Chapter 6

Word Count: 7802

The EU's Engagement with International Organisations: NATO’s Impact on the Making of EU Security Policy

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Introduction

The European Union’s (EU) engagement with international organisations is an often-overlooked factor in the analyses of the development of the EU’s security policy. This article argues that it is important to study how this engagement actually matters: the EU’s engagement with international organisations both boosts and limits the development of its security policy. Here, tight cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is particularly focussed upon. Drawing on interorganisational theory, the chapter shows how EU-NATO relations uniquely combine both positive and negative dependence. This chapter looks at the tension between dependence and autonomy, particularly in light of the discussion on EU strategic autonomy. Strategic autonomy from NATO would arguably equal an end to negative dependence. Positive dependence, however, may play an important role as both organisations face growing challenges to multilateralism and established international organisations, including bilateral defence-related agreements and European initiatives aimed at smaller groups of countries, not exclusively EU members. Avoiding an autonomisation of European defence from the EU might therefore be beneficial for both the EU and NATO.

Engagement with international organisations is easily overlooked

From a theoretical and empirical perspective, the EU’s engagement with international organisations (IO) is often overlooked as an explanation for the development of the EU’s security policy. Research tends to look for explanations in the preferences of the member states, and in their interaction and negotiations with each other. Member states are seen as the main drivers in this process, as well as the main obstacles to progress, particularly the larger member states (see, e.g., Paterson 2011). Academic literature also emphasises important outside states, notably the role of the USA (see, e.g., Gegout 2010 on American hegemony; Posen 2006 on unipolarity and Van Ham 2000 on transatlantic relationship). Factors such as the economic crisis and its impact on military spending are also topics for analysis and explanation of state action (Heisbourg 2000 on military capabilities; Marrone 2012).

In the field of integration theories, analysts draw on slightly different dynamics. Notably, the EU institutions and their development and role, are prominent explanatory factors (e.g., Smith 2004 on institutions and institutionalisation). Long-term social and political processes may be referred to in such investigations, particularly the concepts of Europeanisation (Wong and Hill 2011) or socialisation (Juncos and Pomorska 2006). These studies see integration as an on-going process that moves forward, if not through the spill-over mechanisms as foreseen in the 1960s, at least via a host of various other drivers. Integration theories are also less state-centred than most international relations literature, as it stems from neofunctionalist to liberal intergovernmentalist concepts, which emphasise interest groups and economic and political forces within the member states.

Integration theories, however, seldom consider *other* international organizations in the explanations advanced to explicate EU behavior. Traditionally speaking, much of the analysis of international relations has over looked international organisations as major players or even as independent actors. Typically, IOs are viewed as not having power or intentions of their own that is independent of their member states. In such thinking, IOs cannot have the impact needed to qualify as an explanatory factor of any kind. Moreover, in integration theory the EU is generally conceived as being different from other international organisations. This means that it does not fit in the general IO category and its relations with other organisations are not relevant.

While the theoretical and disciplinary background has led to overlooking inter-organisational relations, the empirical reality also discouraged such analysis. For example, international organisations are formed around certain functions and certain geographical areas, with each working separately from the others. More recently, the role of international organisations has been changing and their tasks becoming more varied. This growth in tasks, and also expectations, increases the relevance of IOs as actors in the international system. As a result, international organisations are more closely interrelated and interact with each other much more than in the past (see, e.g., Costa and Jørgensen 2012).

This increased interaction takes many forms, as the examples below show. Additionally, the EU's engagement with international organisations has grown in the past decades. As a multipurpose organisation, the EU has a long involvement with the United Nations (UN). For example, it is the only non-state entity that is party to more than 50 multilateral agreements with the UN. The EU also has distinctive relations with UN specialised agencies, being, for instance, a full member with voting rights of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) since 1991, while it has a permanent observer status of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) since 1974, which became an enhanced observer status in 2011 after it acquired a legal personality with the Lisbon Treaty (Gehring, Oberthür and Mühleck 2013; Ojanen 2018). The EU further has important interactions with a number of other IOs including: the World Trade Organisation (WTO), of which the EU is a member; Mercosur; the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); the Council of Europe; and, the African Union (AU).

There are many reasons for the EU to engage with international organisations. For one, the growth in the amount of overlap in their memberships, their geographical coverage and their functions simply means that international organisations need to connect more with each other. The member states of IOs may push them closer together for a more efficient use of resources. Organisations themselves may value these relations as ways of gaining new resources or competences. Despite such efforts, competition and waste of resources may ensue. What is important is that relations with

other organisations nevertheless have an impact on what these organisations do and how they work. In the literature on the EU's relations with different international organisations, interesting examples of interaction have been investigated, including the diffusion of norms (Manners 2002), the sharing of advice and expertise (Schumacher 2012) and legitimization (Stocchetti 2013). Inter-organisational relations also shape organisational identities and the status of the organisations in international relations (Ojanen 2018).

Interaction is also visible in security policy, even if it started to grow later than in other fields, such as environmental policy or trade. International organisations working in the field of security policy, and in the European context, only started to interact after the end of the Cold War. During the Cold War, NATO was the dominant Western European security organisation. The European Community (EC) did not occupy itself with security or defence until the Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force in November 1993 and included the common foreign and security policy as well as the long-term goal of a common defence policy. The end of the Cold War was a turning point for NATO's activities too. Thus, NATO and the EU both started, albeit from different directions, to approach the same new field of activities, namely, crisis management. Moreover, from the 2000s onward, EU relations with NATO became integral to the EU's development of security policy (Ojanen 2018).

How does engagement with other organisations matter? Outlining a perspective for analysis

This chapter argues that the EU's engagement with other organisations both boosts and limits the development of its security policy. Boosting means both assuming a new role and doing more in the field. Limiting means confining security policy related activities to cover only certain types, and may also include setting up a hierarchical relationship between the organisations. Hierarchy is a form of negative dependency between the organisations: one being dependent on the other for decision-making rights or for resources in a way that is not conducive to that organisation's own development.

How should one analyse the EU's engagement with other organisations? Studying agreements and interaction between the organisations and mapping ways of detecting impact needs tools that can usefully come from organisational theory, in particular, the study of inter-organisational relations.

Theory that addresses inter-organisational relations focuses on how organisations of various types interact with each other and what consequences such interaction can have. Where international relations theory often looks at actors as if they are independent from the context in which they exist, much of organisation theory emphasises an awareness of the environment of the actor. Where international relations theory often sees competition as the main form of relationship between the actors, organisation theory looks for positive and mutually-supportive relations between the actors.

For instance, Mizruchi and Yoo (2002) argue that organisations act and exist in an environment that requires their response. Moreover, an organisation needs resources from its environment in order to exist and survive. Other organisations are also part of the environment; they can be essential in achieving one's own goals. Survival, then, is about the organisation's ability to take care of relations with other organisations.

In terms of the influence of an organisation, this perspective helps to analyse what power resources are available to particular IOs. In addition to material resources, organisations need knowledge. Learning, thus, is important. International organisations also need recognition of their position in the system, or, in other words, legitimacy (Biermann 2017; Suchman 1995).

A second important insight is that organisations have an impact on each other. A classic study by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) sets the ground for looking at how interaction makes organisations become more similar to one another (isomorphism). Applied to the analysis of EU-NATO relations, this perspective helps to see how relations between the two, in essence, imply that the organisations change. Although this is essentially true, there may also be resistance to change. To capture both isomorphism and resistance, it is helpful to analyse relations by classifying the mechanisms of their interaction. Such mechanisms include: cooperation, competition and convergence or dependence, (e.g., resource dependence). Additionally, one can examine the various *types* of interaction between IOs, such as adaptation, learning or control (Koops 2012); the various *levels* of interaction (Graeger 2016) and the various *venues* of interaction (Gebhard and Smith 2015).There are also investigations that explain why certain forms of interaction surface rather than others forms of interaction, why relations might take a cooperative or competitive character and what impediments might be interfering with potential cooperation (Biermann 2011; Brosig 2010; Kolb 2013).

A third helpful theoretical insight relates to overlap. It is a basic prerequisite for relations to emerge between IOs and can lead to dependency (Biermann 2011) and isomorphism. While the impact of cooperation is often linked to performance (e.g., Graeger and Haugevik 2011), it can also be linked to the functions and identities of the cooperating organisations (e.g., Costa 2017; Ojanen 2018).

This brings us to the international organizations at hand, the EU and NATO, and the search for a meaningful way to examine their interactions. This chapter introduces a framework for analysing EU-NATO relations, which are of particular importance for understanding the development of the EU's security and defence policy. NATO can be seen as an explanatory factor, even the key organisational *other*, for the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) or, conversely, the lack of it.

Thus, this chapter aims to assess the impact of NATO on the EU's autonomy in the field of security and defence. In the following section, different phases of EU-NATO interaction will be mapped in terms of the kind of impact that can be detected, with an emphasis on elements of dependency and elements of autonomy. Subsequently, this chapter examines the discussion on EU strategic autonomy as a question of autonomy from NATO. In the final section, the chapter will draw some conclusions on what the perspective proposed in the chapter brings to the study of EU security policy and to the understanding of inter-organisational dependency both in its negative and its positive forms.

The impact of tightening cooperation with NATO

Boosting development

The development of the EU's foreign, security and defence policy is often seen in the context of the overall development of the EU as an actor: when the EU became a political union with the Maastricht Treaty, it became logical to have such a policy. The development could also be seen in the context of the EU becoming an autonomous actor internationally, not only in the traditional fields such as trade.

"Autonomy" in EU security policy has been a goal at least from the 1998 St Malo Declaration, whereby the United Kingdom and France agreed on the goal for the EU to have an autonomous action capacity, including with military means. Is there a difference, then, between autonomy and actor capacity, or is it rather that actors are by definition autonomous? This discussion already started in the 1970s.

Gunnar Sjöstedt (1977, 15) argued that

> …to be an actor is the same thing as to possess a quality, which is here called actor capability. The object equipped with this quality is a unit in the international system which always meets two basic conditions: it is discernible from its external environment – it has a minimal degree of separateness – and it has a minimal degree of internal cohesion. If these conditions are fulfilled, we could say that the unit has autonomy, which is…a necessary condition for the unit to be able to attain an actor capability.

At the time, this was a new way of looking at the European Communities. Intending to review this thinking, Rhinard and Sjöstedt (2019) further argued that actorness is based on general and specific conditions; namely, autonomy and value cohesion, policy cohesion and capabilities.

Thus, autonomy is a precondition for the EU's external role, and one that has grown more important over time. Referring to Allen and Smith (1990), Rhinard and Sjöstedt (2019) point out that in the early days of the European Communities, supranational actors worked hard to establish it as an actor distinct from its member states. This happened in tandem with other external actors' recognition of the EU as a distinct actor. This means that autonomy stems partly from informal dynamics, such as general impressions that the EU is capable of acting, or from perceptions that the EU has such attributes as political authority, diplomatic skill, technical expertise or general experience. More formally, however, the EU's internal legal "authority" to act can be used to measure autonomy, as argued by Jupille and Caporaso (1998). While autonomy tends to be a general characteristic of the EU (for example, reflected in the growth of external authority in one broad sector after another, usually over time), it can rise or fall depending on the variation in a number of external variables. Specifically, consistently positive performances and demonstrated impact may convince member states to grant additional autonomy to the EU (Rhinard and Sjöstedt 2019).

NATO is among the external variables mentioned above. EU-NATO relations can be seen as a product of the changed security political landscape after the end of the Cold War, which was deeply consequential for all security policy organisations in Europe. The Warsaw Pact was dissolved, while others, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Western European Union (WEU) and, of course, NATO, redefined their roles. For its part, the EU changed even more: with the Maastricht Treaty, it actually entered the field of security. For some time, WEU was the link between the two organisations.

The launch of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) via the Maastricht Treaty in 1991 included linking WEU to the Union. The EU would "avail itself," thus permitting WEU to implement decisions that had defence implications. WEU was already linked to NATO through the Berlin and Brussels 1996 agreements. Interestingly enough, the two organisations had lived isolated from one another for the duration of the Cold War period. Their officials were instructed not to be in contact with each other—perhaps with the understanding that contact would have an undesired impact. For NATO, WEU embodied the European defence commitment, which seemed important as a counterweight to the splitting effects of a changing security landscape. For the EU, WEU embodied the commitment and capacity it needed for its new role in security policy, even though the capacity was supplied by NATO.

Duke and Vanhoonacker (2016) characterize the first decade of formal EU-NATO relations, which started with a joint EU-NATO Declaration on the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), as a parallel development with an occasional overlap. Crisis management was at this point practically the only concrete activity foreseen in the field of security and defence, with EU crisis management operations starting in 2003. Subsequently, the EU inherited some operations from NATO in the Balkans (Macedonia, Bosnia, Kosovo), which were suitably manageable for a newcomer. When the two organisations started to overlap in tasks, they also developed the means to carry out those tasks in similar ways, for instance, by both developing more rapid reaction capabilities. Many parts of the EU's new organisational structure, the Military Staff and the Military Committee, was practically copied from NATO.

The differences between the two organisations, pertaining essentially to decision-making and interest definition, were to be respected. The first important expression of this is the EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP from 16 December 2002 (NATO 2002). It states that the relations are based on the following principles:

> (1) partnership: ensuring that the crisis management activities of the two organisations are mutually reinforcing, while recognising that the European Union and NATO are organisations of a different nature, (2) effective mutual consultation, dialogue, cooperation and transparency, (3) equality and due regard for the decision-making autonomy and interests of the European Union and NATO, (4) respect for the interests of the Member States of the European Union and NATO, (5) respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which underlie the Treaty on European Union and the Washington Treaty,

> in order to provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment, based on the commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any other through the threat or use of force, and also based on respect for treaty rights and obligations as well as refraining from unilateral actions, (6) coherent, transparent and mutually reinforcing development of the military capability requirements common to the two organisations.

In 2003, the two organisations further agreed on principles of cooperation and signed the “Berlin Plus” agreements notably on the exchange of classified information, an assured access to NATO planning capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations, and the availability of NATO assets and capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations, such as communication units and headquarters. Other types of cooperation were not foreseen.

These declarations and agreements mean that this interaction has been consequential. To start with, NATO, but also the UN, has been helping the EU to gain *actorness* in external security policy and find a role and ways to develop its policies and actions (Duke and Ojanen 2006). One could argue that without the support and accompaniment of NATO and the UN, the EU would not have had a clear idea of its external security role. Crisis management was, at first, practically the only concrete activity foreseen in the field of security and defence, with EU crisis management operations starting in 2003. Similarity, or overlap, between the mandates of the EU and NATO grew further as the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in December 2009, brought common defence or mutual assistance with military means. This increasing overlap in attributable roles also meant a new phase of interaction—one that was both more widely needed and potentially more complicated.

In fact, as Koops (2012) notes, the relationship between the EU and NATO is clearly a complex one: NATO can be a model, an enabler and a competitor for the EU. As a model, the new EU military structures are being formed according to the NATO examples while some EU policies, such as civilian crisis management, also adhere to NATO precedence. A shared environment would also pose similar demands on both, such as the need to acquire legitimacy from the UN, and to develop defence capabilities in the cyber and hybrid domains. While NATO enabled or boosted the EU in these field, one can also say that NATO was itself boosted by the need to show even more rapid reaction capacity (via the NATO Response Force, NRF), and by the need to consider civilian crisis management capacities, where the EU has expertise. But the third thread of the relation, competition, cannot be ignored. Meaning, it seemed to be in NATO’s interests to direct or to limit the EU’s security competence development in order to minimize competition.

A limiting influence

If, at the start, NATO-EU interactions were mostly boosting in character, the later phase in their relations came with an increasing emphasis on setting limits – and it was NATO that set limits to the development of the EU. As Graeger and Haugevik (2013) argue, NATO was a constraining factor, complicating and even preventing the EU's development. For Biermann (2017), the Berlin Plus arrangements were already a highly intrusive, autonomy-restricting cooperation framework that essentially left the EU dependent on NATO capabilities in the crucial fields of planning and conduct capability.

Similarity, or overlap, between the mandates of the EU and NATO grew further as the Lisbon Treaty brought with it common defence or mutual assistance with military means. A growing similarity, in turn, increased calls for a clearer hierarchy. But where would hierarchy stem from? In part, it is about priorities or "primacy" expressed in the treaties. The Lisbon Treaty states that the EU's mutual defence clause does not adversely affect NATO's obligations, whose members see their defence obligations as primarily linked to NATO (Ojanen 2018). [1]

One of the clearest concrete examples of an attempt at building hierarchy was the discussion on the "right of first refusal." This right would mean that in a situation where a new crisis management task could be performed, either by NATO or by the EU, NATO would have the right to decide first whether it wanted to undertake the task. For some, such a right seemed logical. Was not NATO the first responder to this sort of operation? Not all agreed, however. This question showed the sensitivities to asymmetries in power relations, or to defining the relations in any hierarchical way. The idea expressed in the Berlin Plus agreements, that planning, command and conduct capability for EU operations would stem from NATO, was similarly controversial. Apparently, although practical and logical, it could also mean that the EU would not be able to develop such capacities on its own and thus remain dependent on NATO (Ojanen 2018).

In fact, various forms of division of labour and specialisation can be seen as constituting dependency. The emergence of new security threats, such as cyber threats, did not lead to one or the other organisation specialising in these areas and subsequently lending a hand to the other. Instead, they emerged on both organisations' agendas so as to ensure the continued competence of both (Ojanen 2018). Similarly, with the St Malo goal of autonomous action, and the new capabilities developed for the EU's own planning and conduct of operations, notably the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) since 2017, the EU resisted the division of labour and hierarchies in order to retain its own autonomy and develop its own capabilities further (Biermann 2017). Outsourcing defence ultimately also makes the EU dependent from that defence provider.

From this perspective, the new steps in the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) seem particularly interesting. In particular, the steps towards development in the 2010's produced new essential elements. For example, European security and defence policy gained new importance, new actors or drivers were added to the process, a new impetus was given to

defence industrial cooperation (with defence industry becoming more of a driver in the process, and the renewal of decision-making procedures became an issue. The Commission's role also started to become more relevant.

In this period, the EU was arguably less following NATO than reacting together with NATO to changes in their shared environment. Even NATO changed, by reverting more to its original tasks in the territorial defence of its member states. The security situation in Europe looked in the mid 2010s very different from the previous decade. The war in the Donbass region of Ukraine (2014-), the Russian illegal annexation of the Crimea (2014), Russia's hybrid actions, which were aimed at splitting Western organisations, and the presidency of Donald Trump (2017-2020), with his suspicions about NATO, the EU and multilateral cooperation in general, were all major factors behind the development of security and defence policy.

Additionally, elements of autonomy become more numerous. The year 2013 and the EU's December 2013 special summit on CSDP, started a new phase in the development of European defence after a period of inaction that was largely due to the pressing need to concentrate on solving the economic and financial crisis. For Howorth (2018), central elements in this "relaunch" were the concept of a European Defence Union, the decision to go ahead with a Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), the launch of the European Defence Fund, the new financial arrangements for Battle Groups and the agreement, reached at the European Council in June 2017, to operationalize the process enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty known as Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) (Howorth 2018).

Duke (2018) analysed the various challenges of developing European defence after 2016 and argued that one was how NATO perceives its advancement: an EU-backed common defence would challenge NATO and any Article 5 guarantees. Therefore, the EU must carefully stress that, for those EU members who are also NATO members, its intention to provide defence guarantees through the Union are *complementary* to those provided through NATO. Duke also saw a risk in the emergence of a common EU defence that might only accelerate "America first" and isolationist tendencies across the Atlantic or lead to anti-EU "NATO-first" positions. But, a common EU defence capacity could also impress upon the United States that its European allies are both serious and capable (Duke 2018).

At the same time, calls for greater cooperation between the EU and NATO have been incessant. As Howorth (2018) notes, the 2016 European Global Strategy refers to "deepening" the EU's "partnership" with NATO. In July 2016, at the NATO summit in Warsaw, a EU-NATO "Joint Declaration" was published. It calls for a "new impetus and new substance" to be given to the "NATO-EU strategic partnership." The declaration was followed up on 6 December 2016 by a joint "Statement on the Implementation of the Joint Declaration" of July, featuring a common set of proposals in all the areas deemed fit for cooperation, and thereafter, regular reports on progress in these areas. Words such as "partnership" and "essential" become standard.

Task allocation, and attempting at defining what the important tasks are, seem to be central examples of the use of power in inter-organisational interaction (Ojanen 2018). In EU-NATO relations, these tasks can be defined so as to limit the development of an organisation. That NATO would play a role in the planning and conduct capability of the EU's crisis management, and have the ability to chose what operations to undertake before the EU, are ways of limiting both tasks and capability development. More broadly, they also limit autonomous decision-making and strategy development.

Positive and negative dependence

At the surface level, one can see two organisations working in increasingly tight cooperation. The more recent definition of this cooperation is the July 2018 Joint Declaration, which advocated meeting common challenges "hand-in-hand," pointing to 15 years of cooperation between two "unique and essential" partners. As many as 74 concrete proposals for cooperation were presented, ranging from measures to bolster resilience to hybrid threats to military mobility, to conduct parallel and coordinated exercises, and to promote the role of women in peace and security (NATO 2019). The result is increasing cooperation and more and more achievement. However, challenges remain. As Lindstrom and Tardy (2019) argue, ambition is not yet matched by reality.

On a deeper level, one might ask what is the meaning of this increasing engagement with NATO for the EU? Certainly, EU-NATO relations, once established (one needs to remember that they are relatively new), have shaped both organisations, for example, by making them more similar when taking on the same tasks. But, has there also been friction or tension, and competition? What would the two compete over?

NATO, as seen above, both boosts and limits the development of the CSDP. Boosting comes in terms of its models for military structures and the possibilities to use new assets and capabilities. NATO enables the EU to work in this area. Conversely, notably in the areas of civilian crisis management and military mobility, the EU enables NATO to progress. But rivalling cannot be ruled out, either. There is both negative and positive dependence between the two. The EU is still not autonomous (although better equipped than before) and perhaps increasingly, the same goes for NATO. The relation turns into interdependence particularly as expectations on both organizations grow.

The limits regard priority defence commitments as well as planning and conduct capabilities for operations. On the surface, it appears that NATO is the main limit to the development of European security and defence. Article 42.7 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) says that defence is consistent with commitments made under NATO and that NATO is the foundation of the collective defence and the forum for its implementation. Similarly, in the EU Global Strategy, which covers the full spectrum of defence capabilities, NATO remains the primary framework for most member states. The strategy does, however, also state that the EU acts autonomously while it contributes to and cooperates with NATO.

In addition to growing expectations, both organisations share the increasingly challenging environment that evidences a growing disdain for international treaties, organisations and multilateralism, and, alongside this, a growing faith in (or a return to) national sovereignty, and a preference for bilateral or mini-lateral arrangements. This is, in fact, another important facet of the recent development of European security and defence: the initiatives led by the United Kingdom, Germany and France that are placed outside of the two organisations. Both organisations also face the fact that capabilities belong to states: the 2018 joint declaration notes that any capabilities developed “should be available to both organisations, subject to the sovereign decisions of the countries that own them” (European Council, European Commission, and Secretary General of NATO 2018).

Faced with shared challenges, one might ask whether the two can together achieve an improved fitness and relevance? Both need to develop and NATO could develop thanks to the EU (notably in areas like military mobility, hybrid threats and energy). However, could the EU continue to develop thanks to NATO or is it more likely to be limited by NATO in the development of its defence policy? One should keep in mind that current debates in and around NATO’s future relevance contribute to the EU’s desire to seek strategic autonomy.

The question of strategic autonomy

Autonomy and dependency

From the above discussion about autonomy, two points merit additional consideration. First, autonomy is something that the EU already has; second, the quantity or degree of autonomy may change in time, particularly in function of performance. It was also noted that inter-organisational relations may influence the performance of an organisation. And, looking at the EU-NATO relations in particular, one can see how, in fact, the EU is becoming more autonomous because of its inter-organisational relations, as it gains capabilities for crisis management as well as for countering different types of threats.

This is the positive side of dependence. From the point of view of performance, both division of labour and cooperation appear *a priori* positive. It is also clear that both organisations face many shared issues. One of the most difficult ones is the overall challenge to multilateral cooperation and its legitimacy. This challenge seems twofold. On the one hand, there are the growing challenges to multilateralism combined with the increasing popularity of bilateral defence-related agreements and new European initiatives aimed at a smaller number of countries, which may not be exclusively EU members. On the other hand, there is an attitudinal change that seems to be spreading—one that questions the utility of organisations and even posits that they are somehow detrimental to their members.

The question of the EU’s strategic autonomy is, in fact, complicated as some of the recent developments in the field seem to transfer security and defence cooperation out of the EU. It

appears that the EU is becoming autonomous of itself. Some initiatives are intentionally being opened up that result in a European defence that is both wider and narrower than the EU.

Such examples notably include French and Franco-German ones, but also the British Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF). The European Intervention Initiative (EI2), launched by President Emmanuel Macron (LoI June 2018), aims to boost shared strategic culture and ability; it is described as being in support of both the EU and NATO—yet, does not belong to either. The Aachen Treaty of January 2019, between France and Germany, comprises elements of defence (also a mutual defence commitment) and cooperation that can be extended to others. These measures are about the EU but not only or even primarily of the EU. The linkage to EU institutions seems unclear.

A dislike of EU institutions playing a role in defence combined with majority voting in this field hampers EU development. However, bilateralism (including bilateral agreements between European countries and the US should be available to both organisations, subject to the sovereign decisions of the countries that own them) and autonomisation also make NATO's future less certain.

Autonomy is one of the shared concerns and challenges that both organisations face. In the case of the EU, the division of labour appears as one of the limitations to its actorness and in that sense also its goal to achieve autonomy. This is the negative side of dependence. A bad performance by NATO, or the perception of its unreliability as a partner, would increase the need to reduce any dependency. If one thinks of European integration as a process rather than of the EU as an organisation, it can be argued that such limits are antithetical to the process itself. One cannot say "this will not be part of European politics" as integration by nature binds different policy sectors together. This is also a crucial difference between the EU and NATO.

Strategic autonomy from NATO and beyond

Recently, the discussion on the development of EU security and defence policy has increasingly been framed as one on strategic autonomy. As will be clear from the discussion below, the notion of strategic autonomy itself is a contested and controversial one. Moreover, it may be difficult to agree on a definition. And, however defined, the thought seems to cause negative reactions. Howorth (2019), for instance, notes that the negative reactions in the US are tied to the notion that strategic autonomy essentially undermines NATO and implies that Europe aims to make itself independent of the US in collective defence.

Strategic autonomy for the EU would seem to mean, first of all, autonomy from NATO. Howorth (2018) further notes that in the new framework for EU-NATO cooperation, the EU would appear to be no longer prepared to play a subordinate role. He points out scenarios in which the US progressively relinquishes its leadership dominance in NATO while Europe acquires more experience and confidence to meet future security challenges on its own. Howorth argues that such a development would be in the US' best interests: to have a competent, mature and self-reliant partner with which to face global challenges. When the EU reaches that stage, the need for a US-dominated NATO will fade away. There would be a merger of some kind, with the EU progressively taking over command of the major agencies in NATO. The Europeanized NATO then

would incorporate CSDP and subsequently could sign a bilateral alliance with the United States. Indeed, Howorth (2019) argues that EU strategic autonomy would be best carried out *through* NATO. Meaning, Europe can best assume such responsibilities and leadership from within—rather than in contradistinction to—NATO.

In order to dispel worries, other, less sensitive concepts have also been proposed, such as "strategic responsibility," or "cooperative autonomy," used for instance by Federica Mogherini at the 2019 Munich Security Conference. Howorth (2018) finds in these notions an aim to stress cooperation, not only with the US and NATO, but also with the UN and other partners. Even in the EU's Global Strategy, the term is occasionally relativized by referring to "*an appropriate level* of ambition and strategic autonomy." Experts also distinguish between "strengthening autonomy," a "significant degree of autonomy" and "full strategic autonomy." In this volume, Tocci writes about a European "cooperative autonomy" that includes but is not limited to strategic autonomy.

Fiott (2018) sees strategic autonomy as European sovereignty in defence. It can mean responsibility (in the sense of burden sharing), hedging (if the US was to leave Europe) and emancipation (in the sense of an absence of dependencies, current or new). Howorth (2019) finds three dimensions to strategic autonomy: the political (strategy), the operational (capabilities), and the industrial (equipment). While Järvenpää, Major and Sakkov (2019) propose operationalisation of "European Strategic Autonomy" as the capacity to act in four dimensions: political, institutional, capabilities and industry.

For many, the essence of strategic autonomy is not about a fully-independent action capability, but about the ability to carry out one's own policies, alone or together with others. Lippert, von Ondarza and Perthes (2019) understand strategic autonomy as the ability to set one's own priorities and make one's own decisions in matters of foreign and security policy, together with the institutional, political and material wherewithal to carry out such policy alone or if need be in cooperation with third parties. For Lippert, von Ondarza and Perthes (2019), strong strategic autonomy means being able to set, modify and enforce international rules, as opposed to (unwillingly) obeying rules set by others or being a rule-taker subject to strategic decisions made by others, such as the United States, China or Russia.

Here, the discussion comes close to an earlier debate on strategic culture. Cornish and Edwards (2001, 603) concluded that the "EU will develop a unique strategic culture which begins to serve its needs and aspirations (...) and which neither forecloses later evolution of the European capability (...) nor – importantly – rivals NATO in scope or style."

Together these notions produce an increasingly holistic approach to strategic autonomy, covering many different fields in which the EU institutions have a role—particularly in the areas of economy, technology, resources and communications. Strategic autonomy, in fact, may be more than security and defence proper: it would include economy or market power and technological leadership (Grevi 2019). From a military planning point of view, an autonomy to choose partners, the availability of capabilities and an industrial autonomy might need to complement the protection of strategic interests such as communication (mobility and presence).

Interestingly, EU strategic autonomy stems from interaction with NATO as well as from other external and internal factors. The question of strategic autonomy can also be linked to EU institutions and decision-making, which is a supranational element that is markedly different from NATO.

When "sovereignty" comes into play, the question of autonomy from whom is bound to be evoked. While autonomy from NATO would be the first answer, even autonomy from the member states comes up. This is because of the increasing role of the Commission and the steps it takes towards deeper cooperation in defence. Strikwerda (2018) provides one interesting example of such a step in the Defence and Security Procurement Directive of 2009, which redefines the CSDP from intergovernmental to supranational. The Commission shaped the process making member states comply with a non-legally binding guidance note. Moreover, member states recognized the authority of the Commission—not because of coercion or economic gain, but because of contextual rationality. Member states were simply following the existing rules, in particular, those related to the internal market.

Lippert, von Ondarza, and Perthes (2019) turn strategic autonomy from a goal into a tool. The authors underline responsibility for upholding the system. Their research paper depicts strategic autonomy essentially as a means to protect and promote values and interests. This is not necessarily done alone: partners are essential for protecting and promoting values and interests. As a means to uphold the system, values and interests and strategic autonomy are related to questions about responsibility *vis-à-vis* member states and citizens. The Union has a responsibility to be able to act; thus, according to these set goals, it should be autonomous.

The research paper by Lippert, von Ondarza, and Perthes (2019) also suggests that autonomy is not an absolute condition, but a matter of degree. They look at "autonomisation," or the ways in which autonomy can grow. They list a number of ways autonomisation might come about: through making decisions more efficiently, through qualified majority voting (QMV), through renewing institutions (for instance by establishing something of a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the EU). The essential question the authors pose relates to legitimacy. Renewing institutions requires legitimacy for QMV and for the European Parliament's growing role.[2] Where would legitimacy stem from? Sjursen (2018) argues that there are two mutually reinforcing sources of legitimacy at the EU level: the principles enshrined in the Treaties and the consensus mode of decision-making. In order for the EU to be able to make a justifiable claim to prevail over the member states, it must be in line with the democratic requirements of autonomy and accountability. It is not enough that the external legitimacy of the EU is enhanced.

Lippert, von Ondarza, and Perthes (2019), however, find that the CFSP falls short both with regards to accountability and autonomy. Foreign and security policy, they recall, is made through interactions and exchanges between the executive branches of the member states. This means that it is difficult to find out where decisions are actually made, and, moreover, it is unclear who should be

held accountable. Thus, their research paper says that while they would expect the consensus mode to enhance the external legitimacy of EU foreign policy, there is a risk at the same time that it would weaken its internal—democratic—legitimacy.

As a result, strategic autonomy connects both how the institutions develop and how the EU's competences are viewed. Institutionally, Howorth (2019) proposes the setting up of an intergovernmental European Security Council (ESC) that would facilitate faster and more decisive EU action and help the Union approach international affairs in a more strategic manner. In time, questions about intelligence assets and nuclear planning need to be tackled, but this can also be done in a longer time frame (20-25 years). Barnier (2019) proposes a separate council formation for ministers of defence. Interestingly, the new Commission combines internal market and defence in the portfolio of one of the Commissioners.

Conclusions

The EU's engagement with NATO both boosts and limits the development of its security and defence policies. Developing organisational structures and concrete capabilities has benefitted from increasing cooperation with NATO. How these would be used, however, is a question where relations with NATO set limits to the EU. Decisions on what operations to start or what capabilities to develop as well as the planning and conduct capability for operations are examples where the EU's policies are assumed to be linked to those of NATO. This kind of linkage may well be beneficial for practical or economic reasons but it also limits the EU's autonomous action and strategy. Being dependent on NATO weakens autonomy, and it can be a handicap in changing international relations, characterised by lack of trust.

This tension between autonomy and dependence is visible in the debate on EU strategic autonomy. Strategic autonomy from NATO would arguably equal an end to negative dependence. Positive dependence, however, may play an important role as both organisations face growing challenges to multilateralism and established international organisations, including bilateral defence-related agreements and European initiatives aimed at smaller groups of countries, not exclusively EU members. For both organisations, keeping and increasing their relevance is key. Their legitimacy and relevance seem increasingly bound together. This is one side of their being interdependent: they share the prestige, authority and legitimacy that is increasingly important for them to thrive (Ojanen 2018).

On a more theoretical level, analysing the impact of EU-NATO relations shows the importance of inter-organisational relations. Overlooking them would impoverish the analysis of how and why the CSDP has developed. Comprehending inter-organisational relations also helps understand the organisations and how and why they change. Importantly, the EU's tasks, organisation, and the argumentation about its nature and goals in the field of security and defence would be different without this interaction (Ojanen 2018).

This chapter has shown that increasing interaction between the EU and NATO has made the two organisations become more similar. Yet, it is also this interaction that helps to understand the implications of their essential differences.

One such crucial difference is the role of the institutions in decision-making. Supranational elements have always set the EU apart from international organisations and military alliances and have been its fundamental difference from NATO (Ojanen 2006).[3] Now, these elements seem even more enhanced. The Commission's increasing involvement in the field of defence, the use of budget funds for defence-related spending as well as the discussion on the need for strategic autonomy all show that as the EU continues developing a security and defence policy, and absorbing more tasks in this field, it also transfers defence into a different domain of (at least partial) supranational decision-making.

Further progress in EU security and defence policy would also seem to take a different path from that of NATO. It might go through gradually reducing the difference between foreign, security and defence policy and other policy fields. The possible next steps might then need to include a new look at the EU's formal competences. Compared to other policy fields, the EU lacks competences in foreign and security policy. The TEU gives the EU competence to define and implement a common foreign and security policy, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy. However, decisions are taken by the member states via unanimity. The role of the Commission is still limited. It does not have the power to submit a proposal for a legal act, which it has in most policy areas where the EU can act. At this point of the EU's development, it would seem that the EU cannot be autonomous in the field of security and defence without having at least some formal competence in it. Meanwhile, the role of groups of countries including non-EU states in leading the development, an autonomisation of European security and defence from the EU as it were, is a clear challenge that the EU faces.

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[1] Formal highest-level political cooperation came to be blocked as Cyprus and Turkey both opposed allowing the other party's full involvement, Cyprus not being in Partnership for Peace and Turkey not being in the EU and less related to the ESDP than it had been to WEU policies.

[2] The role of supranational institutions interestingly came up also when Bailes and Messervy-Whiting (2011) wrote on WEU legacies and the EU's inability to absorb a specialized parliamentary assembly for defence and security.

[3] In 2006, I wrote about two alternative models of a common defence policy emerging. A wholly new type of supranational defence may become reality within the EU, possibly challenged by the EU's close co-operation, or "fusion," with NATO's intergovernmentalism (Ojanen 2006).