crisis was that Greece met with an inability to pay its debt and had to be rescued. This cost, and is costing, dearly because the measures are harsh. Greece experienced austerity measures and tested their effectiveness for subsequent export to other countries with the same problems; Rubini said it was similar to when a canary was sent down a coalmine before the miners to see if the air was contaminated or breathable (Rubini, 2010).

Meanwhile, Italy had emerged from the economic crisis that it too had suffered, but the ineffectiveness of government reforms led to the fall of the prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, and the parliamentary appointment of a technocrat sponsored by the EU.

Meanwhile, the crisis in Spain has been characterized by the collapse of the real estate and financial sectors and an increase in unemployment to record levels. Spain, together with Greece, has the highest unemployment rates of all EU countries (Eurostat, 2014). In the years prior to the economic crisis, about 50% of borrowing and lending companies were dedicated to real estate and construction, with a significant increase in housing construction without buyers; the bursting of the housing bubble and the financial crisis took place simultaneously, and each reinforced the other (Colom, 2012).

Ireland was also affected by the global financial crisis and its government faced strong internal problems; it was perhaps the first country that came through such difficulties. The Irish housing market boom began in the mid-nineties of the last century and, as in other countries, it ended around 2007. It is important to note that in the years of the housing bubble, about 20% of the

jobs created corresponded to the construction sector, while housing prices increased and net migration rate was close to 10% (Aramburu, 2007).

In this context, we analyse the impact of the economic crisis, and particularly the austerity measures implemented to fight against it, in terms of gender equity.

In order to analyse this phenomenon, we will present some statistics showing how certain indicators have involved gender inequality.

One of the most used statistical tools is the Gender Inequality Index (GII). This is an index made up of several indicators that give rise to a number that is between 0 and 1 showing gender inequality in different countries (with 0 being the least inequality, 1 maximum inequality).

After using the GII index to help summarize gender inequality between countries, we will discuss a number of indicators related to health, time use and the labour market; finally, we will describe the evolution over the years of crisis and austerity policies in the five countries in question.

Theoretical approach to gender impact of economic crises

According to authors who have analyzed these issues, whenever there is an economic crisis, it affects men and women differently. Whenever there is a problem of this kind in terms of the economy, employment rates, activity and other indicators show that women suffer in a different way to men (Galvez & Rodriguez, 2012; King & Sweetman, 2010).

This means that crises have a gender component which we have to examine in order to understand the phenomenon in its entirety. Though we take it for granted, gender has relatively recently begun to be considered as a fundamental analysis variable. This view has gained strength since the 1960s (Carrasco, 2005; Galvez & Rodriguez, 2012). The problem of the responses adopted to the crisis and the bailout of the banks is that hardly any carry rigid equality measures (Galvez & Torres, 2009).

One of the most important consequences affecting women is the intensification of women's work, both in the public and private sectors (Larrañaga, 2009).

Some authors would assert, from a Marxist perspective, that the women have become the "reserve army of labor work" (Galvez & Rodriguez, 2012) about which Marx spoke in relation to the proletariat.

In this sense, when companies want to cut costs they hire women because they are lower paid and they have fewer job demands than men (Galvez &

Rodriguez, 2012). Thus, it is seen that women come into the labour market during the crisis at the same time that traditional gender roles are intensified. This is possible with an intensification of the working hours in these two areas, with the consequent double work day (Cagatay, 1998). One could argue, therefore, that the crisis has affected women doubly and more intensely (Galvez & Rodriguez, 2012).

Another of the consequences of the crisis for women is that in times of economic recession, the informal economy grows. This affects women more than men because they work more in the informal economy. The figure below illustrates this (Beneira and Floro, 2004: 28).

Figure 1. Dynamics of economics in economic crises
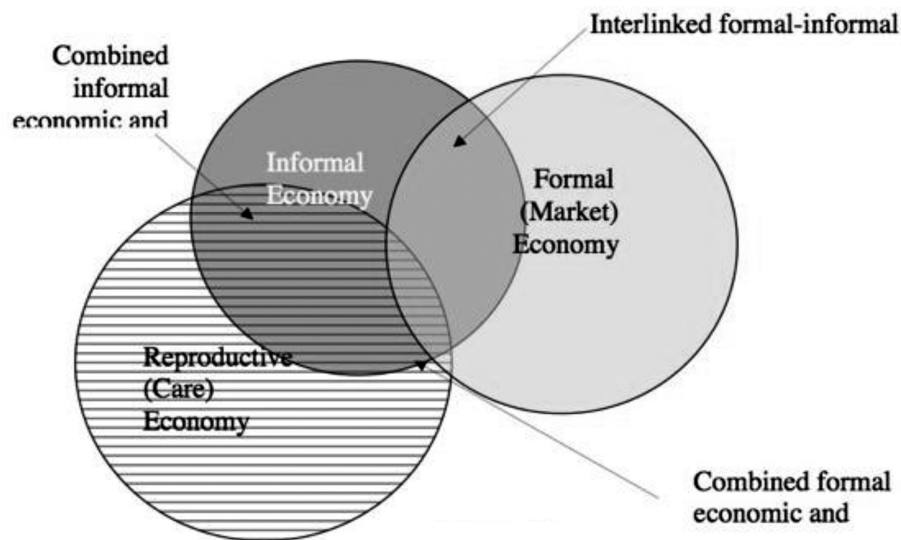
Finally, unemployment in some economic crises grows differently among women than it does for men. This is due to the segmentation of the labour market, which means that in certain cases female unemployment is lower than male (Galvez and Rodriguez, 2012).

With all of these data on economic crises, therefore, we expect to find that analysis of statistics in this economic crisis will show an increase in the female participation rate; a decrease in female unemployment, although in lower quality jobs; and an increase in the informal economy.

Gender indicators during the economic crisis

Health

The following graph shows GII data on wage inequality, rate of activity, healthy life expectancy, etc. It shows not only how gender inequality has evolved, but also how this could affect certain aspects of the lives of people during the crisis.

Figure 2. Evolution of the gender inequality index from 2004-2013
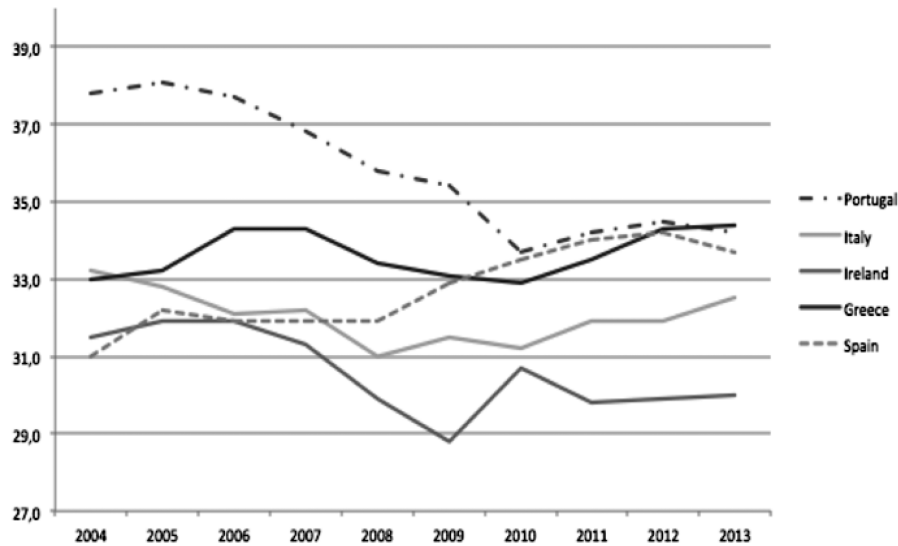
The chart shows the evolution of the GII from 2004 to 2013 in five countries. Spain is placed in the best position (zero being the least inequality and 100 the maximum), while the other countries have reduced inequality between men and women.

However, remember that this composite index consists of a number of variables such as the difference between rates of activity, level of education, pay gap, etc. It is necessary to look more closely at the indicators for these data to see if they have behaved in the way that we are describing.

The first conclusion is that in Greece and Italy inequality has increased in the austerity period. In the crisis period all the countries scored badly, and Spain was the only one where the index decreased.

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Figure 3. Evolution of healthy life from 2004 to 2013, segregated by gender
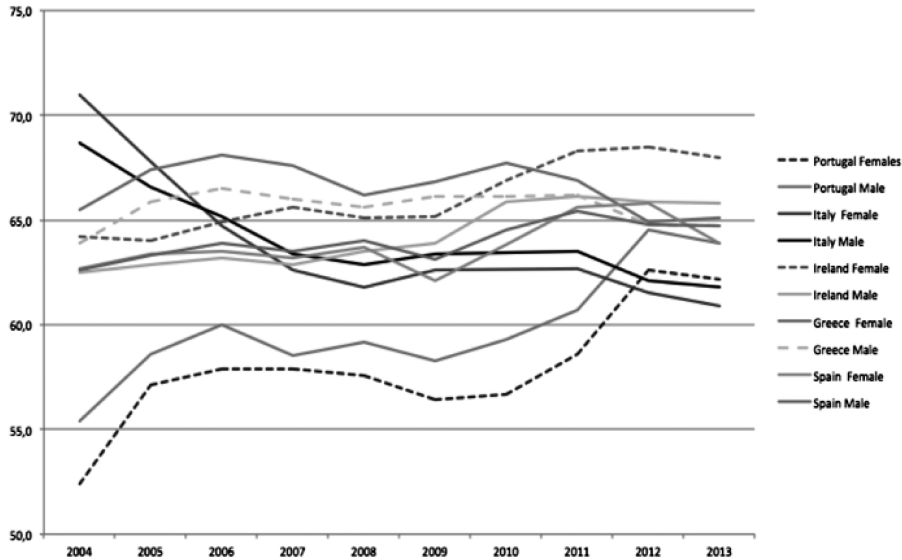
Paradoxically, in most countries – with the exception of Portugal – healthy life decreases slightly in the years of greatest economic boom, while in the years at the start of the crisis it increases.

In 2011, quality of life was reduced in the PIIGS countries. This was the time when the above measures or austerity policies were implemented, rather than the economic crisis proper.

However, this affected men and women in different ways. While in Ireland during the years of economic crisis the healthy life of women continued to increase and that of men remained constant, in the years of austerity (or in the case of Ireland, at the end of the crisis) the tendency in women was reversed, while for men it remained stable.

Greece showed similar levels of health in men and women. This would confirm the assertion of Galvez and Torres (2009), who claim that measures to overcome the crisis have only reinforced the vulnerability of certain social groups.

Spanish, Portuguese and Italian women have all shown similar trends. Women generally have a less healthy life than men. However, in Italy at the beginning of the crisis period, women had healthier lives than men. In this sense, the austerity policies have not only worsened living conditions and health for women, but for men, too.

Overall, however, the years of austerity policies have been worse for

encouraging a healthy lifestyle than the years of economic crisis and, at least in the short term, they have not led to an improvement in the lives of people. Again, the thesis of Gálvez and Torres (2009) is confirmed, that the austerity policies are responsible for saving states, but not people.

Figure 4. Evolution of life expectancy for PIIGS, differentiated by sex, from 2003-2012
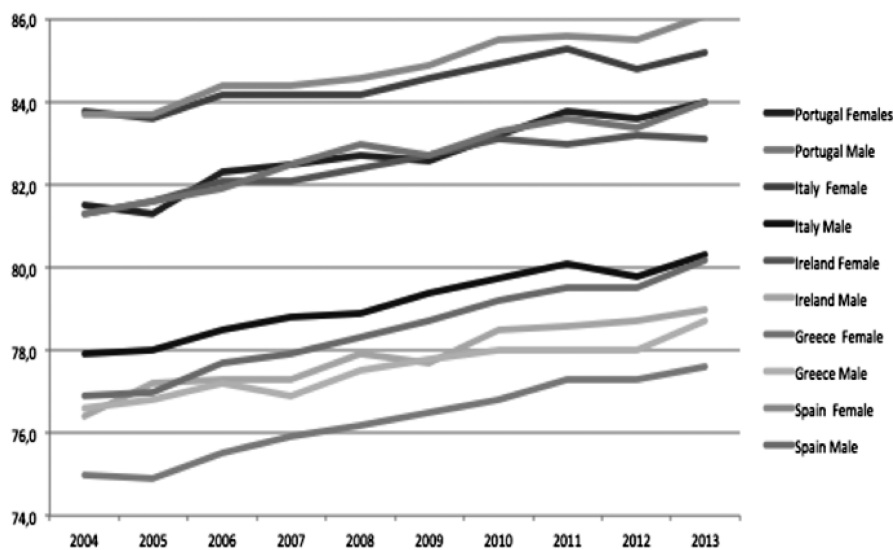
With life expectancy linked to health, the numbers are not drastically reduced during the crisis; however, compared with the previous indicators of 2011-2012, the figure is worse, because it has reduced life expectancy at birth.

However, in the case of women, life expectancy is reduced further than for men, in whom longevity is not reduced but remains stable.

Much has been said about the cuts that have occurred in health care systems. In Spain, for example, some drugs and some care benefits were taken out of the public health care system, such as dependency aid.

Women in the labour market crisis and austerity measures

We said at the beginning that during economic downturns women intensify their working day because they leave the labour market but, paradoxically, their work in the home increases because revenues are reduced and they do not have paid domestic help.

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In the next table we can see the time women spend at home in time-use surveys. Only data for Spain are currently available.

Another problem is that these surveys are not performed every year, and there are only two: 2002-2003 and 2008-2009. So they can only really show what happened with the economic crisis and recession, and not what might happen as a result of the austerity measures, because the data are not available.

Table 1. Main daytime activity in Spain (Source: INE)

	Total		Men		Women	
	% People	Hours by day	% People	Hours by day	% People	Hours by day
0 Personal care	100	11:30	100	11:33	100	11:26
1 Work	33	7:24	39	7:55	28	6:43
2 Study	12	5:09	13	5:13	13	5:05
3 Family and home	83	3:38	75	2:32	92	4:29
4 Voluntary work	12	1:58	9	2:10	14	1:51
5 Social life	57	1:49	56	1:54	59	1:43
6 Sports	40	1:52	43	2:03	37	1:40
7 Hobbies	30	1:54	36	2:03	24	1:38
8 Media	88	2:57	88	3:06	89	2:49
9 Non specificity	84	1:23	87	1:25	82	1:21

The result of the distribution of housework shows that women dedicate two more hours each day to this activity than men. However, this does not mean that women work, on average, less time away from home than men: the difference in working hours is just half an hour.

In any case, it should be noted that the survey was conducted in 2003, and more recent data show that the sexual division of labour is even more evident, and women spend many more hours on housework than men.

It is also striking in the 2009 survey that men and young women devote the same hours to research activities. We might think, therefore, that among the younger adults the trend of unequal division of labour is likely to change, since the two genders give the same value to hours of academic work.

Figure 5. Evolution of the activity rate by sex, from 2004-2013 (Eurostat)
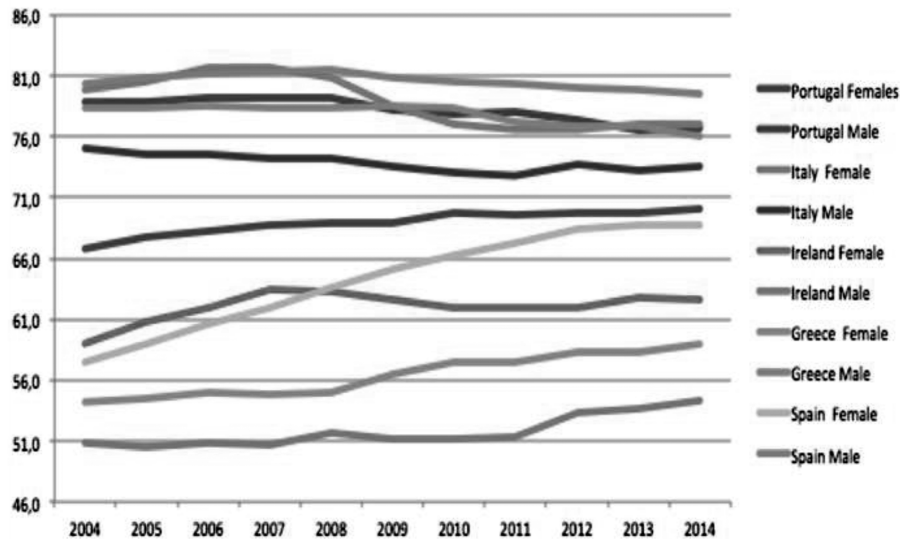
In the chart above, it is possible to check the hypothesis that was proposed at the beginning: while the labour force participation of women is increased, that of men decreases with the crisis. One thing we can say is that women are a reserve army during times of recession. They are an instrument to turn to when the work of men is in crisis. As long as the economy is functioning correctly, the women remain in relative inactivity; however, during recession, women return to the labour market.

In fact, the model shows that men continue as the breadwinners: women's work is subsidiary and is reduced to times when there is economic recession, and even then in most cases is subsidiary work.

In the PIIGS, the trend of the activity rate of men is clearly opposite to that of women. In the five contexts, the male activity rate shows a relative decrease in the final moments of the recession period, coinciding with the austerity measures.

Ireland is the only country which has seen the female participation rate fall, but with years of intensification of austerity measures, it has increased again.

The only activity curves and trends that seem unaffected by the crisis are those of Spain. In Spain, the female employment rate has, since the beginning of the crisis period, seen a growing trend. It was formerly one of the lowest activity rates in Europe (along with the other PIIGS countries). The trend is that more women are incorporated in greater numbers into the labour market, but they still tend to be part-time employees.

Figure 6. Evolution of part-time employment rate by sex, 2004-2014
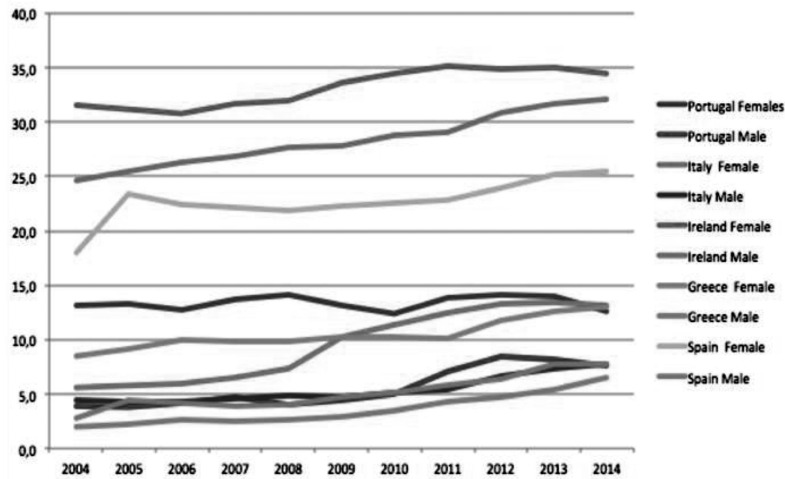
In all five countries there is a tendency towards bias in the labour market, a phenomenon exacerbated by the economic crisis.

However, we see that Irish men have further increased their percentage of part-time work, and they have the highest rate of PIIGS bias.

Thus, we see that in place of women finding full time jobs, men are actually watching their gender partiality rate increase. This occurs especially in the years of the implementation of austerity measures.

Figure 7. Evolution of the unemployment rate by gender, 2004-2013
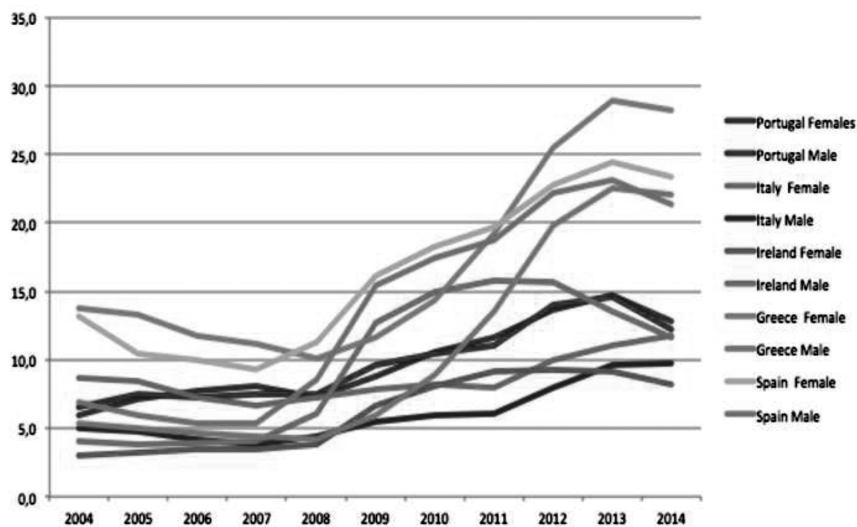
The table shows that in all countries and for both sexes, the unemployment rate has increased since 2008, except for Ireland, where unemployment is reduced for men, and is stable for women.

The country that has biggest increase in unemployment for both sexes is Greece, which also has the highest unemployment rate of both groups.

One effect of the economic crisis has been the reduction in difference in unemployment rates between men and women. While before the crisis there were differences, the latest data show unemployment equality, with the exceptions mentioned.

What is striking about the data is that the austerity measures that sought to combat the economic crisis and unemployment rates, at least in the short term, failed to reduce it.

Figure 8. Evolution of the wage gap
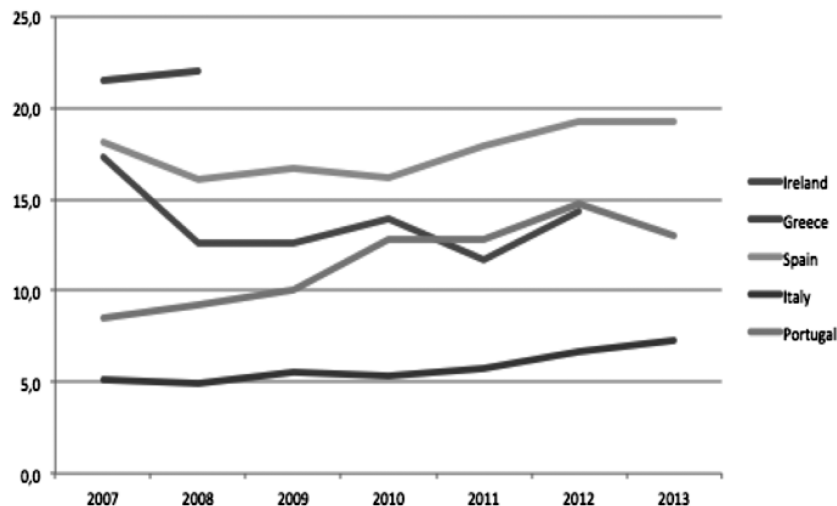
Generally speaking, the economic crisis and the subsequent measures to resolve it produced an increase in the wage gap.

This trend manifests itself mainly in countries like Italy and Spain, and to a lesser extent Ireland and Portugal, where the trend has been less linear.

However, we can say that the crisis has brought about a deterioration in wage conditions for employees. Thus, if in general terms the crisis led to a reduction in unit labour cost (Alvarez et al., 2013), we could say that it remains low among women as a result of the wage gap which, far from being reduced in recent years, has increased.

Some social indicators

With the following data, we show some statistics that claim to illustrate certain social issues that contribute to the empowerment of women.

It is useful to start with divorce data, because economic tensions are an important contributory factor to the breakdown of couples. However, the data presented may suggest that the crisis and its associated problems cause women to be less likely to separate from their husbands, or to postpone the decision.

Figure 9. Evolution of the divorce rate, for 2002-2011
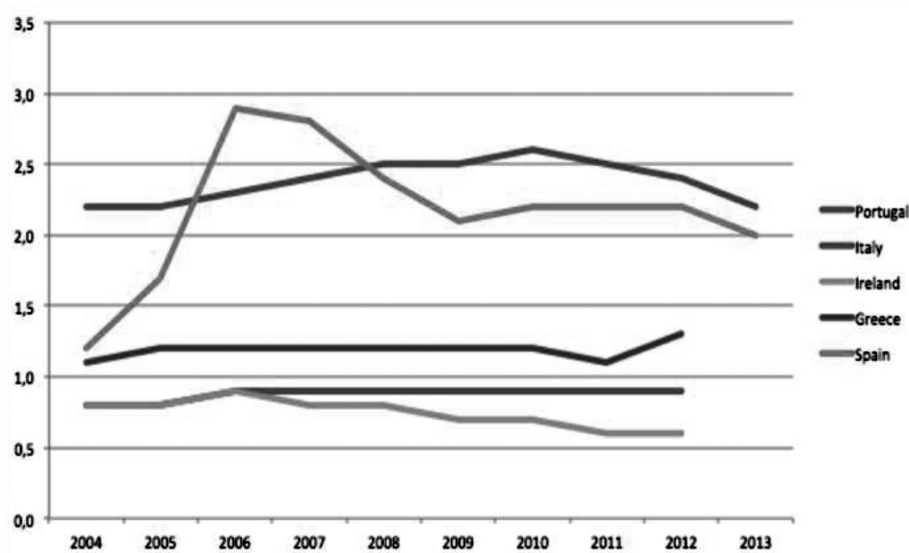
Once again, we find that the data cannot show the implications of austerity policies, for the latest year available for the divorce rate is 2011. However, we can infer two trends from the chart above: on the one hand, rates of divorce in Italy, Ireland and Greece remained relatively stable throughout the crisis period, whereas Spain saw the rate reduce in 2007 following a dramatic upturn.

Another factor that can show the level of empowerment of women is the percentage of women in higher education.

Figure 10. Evolution of the proportion of women among students at level 5, 2001-2012
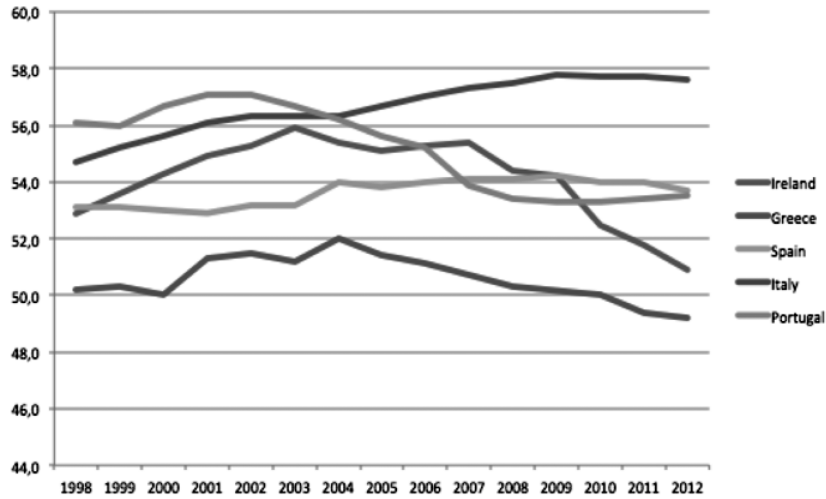
Clearly Ireland is the country which has seen the greatest decrease in the proportion of women in higher education.

We see that the crisis has led to a decrease in the number of people taking up higher education, and it seems that though austerity measures are solving economic problems, they are not increasing the number of people in higher education.

Figure 11. Evolution of the proportion of women in tertiary education, 2003-2013

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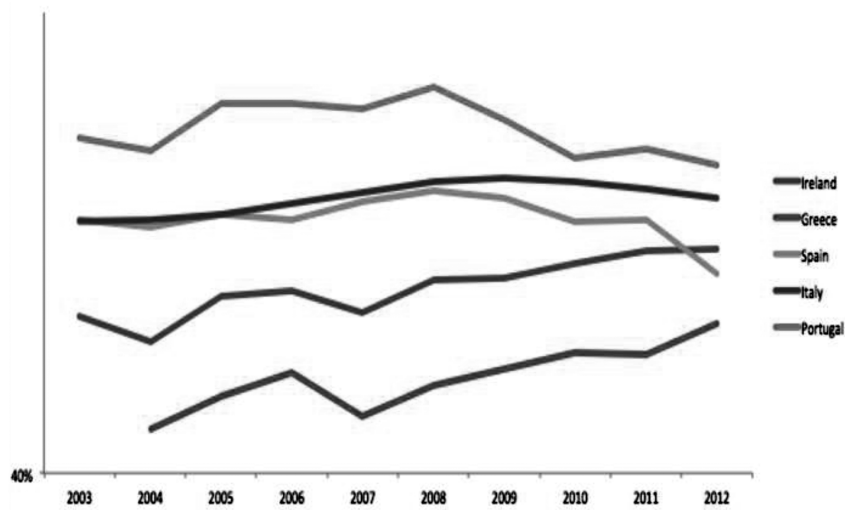
With the exception of Italy, in all countries the percentage of women in tertiary education was reduced during the period of the crisis, this could establish a link between the increase in male unemployment and participation rates in tertiary education.

However, we have seen that women earn less, despite having more training and working more part time. This means that, aside from the crisis, they invest in training; however, despite this, many women continue to hold more traditional roles. The lack of independence in women with these levels of salary and part-time work should be explored further.

Conclusions

It is evident that equality is not a "robot" that is automatically activated without requiring attention or review. We must be attentive to gender inequalities because they are deeply rooted in society, and if the context is "confused", then the situation returns to a state of inequality for women. Unequal societies ultimately offer fewer opportunities to both sexes.

In the midst of this situation of inequality, we must also point out that in the context of a crisis, the most vulnerable are dealt the most difficult hand. Countries with "reasonable" positions in terms of gender inequality have seen their dream of attaining equality vanish. Far from women reaching male levels and conditions of employment, all these conditions and levels have been reduced, so there has been a levelling in the negative.

Therefore, we can conclude that the austerity measures have had an impact on the lives of people, because the healthy life expectancy has fallen in all the countries analysed.

We cannot see a tendency in the data because the cuts have occurred in the last two years, and the statistics only show data collected from the first period. However, they do show a tendency, which is that if the measures continue to be implemented in the same direction, the downward trend that has already begun will also continue in the same direction. We see that improvements in the quality of life are reversing, and it is necessary to wait and see what exactly happens in the long term.

In general, the austerity policies are reinforcing some of the gender stereotypes, and some trends are shattering the equality that was on the agendas of governments. These issues were put to one side because of the crisis. However, we cannot establish general consequences applicable to all countries.

In this sense we must take into account a couple of thoughts: first, we talk about PIIGS as a whole when in fact they have been dynamic, with differences not only in relation to the austerity measures, but also in situations regarding gender; second, beyond gender, it could be argued that the same patterns of activity in the PIIGS economies do not cause the same results (while Ireland is emerging from the crisis, according to some authors, Greece is in a critical situation that continues to expand its debt and need for more funding).

Beyond the gender impact of austerity policies, we see that in fact these types of measure have not resolved the problem of unemployment, and the economy has not advanced. This has been verified in the case of Greece where, with very strong austerity measures, unemployment has grown rapidly.

Lastly, it is very important to consider that the data may take much longer to process. For example, we have seen that many of the statistics used are from 2011,and we need to wait for the further data; this means that we cannot analyse fully the effects of public policies on society. This, in our view, reinforces the sense that the policies administered have had a negative effect on society, because all the measures have been implemented without true knowledge of their potential effects on people.

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The Role of External Security Actors in East Asia

How the EU and the United States shape regional security relations

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In recent years, the EU and the US, whose economic prosperity increasingly depends on their trade relations with – and, by extension, regional stability in – East Asia, have aspired to play a greater role in East Asian security affairs. In the context of their re-engagement in East Asia, this article analyses and compares how the EU and the US have conceptualized and performed their roles as (re)emerging security actors in that region. The analysis suggests that the EU, despite its material and institutional constraints in the area of security politics, partly succeeds in shaping regional security relations by taking on the role of a de-securitizing actor, whereby its strength derives from its ability to provide regional partners (and their policies) with legitimacy and recognition. Thereby, the EU's even-handed approach towards the region's major powers China and Japan contrasts the role of the US, which rather builds on its military power and long-established regional alliances to strengthen the regional securitization of China.

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East Asia's regional security context

In international security studies, conceptualizations of East Asia are generally linked to its network of interconnected regional disputes, in which the security problems of regional actors are closely intertwined. The regional geography, which corresponds to this network, considerably varies and depends on the recognition of interdependencies in regional security relations. As suggested by Buzan and Waever (2003), the security relations of regional actors become intertwined in processes of securitization and de-securitization, whereby actors either construct something (e.g. another country) as an existential security threat (thereby *securitizing* it) or refuse to view something (e.g. another country) as existentially threatening (thereby *de-securitizing* it) (ibid, 44). In this context, interdependence in East Asia's security relations has been viewed as rooted in – and framed by – three historical processes, which continue to shape its patterns of cooperation and conflict today (ibid, 93-185).

Firstly, Japanese pre-1945 expansionism and occupation in North and South-East Asia has resulted in residual fear and dislike of Japan across the region (ibid, 136). In this context, Japans failure to reconcile itself with its past continues to burden its relations with China and South Korea, whose securitization of Japan's identity reinforces resentments and tensions in the region. Secondly, Cold War superpower rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States separated countries in both North and South-East Asia along an alliance system, which, until today, continues to shape East Asia's regional security network (ibid, 128-136). While South-East Asia has partly overcome its Cold-War legacy in a process of regional integration, North-East Asia remains deeply affected by its Cold War heritage that manifests itself in deadlocked cross-strait relations and the division of the Korean Peninsula. Furthermore, since the end of the Cold War, the United States has maintained its regional alliance system in North (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan) and South-East Asia (Philippines, Thailand), which continues to provide it with considerable influence in the region. Thirdly, China's rapid economic development, its growing military expenditure and its territorial claims in the East and South China Sea have given rise to the view among regional actors (in particular those directly confronted by Chinese territorial claims) that China's rise and its evolving regional policy constitute an increasing threat to the region's stability (ibid, 155-171).

Together, all three processes continue to shape East Asia's regional trans-

formation, whereby the (de)securitization dynamic surrounding the 'rise of China' has arguably evolved as the major driving force. On the one hand, China's evolving role in regional disputes and its growing economic and military power as well as the general mistrust among a number of regional actors towards the intentions of China's political elite have led to an increasing securitization of China's role in the region, particularly surrounding its perceived 'assertive' behavior (on the discourse of 'assertiveness' see Jerden, 2014; Johnston 2013). In particular, China's rise has been emphatically securitized in the politics of those regional actors who are directly affected by Chinese territorial claims (Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam). In North-East Asia, this trend has been particularly visible in light of territorial disputes between China and Japan, which surround sovereignty claims over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and led to deteriorating relations between both regional powers. In South-East Asia, regional actors have securitized China's regional behavior in light of its territorial claims in the South China Sea as well as its land reclamation activities on disputed reefs.

On the other hand, another group of regional actors, including South Korea and Singapore, have taken a more balanced approach towards the region's great powers China and Japan. Furthermore, ASEAN (even though some of its members are affected by Chinese territorial claims) has emerged as an important regional de-securitizing actor, which has played a key role in the setup of economic and security organizations (e.g. the ASEAN Regional Forum, the East Asia Summit). Through its promotion of multilateralism and diplomacy, ASEAN has taken on a critical role in strengthening regional connectivity and institutionalization, and, by extension, the socialization of regional actors (on ASEAN's role in this process see Acharya, 2005).

However, East Asia's (de)securitization dynamics are not only shaped by regional actors, but further influenced by external involvement. As already indicated, the US has played a crucial role in the evolution of regional patterns of cooperation and conflict, and continues to do so by maintaining a strong alliance system in the region. Further, the US' recent re-engagement in East Asia, framed by its 'rebalance policy', suggests a deepening US involvement in regional security affairs. At the same time, the US is not necessarily the only external actor with the ability to shape the region's security relations. While some scholars have indicated the potential role of East Asia's neighbours Russia (Hill & Lo, 2013) and India (Naidu, 2013), a growing number of scholars have, perhaps surprisingly so, analyzed and recognized the EU's aspi-

ration to play a stronger role in East Asian security affairs (Berkofsky, 2014; Yeo, 2013, Richey & Ohn, 2012).

Perhaps even more surprisingly, the EU's potential role as an international security actor in East Asia has often been viewed with considerable – albeit careful – optimism and challenged widespread skepticism regarding the EU's ability to play a meaningful role in regions beyond its immediate neighbourhood (ibid). In particular, analyses of the EU's evolving role in East Asia have emphasized the EU's 'soft power' contributions and its role in responding to non-traditional security threats as an indication of the EU's growing relevance in regional security affairs (Berkofsky, 2014; Richey & Ohn, 2012). However, in how far the EU is indeed able to use its diplomatic and economic weight as well as its strengthened security relations to shape regional processes of (de)securitization, and therefore the social patterns of cooperation and conflict, has yet to be fully addressed.

In this light, the article moves on to analyze in how far – and through which means – external actors like the US and the EU are able to shape the above-outlined regional patterns of (de)securitization in East Asia. The article proceeds by briefly outlining the US' reengagement in East Asia and discusses in how far the US' regional policy shapes processes of securitizing China's evolution as a regional actor. In this context, the subsequent section analyzes the EU's emergence as an international security actor in East Asia. Critically, this section suggests that the EU, driven by its bigger member states, derives one of its core strengths as a regional security actor from its ability to provide regional initiatives with legitimacy and recognition (including the ones proposed by China). This quality, it is argued, presents the EU with opportunities to position itself as a de-securitizing actor, which might set an example for other regional actors. In its conclusion, the article compares the EU's approach to that of the US and discusses in how far the EU's regional security policy contrasts and (potentially) de-securitizes the US rebalance to Asia.

The US' rebalance to East Asia: Securitizing China?

The US' 'rebalance to Asia' takes its origin in the article *America's Pacific Century*, authored by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in November 2011, which has become the guiding document for the US policy towards East Asia under the Obama administration (Clinton, 2011). In the following, this section suggests that, since its announcement, the renewed US' East Asia

policy has partly shaped the region's securitization of China through four interrelated processes.

Firstly, as part of its 'rebalance' policy, the US has engaged in encouraging connectivity among its traditional allies and partners across East Asia and adjacent regions. On the one hand, the US contributed to closer economic links among East Asian partners by working towards an agreement on a Trans-Pacific free trade deal (the TPP), which connects Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore with the Americas as well as Australia and New Zealand in the South Pacific. On the other, the US has promoted stronger military connections among its regional partners, which particularly material-ized in the evolving military alliance between Japan and Australia (see Satake & Ishihara, 2012). Moreover, while the settlement of the 'comfort women issue' between South Korea and Japan has not been directly linked to a role of the United States, US pressure to end the dispute that had long constrained relations between two of its closest regional allies has likely played an impor-tant role in that process.

Secondly, the US has modernized its traditional alliances and encouraged its regional partners to take greater responsibility for their own security and defense policy (Thayer, 2015). Crucial elements in this context are the revi-sion of US-Japanese defense guidelines, which enables Japan to defend itself outside its own territory as well as the Obama Administration's decision to lift the decades-long US embargo on arms sales to Vietnam. Moreover, the US has complemented such measures with strengthening its own military presence in the region, for example through additional marine deployments in Australia and US littoral ship presence in Singapore (see Campbell & Andrews, 2013).

Thirdly, the US has taken a rather critical stance on China-led regional initiatives like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and its One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative. In the case of AIIB, the US not only refused to join the bank but also lobbied its regional allies to not sign onto this institution, which the US has viewed as a Chinese instrument to expand its influence in the region (see also Keck, 2015; Hong, 2015).

Finally, the US has securitized China's land reclamation programme on contested South China Sea reefs by discursively referring to China's policy as a threat to the freedom of navigation. On the basis of this narrative, the US responded to Chinese land reclamation by sailing warships near disputed reefs in the South China Sea within the framework of 'freedom of navigation opera-

tions', which have subsequently led to increased tensions in Sino-US relations (see also Ku, Fravel & Cook, 2016).

Together, these four processes suggest that US measures related to its 'rebalance' policy in East Asia have reinforced the securitization of China as a regional security threat and thereby shaped regional patterns of cooperation and conflict. In particular, the US has done so either directly (such as in its response to China's land reclamation programme) or indirectly, by strengthening its partners in the region, many of whom are in territorial disputes with China and fear China's rise as a potential security threat. Moreover, the US rebalance policy has been, at least in great part, internalized by China as a US containment strategy and subsequent attempt to undermine the legitimacy of its role in the region.

Against this background, the following section analyzes whether the European Union, being another external – albeit considerably less powerful – actor in the region, is able to position itself as a relevant security actor in East Asia and shape regional processes of (de)securitization in meaningful ways.

The EU's Evolving Role in East Asian Security Relations: De-Securitizing China's Rise?

The EU's evolving role in – and interaction with – East Asia at the security level needs to be understood in the context of at least three driving processes. Firstly, China's evolution as the EU's most important trading partner (alongside the United States) has made the EU's prosperity, and in particular that of its export-oriented member states, increasingly dependent on regional stability and development in East Asia. Consequently, EU-China relations are increasingly shaped by joint concerns over regional stability and the security of trading routes, which has opened avenues for cooperation, such as in the EU-led anti-piracy mission off the coast of Somalia.

Secondly, in its Lisbon Treaty the European Union has established new institutions, which have become a driving force in positioning the EU as an effective and recognized international security actor. In particular, the creation of the European External Action Service that pools EU competences in foreign and security affairs as well as the installation of an EU High Representative have formed institutions, whose legitimacy directly depends on EU visibility and recognition in international (security) affairs. With growing professionalization, both institutions have become a driving force in strengthening the secu-

rity dimensions of the EU's strategic partnerships, particularly in light of the EU's evolving East Asia relations.

Thirdly, US re-engagement in East Asian politics has provoked the EU to reconsider and refine its own position in that region. In this regard, the EU's 2012 Council guidelines on its foreign and security policy towards East Asia (Council of the European Union, 2012) have been viewed as an EU response to the US rebalance policy that lays out the EU's role in East Asia's regional security (see for example Youngs, 2015). Driven by these processes, the EU has formulated its ambition of becoming 'a more credible security actor in East Asia' (EEAS 2012; 2014). In what is sometimes referred to as the EU's own 'pivot to Asia' (Casarini 2013), based on the 2012 Council guidelines, the EU's evolving foreign and security policy towards East Asia increasingly revolves around five key features.

Firstly, drawing on its own experience, the EU has stepped up its engagement in promoting East Asian integration and multilateralism to improve regional stability. In this regard, the EU has so far concentrated its efforts on ASEAN. Since summer 2015, the EU assigned an ambassador to that organization, doubled its financial assistance and proposed an upgrade of EU-ASEAN relations to the level of a strategic partnership (see Council of the European Union, 2015). These measures further reflect the EU's ambition to gain ASEAN support for becoming a member of the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Defense Minister Meeting Plus (ADMM+), both of which have evolved as the primary organizations for high-level interaction on regional security and defense matters. Inclusion in both organizations would provide the EU with a greater role and presence for mediating between regional actors and strengthen its recognition as a security actor in East Asia.

Secondly, in its 2012 Council Guidelines and later reiterations, the EU has emphasized its intention to not take sides in regional territorial disputes (Council of the European Union, 2012). While this had already been an EU position pre-2012 in an East China Sea context, the EU has become more outspoken in applying the same principle of impartiality in the South China Sea (see for example EEAS, 2015). Thereby, the European Union has made clear that it will 'not in any sense take positions' (Council of the European Union, 2012) or 'get into the legitimacy of specific claims' (EEAS, 2015). Moreover, the EU has positioned itself as a strong proponent of international law and multilateral solutions, and emphasized the importance of UNCLOS and its arbitration procedures in the South China Sea context (see, for exam-

ple, Council of the European Union, 2016). To underscore its support to multilateral talks and institutions, the EU has further expressed its concern regarding the unilateral actions of all South China Sea claimants (i.e. not only those of China), which may further militarize and drive up tensions in the region (ibid.). This way, in contrast to the US, the EU has manifested an image of itself as a relatively neutral actor in the region – thereby withstanding US and Japanese pressure to take a stronger stance against China (see for example Ueta 2013; Kundnani & Tsuruoka 2014; Youngs 2015).

Thirdly, the EU has taken a rather balanced approach in its free trade policy towards East Asia's regional powers and currently negotiates a free trade agreement with Japan in parallel to a comprehensive investment agreement with China. Even though the US has not excluded the future inclusion of China into the TPP framework, the EU's free trade approach, like its role in territorial disputes, seems to somewhat contrast that of the US, at least in so far as it has been received far more positively by China.

Fourthly, the EU's positioning as a proactive security actor in East Asia has focused on addressing non-traditional security threats as well as EU-led crisis management missions, for both of which the EU seeks to form global coalitions. Most prominently, the EU has successfully done so in the context of its anti-piracy campaign off the coast of Somalia, in course of which it cooperated with China and South Korea on a military level. In this context, the EU is currently promoting so-called framework participation agreements (FPAs) that establish the legal foundations for closer cooperation in EU-led crisis management missions (South Korea has become the first East Asian partner to sign an FPA). Furthermore, the EU has been ambitious to strengthen its strategic partnerships with its East Asian partners (China, Japan and South Korea) and its relations with ASEAN in the area of tackling non-traditional security threats, particularly in the context of climate change, disaster relief, anti-terrorism as well as environmental and cyber security. However, while this policy area has often been prioritized at bilateral summits, tangible cooperation at the practical level has been hindered by diverging norms and ambitions as well as lacking trust and, particularly on the part of the EU, lacking competences. Nevertheless, the identification of joint challenges and ambitions has benefitted the EU and its strategic partners in East Asia in so far as it has helped them to construct an image of each other as responsible international security actors.

Finally, the EU, and some of its member states in particular, have taken a

largely positive view of China's economic rise and its regional economic initiatives. In particular, virtually all of the EU's major economies, among them close transatlantic partners like the UK, have joined the China-led AIIB despite strong US opposition to the bank. Moreover, after Luxembourg (March 27), the UK (March 28), Germany (April 1), France and Italy (both April 2) had declared their intention to join the bank, also Australia (April 3) and South Korea (April 11) – both of them close US partners in East Asia – stated their intent to become founding members of AIIB. In this context, the approach of the EU's major economies not only stands in contrast to the US position towards China's initiative, but may have further indirectly encouraged hesitant Asian countries to join the bank and withstand US pressure (see also Perlez, 2015; Harris-Rimmer, 2015). However, while Europe's major economies, driven by economic interests, rewarded China's multilateral approach by legitimizing it with their membership, the EU appeared uncoordinated and divided (only half of its member states joined AIIB) in this process, which has been viewed as preventing it from taking a stronger position in the region (see Renard, 2015). By contrast, the EU appears less divided in its largely positive view of China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative, which China promotes as a connectivity programme that promises to improve infrastructure links between China and Europe, both over land and by sea. In this context, the EU and China have furthermore engaged in a dialogue to explore synergies between OBOR and the Juncker Investment Plan with the ambition to develop joint infrastructure projects (see also Herrero, 2015).

Together, these key features characterize the EU's emerging role as a foreign and security actor in East Asia. As part of this process, the EU's even-handed approach towards the region's powers has stood in contrast to the US alliance-based regional engagement. On the one hand, the EU's proactive promotion of multilateral organizations, regional diplomacy and cooperation in areas of non-traditional security as well as its firm position of not taking sides in regional territorial disputes have provided the EU with the profile of an engaged but relatively neutral international security actor in the region. On the other, the EU's relatively positive view of China's rise and its supportive attitude towards China-led multilateral economic initiatives provide China with positive recognition as a regional actor. In terms of the latter, the EU, and in particular its export-oriented member states, may encourage regional actors to take a more even-handed approach towards the region's powers China and Japan.

In this light, the EU's external support to regional multilateralism, whether initiated by China, ASEAN or others, and its promotion of the regional and international socialization of China (rather than its isolation) can be viewed as a potentially critical contribution to East Asia's evolving processes of (de)securitization. Furthermore, the EU's position of not taking sides in regional territorial disputes, its insistence on diplomatic and multilateral solutions as well as its close political and economic relations with regional actors provide it with the legitimacy and credibility to further develop this role in the future. Thereby, the EU's indirect distancing from the US' approach to the region, albeit often driven by individual member states rather than EU institutions, might in fact position the EU as an external actor, which is increasingly recognized for representing a narrative that provides an alternative to the US securitization of China's rise.

The Role of External Actors in East Asia

As shown by the two sections above, both the EU and the US have recently stepped up their engagement in East Asia, whereby their approaches towards the region vary considerably. On the one hand, the US builds its regional engagement on bilateral security alliances in the region. On the other, the EU, and especially its bigger member states, shape the region by using their economic and diplomatic leverage as well as their ability to provide regional actors (and their policies) with legitimacy and recognition. By promoting the socialization of China in regional multilateral institutions, the EU's policy partly contrasts the US' securitization of China's rise, whereby it increasingly positions itself as an external de-securitizing actor.

However, despite this potentially crucial role for the EU in East Asian security affairs, the analysis also indicates that the EU's ability to play a meaningful role in the region is compromised by its internal division and often driven by individual member states rather than joint EU positions. In this light, the need to unite member state policies constitutes a critical challenge for establishing and developing the EU as a stronger international security actor in East Asia. While the analysis has indicated the EU's role in supporting de-securitizing initiatives in East Asia, it remains to be seen whether the EU is indeed capable of shaping the narratives and policies of regional actors in the long run. In other words, the sustainability of the EU's engagement in East Asia, and that of relatively weak external actors in regional contexts in general, remains an open question.

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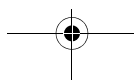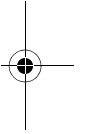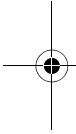
Going deep!
Acquiring new submarines
in common?

An analysis of Dutch and Norwegian security interests, defence traditions and concepts for the use of submarines

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Introduction and analytical approach

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the Netherlands' and Norway's security- and defence policies, including the two countries' defence traditions and strategic cultures. An analysis of the security and defence policies and a systematic comparison between them are of significance when the two countries are investigating possibilities for a comprehensive cooperation program in the area of submarines. This might result in a joint acquisition program for the two countries' navies. In fact, the Netherlands and Norway will seek to replace their submarines during the same time period in the mid 2020's. With regards to their current submarine capability, the Dutch Walrus-class was phased into the Dutch navy in 1990-1993, while the Ula-class was phased into the Norwegian navy in the years between 1989 and 1992. To further develop a submarine capability will be of importance due to the need for both of them to use subma-

rines to conduct clandestine operations at sea because submarines have a higher strategic mobility and endurance during operations than surface vessels. In short, a significant part of the role of submarines is strategic deterrence through its ability to operate covertly and to create a condition of insecurity for the opponent. To further develop such a capability in the years to come is a strategic priority for both countries.

The main aim of this paper is to clarify the main variables that are of relevance when we discuss such a comprehensive cooperation program. By building the analysis upon a report by Tomas Valasek (2011), this paper seeks to identify six variables that will have the most significant impact on such a joint comprehensive cooperation program. The six variables are similarities and differences of strategic cultures, geographic proximities and interests, equal sizes of the defence structures, a common understanding of the aims of the cooperation, trust and solidarity between the parties, and similarities in the competitive conditions for the defence industry. One of the aims of this paper is to state the commonalities and clarify to which extent differences in strategic culture can be an impediment when these two countries might develop a submarine capability in common.

One of the main conclusions drawn is that difference in strategic culture is the most important impediment for a successful comprehensive cooperation program. Strategic culture will here be defined as the shared beliefs, norms and ideas that generate specific expectations about a state's preferences and actions in security and defence policy (Biehl, Giegerich & Jonas 2013: 12). Due to these differences in strategic culture, the Dutch and Norwegian approaches towards the application of military force have differed substantially. This has been due to a far more expeditionary strategic culture in Dutch security policy, while the Norwegian culture has been far more homeland oriented (see e.g. Græger 2007; Noll & Moelker 2013). One of the aims of this paper is to point out which variables that might reduce this impediment and will point out that trust and solidarity between the two countries to a large degree can counterweight differences in strategic culture. This paper will consequently argue that the best outcome for Norway will be if the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture can be utilised for the purpose of the common defence commitments in NATO. In short, it is important to rank these variables so as to decide which of them that has the most influence upon the success or failure of such a cooperative endeavour. The paper therefore applies comparative methods with the aim to clarify the limitations as well as possibilities for such a comprehensive cooperation program.

As this paper also will illustrate, the differences in strategic culture will inevitably result in differences in doctrines and defence structures. In recent years these differences in strategic culture have narrowed somewhat, meaning that the Netherlands and Norway to an increasing extent have developed a more similar approach to how international challenges and threats should be met. Hence, the really big issues in today's European security discourses are whether national strategic cultures have become more similar and to what extent new threats, foreign crises, and institutions have affected strategic thinking also in medium-sized and smaller countries like the Netherlands and Norway.

This analysis is organised as follows. The first part describes and analyses the security policy framework for Dutch-Norwegian cooperation in security and defence affairs. It covers issues like the different initiatives that have been taken during recent years on EU and NATO defence cooperation and the different security interests of the two countries. In the second part the six variables will be thoroughly discussed. In the conclusion these six variables will be ranked based upon a qualitative analysis.

The security policy framework for Dutch-Norwegian cooperation

The Pooling and Sharing (EU) and Smart Defence (NATO) Initiatives

Traditionally, the US predominance in NATO has given European governments little reason to bolster their own militaries (Valasek 2011: 2) and provided the European member states strong incentives for free-riding. In this situation the "Ghent framework" on "pooling and sharing" of European defence resources from September 2010 has been widely praised as a very significant breakthrough. Following up the informal defence minister meeting in September 2010, a food for thought paper elaborated by Germany and Sweden was distributed in November the same year. The title was "European Imperative. Intensifying Military Cooperation in Europe" – "Ghent Initiative" (European Union 2010). To spend resources within Europe more efficiently and to maintain a broad array of military capabilities to ensure national political ambitions, as well as Europe's ability to act credibly in crises, are the overarching goals with this initiative.

This EU "pooling and sharing" initiative was followed up in May 2012 by a NATO decision to promote "smart defence" along very much the same lines (NATO 2012; Howorth 2014: 87). The main background was to rationalise and maximise European military capacity and to promote closer European defence coordination. This will be even more important when US strategy is shifting towards Asia and the Pacific. Hence, if the US no longer takes the lead in setting strategy towards Europe's neighbourhood, the only alternative actor is Europeans collectively, i.e. the EU since no European country individually can defend all of its interests all of the time (Biscop 2013b: 7). Then, however, Europeans meet two challenges that have been on the rise since the financial crisis began in 2008. The first challenge is that the defence cuts by the EU- and NATO-member countries have been conducted at purely national level without any reference to what others were doing. The second challenge, derived from the first one, has been a lack of trust which stems from an overvaluation of sovereignty. This is a major factor inhibiting rationalization of Europe's military capacity (Howorth 2014: 88). A combination of differences in strategic cultures and different levels of trust between European countries has had serious effects. The most important one is Europe's diminishing role as a strategic actor in a more multipolar world. Consequently, the EU is a "small power" (Toje 2011).

Such a "small power" will in the future face a different and extremely multifaceted security environment of both symmetrical and asymmetrical challenges and threats. This includes a resurgent Russia which has led to a completely different security situation in Europe. It also includes new security challenges such as cyber-threats and threats emanating from newer developments in technologies, concepts and doctrines. Furthermore, the volatile situation with state-collapses and refugee-flows from the Middle East illustrates the multidimensional challenges in today's Europe. One cause for optimism in this rather grim picture is that Europe at least has several vital interests in common, like preventing threats against Europe's territory from materialising. Therefore, the only way to avoid such a diminishing role of Europe in security and defence affairs is significantly cross-border defence cooperation, coordination and integration. This might include measures like common acquisition of defence equipment, common maintenance agreements, training and education programs, a more wide-spread sharing of infrastructure such as training grounds or storage facilities, and the creation of joint military units. The main problem within the EU, but the same is the case for NATO as well, is that

much of it is wasted in fruitless duplication across 28 armies, 24 air forces and 21 navies (Howorth 2014: 85). Simultaneously, different parts of Europe are faced with different sets of security challenges and threats. Since the US might not be the force for European cohesion as it once was, we are also witnessing the existence of diverging geostrategic preoccupations among European allies (Simón 2015: 166).

The strong tendencies by European powers to organise their defence cooperation in "clusters" is an important feature in this development. In this cluster approach, often like-minded nations come together to cooperate on defence procurement, investments and policy (Howorth 2014: 89-91). The motif behind such a cluster (or "nodal") approach is primarily to save money, to generate and further develop European cooperation on security and defence, and to generate trust among the participants.

The Netherlands and Norway's security interests and defence traditions

Therefore, the sovereignty concept must be given another interpretation in today's European security framework. Hence, up until now the European EU- and NATO-members have preferred autonomy over capabilities causing a sovereignty-capability paradox in today's European security framework (Major & Mölling 2013: 15-16). This sovereignty-capabilities paradox together with a "nodal" form for defence cooperation is a useful background for analysing the Dutch-Norwegian cooperation on new submarines. For the Netherlands and Norway, bi- and multinational cooperation with European allies will make an important contribution to transatlantic burden-sharing. This is also important politically for the two countries with their Atlantic outlook in security and defence affairs. For both of them NATO is the most important security institution, which most clearly was underlined by the former Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Uri Rosenthal in 2011 when he stated that "... The trans-Atlantic cooperation remains for me the cornerstone of the Netherlands security policy. The treaty organisation remains leading in the world. NATO is first and foremost a community of values" (quoted in Noll & Moelker 2013: 261). Nevertheless, and as the conclusions from the European Council from June 2015 underlines, Europe's security environment has changed dramatically (European Council 2015). Therefore, the European Council will keep security and defence regularly on its agenda. This might, in a longer perspective, chal-

lenge the Netherlands traditional Atlantic foreign policy outlook, also because the Dutch EU presidency during spring 2016 will work an EU White Book on defence. This work will be conducted in parallel with the elaboration of an EU global strategy. The European Council will in June 2016 take the final decisions on such a strategy which will replace the current EU strategy from 2003.

In this perspective, a joint acquisition program will be far easier to achieve if the two countries first share the same security- and defence policy challenges, and second have compatible strategic cultures as a foundation for the elaboration of their defence policies. If this is the case, it will be far more feasible to develop and agree requirements for new submarines that are not only similar, but identical. Clearly, identical requirements and an identical design of the submarines will be the best solution in all areas, also including being the most cost-effective one. This has, however, on many important issue areas traditionally not been the case.

In fact the Netherlands was after the end of the Cold War one of the first European countries to start a defence transformation towards expeditionary forces, including the abandonment of conscription in 1993. Central in the Dutch defence reform were investments in light, modular forces and maritime transport capacity. In comparison, the adaptation of Norwegian forces to a new security situation was a much slower process. Norway kept for a long time its large mobilization army, a large number of permanent military installations and a corresponding large number of out-dated defence materiel. This also posed major financial challenges for the Norwegian defence forces. The result was a double imbalance: first, between adopted budgets and defence plans; and second, between the new tasks required of the Norwegian military, like participation in international military operations, and its ability to carry them out. In fact, the Norwegian adaptation process was much slower than was the case in many other NATO member states like Belgium, France, Great Britain and the Netherlands. One major reason behind this reluctance was undoubtedly Russia′s military capabilities on the Kola Peninsula.

However, the reasons behind these differences are only partly a result of different threat perceptions among European allies. Differences in strategic cultures and corresponding differences in defence discourses must also be taken into account (Græger 2007; 2009). This seems in many ways as a paradox since the Netherlands and Norway share a corresponding foreign policy tradition mostly related to two aspects. The first one is the maritime-commercial tradition and the second one is an internationalist-idealist tradition in foreign

policy conduct. For the Netherlands, "going Dutch" has traditionally meant an integrative approach of Defence, Diplomacy and Development. Consequently, the Netherlands has actively striven to improve the world, using all assets, including the military (Noll & Moelker 2013: 263-264). Norway's foreign policy tradition is fully compatible with the Dutch tradition of claiming "moral leadership" through the country's policy of "peace and reconciliation", also including trademarking this policy "global Norway" so as to underline Norway's dependencies on an open world economy (Tamnes 2009: 259).

Nevertheless, when the Netherlands internationalised its defence forces in the 1990's, Norway kept the national focus. The main reason was primarily the nation-building role of the Norwegian defence policy and how this was incorporated in central national concepts, values and military practises. This rendered it resistant to change (Græger 2009: 4). Other factors explaining this paradox was how defence policy intertwined with other areas of domestic policy, so when changes in the defence establishment had negative consequences for these areas, opposition was provoked, not least in the case of district policy issues. This illustrates that the Norwegian defence discourse has mainly been about national, territorial defence (ibid).

When substantial changes in Norwegian defence policy started to take place in 2000-2001, this was mainly a result of changed demands from NATO on the need for defence reform. Especially the US influenced Norwegian defence reform efforts. One of the overarching aims that explain this change of policy was to avoid political and military marginalisation in NATO. In fact, Norway has striven increasingly hard to prevent marginalisation in the post-Cold War environment (Heier 2006: 236). The Norwegian participation in ISAF in Afghanistan must be understood in this perspective. However, there was an increasing concern in Norway that international military operations dominated too much in NATO.

The Norwegian "Core Area Initiative" from 2008 is indicative underlining the need for NATO to focus more on its core tasks, as well as on the challenges in the NATO periphery (Haraldstad 2014). From a Norwegian perspective, it was the ability to meet potential threats against NATO territory and populations in a robust manner, including in high-end scenarios, that made it possible for the alliance to sustain high-intensity conflicts beyond NATO's borders (Eide 2009). Interestingly, we have seen a corresponding development in the Netherlands regarding international operations. On the one hand, the military operations that the Netherlands have taken part in have shown that

there has hardly been any geographical focus in Dutch security policy. The country has been engaged in UN-, NATO- and EU-led operations all over the world. On the other hand, this has not been without political costs. The ISAF mission in Afghanistan caused political problems in the Netherlands when the Social Democrats in government in 2010 no longer supported the mission due to the changing nature of ISAF from a reconstruction mission to much more of a fighting mission. This led to the fall of the Dutch government (Batty 2010). Hence, we are witnessing an increased scepticism in the Netherlands with regard to the use of military force as an instrument in foreign policy. This is also in line with Norwegian experiences.

Nevertheless, to organise defence cooperation in clusters (or "nodes") is an integral part of Dutch defence policy. This was most recently expressed in the letter from the Dutch Ministry of Defence to the Parliament from 7 November 2014. In this letter Norway is regarded, together with Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg, as "strategic partners". In addition the Dutch defence forces have close cooperation with Denmark, France, Great Britain and the US. These cooperative measures include several issue areas, like the Dutch-German Corps, the Benelux cooperation on defence, the British proposal on a Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and several others, including cooperation between the Netherlands and Norway on the F-35 acquisition. The Belgian-Netherlands cooperation on an integrated maritime command (Benesam), which includes common training and maintenance facilities for frigates and mine hunters, is also emphasised in the letter.

Clearly, the sovereignty-capability paradox is of relevance when analysing this form of cooperation. Here the question is often asked how to match increasing dependency on capacities of other countries with national autonomy on defence matters. The Dutch-Norwegian Declaration of Intent signed in March 2012 on material and operational cooperation is one of the frameworks for the joint acquisition program on new submarines. The changing security situation in Europe where NATO again underlines the common defence commitments is of fundamental importance when the two countries are scrutinising the possibilities for a joint submarine acquisition program.

The Six Conditions for Successful Cooperation in the Area of Submarines

Dutch and Norwegian Strategic cultures – So many similarities, but so different approaches

Without conducting a pure text-analysis, an important method to compare strategic cultures is to analyse their strategic outlook documents, including doctrines and public reports. When comparing the two countries' foreign- and security policy documents, similarities more than differences come to mind. The similarities include Atlanticism, a foreign policy characterised by "effective multilateralism" and an UN-led international order. Important to note however, is that these countries' Atlantic outlook does not only stem from the fact that NATO is a security community, but also from an enduring and profound cultural commonality that goes deeper than the fact that both countries belong to the same defence alliance.

The Netherlands

This Atlantic foundation is described in the Netherlands defence doctrine (NDD) from 2013. Here it is emphasised that it "cannot exist in isolation". This means that the doctrine cannot be seen in isolation from NATO, the EU and the UN, "... of which NATO's doctrine development is the most advanced" (NDD 2013: 13). From a Dutch perspective, even though the EU and the UN are central institutions to Dutch security- and defence policy, it is NATO's doctrine development that is highlighted as the most important one. Taking this Atlantic outlook as our main point of departure, the NDD underlines that it must be seen as an integral part of NATO's defence doctrines. Therefore, the Dutch defence doctrine states that the "... Dutch joint doctrine will only be written and issued for subjects not covered by NATO doctrine or in which specific Dutch aspects need to be emphasised, in cases where the Dutch vision differs from that accepted within NATO or if clarification is needed for the tactical level (NDD 2013: 14). This statement implies that Dutch defence policy is unequivocally NATO-integrated.
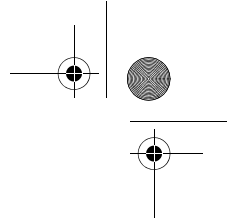
Besides the NATO framework for the conduct of Dutch defence policy, it is important to note that according to Article 97 in the Dutch Constitution, it is the Government that has the supreme authority over the armed forces. Hence,

any decisions to deploy the armed forces will always be made by or on behalf of the government. As a further elaboration of Article 97, three overarching tasks for the Dutch armed forces are identified: 1) protection of national and allied territory, including the Caribbean parts of the Netherlands, 2) promotion of the international rule of law and stability, 3) support for civil authorities in national law enforcement, disaster relief and humanitarian aid, both nationally and internationally.

Important to note, and a clear sign of the Netherlands' clear expeditionary strategic culture, is that this list in no way is hierarchical. On the contrary, these tasks are described as equal and must be executable at all times. The doctrine further underlines that the likelihood that a certain task will need to be executed may vary over time (NDD 2013: 50-51). Therefore, the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture could be defined as a policy that emphasise that national as well as international tasks are equally important. This explains why the defence structure is light and mobile. This includes a policy where the defence of Dutch territory (also in the Caribbean) is not setting the framework for the development and build-up of the defence structure. Light armoured forces with high agility and mobility, deployable in principle anywhere is henceforth a consequence of such a strategic culture.

Nevertheless, in NDD as well as in in the document "Fundamentals of Maritime Operations – Netherlands maritime military doctrine" (GMO), Article 5 in NATO and the collective defence of NATO territory is regarded as an essential core task for NATO. Consequently, this is an essential core task for Dutch military forces as well. However, collective defence "... in its traditional form", namely warding off a large-scale offensive directed at one or more NATO member states, is unlikely the NDD states. Even though the NDD was issued in 2013 well before the conflict in Ukraine began, the 2015 and 380 pages long GMO also, interestingly enough, puts most emphasis on asymmetrical threats: "The relatively (East-West) situation in the past has given way to a diffuse and uncertain state, in which interstate conflicts and thus regional instability, terrorism, organised crime and environmental and natural disasters pose the greatest threats to national and European interests" (GMO 2015: 11). The maritime doctrine further states that this will have implications for the Dutch navy by underlining the widening as well as the diversity of maritime operations both at sea and in coastal regions (ibid).

With regards to submarines, the GMO (2015: 274-275) states that operating under water is one of the few ways to stay hidden in the maritime domain.

Submarines derive their strength from this; they are difficult to detect and can thus remain unseen for longer. This enables them to bring their striking power to bear in places where other units run much greater risk, such as in the immediate vicinity of units and areas of an adversary. Submarines can thus make full use of the elements of surprise. Therefore, the possible presence of a submarine sends a strong and threatening signal to an opponent.

Paradoxically, the Dutch strategic culture is clearly expeditionary, but we have for a long time seen a development where the opposition to the application of military force has grown stronger. As Noll and Moelker (2013: 261) emphasise, this will make it difficult for any government in the country to act in accordance with its own ambitions. This is also an all-European development causing dilemmas in the elaboration of European defence policies.

Norway

Strategic cultures are changing in Europe and so is the Norwegian approach on how to apply military force. International operations, and especially the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, have been an important element in the development of Norwegian defence policy during the last decade. Contrary to the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture, the Norwegian culture remains national in its approach.

Proposition to Storting 73 S (2011-2012), the proposition on defence from the Norwegian government to the Parliament, was made public well before the conflict in Ukraine began (Forsvarsdepartementet 2012). The proposition states that the aim of the Norwegian armed forces is that it shall, together with allies, maintain Norwegian sovereignty, rights, interests and values. To develop abilities and relevant responses in the whole spectrum of conflicts shall constitute a war preventive threshold that secures Norway's security and room of manoeuvre against any form for political, military and other forms of pressure. In today's world, the proposition further underlines, security must be regarded from a global perspective. Norway can therefore not limit its security policy outlook to a strictly regional approach. It is therefore in Norway's interest to maintain international peace and stability by taking part in efforts to keep an UN-led international order of justice and furthermore to defend human rights and to strengthen cooperation between states. The Norwegian Armed Forces are therefore one of several instruments that contributes to shape and create a safer world.
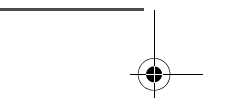
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Interestingly enough, the role of submarines are given the same description as in the Dutch GMO. In the Norwegian proposition, the role of the submarines is described as a flexible capability covering the whole spectrum of operations at sea. The ability to conduct clandestine operations makes it a unique capability. Hence, the tasks a submarine can conduct make it an important capability in a modern defence. Furthermore, the submarine is not as dependent as surface vessels on logistical support at sea. It has a higher strategic mobility and endurance during operations. A significant part of the role of submarines is strategic deterrence through its ability to operate covertly. It then creates a condition of insecurity for the opponent. The national approach in Norwegian defence policy is clearly expressed when the proposition states that Norwegian submarines shall patrol continuously in Norwegian areas of interest. Furthermore, the submarines can also participate periodically and for a shorter period of time in the whole NATO operational area. These operations can both be in littoral areas and further at sea.

The Russian annexation of the Crimean peninsula in March 2014 has set a new framework for Norwegian defence policy. This is most clearly expressed in the report from the Expert Commission on Norwegian Security and Defence Policy –"A joint effort" which was made public in April 2015 (Ekspertgruppen for forsvaret av Norge (EG) (2015). The report states that the framework for Norwegian security policy has changed significantly in a relatively short time. Norway is again facing traditional security challenges. It further underlines that Norway is a small state and dependent upon a functioning multilateral system, that Norway is part of a western security community, and that Russia is outside this community. Additionally, the report emphasises President Vladimir Putin's ambition of making Russia a strong and important military actor in international affairs. As a consequence, it underlines the deep distrust between Russia and the West and concludes this situation most probably will last for years.

In its advice to Norwegian politicians the report concludes that a new and more lasting security situation has appeared in Europe. The role of NATO's collective defence commitments is underlined throughout the document, as well as the re-appearance of symmetrical threats. As a consequence, it becomes important to strengthen the transatlantic link and henceforth the US engagement in the defence of Europe. The need for modern submarines is therefore underlined several places. The report therefore underlines that acquisition of new submarines is the next large investment project for Norway. New subma-

rines have a central place in the operational concept that will solve challenges in the upper part of the conflict scale. The Expert Commission states that the financing of new submarines is impossible within the ordinary defence budget. Hence, the extra funds needed must be provided outside of the defence budget line.

Summary

This comparative analysis has shown several similarities, but also important differences in approaches. The Dutch approach is still an expeditionary one, as expressed in the maritime doctrine (GMO). However, the Dutch government also recognises the new security situation in Europe, and underlines that Dutch doctrine shall be in full correspondence with NATO doctrine. Hence, from a Norwegian perspective, the best outcome will be if the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture can be utilised fully for the purpose of the common defence commitments in NATO.

One of the most important insights has been that the Norwegian adaptation to international operations and an expeditionary praxis primarily stems from a fear of being marginalised in NATO. The Expert Commission's recommendations support such a conclusion with its clearly national approach, also including the Northern areas as the primary focus for Norwegian defence policy. Consequently, the trustworthiness of the common defence commitments in NATO is fundamental for Norwegian security.

In this regard it is interesting to note that the description in the Dutch and in the Norwegian planning documents on the role of submarines are identical (GMO 2015: 274-275; Prop 73 S 2011-2012: 96). Furthermore, it is an increased focus on the submarine project in the Netherlands. In the spring of 2016 the Dutch Minister of Defence will present a paper to the Parliament on future submarines, also including the requirements for these submarines. There is furthermore a lot of political attention to this project, and also an increased interest from the Dutch defence industry. Nevertheless, due to the differences between the two countries, differences in requirements for the new submarines might very well appear. Clearly, an identical submarine with the same requirements will be the optimal solution. If that is not possible to achieve, submarines that are different, but shares identical subsystems to the maximum extent possible, will be the next-best option.

Geographic proximities and interests

While differences in strategic cultures and approaches clearly exist between the two countries, the need for partners to cooperate with is on the rise in both of them. Hence, the need for intensified defence cooperation, especially in the north-western European "node" of NATO countries, is on the rise. This is perhaps especially the case for Norway. The Expert Commission clearly states that Norwegian defence policy cooperation with countries in Northern Europe must be intensified (EG 2015: 62). The most important type of cooperation is bi- and multilateral cooperation with NATO allies in the region. Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands are of special interest. From the Norwegian side this is labelled the "North Sea strategy". The aim of this strategy is primarily to strengthen the operational abilities through defence cooperation with NATO allies around the North Sea through joint acquisition programs, training, exercises and logistics. It must nevertheless be stated that the space for an effective north-western European "node" might have some difficulties to develop when the countries involved already are engaged in bi- and multilateral defence cooperation, like the Benelux-cooperation, the Dutch-German corps and so on.

With regards to Great Britain and Germany, these two European powers have considerable military capabilities that can be of use in case of military support to Norway. With the Netherlands, the report says, Norway has a long tradition of defence materiel cooperation. The German Framework Nation Concept (FNC) from 2013 and the British initiative on a Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) from 2014 emanates from this region. As regards the FNC, this is meant to offer a practical mechanism for realising deep cooperation amongst volunteering nations. The key idea is that those nations who retain a broad spectrum of capabilities would act as cluster coordinators with a view to meeting alliance defence planning targets on a tailor-made multinational basis. This effectively boils down to an open-ended invitation for smaller allies to plug into those enabling capabilities only the big nations can provide: headquarters, communication and information systems, joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance etc. (Mattelaer 2014). The FNC initiative can, nevertheless, be criticized for being too oriented towards collective defence, which might be considered a handicap, not least for countries with a more expeditionary tradition. Nevertheless, the Netherlands plays an important role in both FNC as well as in JEF. To strengthen this north-western European "node" is therefore in full correspondence with Norwegian interests. This is also an area where the
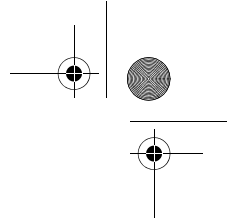
Dutch interests match the Norwegian ones, and the letter from the Dutch Ministry of Defence to the Parliament from 7 November 2014 fully confirms this.

As a consequence, the bilateral Dutch-Norwegian cooperation has grown stronger in the 2010's. Several agreements have been reached like the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) from April 2013 on defence materiel cooperation. In addition, an agreement on "Implementing Arrangement Naval Materiel" (IA) from March 2014 has been signed, and a Project Arrangement concerning the cooperative program for a future Dutch and Norwegian submarine capability was signed in February 2015. With regards to the first agreement, the aim is to identify areas of possible defence material cooperation like industrial relations and defence research, but also to strengthen the Dutch and Norwegian defence suppliers' opportunities to compete on a reciprocal basis. The aim of the second agreement is to explore the possibilities for future joint project activities and joint procurement programs. The third agreement has as its overarching aim to achieve and sustain a relevant Future Submarine Capability (FSC). This may include, but is not limited to, joint development; coordinated procurement and pooled resources for in-service support activities (i.e. shared and combined education, training, work-up, exercises, maintenance and spare parts). The objective of the joint effort is to achieve better life time operational value for money through economy of scale and economy of effort, seeking also to share the work to be performed.

When analysing this variable, the above mentioned sovereignty-capability paradox becomes an important element to take into consideration. This is beyond doubt an impediment, but an impediment that can be minimised by the political and military authorities involved. Hence, when we seek to analyse these cooperative efforts, we must therefore take into consideration that it can take several years before the benefits for these cooperative efforts becomes visible. Furthermore, the costs may be higher in the initial stages and political risk factors cannot be underestimated either. In sum, the countries involved are in a felt position of losing their formal sovereignty. Therefore, it becomes important to have a long-term perspective on these cooperative efforts where practise and some sort of commonalties in values can counterweight differences in strategic cultures between the two countries.
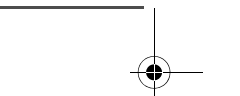
Equal sizes of the defence structures

As the American scholar Oran R. Young wrote several years ago, sharp asymmetries in the distribution of power among the participants will circumscribe the effectiveness of international institutions (Young 1993: 185). This statement is valid in bilateral relationships as well. When analysing this variable it becomes apparent how difficult it is to compare different states' needs for submarines on a quantitative foundation alone. One very illustrative example is Netherland's four Walrus-class submarines versus Norway's six Ula-class submarines. From a quantitative approach alone it seems that Norway is a bigger submarine actor than the Netherlands. In practise, however, the Dutch submarine service is twice as large as the Norwegian one. The Dutch submarines are more than twice as large as the Norwegian submarines (2800 tons versus 1100 tons) and the number of personnel on board is more than twice as high as well (55 versus 23).

When assessing symmetries and asymmetries in the Dutch-Norwegian relationship on submarines, more qualitative factors must be taken into consideration. Such qualitative factors are the two states' military needs for submarines, their operational concepts, their performance requirements, their different capabilities in several warfare areas, and their maintenance, education and training organisation and facilities. Strong asymmetries in a relationship might therefore result in submarines with other capabilities and capacities than the weaker part in the relationship is in need for. However, the level of asymmetries in the Dutch-Norwegian security policy and military relationship should not be overestimated. The bilateral agreements between the two states as described above will mitigate these tendencies and make the relationship far more symmetrical. Hence, the cooperation between the two countries must be analysed and understood in a bottom-up perspective as well.

As the document "In the interest of the Netherlands" (2013: 9) from the Dutch Ministry of Defence emphasises, bottom-up initiatives often arise from the practical cooperation between two or more countries and can subsequently be adopted as best practises by other countries as well. The same document underlines that the current intensification of the cooperation between the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg can be a relevant example (ibid). Clearly, this bottom-up approach might well result in policy convergences and common doctrinal developments. Here, we might define policy convergence in a symmetrical perspective as a gradual adoption of similar policies in terms of

doctrines (enunciated principles or discourses), means (or instruments) and practises related to the use of military force (Pannier & Schmitt 2014: 2).

Furthermore, when analysing the north-western European "node" of NATO countries in perspective of symmetries and asymmetries, the Netherlands and Norway are beyond doubt the two countries in this "node" that most clearly match each other. They share, as previously stated, a common history of long-standing defence cooperation. Both of them are partners in FNC and JEF, the newest security policy concepts that also emanates from this region.

Several Norwegian policy-makers and civil servants also like to stress that Norway has "moved up one division in NATO" making Norway on par with the Netherlands. If this is a correct description, then Norway will face the same dilemma as the Dutch seem to do: "are the Netherlands the biggest of the small or the smallest of the big military powers?" The background for this Norwegian assertiveness stems on the one hand from an overarching fear of being marginalised in Europe (Heier 2006), and on the other hand from the fact that Norway has been very ambitious since the end of the Cold War, playing an active military role in the world, most notably in NATO operations. The same has been the case for the Netherlands (Noll & Moelker 2013: 255). To pin down the exact degree of symmetry and asymmetry in the bilateral Dutch-Norwegian relationship is difficult, but there does not seem to be strong asymmetries in the relationship.

Same understanding of the aims of the cooperation

The Netherlands and Norway will seek to replace their submarines during the same time period in the mid 2020's. Hence, the basic need for a new submarine capability in the near future is the very reason that explains the aim of this Dutch-Norwegian cooperation. The 2013 Dutch-Norwegian MoU seems to be a relevant starting point for analysing the aims of this cooperation effort. It is nevertheless important to develop an understanding of this MoU in perspective of the Dutch aim of further developing its defence structure within the framework of multilateral cooperation. The Norwegian Expert Commission (2015) assessment as regards multilateral defence cooperation is also of importance in this regard. However, the above mentioned sovereignty-capability paradox might be of relevance here since Norwegian defence policy, compared with the Dutch approach, is far more national and sovereignty oriented.

As regards the scope of the MoU, it first includes elements of enhancements
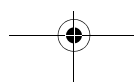
of cooperation in industrial defence areas of production, services, technology and trade. Second, it includes cooperation in the use of defence scientific and technical resources to encourage and promote joint research and development projects. Third, the scope of the MoU includes facilitation of the exchange of personnel, scientific-technical and technological information relating to defence material. The first objective of the MoU includes the determination and periodic review of the specific common requirements of the armed forces of the participants and to which extent the undertakings on development of defence equipment may be carried out jointly. The second objective is the identification of possible areas of collaboration in the procurement of equipment to meet common requirements of the armed forces of the participants, including logistical support of common equipment jointly procured. Finally, the third objective is mutual assistance in technical evaluations, tests and trials, in developing operational and maintenance concepts. This might also include exchange of personnel, experiences, materials and scientific-technical and technological information concerning defence materiel, and furthermore also cooperation in the field of defence technology and supply.

However, while the content of this MoU is far-reaching and paves the way for deep and comprehensive defence cooperation, not only in the realm of submarines, but in other defence sectors as well, we should not underestimate the possible obstacles such a MoU might face either. As Tomas Valasek (2011: 14) points out, countries that buy weapons jointly will want to share the expense of looking after them and may form joint maintenance depots. Similarly, countries that form a joint unit may want to set up only one supply chain for it and buy from one supplier.

When we assess the comprehensive Dutch-Norwegian cooperation, one of several possible obstacles is that many past attempts at pooling procurement have been plagued by participating governments' inability to agree on common technical standards for the equipment they want to buy jointly. Several projects have also suffered from governments insisting on keeping a certain portion of manufacturing jobs at home (ibid). This has consequently led to expensive production arrangements and leads us again to the sovereignty-capabilities paradox. Not only the financial crisis, but also the new security situation in Europe has led to enhanced needs in both countries to intensify defence integration. The Dutch government has stated this on several occasions, and the Norwegian Expert Commission has emphasised the same as well. The challenge from the Norwegian side is that the Dutch defence forces have a very

long experience in in-depth defence integration through Benesam that for much over a decade has shown that capabilities can be kept by sharing sovereignty (Biscop, Coelmont, Drent & Zandee 2013).

Trust and solidarity between the parties

A successful implementation of the 2013 MoU presupposes a high degree of trust between the Netherlands and Norway. In a changing European security situation where we are witnessing a rebirth of the collective defence commitments in NATO, trust and solidarity between the allies is a precondition for a viable European security order. As Valasek (2011: 22) underlines, trust is always important, but especially so when the forces that partners choose to combine are responsible for defending home territories. Trust is the key difference that determines whether joint projects are successful in creating best operational output for money which is the overarching aim of the Dutch-Norwegian Future Submarine Capability program.

One way for cooperating countries to build trust is by committing to a treaty, as the French and the British did through the Lancaster House Agreement from 2010 (Pannier & Schmitt 2014). No such bilateral treaties in the sphere of security and defence exist between the Netherlands and Norway, but this fact alone does not prevent a development of a high degree of trust and solidarity between them. Irrespective of a treaty or not: military cooperation is a process that takes time. As the document "In the interests of the Netherlands" (2013: 9) emphasises, it is important to remember that the costs generally precede the benefits. Therefore, in order to enjoy the fruits of efficient cooperation, prior investment is often necessary: "Various international initiatives have led to concrete results, but less quickly than had been hoped. Cooperation implies an increasing dependency on others and investments in specific capabilities. This does not alter the fact that cooperation is no longer a matter of choice but a matter of pure necessity" (ibid: 9-10).

When we assess the concept of trust as defined above, an important analytical dimension in this concept is path dependencies. Path dependencies are created when past events sets the framework for future cooperation efforts between the parties. This implies that if an agreement is reached between two or more countries, and one of the participants fails to live up to its obligations, this might have negative effects upon the will among the other countries to negotiate new agreements with that specific country. Hence, negative spill-over

effects are created which furthermore can undermine that specific state's needs for future defence cooperation with the other countries involved. Positive spill-over effects can also be the result if the cooperating countries find the cooperation fruitful and in accordance with their own interests. In the realm of defence policy, to save scarce resources and to use the funds provided more wisely is an overarching aim for defence cooperation. This implies to pool and share the defence resources in a smarter way; i.e., the EU Pooling and Sharing-, and NATO's Smart Defence Initiatives.

The so-called "Package Deal" agreement between the Netherlands and Norway from 2003 is an example of a cooperation effort that went wrong. The "Package Deal" was an agreement between the two countries on exchange of defence materiel, most notably the exchange of NASAMS II (Norwegian Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile) with Panzerhaubitz 2000 (PzH 2000) 155 mm self-propelled howitzers from the Dutch army. From the Norwegian side it was, in June 2004, argued that to adapt and operate the PhZ 2000 would be far more expensive than previously thought. Nevertheless, this "Package Deal" arrangement had been marketed in Norway, and especially in the Netherlands, to be a result of a unique form of cooperation between two countries with corresponding security interests. It was expected that this agreement would lay the foundation for long-standing cooperation in the area of defence material. Failure to implement this agreement would, consequently, have negative effects on Norway's trustworthiness as a partner. In reality however, the failure of the deal did not have severe consequences. The reaction in the Netherlands was astonishment rather than irritation. Even though the consequences were not severe, it must be clear that trust-level is an important element in defence cooperation, even within the north-western European "node" of NATO countries.

As Howorth (2014: 88) points out, lack of trust in addition to differences in strategic culture are the major factors that inhibit a rationalisation of Europe's military capacity. These two factors combined explain why European countries overvalue their own national sovereignty. In sum, trust must be regarded as the main driver in bi- and multilateral defence cooperation. Without it, cooperation agreements will only become paper-tigers. Irrespective of formal agreements, trust is one of the most important factors determining the success or failure of defence cooperation in today's Europe.

Level playing field for the defence industry

The defence industrial aspects are important elements in a Pooling and Sharing (EU) and in a Smart Defence (NATO) perspective. In fact, the European Council (2013) points out that no European government can launch new programs on its own. Very often the necessary defence investments in Europe are too high and the national market too small. With defence budgets under pressure, further market-driven industrial restructuring and consolidation is inevitable. The EU's aim is to create a strong, healthy and globally competitive European Defence and Technological Industrial Base (EDTIB). This is a prerequisite for developing and sustaining defence capabilities and securing the strategic autonomy of Europe (Fiott 2013). Therefore, the role of the industry is also a central element in the Dutch-Norwegian considerations on new submarines. In the Project Arrangement concerning the cooperative program for a future Netherlands and Norwegian submarine capability, an important objective is "… to facilitate the industrial co-operation between the Participants in order to involve their national industries". In the introduction to the Dutch-Norwegian MoU it is emphasised that the goals are "… strengthening defence industrial relations, encourage closer co-operation in the field of defence research and development and to strengthen Netherlands and Norwegian defence suppliers opportunities to compete on a reciprocal basis, for the procurement of defence products, equipment, materials and services".

However, nation-specific emergency preparedness needs and commercial- and industrial considerations have often reduced the potential gains. To utilise the potential gains from such a cooperative endeavour the parties must actively harmonise needs, specifications, time-frames and decision-making processes. Trust between the parties is a central element here as well. Hence, trust also has a commercial side. In fact, pooling and sharing and smart defence saves money by allowing the participating states to reduce the amount of equipment they buy (Valasek 2011: 23). One important challenge in this regard is that neither Norway nor the Netherlands any longer have experienced submarine shipyards. Both of them are consequently in need of finding a qualified subma-rine shipyard abroad. Two Dutch shipyards have traditionally built subma-rines, the Rotterdamsche Droogdok Maatschappij Submarines B.V. (RDM) and the Wilton Fijenoord shipyard. The latter closed its submarine division due to lack of orders in 1988, and RDM ceased production in 2004 for the same reason (NTI 2013).

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Therefore, the Netherlands has a very long history of building submarines, also for the export-market. For example, the RDM Company constructed a total of eight boats for the Dutch Navy over a time-span of 40 years. The RDM also offered two types of submarines for export; one of them was the Zwaardvis-class diesel-electric submarine. This submarine was decommissioned in the mid-1990s following service in the Dutch Navy. The other submarine was the Moray-class, also a diesel-electric submarine, with an optional air-independent propulsion (AIP) system.

Important to note is that Combat Systems for submarines is an area where both the Netherlands and Norway have decades of experience. The Norwegian defence company Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace (KDA) has delivered Combat Management Systems and Passive Sonar processing systems for Norwegian submarines and for export. In the Netherlands the development and production of Combat Systems are done within the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO), who delivers Combat System solutions for Dutch submarines and surface vessels. The Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) is an important sub-supplier for DMO within Combat System development. Sharing of Combat System deliverables between the two countries' defence suppliers may be a challenge in a submarine cooperation program.

Therefore, in the Dutch-Norwegian cooperation program on submarines, industrial policy will play a significant role. The overarching aim must be that the two countries strive to maximize common requirements for the new submarines built around the same platform, but at the same time accept some differences due to national defence needs and vital national industrial capabilities. In fact, real savings and benefits of cooperation are likely to be considerably higher with a high degree of trust between the parties. As previously stated, trust is often the key difference that determines whether joint projects save money or not.

Summarising the overarching findings of the analysis

The factors explaining the foundations for success	The Netherlands	Norway
Similarities in strategic cultures	Expeditionary strategic culture	Homeland oriented strategic culture. Strategic, not ideational adaptation to international military operations
Geographic proximities and interests	The north-western European "node" in NATO: • More important for the Netherlands	The north-western European "node" in NATO: • More important for Norway
Equal sizes of the defence structures	The Dutch submarine service larger in size due to different national defence needs than the Norwegian one (expeditionary versus homeland). The defence cooperation agreements reduces asymmetries in the relationship	"Norway has moved up one division in NATO"
Same understanding of the aims of the cooperation	A stronger tradition in the Netherlands for defence integration: • Benesam a possible model for European naval integration?	The Expert Commission emphasises stronger need in Norway for intensified defence cooperation with neighbouring countries
Trust and solidarity between the parties	A very high degree of trust: • The only factor that can counterweight differences in strategic culture	A very high degree of trust • The only factor that can counterweight differences in strategic culture
Level playing field for the defence industry	A long tradition of combat system development and building of naval vessels, including submarines. Possible political consequences?	A long tradition of combat system development. No tradition of building submarines.

Conclusions

The Netherlands and Norway share a common security policy history. A comprehensive cooperation program in the area of submarines must therefore be understood in perspective of this long history of close cooperation. However, this cooperative endeavour takes place during a time when the conditions for European defence could be said to be in some kind of state of emergency (Biscop & Fiott 2013). Claudia Major and Christian Mölling (2013: 13)

describe Europe's condition as a lack of willingness to generate appropriate portions of capability for defence, which again has led to a new kind of paradigm in Europe: the defence economic imperative. This means that the decisions taken by the Europeans on military capabilities are less an expression of their long-term strategic priorities, but rather one of immediate budget restrictions.

This paper has primarily outlined the overarching framework for the Netherlands' and Norway's long-term strategic priorities and interests with regards to cooperation between them on submarines. The uniqueness of this paper is that it has applied a framework developed by Tomas Valasek (2011) that can discern between the different variables that are of relevance when we investigate such a comprehensive defence cooperation program. This framework has also allowed us to rank the variables and thereby to pinpoint which of them that is of highest significance.

Out of the six different variables, strategic culture appears to be the most important one and is the only variable that can decide whether a cooperative endeavour becomes a success or not. This paper has described how different the strategic cultures in the Netherlands and in Norway are. In fact it is possible to conclude that the Netherlands is a model for those European countries that have an expeditionary strategic culture; while Norway's strategic culture is a model for those European countries that have a national approach. As this paper has shown, this major difference between them cannot be understood in perspectives of different threat perceptions alone. Differences in strategic cultures must be understood as a result of differences in national defence discourses due to differences in social factors and relations at the national level (Græger 2007; 2009).

However, taking the other five variables into consideration, one important conclusion from this study is that the trust variable seems to be the only one that has the ability to counterweight differences in strategic culture. Trust and solidarity between the parties is therefore the second most important variable. This conclusion is also in line with the current research literature (Biscop 2013ab; Biscop & Fiott 2013; Howorth 2014).

The third most important variable is geographic proximity and interests since both countries belong to the north-western European "node" in NATO. This is primarily a result of diverging geostrategic preoccupations among the European allies. This geographical variable is also important from a defence cultural perspective since these countries have several interests in common.

Due to a changing security situation in Europe, Norway's need for cooperation with countries around the North Sea becomes even more important. The Dutch approach is in line with the Norwegian line of thought, but goes further in defence integration as is the case for the Benesam-cooperation framework.

The fourth most important variable is the degree of symmetry and asymmetry in the relationship. Even though the Dutch submarine service is larger than the Norwegian one, there is in total a high degree of symmetry between them. The bilateral agreements between the two countries reduce the degree of asymmetry, and Norway's participation in international operations has, in Norwegian self-perception, moved the country "one division up" in NATO.

The fifth most important variable is the defence industry and especially the importance of a level playing field for this industry. This stems primarily from the fact that both countries have to build their new submarines at an experienced submarine shipyard abroad and not in the Netherlands nor in Norway. Since both nations have long experience within Combat systems, sharing of Combat System deliverables between the two countries' defence suppliers may be a challenge in a submarine cooperation program.

The sixth most important factor concerns whether the two states have the same understanding of the aims of the cooperation between them. Here the Dutch side has a much longer tradition of deep defence cooperation with other countries than is the case for Norway.

In sum, when the two countries take their decisions on cooperating on submarines, they must realise that both of them are facing the same security policy challenges. It might therefore be important to take a more long-term strategic perspective when we discuss the submarine issue and invest in building a long-lasting trusting relationship, instead of giving priority to the most immediate budget restrictions or national industrial needs.

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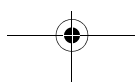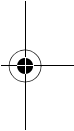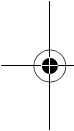
Does practice make perfect?

The mechanisms of lesson learning in CSDP military training missions

PIERRE MINARD[1]

The lesson learning process has gained momentum in recent years, especially in the field of the Common Security and Defence Policy with the increasing number of missions and operations deployed by the European Union. This mechanism is nothing new to the military, as it corresponds to a procedure that is standard in most modern armies. It is, in appearance, quite simple: identify positive and negative features of a mission, critically analyse them, and feed the outcome back into the planning of subsequent missions. Behind this lies the idea that, to put it proverbially, practice makes perfect.

Obviously it is not an easy task to gather and digest lessons – it requires a carefully-designed and systemic framework. This is why, in 2007, the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) came up with the EUMS Lessons Learnt Process (ELPRO), which relies on the EUMS Lessons Management Application (ELMA). This unique and complex tool differentiates between three types of lessons. First there are *lessons observed*, compiled in the database by deployed ground personnel and later analysed by EUMS experts. After review by the Lessons Management Group, these can be turned into *lessons identified*. This second stage aims at verifying observations and starts the process of drafting action plans, which prepares for the implementation of a possible solution.

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It is only after implementation during the final step – which is also the most difficult – that the *lessons are learnt*.

It is quite clear that lesson learning is, in theory, a very rational and rationalised process that corresponds to the imperative of not making the same mistake twice. However, as an EUMS officer recognises: "very often we do not learn lessons. Really the learnt bit is only a part of the process" (Interview EUMS, April 2014). It seems that the lesson learning process itself and the actual implementation of lessons learnt are fundamentally at odds. Indeed, in the case of the EU, this strategic instrument remains under the close scrutiny of the member states, in order not to encroach on any politically sensitive topic (Interview EUMS, April 2014).

The consequence of this is that it becomes unclear where the lessons that are learnt fit in the whole decision-making process, being somewhat stuck between two conflicting realms: strategy and diplomacy. This article aims to clarify this situation by explaining why some lessons are learnt and others are not when it comes to CSDP missions.

Because of the nature of this topic and the lack of access to the list of lessons itself, it is necessary to rely on a mix of second-hand literature – which has always been at the forefront of the analysis of the various missions – and first-hand interviews with EUMS and CMPD field-practitioners. To illustrate the application – or lack thereof – of lessons learnt, it is indispensable to scrutinise a set of missions that have comparable components. This is why the examples of military training missions provide us with a certain degree of hindsight while being able to rely on a considerable amount of relevant analysis.

The first chapter will illustrate how erratic the process of lesson learning can be by analysing EUSEC RD Congo, EU SSR Guinea-Bissau, EUTM Somalia and EUTM Mali. The purpose is to enlighten both the successes and limits of lessons learnt in face of political and practical realities. The second chapter will use this base to develop an analysis of lessons learning, discussing its true nature and utility as regards mission planning.

The case of military training missions: an illustration of lesson learning processes in CSDP

EUSEC RD Congo and EU SSR Guinea-Bissau

Military training is a component of Security Sector Reform (SSR) that has featured in several CSDP missions – either in part or in total. The first EU mission to have such a component was the EU mission to provide assistance for security sector reform in Democratic Republic of Congo, EUSEC RD Congo – ongoing since June 2005. For nine years, its almost-exclusively military personnel have been undertaking in-depth structural reforms of the Congolese army – notably introducing a payment scheme, human rights lessons and integrating former rebels in the army – in order to ensure its efficiency and its modernisation, in the framework of a Mentoring, Monitoring and Advising mandate (MMA) (Dari & al, 2012). From June 2008 to September 2010, the EU launched SSR Guinea-Bissau, which was very similar in its aim although with more limited manpower and budget. Its objective was to help Guinean authorities to implement their national strategy regarding SSR (Bloching, 2010).

In the absence of any official document listing which lessons have been observed, identified and learnt, this picture can only be partially drawn through the existing literature and an analysis of their adaptation – or lack thereof – in subsequent missions (Dari & al., 2012). The first general lesson is to take into consideration the local political context. This seems rather common-sense as SSR missions rely heavily on advisory and technical components in order to develop primary security capacities. However, this proved to be especially sensitive in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo where the political and military spheres were deeply intertwined, alongside vivid power-based rivalries (Clement, 2009). This was also of utmost importance in the case of EU SSR Guinea-Bissau, with Damien Helly suggesting that, "the initial planning missions had been too short to grasp the specificity of Guinea-Bissau's state fragility" (Helly, 2009:375). Even though it is clear that everything cannot be foreseen in advance, such hurdles can be overcome through close collaboration with local actors – or local ownership – so that reforms can be put into a long-term perspective. Concretely, this consists of identifying the potential partners as well as the ones that will benefit from the mission.

The next general lesson is linked to the issue of coordination with other SSR-related actors, which are potentially numerous in post-conflict areas such

as DRC. Specifically, the main ones were the United Nations, the United States, the African Union and other bilateral actors such as France and Belgium. With different agendas, different methods and decision-making processes, it can prove very difficult to engage in effective and fruitful cooperation on the ground when there is such a diversity of actors. What is at stake here is to endow the development of information and resource sharing between all SSR actors engaged in the same or similar operations (Dari & al., 2012). Another type of lesson drawn from both missions – but also from many others – is the one regarding staffing difficulties, with the proposal to review the procedures according to the mission's requirements. This has been identified as a key issue, hampering the already limited flexibility on the ground (Dari & al., 2012).

Lastly, with a mission such as EUSEC RD Congo and its eight mandates, one would rationally expect that each mandate be adjusted in accordance with the needs and difficulties previously encountered. This is the very essence of any form of organisational learning (Dari & al, 2012). Yet, the mission is about SSR; building long-lasting capacities to fix a weak security apparatus. Having eight mandates over the course of nine years with *ad hoc* extensions is in fundamental contradiction with the inner logic of SSR as a long-term approach to security. The setting of an arbitrary expiration date, an end-date, to a mission is therefore identified as another key-lesson which is applicable to this particular case, and an important hurdle going against any operational logic (Biscop and Coelmont, 2010).

It is one thing to identify a lesson, even of generic nature, but it is obviously quite another to learn from it. In the case of EUSEC, progress and lesson learning were achieved by improving cooperation between SSR actors on the ground as well as in the staffing requirements. However, with regard to the more sensitive aspect of the political contextualisation of the mission's SSR actions – and especially cooperation with the local authorities – lessons were not learnt. This is not exclusively related to EUSEC as it was already identified in EUPOL Kinshasa (Dari & al., 2012). In other words, this shows that the lesson was not learnt from one mission to the other, despite dealing with the authorities of the same country, in a very similar timeframe.

EU SSR Guinea-Bissau suffered from comparable difficulties that resulted in analogous lessons being identified. Unfortunately, the mission was not renewed at the end of its mandate in 2010, following the strong resistance from the local military in the face of reform. Despite some limited operational successes identified in the inter-institutional cooperation, it is impossible to

guess which lessons would have been learnt for a hypothetical subsequent mandate (Bloching, 2010).

Implementing the first EU training mission on a fragmented base of experience – EUTM Somalia

In April 2010, the European Union launched its first SSR mission specifically dedicated to military training. EUTM Somalia also aims at restoring security in the region by focusing on the security apparatus of the state (Oksamytna, 2011). Contrary to EUSEC RD Congo and EU SSR Guinea-Bissau, EUTM Somalia is a full military mission that provides extensive training to several units of the Somali army. The training itself initially took place in Uganda for security reasons but was moved to Mogadishu in December 2013. Still ongoing, the mission is part of the EU's Horn of Africa strategy that relies on a holistic approach to the area, together with EUNAVFOR Atalanta and EUCAP Nestor. EUTM Somalia is the first pillar of the SSR approach in the region, helping to tackle the many threats and challenges it faces – such as maritime security and terrorism. In terms of lesson learning, this mission constitutes the very first of its kind, which meant that it could only rely on a fragmented base of experience from EUSEC RDC and EU SSR Guinea-Bissau.

One of the main criticisms that the mission received was related to the EU's choice to support Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG), in power until summer 2012. The TFG had been the target of an abundance of criticism from NGOs, highlighting its endemic corruption, clientelism and clan rivalries (International Crisis Group, 2012). Since 2007, Somalia has been labelled, together with North Korea, as the most corrupt country in the world by Transparency International (Transparency International, 2014). Yet Europeans chose to support the TFG by default; mostly because of the lack of identified alternatives and its actions against the most radical Islamists groups of the country, especially Al-Shabbaab. Despite initial concerns, the TFG did finally implement a new constitution in 2012, as the security situation in Somalia improved. On the other hand the newly formed Somalia Federal Government (SFG) still remains weak and is losing its capital of confidence very quickly (Bryden, 2013).

As a result, the political context, in the case of Somalia, proved to be a lesson of major importance and not easy to learn from as it also depended on variables that are difficult to assess and foresee. Indeed, the EU risked greatly

underestimating the environment in which the mission was convened, but at the same time was presented with very limited alternatives. This had critical impact on the conditions of deployment and trickled down to influence local ownership issues, with the risk of being accused of favouritism in a widely fragmented country.

Lessons were easier to identify on operational and practical aspects. One example was the lack of unity in the doctrinal approach of the mission, as it was pointed out during an interview: "the problem is that if there is no syllabus which defines the content of the training and the doctrinal corpus, we risk lacking consistency" (Interview EUMS, March 2014). More generally the whole selection process was littered with obstacles: ensuring that the recruits do not defect to the enemy, that they are of age and that they do represent the clan diversity of Somalia. This is why much attention was drawn on the needs of the recruits, for instance through the inclusion of Somali translators coming to Uganda in order to facilitate training. The greatest success was the efficiency and speed of deployment of the European personnel. Often slow and difficult, staffing benefited from the profile of the mission; it is indeed much easier to deploy troops for a mission of a non-combat nature with a lower risk of casualties (Oksamytna, 2011).

Another positive aspect of the mission was cooperation with other partners, as important SSR actors were successfully integrated into the scheme of the mission. For instance, the United States of America was particularly involved in helping the EU to transport the recruits to Uganda, where the training was taking place. This synergy was also achieved with the African Union, especially with the peacekeeping mission AMISOM, which is also funded by the EU through the Africa Peace Facility. This cooperation was not limited to the first mandate, and the lesson appeared to be learnt as the Council renewed its commitment in that respect in its 2013 decision (Council, 2013).

Finally, the preference of an end-date over an end-state for a mission remained an issue, and it was unclear whether the lesson of when to end a mission was truly learnt. EUTM Somalia was launched with a mandate of just one year, the classic length of CSDP military missions, though this has been seen as insufficient and ineffective for tackling long-term SSR objectives. The latest mandates for the renewal of the mission in 2013 and 2015 afforded an extension of up to two years. This evolution therefore presents the end-date issue as quite fluid and partial in its learning, keeping an end-date but extending its originally limited duration.

EUTM Mali: *were the lessons learnt and implemented?*

The EU training mission in Mali, launched in February 2013, is the latest military training mission. After an initial mandate of 15 months, it was extended until March 2016. The main objective is quite similar to EUTM Somalia: training soldiers from the Malian army to provide the backbone for renewed armed forces that have so far been unable to cope with the twin threats of Tuareg separatism and radical Islamist groups in the north of the country. Contextually, the mission has been designed in the framework of the EU Sahel strategy as a long-term SSR solution to remedy identified security gaps that are common to the Sahel countries – i.e. Mali, Niger and Mauritania. Following the rapid deterioration of the security situation in early 2013, the EU reacted swiftly with a deployment ahead of schedule (Rouppert, 2013).

Despite the fact that the mission is still ongoing, it is possible to identify the extent to which lessons from EUTM Somalia, EUSEC RD Congo and EU SSR Guinea-Bissau have been learnt. To begin with, an EU Military Staff officer observed that "EUTM Mali is more politically linked to the government, and this is what is set as an example" (Interview EUMS, March 2014). This highly political and sensitive task has been notably performed by the mission commanders, who have been given sufficient leverage to strengthen these ties. It is noticeable that EUTM Mali was relying on some kind of top-down approach with an important component of the mission dedicated to counselling the Malian military authorities, which was not originally the case in Somalia. This means that EUTM Mali generated feedback and lessons that were subsequently applied to EUTM Somalia, despite the latter being its predecessor.

From an operational point of view, it seems that some lessons have been learnt from the previous SSR missions. Following the case of EUTM Somalia, it was identified that the cultural specificities of the recruits had to be taken into careful consideration in order to execute the training in the best possible conditions. In particular, the language issue was dealt with in the early strategic planning documents and translators were recruited. This means that EUTM Mali is endowed with a common conceptual document – or syllabus – notably because France has been acknowledged as the framework-nation (Interview EUMS, March 2014). In the absence of such a framework-nation, the lesson learnt here is that the doctrinal corpus needs to be unified beforehand. In turn, this could be applied to EUTM Somalia.

Nevertheless, the discipline of lesson learning remains far from straightforward and many a lesson cannot be categorised simply as "learnt" or "not learnt". More bluntly, an EUMS officer states: "[lesson learning] had improved but it hadn't improved significantly. So some of the lessons were understood but not learnt. And I take lessons being learnt as not just a mindset, but actually something that is written down, so these are instructions for everyone to follow" (Interview EUMS, April 2014).

As such, not all political context-related lessons were completely learnt. Again, the mission relied on the transitional government of Dioncounda Traoré, who was nominated by the junta in the aftermaths of the March 2012 putsch, before proper elections were held. As underlined by several scholars, the problem was that the electoral plan, presented in January 2013 – with elections held the following summer – and strongly supported by the European Union and other international actors, was dominated by the power elites already in place, without any possibility of dialogue or appeasement (Lacher and Tull, 2013). As a consequence of this institutional blurriness and its potential detrimental effects on the progress of the mission's mandate, one can easily understand the eagerness of the EU to see the electoral process being fulfilled on time, so that its intervention can be seen as more legitimate, even if *a posteriori.* In the absence of any realistic learning of this complicated lesson, the EU had no real option but to hope that the political situation would move in its preferred direction. Again, this set of lessons is highly political in nature and epitomises the inner difficulty in assimilating the whole process of lesson learning with the political intricacies of launching a mission.

However, it is easier to assess the level of cooperation with other international actors, which are numerous in the case of the Sahel region, even with the scarcity of official documents that discuss lessons learnt. The situation seems to have improved since the first stages of the mission. Despite initial erratic cooperation, the implementation of some framework for dialogue for the EU, the US and the UN indicates that the lesson remains partially learnt (Rouppert, 2014).

Finally, the choices made towards the length of the mandate appeared to endorse a similar pattern to EUTM Somalia. Facing the tricky issue of the end-date problem, the EU established the duration of the first mandate to be 15 months before extending the second to two years. Despite progress in the extension of the duration of the second mandate, this preference for an end-date remains a touchstone of the ambiguity of the lesson learning processes, influencing a strategic and very rational process with political and diplomatic concerns.

The actual role of lesson learning in the decision-making process

Lesson learning reflects the complexity of the decision-making process in the EU

When it comes to focusing on the actual role of lesson learning in CSDP, ambiguity is the norm, despite being detrimental to the smooth running of the lessons learnt. The absence of clarity and systematicity is obvious for strategic lessons, which are also the most politically sensitive. In order to circumvent this issue and create some kind of effective conclusive action, the Crisis Management Planning Directorate presented for the second year to the PSC the Annual CSDP Lessons Learnt Report in early March 2015 (Interview CMPD, 2014). This consists of a comprehensive set of lessons on CSDP missions and includes one military and two civilian annexes and also features advice from the European Commission. Although the five lessons that create the basis of the report remain of a general nature, they feature recommendations that "have to be as precise as possible in order to make things go forward" (Interview CMPD, 2014). This conjunction of both recommendations and general lessons is a first concrete step towards more effective systematicity without leaving the boundaries of what is politically acceptable.

However, ambiguity remains obvious in the absence of clear evaluating standards. In one of the most comprehensive reviews of the CSDP literature so far, it is underlined that "the core concepts of evaluation such as input, output, outcome or impact are often used inappropriately and with different meanings if compared to evaluation criteria and indicators developed by institutional literature and scientific literature" (Freire & al., 2010:55). Facing this weakness, Kseniya Oksamytna identifies three elements: (1) the political factor, which reflects the agenda; (2) the operational factor, which deals with the conditions of deployment and the unfolding of the mission; and (3) the symbolic factor covering EU's visibility as a consequence of the mission (Oksamytna, 2011). Those are rather vague features, especially when compared with the analysis schemes that have been developed by the European Commission to evaluate its own policies, but in the absence of any unclassified documents it is necessary to rely on inclusive and malleable factors.

The European Union has been keen to emphasise the successes of its missions and operations, and this is yet another factor that contributes to the

persistence of an ambiguous lesson learning process. Regardless of the numerous criticisms these missions have endured regarding their lack of long-term impact and the frailty of their mandate, they bear their fruits internally by contributing to the development of the EU's legitimacy to act. Furthermore, the EU focuses on the positive side of its operations to avoid the risk of naming and shaming specific member states that can have either undermined the running of the mission or simply not provided any kind of support for it. This is helpful in sidestepping deep internal divisions between member states on a number of international security issues.

Lesson learning or business as usual?

The main problem of not learning a lesson appears to be related to the strategic level, where many lessons go "either against the redlines of an individual member state or they are not politically correct in the environment that we wish to portray them" (Interview EUMS, April 2014). The most difficult aspects of lesson learning result from the various political sensitivities expressed by the member states with which everyone has to comply. This discrepancy is recognised by the practitioners of lesson learning: "in theory there should not be any political influence, but in reality we are witnessing a discreet game which ensures that national lines are well respected" (Interview EUMS, March 2014). Thus, there is a permanent tension between the rational logic, which is supposed to be endorsed throughout the whole process, and the political imperatives of 28 member states.

Of course, there are 'easy' lessons that quite often do not require going through the official channel – i.e. the political machinery. For instance in EUTM Mali, the handling of the political relationship with the local authorities was directly managed by the mission commander, thus allowing for flexibility in the assignment and the way this relationship was conducted, while contributing to the success of the mission in an intertwined top-down and bottom-up approach. On occasion, this also applies to institutional handling of the process itself. The case of the new annual reports on lessons learnt is quite instructive, as the EUMS officers have been included in the strategic planning of the missions without any formal political approval and in a very pragmatic way.

Nevertheless, the lesson learning process can be stopped at the early stages because of its perceived sensitivity. In the case of CSDP missions, observed

lessons that are gathered in ELMA can be terminated at any stage – even from the beginning by the commanding officers if they believe that someone's redline has been, or will be, crossed (Interview EUMS, April 2014). Similarly, if lessons are allowed to be analysed and turned into lessons identified, their implementation can still be broken off. Member states have the very last word. It appears that the added-value of the process is to implement lessons – i.e. to learn lessons – that are politically compatible with all member states, so that unanimity is preserved.

The censorship itself is not performed by the EUMS personnel but by their political superiors – especially the PSC. Indeed, these officers have to be careful not to overstep their role and modify the lessons that are observed. Doing so would alter the perception of the issue at stake and its potential transformation into an identified lesson. This is even more sensitive as most of the EUMS personnel are seconded nationals, with the institutional threat of pushing forward the interests of their member states.

Therefore, the whole lesson learning process is of an *ad hoc* nature (Bloching, 2011). Taking the example of the end-date concept, while it clearly antagonises strategic military planning and significantly constrains operational efficiency, it remains clear that this is above all a politically acceptable solution, which allows for the renewal of a mission with a different mandate each time. The interfering of member states in the evaluation and lesson learning process of CSDP missions is seen as part of the problem itself, as they are fundamentally opposed to a high degree of formalisation, thus relying on and perpetuating the *ad hoc* principle (D'Urso, 2008).

Making the best out of constraints: lesson learning as a fragmented instrument

In theory, implementing learnt lessons should be about efficiency and rationality but a mission's *raison d'*être is often about demonstrating the EU's credibility and aptitude as an international security actor. Thus, there are potential discrepancies between a mission's objective and trying to gather and actually implement lessons learnt in a rational way (Pirozzi and Sandawi, 2009).

As a consequence, there is no such thing as rational adequacy between the identification of a specific issue, which requires tailored intervention, and the development of such an efficient solution (Menon and Sedelmeier, 2010). This approach means that many lessons learnt are used to fill the gap between, on

the one hand, the politico-diplomatic terms and consensus needed for any subsequent mission, and on the other, the reality of the situation on the ground, often becoming some kind of adjustment variable. For example, EUTM Somalia used the practical lessons learnt in EUTM Mali to build a more effective relationship between its mission commander and the local authorities.

In that respect, both the EUMS and the CMPD – leaving aside the CPCC in the case of military SSR missions – are at the same time the intermediaries and the equilibrists of lesson learning, in the sense that they gather observed lessons, analyse them, transform them into identified lessons, all while remaining under close supervision of their hierarchy and the political guidance of the member states. Indeed, the lessons themselves epitomise this split between the language of politics and the language of the military at the strategic planning level, where compromise is essential. For lessons that require political approval it is thus of utmost importance to advance the most acceptable among them (Interview EUMS, April 2014).

As such, the lesson learning process is watered down in the case of CSDP missions by clear political necessities. However, one should not be overly pessimistic as there is some room of manoeuvre for the practitioners of ELPRO. Indeed, when a lesson is cancelled in its implementation and yet remains highly important for the EUMS – especially when the same observation is made during every mission – then "if we are pushing against the member states' point of view, then the more times this comes up, the more times they have an opportunity to challenge their own point of view" (Interview EUMS, April 2014).

Conclusion

The whole idea behind lessons learnt is that practice should make someone perfect. Instead, we witness that lessons are not systematically learnt. They are constrained by the political consensus that is already established and which is often disconnected from strategic considerations on the ground.

In the case of CSDP military training missions some lessons appear to be learnt, some only half-learnt, and others not at all. Although, one should not be fooled by such apparent simplicity; this results from different rationales between the strategic thinking and the diplomatic terminology and paradigm. Thus, some lessons, despite being understood, are diplomatically more interest-

ing or less risky not to implement. From that perspective, the example of the end-date concept is quite enlightening. Having a succession of one-year mandates concentrates many criticisms in a long-term perspective, but at the same time it introduces much flexibility and is seen as more acceptable for the member states.

This means that there is some sort of manifold evaluation that can be likened to a set of Russian dolls. The smallest doll represents the local and *ad hoc* evaluation of practical aspects of the missions that, if possible, are dealt with directly. Then there is the second, which represents the strategic lessons and is of a more political and risky nature. Thirdly, there is the biggest one, engulfing the previous two, resembling some kind of 'evaluation of the evaluation' made by the political side to maintain control over the whole process and how it develops.

One possibility to help the EU engage with self-reflexive analysis of its actions could be to identify best practices as a way to influence the political side using peer-pressure. Another option would be to build common standards of evaluation. Further, it could be envisaged to expand the process to include MEPs and part of the academic community; the point being to gather external views on lessons observed and identified.

Finally, this underlines the ongoing struggle between the organisational and political approaches, even more so given that the personnel in charge of it play an ambiguous role: they are both under the scrutiny of the political and pushing for a more rational endorsing of useful lessons. Therefore, this persistent fight about the implementation of lessons learnt remains a key-component in the evaluation of EU CSDP missions.

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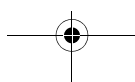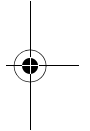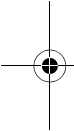
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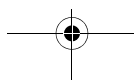
Libya: a nation suspended
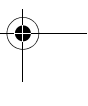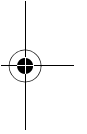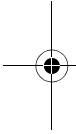# between past and future

Federica Saini Fasanotti[1]

Libya has always been a country of sharp contrasts, whether at a regional level or tied to tribal, ethnic and religious identities. Today many tribal distinctions are gone but the other contrasts persist; and it is only by understanding and accepting them that the nation can be rebuilt successfully.

Never before has there been so much press about Libya, not even during the most tense moments between Gaddafi and the Reagan administration. Certainly, during the 1980s we saw the *rais*, Gaddafi, inflame public opinion with his rash behavior and peculiar lifestyle. But today the situation is considerably worse, with migrants fleeing Libyan shores; Salafi – and not only – terrorism; and a long-lasting civil war.

The "Arab Spring" and the end of Gaddafi

In late 2010, a series of violent protests inflamed North Africa and some Middle Eastern countries, from Tunisia to Egypt, from Morocco to Libya. The voices of people oppressed for decades by anti-democratic regimes were heard on the shores of the Arabian Peninsula to Syria, shaking the whole Islamic world. The so-called "Arab Spring" has certainly changed the face of the Maghreb and other countries, but how? After four years, it is clear that very

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little good has been accomplished. Analyzing the events that took place in each interested country, we realize that there has not been a broad-based "Spring" at all. The term is overly restrictive and misleading.

The widespread optimism of the early months of the "Spring" was soon confronted with bitter infighting, and Libya is, unfortunately, a glaring example. The anti-government protests began on 15 February 2011 in Benghazi, the most oppressed Libyan city, and in that occasion the security forces fired against the crowd which, at that point, rose up, led by heterogeneous rebel groups. The fight between the two sides spread so rapidly throughout the country that ten days later the United Nations condemned officially the violations of human rights[2]. The international community decided to support the insurgents, forgetting apparently the institutional role of Africa Union[3], through Resolution 1973 of the Security Council of the United Nations that justified military intervention: an intervention in some cases certainly much more substantial than what the media has portrayed. The assistance that some foreign nations provided to the rebel forces, gathered in the National Transitional Council (NTC), was far from insignificant: the NTC was not only heavily stocked with weapons, but also supported by the British and French air forces. Simultaneously, and made possible by the intervention of nations like Qatar, a large number of fighters was able to enter Libyan territory, some of them jihadis with previous experience in other theaters of war such as Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq[4]. The international community made many mistakes: first, the support in terms of means and weapons granted to the insurgents opposing the ever-present Mohammar Gaddafi was not accompanied by any kind of meaningful planning for a subsequent transition process which was bound to be difficult and complex. The lack of leadership among the Libyan rebels was evident immediately after the barbaric execu-

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[2]   UNSC Resolution 1970, 26 February 2011.

[3]   In this regard: MATTEWS, Kay. 2013. "The 2011 NATO Military Intervention in Libya: Implications for the African Union". In Brooke A. SMITH-WINDSOR, *AU-NATO Collaboration: Implications and Prospects.* Rome: NATO Defence College, 113-121.

[4]   Qatar admitted "that it sent hundreds of troops to support the Libyan rebels", and not only, therefore, taking part to the NATO-led air force attacks. Moreover it delivered money, "weapons and ammunition on a large scale – without any clear legal basis" as in "Qatar admits sending hundreds of troops to support Libya rebels". 2011.*The Guardian*, 26 October. See also ROBERTS, David. 2011. "Behind Qatar's Intervention in Libya". *Foreign Affairs*, 28 September; BODUSZYNSKI, Mieczyslaw P. 2014. "Qatar and Libya: Diminishing Returns". *Gulf State Analytics Monthly Monitor Report*, July; DAGHER, Sam-LEVINSON, Charles-COKER, Margaret. 2011. "Tiny's Kingdom's Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern". *The Wall Street Journal,* 17 October; BASSIOUNI, M. Cherif, 2013. *Libya from Repression to Revolution. A Record of Armed Conflict and International Law Violations, 2011-2013,* Leiden-Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publisher, 148-149.

tion of Gaddafi[5]: the *modus agendi* connected to his capture and killing without trial, were the first sign that things were not headed in the right direction. Since then, differences among the key groups in the country have become increasingly obvious. In more than four decades of absolute rule, Gaddafi had successfully diluted the power of the ancient Libyan clans that the monarchy, instead, had to some extent accommodated. Moreover, as mentioned above, he concentrated all power in his very person without creating an administrative network and a government structure able to survive him. Under the guise of "government of the masses" (*Jamahiria*) the entire opposition had been canceled, every democratic breath strangled. And so, in 2011, the first to take up arms against Gaddafi were those clans he had persecuted: the most motivated among them appeared to be precisely those of Cyrenaica, the region always "second" in the eyes of the Tripolitanian dictator.

Events moved quickly, and within a few months the army loyal to the Libyan leader was wiped out, and he was captured and executed on October 20, 2011. Weapons crates were distributed to the population, in order to accelerate the rebel advance towards Tripoli, violating one of the fundamental principles of counterinsurgency: the disarmament of the population must be systematic, as an armed civilian is equivalent to an armed rebel. The damage caused by NATO's reckless decision is now visible to everybody.

The multi-factional war

The death of Mohammar Gaddafi did not bring any relief to the country. On the contrary: Libya has descended into uncontrolled violence, a civil war that can rightly be called *multi-factional.* This is an apocalyptic scenario in which the remaining, unarmed civilians suffer most. The events from July 7, 2012 (the moment of the first free parliamentary elections), to August 25, 2014 (when the Islamists, after having defined as lawful their own parliament instead of the House of Representatives recently voted, occupied Tripoli) followed one another frenetically. In this sense, a spiral of violence shook Benghazi and Tripoli: terrorist attacks hit military leaders and civilians,

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[5]   Mohammar Gaddafi was found, after a NATO raid, in a culvert two miles west of Sirte by the militia of the National Transition Council (NTC), while he was trying to escape with some of his men, and killed after a while. Reports on his death are still contradictory, although there are several videos on the web showing him, wounded but still alive, in the hands of the rebels, and then after his death.

tribal[6] and religious[7] clashes, then, inflamed the whole territory and on September 11, 2012, a consistent group of heavily armed Islamists from Ansar al-Sharia Libya and other extremist cells attacked the US consulate in Benghazi, killing the American ambassador, J. Christopher Stevens[8]. Violence did not stop and frictions among tribes[9] continued throughout the period under consideration. In the meantime, on October 14, 2012, the General National Congress of Tripoli (GNC) elected Ali Zeidan as Prime Minister, who stepped down on March 11, 2014, replaced by Abdullah Al-Thani. In those days a new legislative body, the Council of Deputies, on June, 2014, organized new elections in order to substitute the GNC. The result favored the more secular and moderate wing at the expense of Islamists who did not accept it, declaring a sort of continuing mandate for GNC, and occupying the capital, Tripoli. At that point, the regularly elected new parliament, called House of Representatives (HoR), was substantially forced to move to Tobruk[10]. The Libyan leadership, after an initial hint of cooperation, resulted to be split in two governments: one, based on a secular matrix, headquartered in Tobruk, supported by the House of Representatives (HoR) and recognized internationally, abetted by General Khalifa Haftar[11] and by the Zintan brigades, the militias coming from the ethnic minorities of Tebu and Fezzan and, externally, assisted by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates in name of an anti-islamist ideology[12]; the other, Islamic, headquartered in Tripoli, supported instead by the New General National Congress (GNC) and by the more Islamist militias[13] coming from Misrata, Amazigh and the Tuareg, as its armed wing, as well as benefitting from the international support of Qatar, Sudan and Turkey, based on different interests, as such as earning a prominent place in the global political scene or supporting the Muslim Brotherhood[14].

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[6]   Awlad Al-Shaik against Zslitenis and Al-Hali against Al-Fawatra in the area of Zliten, during summer 2012. See "At least 12 killed in tribal clash in Libya". 2012. *Reuters*. 23 August.

[7]   Substantially groups of Salafists against Sufi scholars and imam. See AL-SHALCHI, Haadel. 2012. "Libya Islamists Destroy Sufi Shrines". *Reuters*. 25 August.

[8]   COKER, Margaret. 2012. "U.S. Ambassador to Libya is Killed", *The Wall Street Journal*. 11 September; HARDING, Luke – STEPHEN, Chris. 2012. "Chris Stevens, US Ambassador to Libya, killed in Benghazi Attack". *The Guardian*. 12 September.

[9]   For example, in October between Warfalla tribes and Misratan fighters, see GAULTIER, Mathew. 2012. "Curfew enforced in Sirte after clashes over Bani Walid Siege". *Libyan Herald*. 13 October.

[10] See STEPHEN, Chris. 2014. "Libyan Parliament takes Refuge in Greek Car Ferry". *The Guardian*. 9 September.

[11] They led *Operation Dignity*, one of the two major armed coalitions in the country.

[12] ST JOHN, Ronald Bruce. 2015. *Libya. Continuity and change*. London-New York: Routledge, II edition, 167.

[13] They led the other armed coalition, called *Operation Libyan Dawn*.

[14] TASTEKIN, Fehim. 2014. "Turkey's War in Libya". *Al-Monitor*. 4 December; COLLING, Andre. 2015. "Can UN-led Talks Bring Together a Fractured Libya?". *IPI-Global Observatory*. 28 January.

The rapid rise of political parties characterized by Islamic extremism is having other consequences in terms of undermining the deep civilization achieved by the moderate Muslim world. In Libya, in addition to the Tobruk and Tripoli based governments described above, other forces are simultaneously at work, trying to fill the power vacuum caused by the fall of Gaddafi. These forces include Salafist groups such as Ansar al-Sharia Libya (between Benghazi and Derna), Muhammad Jamal Network (between Benghazi and Derna), Mokhtar Belmokhtar's al-Murabitun (in the area of the South-East, around Ghat, Ubari, Tasawah and Murzuq), AQIM[15] (South-West and North-East of Libya) and AST[16] (between Derna and Ajdabiya).

Moreover, a cell of ISIS has also begun to take hold in the strategically important city of Sirte, Gaddafi's hometown. Sirte is part of a desert area that was, during the Fascist period of the Italian occupation, termed the Sirtic "corridor" or "channel." It has tremendous strategic value if we consider that it is not only the line between the two regions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica[17], but also one of the richest point of oil fields across the nation: it is not a case, in fact, that ISIS manifested itself right there. The self-proclaimed Islamic State has a strong interest in filling the current power vacuum, given Libya's overall strategic importance: first, in terms of control of the entire North-African area; second, for the possibility of criminal trafficking in the Mediterranean; third, for potential exploitation of huge energy resources. If we analyze the management of the resources made by ISIS in Iraq over the last twelve months, it is easy to understand its interest in Libya and especially in the Sirtica area.

The current situation

Yet, not even the appearance of actors linked to Salafi terrorism seems to have boosted the peace process begun by the Envoy of the United Nations Bernardino Leon more than a year ago, under the aegis of UNSMIL[18]. A serious agreement between the two parties, calling for a coalition government, seems out of reach. Meanwhile Libya is increasingly on the brink. Few of the

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[15] Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.
[16] Ansar Al-Sharia in Tunisia.
[17] Even in 1928, it was the scene of some of the most significant *joint operations* between the two (at the time still separate), Italian military commands of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica engaged in colonization of the Libyan territories.
[18] United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

fundamental elements required for the development of a modern country are in place. Libya has so far invested little in terms of childhood education. Corruption is growing exponentially, as well as unemployment. Despite immense energy resources, the economy is contracting. Oil production has declined from a half-million barrels per day in 2013 to 300,000 in January 2015, and not because of any depletion of deposits. In addition, the war has completely frozen one of the most important alternative sources of revenue: tourism. Instead there have been thousands of deaths and refugees. Regardless of the commendable efforts of Bernardino Leon, the international community should seriously consider how to intervene in Libya, according to the possible options that, at the moment, seem to be two: an intervention based on a structured plan (highly preferable) or, vice versa, an emergency plan, determined by any possible dramatic event in the next future. Essentially we should decide whether to think a real and articulated strategy or act to implement a simple operational tactics, not forgetting that, even a year ago, acting in a structured way within the Libyan theater would be much simpler. Today, the situation has seriously deteriorated and it seems impossible to hypothesize a non-armed intervention, even in defense of the soldiers called to a simple mission of protection of the new coalition of government.

In this regard, the international pressure on the CNG – every day more and more fragmented and unwilling to sign – is certainly important, but more than a *Peacekeeping* advocated in many occasions, primarily by Italian ministers[19], it is as necessary as ever a real operation of *State Building* that could ensure peace but, more important, could allow the construction of the administrative and infrastructural network which, at the moment, is totally lacking in the country. Libya needs an operation which can also act as a shield against crime and corruption; providing a systematic control of the territory and disarming militias. Without that, a lasting peace is inconceivable. In this sense, an agreement would be desirable, above all to allow the institutions responsible to act for the reconstruction of the country, albeit slow and difficult. On September 13, 2015, after several meetings, Libyan leaders came together under the aegis of the United Nations in Morocco, where they had already worked during the summer, reaching a *consensus* on the main points of the draft that instead, on July 11, was not successful. From the point of view of Bernardino Leon, the

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[19]   GAIANI, Gianandrea. 2014. "Gli italiani in Libia? Solo col casco blu e se ce lo chiede l'ONU". *AnalisiDifesa.* 4 Dicember.

two opposing parties seemed to have overcome the majority of the points of conflict, but the final signature, expected on September 20, did not arrive.

On October 8, he proposed six names for a Presidential Council in order to form a Government of National Accord (GNA), but many are the doubts in this regards, concerns raised by the Libyan themselves who believe that this process is not actually legitimate, because some of the desired names were, instead, not chosen by the Envoy[20]. Grand Mufti Sheikh Sadik al-Gharyani said that the UNSMIL deal was "just ink on paper" and the Leon's action was a "complete farce"[21], writing on a local newspaper that Libyan have to start to think seriously to a process of pacification out of any foreign influence[22]. Even if these words were pronounced by a controversial figure as al-Gharyani, that was a clear indication of loss of trust in the UN mediation, aggravated by some major political movements, as, for example, the announcement that the Central Shield Force of Libya, the biggest military force in Misrata operating under the General Command of Libyan Army connected to the GNC, rejected Leon's draft[23]. In addition, as soon as Leon left his role, a British newspaper revealed that he had spent the summer negotiating a £35.000-a-month job with the United Arab Emirates – one of the supporters of the HoR – as general director of its "Diplomatic Academy"[24], creating a real turmoil in the Libyan public opinion, and not only. In the meantime, a German diplomat, Martin Kobler, has been appointed his successor at the UN, but his mandate, built on this controversial background, now appears to be really uphill, although on December 17th has been signed an agreement for a government of national unity, with Faiez Serraj as Prime Minister. Many, in Libya are the voices against it, because it was inked without a real consensus from both parliaments and that could plunge the country into more chaos and divisions, allowing ISIS to gain more control over territory.

[20]   SEN, Ashish Kumar. 2015. "For Libya, The First Step in a Long Journey" – an interview to Karim Mezran. *Atlantic Council.* 9 October.
[21]   AYYUB, Saber. 2015. "UNSMIL deal 'just ink on paper'". *Libya Herald.* 14 October.
[22]   Grand Mufti AL-GHARIANI, Sadiq. 2015. "A political Agreement or Imposing a Trusteeship? What is the Solution?". *The Libya Observer.* 15 October.
[23]   "Misrata's biggest force refuses Leon government". 2015. *The Libya Herald.* 18 October.
[24]   RAMESH, Randeep. 2015. "UN Libya Envoy accepts £1,000-a-day job from backer of one side in civil war". *The Guardian.* 4 November.

Scenarios and perspectives

In the dreamland, it is obvious that a real agreement among the political parties would be desirable, above all to overcome the atavistic divisions that have always, and certainly not only since 2011, profoundly separated the two parts of Libya, to which should be added the universe of Fezzan. It would be a coalition government, similar in many respects to the Afghan one of Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, a coalition capable of leading the country towards a better future; a government elected democratically with the full *consensus* of the people, able, in a very short time, to wipe out any dangerous extremist claim. This in a dreamland. The reality, unfortunately, is much more complex and presents a Libyan political class not mature enough to put aside its own interests; a society divided and inflamed at this point not only by old conflicts, but also by new grudges generated in years of civil war; a population exhausted, severely impoverished and unable to respond alone to an extremist threat ready to destroy all the good things that the moderate Islamic community has built over the last centuries. Faced with this reality, one should wonder if it would not be a desirable setting undermining the colonial one given to Libyan territories, in favor of a new state, absolutely federal, divided into three large regions: Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan, or even more if the Libyan citizens deem it appropriate. One wonders whether it is really high time that the *provinces*, as the Fascism called them, begin to walk alone, following different paths, based on their ethnic, social, religious and political. As told at the beginning of this article, Gaddafi left the country without an administrative structure and government able to survive him, and after four years of civil war, the situation can be said even worse: the GNC and the HoR are infinitely more fragmented into various fractions, which means a further difficulty in making decisions. In the last months, besides, many are the voices, inside Libya, raised against any kind of foreign intervention for a independent process of reconciliation.

That said, there have been, on the other side, many appeals by the Libyans themselves towards the Western world, the requests for help so insistent to force us to stop on the sentence of the former High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union, Lady Ashton, who in 2011 affirmed Europe's willingness to "listen without imposing", representing the firm determination of the Western world not to intervene in the delicate process of democratization of those Muslim countries touched by the wind of the "Spring". There is no doubt that democracy is a precious asset that every

state must achieve independently: if we look, in fact, at the history of Europe and United States, we realize how painful, long-term and complex is to become democratic nations and how much, however, is difficult to maintain the status. In 1938 the Duke Amedeo d'Aosta, Viceroy of Ethiopia, claimed – about the Italian occupation of the Horn of Africa – that democracy in some countries may do more harm than good. Democracy is not, in fact, an exportable asset like many others, but a value that must germinate in a political-economic-social fabric able, not only to develop, but also to protect it. But we also have to remember that in the past many nations, already democratic, contributed to the birth of other democracies by sending their men and means to the common cause, and serving as a shining example for countries still in chaos. In this sense, it is perhaps time, four years later the words of Lady Ashton, to be less idealistic and more pragmatic, not only listening, but also helping Libya in every possible way to built a new government and, above all, a new nation. The support to the GNA – *if it will work* – must be complete in political, economic, administrative and even military terms. Libya has to be rebuilt from the ground: from the infrastructures to the legitimacy of the state itself. And this huge effort cannot be completed successfully leaving the Libyans alone. A big rule will be played by the regional actors and by all those who, in one way or another, have continued to support one of the two sides. It can be helpful, in this regard, using once again the recent history of Afghanistan and the importance that the neighboring (and not only) countries had in the process of stability. It is time to put aside all selfish influence and acting for the sake of Libya, helping – as it has been, and still is, for Afghanistan – to become an independent state. This is not demagogy. The natural and human resources are there, it is just to have the will, both on the part of the Libyans and the international community, keeping in mind one thing: there is no time to lose.

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