



SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
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The High Representative for the CFSP and EU
security culture: mediator or policy entrepreneur?

PhD Dissertation
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April 2012

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ABSTRACT

The High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (High Representative) was first established by the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999 to enhance the effectiveness and credibility of EU foreign policy. Since its creation, this body has played different roles vis-à-vis various policy dossiers. In some cases, the High Representative has successfully coordinated the positions of Member States and enhanced the worldwide visibility of EU foreign policy. On other occasions, the High Representative played a more proactive role by identifying and operationalizing common European interests.

The varying role of the High Representative in different policy dossiers reflects the ambiguity of the EU political system. Unlike in most European states—where the executive and legislative powers are linked through the same parliamentary majority—within the EU supranational and intergovernmental sources legitimacy coexist. It is the ambiguity deriving from it that permitted the High Representative to adopt different roles in response to different external challenges.

This research investigates the reasons that led the High Representative to play sometimes the role of mediator and at other times that of policy entrepreneur by examining the influence of security culture on EU foreign policy processes. Security culture is defined as the convergence of socially transmitted norms shared by the majority of political actors belonging to the EU security community. The norms constituting security culture concern the identification of security threats, the definition of the appropriate instruments to deal with them, and the interaction with the international community.

The comparison of the cases of the 2001 Macedonia crisis and the negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme reveals that shared norms—and thus the emergence of a shared culture—with regard to a given threat had an impact on policy processes involving the High Representative. In particular, the emergence of a shared security culture created a positive context which enabled the High Representative to adopt the role of policy entrepreneur, rather than simply mediating among Member States.

In order to address the capability-expectations gap emerged among citizens' expectations, and EU's ability to deliver in the field of foreign policy, scholars have long stressed the need to build stronger institutions able to constrain the powers of Member States. However, this research identifies the development of a shared vision about common security as a factual pre-condition for the empowerment of central institutions and, thus, for further integration in this field. In addition, even though the existing literature has mostly identified diverging norms on the use of force in the international arena and on the alliance with the US as the major obstacles to an effective EU foreign policy, this study suggests that another major obstacle in this regard lies in diverging norms concerning the role of international cooperation and the relation between national and international security vis-à-vis external threats.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CFSP: Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP: Common Security and Defense Policy
DG: Directorate General
DPA Democratic Party of Albanians
EEAS: European External Action Service
EPC: European Political Cooperation
ESS: European Security Strategy
EU: European Union
EUMC: EU Military Committee
EUMS: EU Military Staff
FRY: Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
fYROM: former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GSZ: Ground Safety Zone
HR: High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy
IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency
KFOR: Kosovo Force
NAM: Non-Aligned Movement
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCRI: National Council of Resistance of Iran
NLA: National Liberation Army
NNWS: non-nuclear weapons states
NPT: Non-Proliferation Treaty
NWS: Nuclear weapons states
PDP: Party for Democratic Prosperity
PoCo: Political Committee
Policy Unit: Early Warning and Policy Planning Unit
PSC: Political and Security Committee

SDMS: Social democrats

SFOR: Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina

TCA: Trade and Cooperation Agreement

UCPMB: Liberation Army of Preševo, Medveđa and Bujanovac

UNPREDEED: United Nations Preventive Deployment Force

UN: United Nations

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

VMRO-DOMNE: Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party
for Macedonian National Unity

WMS Strategy: Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

WTO: World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since 1992, EU Member States have undertaken important efforts to coordinate their foreign policies and build a common foreign policy. Even though twenty years have passed since then, and significant institutional and political developments have occurred, the EU has not developed yet a common and effective foreign policy, and complaints about its lack of coherence or cohesion endure.

With the aim of tackling some of these problems, the Lisbon Treaty (2007) introduced significant innovations in EU foreign policy. In particular, the Treaty radically reformed the powers of the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (HR) first established by the Amsterdam Treaty (1997), and renamed it High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (High Representative of the Union).¹

The reform of the HR was one of the most debated issues during the negotiation of the text. After considering various options, the Convention on the Future of Europe proposed to merge the positions of the former Commissioner for External Relations and the HR and to name the post ‘Union Minister for Foreign Affairs’, signalling the high ambitions attached to its role. However, after the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by French and Dutch voters, national governments preferred to stress the enduring importance of national interests and to rename the figure High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. At the same time, they significantly reformed the HR’s role and powers. In particular, they attributed the High Representative of the Union the task of presiding over the Foreign Affairs Council and to be one of the

¹ In order to distinguish the High Representative before and after the reform, this study will refer to the institution before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty as the HR, and to the institution in place since December 2009 as High Representative of the Union.

Vice-Presidents of the European Commission, in charge of external relations. In addition, they put the High Representative of the Union at the head of an important new structure—the European External Action Service (EEAS)—and gave it a wider right of initiative in EU foreign policy.²

The reform of the High Representative of the Union was hailed as one of major innovations introduced by the Treaty. The fact that this person would chair the Foreign Affairs Council and at the same time be the Vice-President of the Commission generated expectations for a more coherent and efficient foreign policy (Avery 2009: 26; Brady and Sola 2010; Rieger 2011). Similarly, major expectations were generated by the fact that the High Representative of the Union would represent the EU in the international arena, and at the same time maintain control over a significant portion of the EU budget for external relations (Juncos 2009).

Despite these important reforms, and even though more than ten years have passed since the HR was first established (Treaty of Amsterdam, 1999), only a few studies have investigated its legacy, and the lessons it could provide for the future, including for the setting up of the High Representative of the Union and its EEAS.³

While giving birth to the HR, the Treaty of Amsterdam attributed to this body little powers and a low administrative profile (Buchet de Neuilly 2002; Grevi, Manca, and Quille 2005a). The appointment of Javier Solana as first incumbent for the post, however, raised expectations for this figure to gain a stronger political role. Javier Solana had been former Secretary General of NATO and Foreign Minister of Spain. Moreover, subsequent reforms attached to the authority of the HR new bodies meant to perform new executive tasks especially in the field of security and defence. The combination of these elements contributed to render the future impact of this institution on EU decision-making mostly unpredictable.

² Art. 18, 26, 27, and 30 of the Lisbon Treaty.

³ The only work explicitly addressing the legacy of the HR is an edited volume by Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet and Rieger (2011b). In addition, few journal articles have specifically focused on the role of the HR and its relation with other institutions: Melis (2001), Buchet de Neuilly (2002), Crum (2006), Dijkstra (2010a) and Kurowska (2009).

Scholars and commentators observing the role of the HR have offered different and, at times, contradictory evaluations. For most scholars the HR played a fundamental role in EU decision-making (Buchet de Neuilly 2002; Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet and Rüger 2011a: 5), and “successfully increased [...] effectiveness of the CFSP on key occasions” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008: 79).⁴ Yet, when it comes to defining its contribution, little or contradictory explanations have generally been provided. For some, the HR was one of the driving forces behind the ‘Brusselization’ of EU foreign policy (Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2002; Duke 2011: 36). For others, the empowerment of the HR led to question “whether the central actors in the CFSP/ESDP framework now play a role similar to that of the Commission in the first pillar” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008: 77). Some have defined the HR as “*the* face of the EU” (Duke 2011: 35) as it provided “the CFSP with a degree of visibility and permanence which had previously been entirely absent.” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008; Piana 2004). Others have highlighted the role and contribution of the HR as norm entrepreneur (Kurowska 2009), or mediator in the negotiations among Member States (Sauer 2008; Musu 2003).

This research posits that the difficulty in reaching a comprehensive and unanimous evaluation of the role played by the HR is to be attributed to two main factors. First, the HR was given an ambiguous job description—in between an administrative and a political figure—generating contradictory expectations about its future role (Buchet de Neuilly 2002; Dijkstra 2011: 78-80; Duke 2011; Regelsberger 2011). Second, the ambiguous institutional structure of the EU—characterised by the coexistence of supranational and intergovernmental institutions and ambiguous identity configurations—permitted the HR to adopt very different roles vis-à-vis different policy dossiers. While on some dossiers the HR formulated key policy proposals and transformed it into common policies, in other issues it was sidelined or played the limited role of honest broker.

Starting from these assumptions, this research investigates factors that have led the HR to play sometimes the role of mediator and other times a more proactive role.

⁴ At the end of Solana’s second mandate (in 2009), however, some offered a less positive assessment of his contribution in all these fields (European Voice 2009).

Traditionally, scholars investigating the empowerment of EU central bodies have focused on two main variables: the interests of Member States (Hoffmann 1966; Moravcsik 1998), and the ability of institutions themselves to erode competences to national capitals (Stone Sweet and Sandholtz 1997; Smith 2004; Beach 2005). By contrast, by drawing on the literature on sociological institutionalism, this study looks at the impact of the emergence (or lack) of a shared EU security culture on policy processes involving the HR.

This Introduction starts by illustrating the role of the HR and the institutional context in which it was collocated. The first section argues that the complex political system in which the HR was located and the ambiguous job description it was given in Amsterdam rendered its future role in EU foreign policy mostly unpredictable. The second section presents the main puzzle at the origin of this study—which is the varying involvement of the HR in different policy dossiers. Subsequently, the third section illustrates the purpose of this study and the plan of the work.

The High Representative for the CFSP and EU foreign policy: an ambiguous institution in a complex institutional system

Since the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty (in 1993), EU foreign policy has been managed by a complex institutional system characterised by a division of powers and competences between the centre and the periphery, and by the coexistence of supranational (the European Parliament and the Commission) and intergovernmental (the Council) institutions. Within this institutional framework, the management of high politics issues like the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)⁵ were characterised by a limited intervention of supranational (vs intergovernmental) institutions, and by the maintenance of key implementation powers at the national (rather than at the supranational) level (Regelsberger, Schoutheete de Tervarent, and Wessels 1997).

⁵ In this work CSDP will be used also as synonym of its precursor, the European Security and Defence Policy.

In 1997, in Amsterdam, Member States agreed to a treaty reform aimed to tackle two of the chronic problems of EU foreign policy: scarce coordination and lack of leadership. To this purpose, they decided to create a new institution: the High Representative for the CFSP (art. 18 of Treaty on the European Union).

On that occasion, however, divergences among Heads of State and Government rendered it difficult the emergence of a coherent reform. Eventually, the Amsterdam Treaty gave birth to a post with a vague job description and only weak powers. The low ambitions of this reform, however, were subsequently contradicted by the attachment to the post of the HR of a series of new bodies—active especially in the field of the CSDP—and by the appointment, as first incumbent, of a person with a high political profile. All these elements contributed to the emergence of an institution with an ambiguous profile and an unpredictable impact on policy-making (Dijkstra 2011: 68; Regelsberger 2011: 19-22; Duke 2011: 35-37).

EU foreign policy: overview of the institutional system

EU foreign policy manifests itself through actions in a number of policy areas, ranging from trade, to development, and humanitarian aid, as well as through security and defence policies. Since the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty (1993), all these common policies have been managed by the same institutional framework, composed by the Council of Ministers, the European Commission, and the European Parliament. While the Council represents the interests of Member States, the European Parliament represents the interests of European peoples.

Despite associating them to the same institutional framework, the Maastricht Treaty established different instruments and procedures for regulating low politics issues (mainly trade, humanitarian aid, and international development), and high politics issues pertaining EU foreign policy (the CFSP and the CSDP). Decision-making in the area of trade, humanitarian aid, and international development were associated to the Union's

first pillar: the European Community.⁶ Accordingly, in these policy domains the Commission was generally given the exclusive right of initiative, while the Council (acting by qualified majority) and the European Parliament obtained joint decision powers.⁷ Even though Member States retained key competences (except in the case of the commercial policy), moreover, in most of these policy domains common institutions obtained autonomous implementation powers.⁸

By contrast, the Maastricht Treaty limited significantly the powers of the European Commission and the European Parliament in the CFSP and in the CSDP, which constituted the Union's second pillar.⁹ In these fields, greater prerogatives were attributed to the Council. For example, the Treaty of Maastricht established that decisions concerning the principles and general guidelines of the CFSP shall be adopted by the European Council (art. J8 Maastricht Treaty). The Council of Ministers alone was charged with the implementation of these guidelines, through the adoption of common positions or joint actions (art. J3). As these acts were to be adopted by unanimity, this procedure de facto granted a veto power to each Member State. Unlike in other policy areas, moreover, the European Parliament was only entitled to be consulted "on the main aspects and the basic choices of the common foreign and security policy" (art. J7 of the Maastricht Treaty).¹⁰ Similarly, the powers of the Commission were limited as it was not the only body entitled with the right of initiative (so were single national governments, art. J8). Unlike for policies adopted under the first pillar, the Court of Justice had no jurisdiction over the acts adopted under this policy.

⁶ See for example art. 110-116 and art. 130u-130y of the Title II (Treaty establishing the European Community) of the Treaty on European Union http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/11992E/tif/JOC_1992_224_1_EN_0001.pdf

⁷ Key differences, though, distinguish commercial policy (which is a common policy) from development and humanitarian aid (which are not common policies). The role of the Commission is much stronger in the common commercial policy: in this field this body may initiate proposals for trade negotiations, and has decision-making powers with regard to anti-dumping measures. In both cases, the role of the European Parliament is rather weak (in the case of the common commercial policy it is only consultative).

⁸ For example, the Commission manages the EU aid budget and the European Development Fund. In addition, it negotiates cooperation and trade agreements on behalf of the Council.

⁹ Title V (Provisions on a Common Foreign and Security Policy) of the Treaty on European Union http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/11992E/tif/JOC_1992_224_1_EN_0001.pdf.

¹⁰ In addition, it "shall be kept regularly informed", and "may ask questions of the Council or make recommendations" to the Council of Ministers.

In addition, unlike in other foreign policy domains, the Maastricht Treaty left CFSP and CSDP implementation tasks with the Member States, while attributing common institutions (intergovernmental or supranational) no or very limited executive powers (Regelsberger 2011; Regelsberger, Schoutheete de Tervarent, and Wessels 1997). This decision reflected existing trends in the history of European integration. Indeed, already before the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty, EU Member States had established a mechanism of foreign policy consultation—the European political cooperation (EPC)—based on purely intergovernmental arrangements among Member States’ foreign ministries. As such, the EPC was not supported by any common institution (only starting in the 1980s did Member States establish a small independent secretariat, charged with limited administrative tasks). Following this practice, even though formally placing the CFSP (and the CSDP) under the same institutional umbrella of other common policies, in Maastricht EU Member States did not give central institutions key implementation powers as in other policy fields. For example, they entitled the Presidency—not the Commission—to be responsible for the implementation of CFSP common measures and to represent the EU in the international arena (art. J5). Similarly, the Council’s Secretariat was entitled to assist the Presidency in the performance of its tasks; yet, its role was to be merely administrative (preparing the agenda, keeping records of decisions taken) and not political.

The powers attributed to central institutions by the Maastricht Treaty were even weaker with regard to security and defence. Even though Member States ambitiously asserted that the CFSP “shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence”, they did not create or explicitly charged any central body with the implementation of this policy (as we will see in the following section, this occurred at a later stage, with the Amsterdam and the Nice Treaties). In addition, national governments attached to the Community’s budget only administrative expenditures relating to this policy, while operation expenditures were to be supported by Member States (art. J11).

The institutional system created in Maastricht generated contradictory trends. On the one hand, by formalising and institutionalising cooperation in this field, the

Maastricht Treaty provided Member States with new instruments to develop common decisions in the foreign policy realms. On the other hand, however, given the limited role attributed to central institutions, the Maastricht Treaty left the EU with no common instrument to implement these decisions. This discrepancy was at the origin of the capabilities-expectations gap between citizens' expectations on EU foreign policy, and institutions' ability to deliver described by the literature (Hill 1993).

The Amsterdam compromise

During the 1990s, the failure of the EU to prevent the conflict in Bosnia, and its inability to intervene in the Kosovo conflict contributed to increase the awareness about the inadequacy of the EU institutional system as established in Maastricht. Accordingly, in mid 1990s EU Member States convened an intergovernmental conference to elaborate a treaty reform which was to tackle, among other things, two of the chronic problems of EU foreign policy: scarce coordination and lack of leadership.¹¹

In view of this reform, French leaders first formulated the idea to create a new institution which would represent the EU in the international arena. This idea was initially put forward in public speeches and public declarations,¹² and subsequently, refined in the context of a Reflection Group chaired by Carlos Westendorp, set up to prepare the work of the intergovernmental conference drawing the new treaty.¹³ According to the French proposal, the new post—the HR—was to be a high political figure, able to give new impetus to EU foreign policy and provide it with strong leadership. French leaders argued that the HR should derive its political legitimacy at the highest political level—from the European Council—and act independently from other EU institutions. In order to perform its tasks, the HR should have the right to formulate policy proposals within the limits of the mandates established by the Council, and

¹¹ The need to give the Union greater capacity for external action was identified among the three priorities of the reform by the so-called Westendorp Report (A Strategy for Europe 1995), produced by a group of experts and officials convened to make proposals for subsequent negotiations.

¹² Le Figaro, 10 July 1995, 20 February 1996. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/igc1996/pos-fr_en.htm and Jacques Chirac, "Pour une Europe forte", Revue des Affaires Européennes, 1:1995 cited by Buchet de Neuilly (2002: 15).

¹³ See A Strategy for Europe (1995) and Grevi, Mance, Quille (2005b).

operate with the help and assistance of an analysis and planning centre (whose creation was contemporary being negotiated). Finally, the HR should have a role in the external representation of the EU and in the negotiations with third countries. For all these tasks, the French government recommended the appointment of a “person of real stature, not to say international renown”.¹⁴ French diplomats did not make a secret of the fact that the proposal was aimed to strengthen the role of the Council vis-à-vis that of the Commission, as they perceived that the former “constitutes the ultimate expression of the political will of the Union”.¹⁵

This proposal formulated by the French diplomacy encountered significant opposition from the European Commission and other EU national governments. The Commission considered the new figure as a possible competitor in the foreign policy realm and feared that it could challenge its role (European Commission 1996). Other national governments argued that the creation of the new post would have further raised bureaucratic conflicts without improving coherence and coordination. In addition, the representatives of small Member States were wary of any proposal strengthening the role of the Council vis-à-vis that of the Commission, as they perceived the former as dominated by large Member States (Benelux 1996). In their eyes, the HR would have permitted to large Member States dominating the Council to pursue their foreign policy goals within the framework of the EU. The fact that the proposal had been formulated by France did not help reduce these fears.

In light of these divergences, the Reflection Group chaired by Westendorp and appointed to formulate options of reforms envisaged two alternative solutions. According to a first option, the new figure could be appointed at the highest political level, by the European Council, and receive orders from it. According to a second option, the new post could have a mainly administrative role, be appointed by the General Affairs Council and be based within the Council’s General Secretariat.

The institution finally established by the Treaty of Amsterdam was based on a compromise—between these two solutions—proposed by France and Germany during

¹⁴ See France (1996).

¹⁵ Ibid. See also Jacques Chirac, “Pour une Europe forte”, *Revue des Affaires Européennes*, 1:1995, cited in Buchet de Neuilly, (2002: 15).

the intergovernmental conference (Chirac and Kohl 1996). The final compromise considerably lowered the ambitions of the initial French proposal. According to the text agreed in Amsterdam, the new HR was to be appointed by the Council of Ministers and its tasks were to be performed by the Council's Secretary General. In addition, the post was given little power and a rather vague job description; its main tasks were:

- to give assistance to the Council with the preparation, formulation and implementation of foreign policy decisions.
- upon request of the Presidency, to have a role in the external representation of the EU, together with the Commissioner for External relations and the President of the Council.¹⁶

According to some commentators, the Amsterdam Treaty created a figure with a merely administrative profile, with the role of a “bureaucratic actor, although at a senior level” or of an “agent” of Member States (Grevi, Manca, and Quille 2005a; Buchet de Neuilly 2002).

During the intergovernmental conference, however, the attribution to this new subject of a merely administrative role was partially contradicted by other decisions. EU Member States, in particular, created an Early Warning and Policy Planning Unit (hereafter Policy Unit), and placed it under the responsibility of the HR.¹⁷ This body was to become the centre of analysis and planning in the foreign policy domain and, therefore, was bound to have a political rather than administrative role. Although the debate about the creation of the Policy Unit initiated separately from that concerning the HR, negotiations on the two institutions soon merged. Again, even though agreeing on the need of new instruments to provide the EU with a more coherent foreign policy, Member States disagreed on how to do that. While Member States in favour of a more supranational foreign policy wanted to attach the Policy Unit to the Commission, those in favour of a more intergovernmental approach preferred to set it within the Council. In the

¹⁶ Art. 18 and art. 26 TEU. The role and functions of the Secretary General were to be performed by a deputy.

¹⁷ See Declaration 6 annexed to the Treaty of Amsterdam on the establishment of a policy planning and early warning unit. The Policy Unit was to be composed of seconded national diplomats and representatives of the Commission, the Council Secretariat, and the WEU. On this subject: Lodge and Flynn (1998).

end, the second option prevailed and the Unit was attached to the Council. Somehow, this decision counterbalanced the low profile attributed to the HR: while fears of a too strong intergovernmental pillar limited the ambition of the HR, concerns over a too strong Commission in the foreign policy realm contributed to attach the Policy Unit to the office of the HR.

The HR: an ambiguous job description

In Amsterdam, divergences between Member States did not permit to clarify important aspects of the reform. Some national governments, for example, suggested that the HR could chair the Political Committee (PoCo), but no agreement was reached on this point and the issue was deferred to subsequent talks. Similarly, even though a general agreement was reached on the mix composition of the Policy Unit, the balance between the different components and its working methods were not clarified. Certainly, the need to reach a compromise played a significant role in that. Indeed, the role of the HR (and the Policy Unit) in this context has been conceptualised as that of “repertoires”, or policy options, vague and flexible enough to be interpreted in different ways by different Member States. While those supporting a supranational foreign policy saw in them the possibility to enhance the role of central vis-à-vis national institutions, those willing to enhance the powers of Member States interpreted them as a new instrument in the hands of national governments (Buchet de Neuilly 2002). Negotiators, moreover, were aware of the fact that the future role of the two entities depended much more on the future politics of foreign policy than on the formal provisions under discussion.

In light of the vague provisions contained in the Amsterdam Treaty,¹⁸ the subsequent implementation of the text played a key role in shaping the envisaged reforms. Even though the Treaty attributed the task of appointing the HR to the Council of Ministers, for example, Heads of States and Governments took on this task. In December 1998, indeed, the European Council agreed that the new HR should be “a personality with a strong political profile” and be appointed as soon as possible. In

¹⁸ On this point see Regelsberger (2011) and Duke (2011: 35)

addition, Heads of States and Governments recalled that the HR was to work closely with both, the Council and the Commission, and added that the Council could give it specific mandates (European Council 1998).¹⁹ Subsequently, in June 1999, the European Council agreed on the appointment as first HR of Javier Solana, former Spanish Foreign Minister and NATO Secretary General (European Council 1999a).²⁰ The appointment of Solana reached very fast an almost unanimous backing from national governments.²¹ Unlike the compromise reached in Amsterdam, it signalled a certain desire to give the new post a high political profile and not to relegate it to an administrative role.²²

The meaning of and reasons behind this appointment cannot be understood without considering the changed political environment in which it took place. To be short, one could say that just after the Amsterdam Treaty was signed, the Franco-German leadership that had led to its formulation was replaced by a new Franco-British 'entente'. This change was mainly due to the fact that, under the new leadership of Tony Blair, the UK decided to give up her long standing veto on the creation of a European defence policy. The new course was launched in December 1998 during a Franco-British bilateral meeting in Saint-Malò and was soon adopted by the whole EU.²³ The shift was broadly described as a response to the events of the Kosovo war, which had highlighted the inadequacy of the existing intergovernmental arrangements and the incapacity of the EU to react to external challenges (Sheperd 2009).

Within this new course, the Head of States and Governments agreed also on the creation of new institutional bodies to become the core of the newly born European

¹⁹ The implementation of the Amsterdam Treaty was also discussed by the General Affairs Council (Council of Ministers of the EU 1999).

²⁰ The decision was ratified by the General Affairs Council of 13/10/1999 and was to have effect from October 1999.

²¹ Surprisingly, in this new context only France expressed some reservation on the appointment of such a high profile candidate, allegedly for fears that it could shadow the action of traditional (national) diplomacy. Apparently, after supporting a strong HR to enhance the role of the Council vis-à-vis that of the Commission, France was now keen to reassert even more national prerogatives in the foreign policy domain.

²² "By nominating the NATO Secretary General Javier Solana as the first incumbent of this role, Member States opted for a high profile political figure" (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008).

²³ See Bilateral Declaration of Franco-British summit, St. Malò 4 December 1998. In June 1999 the substance and the wording of this Declaration were incorporated in the conclusions of the Cologne European Council (European Council 1999a).

Security and Defence Policy. Most importantly, these bodies were designated to work in close relation with the HR (European Council 1999a). Member States agreed, in first place, on the creation of the Political and Security Committee (PSC), taking the place of the PoCo in the coordination of Member States' foreign policies. Initially created under the European Political Cooperation, the PoCo was a non-permanent body in charge of foreign policy coordination; once a month it gathered the Political Directors of Member States. Unlike the PoCo, the PSC was to be a permanent body composed by national representatives (always assisted by a member of the Council Secretariat and the Commission); despite initial disagreement on the level of appointments to this body (UK wanted it to be low level in order for it to remain subordinate to CoReper), Member States eventually agreed in principle that the PSC should be at the ambassadors' rank (a solution strongly supported by France). The PSC was created to perform the duties associated to the emerging CSDP,²⁴ but provided also the HR with a new permanent political interlocutor.²⁵

In addition to the PSC, Member States agreed on the creation of a Military Committee (EUMC) formally composed of national Chiefs of the Defence Staff. Finally, they created the European Military Staff (EUMS). Both these bodies were created to provide the EU with institutional instruments to perform EU-led military crisis management operations—the so called Petesberg tasks (European Council 1999c).²⁶ As the EUMC and the EUMS were placed under the authority of the HR, the latter was closely involved in the launch of the CSDP and became “a key contribution to make to the efficiency and consistency of the CFSP and the development of the common security and defence policy” (European Council 1999c).

²⁴ In particular, since in December 1999 Member States had decided that the EU should be able to perform low level military operations (Petesberg tasks), it was clear that the PoCo could not be in charge of that and that a more permanent body was needed.

²⁵ The PSC was first set up as a temporary body in spring 2000 and became a standing body after the European Council of Nice, December 2000.

²⁶ Petesberg tasks were first listed in the context of WEU in 1992 and included operation ranging from humanitarian to peace-keeping and crisis management; yet, they did not include territorial defence which has always remained a task of NATO. Even though the EU first declared its willingness to perform these tasks for the first time in the Amsterdam Treaty, the process of setting up the necessary instruments was only initiated in 1999 (European Council 1999b).

The fact that the newly appointed HR was the former NATO Secretary General, moreover, cannot be regarded as a mere coincidence. At the time of his appointment (June 1999), Solana had just led the NATO campaign in Kosovo (Spring 1999). As already mentioned, by exposing their incapability to react to events even in their own backyard, this campaign played a major role in pushing EU Member States to develop crisis management capabilities. The launch of the CSDP was broadly considered a fundamental part of this process. In general, the location of the HR at the top of the institutional hierarchy leading the CSDP considerably strengthened its profile, and rendered it one a potential key player in EU foreign policy.

In conclusion, the creation of the HR was the result of a complex compromise between an ‘integrationist’ camp, favouring a stronger role of central and supranational institutions, and an ‘intergovernmentalist’, supporting a stronger role of intergovernmental institutions. Divergences between these two camps rendered it impossible to define whether the HR was to play a political or an administrative role, whether it was to act only as a mediator among Member States—and limit itself to implement policy decisions taken by them—or it was to act as a politician—elaborating policy proposals and a vision of the future EU foreign policy. At the time of its creation, therefore, the future impact of this institution on EU foreign policy remained highly unpredictable.²⁷

The puzzle: the HR’s ambiguous role in EU foreign policy

The involvement of the HR in EU foreign policy during the ten years in which this institution remained into place in its original form has been addressed by many scholars analysing different foreign policy dossiers. Given the ambiguous job description attributed to the HR by the Amsterdam Treaty, these studies have mostly evaluated this institution on the basis of various and different terms of reference. Moreover, as most of

²⁷ The novelties of the institution, together with the vague identification of its tasks, and of the relation with other bodies were certainly the main constitutive elements of this ambiguity. As Cohen, March, and Olsen (1972) observed, ‘unclear technology’, or the ambiguous interpretation of the organizations’ processes by its member is one of the major sources of ambiguity in organizational choice. See also March and Olsen (1976).

these works have aimed to assess the effectiveness of EU foreign policies in general, and not the role not of the HR in particular, they have conflated the evaluation of this institution with that of EU's successes (or failures). A survey of this literature, in any case, reveals that the HR was inconsistently involved in different policy dossiers and thus played an ambiguous role in EU policy-making.

First, the literature shows that, while the HR was closely involved in some policy dossiers, at times playing a role similar to that of the Commission in market integration, it was marginalised or excluded from others (Regelsberger 2011: 26). This ambiguity emerges clearly from the observation of EU crisis management (Dijkstra 2010a): while the HR was at the forefront of EU's action in some crises, it was not in others. Yet, the HR's ambiguous role was not limited to crisis management, but extended to other areas. Many scholars, for example, have highlighted the significant role played by HR in EU foreign policy towards the Balkans,²⁸ in particular during the 2001 Macedonia crisis, and the resolution of the conflict between Serbia and Montenegro in 2001-2002. Similarly, most scholars have stressed the important role acquired by the HR in the management of the negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme, and EU's policies towards the Middle East.²⁹ In addition, a number of scholars have highlighted the involvement of HR Solana in the CSDP (Karlás 2005; Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008). By contrast, little or no mention is made in the literature on the role of the HR in other policy dossiers, such as those relating to Asia and Russia (European Voice 2009).

With regard to those policy dossiers in which the HR was more involved, scholars have detected different roles and different levels of empowerment. According to some scholars, the HR was fundamental in elaborating and promoting a political discourse legitimating the growth of EU foreign policy (Kurowska 2009). For others, it gave an "invaluable" impulse to EU foreign policy (Piana 2004: 125) by increasing "the visibility of the Union and the coherence between the Member States", or by enabling the EU to

²⁸ Stahl (2011), Piana (2002; 2004: 119), Friis (2007); Papadimitriou, Petrov and Greiçevci (2007); Tocci (2004); Moore (2002); Noutcheva (2006), Darmanovic (2007).

²⁹ On Iran: Sauer (2007a); Harnish (2007a; 2007b); Everts (2004a); Heisbourgh, Clawson and Sazhin (2005). On Mediterranean and Middle East: Guney (2008); Korkmaz (2008); Musu (2008); Dagci (2007); Dosenrode and Stubjaker (2002); Tocci (2008a); Musu and Casarini (2007).

create a more effective presence in third countries or regions (Aoun 2003; Piana 2004; Soetendorp 2002). Some have considered it a driving force behind the ‘Brusselization’ process of EU foreign policy (Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2002; Duke 2011). According to Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, finally, the HR played a role similar to that of the Commission in the first pillar, that is identifying and operationalizing the common “European interest” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008: 79)

Other scholars, however, have offered less positive assessments. For some the involvement of the HR in sensitive policy dossiers was just a compensation to small Member States for their support to the initiatives of big Member States (Sauer 2008). Accordingly, the role of the HR was rather limited and more similar to that of mediator. In this context, its ability to formulate an effective common policy was constantly hampered by divisions among Member States and the strict intergovernmental framework in which it was forced to act (Sauer 2008; Musu and Casarini 2007).

In conclusion, the literature on EU foreign policy has not elaborated a clear and uniform conceptualization of the role of the HR in policy processes and yet, by showing its inconsistent involvement in different policy dossiers, it has revealed a certain ambiguity in its role.

Purpose of the work

The main aim of this work is to shed light on the observed ambiguity in the involvement of the HR in EU policy processes. So far, only a few works have specifically addressed the role of the HR, and most of them have addressed the observed ambiguity of its role only marginally.³⁰ Scholars drawing on rational choice institutionalism have depicted EU Member States as members of a market where they try to maximise their utility (Wagner 2003; Koenig-Archibugi 2004; Pollack 2006; Moravcsik 1998). With regard to EU foreign policy, these scholars have argued that Member States delegate competences to

³⁰ The only work explicitly addressing the legacy of the HR is an edited volume by Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet and Rüger (2011b). In addition, few journal articles have specifically focused on the role of the HR and its relation with other institutions: Melis (2001), Buchet de Neuilly (2002), Crum (2006), Dijkstra (2010a).

central institutions as (and when) the latter are able to solve coordination problems (Wagner 2003) or lock-in agreements vis-à-vis domestic audiences (Koenig-Archibugi 2004). More recently, rational choice scholars adopting principal-agent approaches (Dijkstra 2010b; Klein 2009) have argued that, in the field of foreign policy and crisis management, greater delegation is associated to the ability of central institutions (including the HR) to provide policy processes with an added value (in particular in terms of expertise and visibility) which cannot be provided at the national level. These explanations, however, cannot account for the observed ambiguity of the role of the HR. There is not reason to believe, for example, that the HR could provide a stronger expertise or visibility in negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme, than in negotiations over 2003 US intervention in Iraq. And yet, the HR did play different roles in the management of these two policy dossiers.

Recently, new interesting hypotheses on EU foreign policy processes have been formulated by the literature on sociological institutionalism. This literature has shown the emergence within EU institutions of ambiguous identities and normative frameworks affecting the behaviour of different political actors (Juncos and Pomorska 2010; Juncos and Reynolds 2007; Lewis 2003, 2005, 2008; Laffan 2004). Even though representatives of national governments sitting within the Council of Ministers remain strongly attached to their 'national' identities, indeed, this literature has shown that socialization processes among them are leading to the emergence of a new 'European' identity, which coexists with the national ones.

Even though these scholars have not deeply analysed the impact and consequences of these socialization processes on policy-making, their studies have paved the way for alternative explanations of the ambiguous role of the HR to those provided by rational choice scholars. For this reason, departing from traditional definitions of the EU, this study conceptualises the EU as a *compound polity* (Fabbrini 2007), characterised by the coexistence, at the central level, of both intergovernmental and supranational sources of legitimacy and of ambiguous normative frameworks (Laffan 2004; Juncos and Reynolds 2007; Lewis 2005). This study starts from the assumption that it is this ambiguity that allowed the HR to play an inconsistent role: at times more

similar to that of a minister of a political system, at times more similar to that of a secretary of an international organisation

In order to understand under what conditions, in this context of institutional ambiguity, the HR could play a more prominent role, and in what conditions it played a less prominent one, this study focus on at the emergence (or lack) of shared norms concerning the external world among among a majority of EU political actors. By focusing on the concept of ‘norm’ this research looks at how social interaction informs behaviour. Accordingly, norms are not opposed to interests; rather, this research posits that interests are socially constructed and, thus, not exogenous to the political system nor given.

In order to investigate how social interaction shape behaviour, this research looks not only at socialisation processes taking place within Brussels’ based bodies, but also at socialisation processes taking place outside them, especially in national capitals. Accordingly, this research investigates to what extent the emergence of shared EU security culture was a factual pre-condition for the HR to play the role of policy entrepreneur in EU policy-making.³¹ In order to answer this question, this research compares two case studies in which the HR played different roles. The first case study concerns EU’s intervention in the resolution of the Macedonia crisis emerged in 2001. During this crisis, the HR played a proactive role, similar to that of policy entrepreneur displayed by the Commission in other policy areas.³² The second case study focuses on the negotiations over Iran’s nuclear programme. In this second case, the HR played a more limited role: it maintained a modest profile vis-à-vis big Member States, and acted as a mediator among national governments.

The main argument developed by this research is that the emergence of shared norms on how to address external threats, and, thus of a shared EU security culture, had an impact policy processes involving the HR. In particular, it created a positive context which enhanced the sense of common belonging of national representatives sitting in Brussels, and thus activated ‘supranational’ as opposed to ‘national’ identity

³¹ For the definition of security culture adopted in this study see Ch. 3.

³² For the definition of policy entrepreneur adopted in this study see Ch. 3.

configurations, favouring the emergence of supranational vis-à-vis intergovernmental dynamics.

At the empirical level, this research contributes to enhance the understanding of the role of a specific institution—the HR—in which policy-makers have posed significant expectations, and which has been recently reformed by the Lisbon Treaty (2009). By looking at the legacy of the HR, this research aims to shed light on the future role of the reformed High Representative of the Union and on its possible impact on the future development of EU foreign policy.

The work proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 presents the state of the art in the current literature on the HR, EU foreign policy, and common institutions. Having identified a gap in the way this literature accounts for the empowerment of central institutions, and for the observed ambiguity of the role of the HR. Chapter 3 elaborates the theoretical framework of this work, on the basis of the conceptualization of the EU as a compound political system, and on the two concepts of policy entrepreneur and security culture. In light of this framework, the main research question of this work is formulated. Subsequently, Chapter 4 illustrates the methodology chosen to answer this question and explains the reasons behind this choice. Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 focus on the investigation of two case studies: the 2001 Macedonia crisis (Chapter 5) and the negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme (Chapter 6). Finally, Chapter 7 compares the findings of the two case studies and presents their theoretical and empirical implications.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Even though more than ten years have passed since this institution was first created, the HR remains a relatively under investigated institution, especially in relation with the recent proliferation of publications on the EU and its foreign policy. Indeed, only a few works on EU institutions have specifically focused on the HR (Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet and Rüger 2011b; Dijkstra 2010a; Kurowska 2009; Crum 2006; Buchet de Neuilly 2002; Melis 2001), while most literature on the EU studies has formulated only general hypotheses about factors affecting the involvement of central institutions in policy processes.

Part of the literature investigating EU institutions has drawn on the discipline of international relations. Even though remaining the prevailing theoretical framework within this body of literature, intergovernmentalism (Koenig-Archibugi 2004; Wagner 2003; Moravcsik 1993) has not been able to predict the empowerment of EU central institutions in the field of foreign and defence policies initiated in Maastricht, and intensified after the St. Malò compromise. In order to account for this evolution, traditional intergovernmentalist assumptions have been refined by scholars adopting principal-agent approaches. These scholars have argued that Member States may delegate key implementation tasks to central institutions in this sensitive field because of the expertise and visibility that these institutions can provide to policy processes (Dijkstra 2010b; Karlas 2005; Klein 2009). Although effective in accounting for HR's new executive powers especially in the area of crisis management, this explanation fails to account for the ambiguous relation between this institution and EU national governments in other areas of policy-making.

Since the 1990s, intergovernmentalist assumptions have been challenged by a second body of literature investigating EU institutions with the tools of comparative

politics and policy analysis (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008; Piana 2004; Tonra and Christiansen 2004; White 2004; Webber et al. 2004; Wallace 2000). Scholars adopting these approaches have posited that, much alike state institutions, EU central institutions (non only Member States) can have an independent impact on foreign policy processes and decisions. This literature has provided detailed accounts of EU foreign policy processes and of the recent development of its institutions. However, it has not formulated clear hypotheses about factors that affect the involvement of central bodies into policy processes.

Recently, a new body of literature has emerged which investigates EU foreign policy by drawing on the international relations literature on norms. In particular, scholars drawing on sociological institutionalism have revealed that socialization processes are leading to the emergence of a new culture or new identities within EU institutions which, rather than substituting national identities, coexist with them (Lewis 2008; Juncos and Reynolds 2007; Lewis 2005; Laffan 2004). Even though, so far, they have drawn only limited conclusions on the implications of their findings on policy processes, these scholars have provided new interesting hypotheses for explaining the observed ambiguity of the role of the HR in foreign policy processes.

This Chapter presents this state of the art in the literature. The first section focuses on the literature drawing on intergovernmentalism and rational choice institutionalism. The following section presents the main challenges brought to this literature by scholars drawing on comparative politics and foreign policy analysis. Finally, the third section illustrates recent findings of scholars drawing on sociological institutionalism.

Rational choice institutionalism and EU foreign policy

Since the 1960s, the slow path of integration in the foreign policy domain has provided justification for the predominance in this field of intergovernmentalist positions (Hoffmann 1966), as opposed to neo-functional theories dominating the debate on economic integration (Haas, 1958). Even when EU central institutions were charged with

foreign policy and political cooperation (the Maastricht Treaty, 1992), the specific features of policy-making in this field continued to justify the prevalence of intergovernmentalist assumptions.

Since the late 1990s, however, these assumptions have been challenged by further developments of EU instruments, and by the delegation to central institutions of key executive tasks that have traditionally been a prerogative of Member States. Recently, rational choice scholars have tried to adapt to this challenge by drawing on principal-agent approaches first developed in the literature on US institutions. Even though providing sophisticated accounts of the specific features of EU foreign policy cooperation, these studies have not offered convincing hypotheses about the ambiguous involvement of the HR in policy processes.

Liberal intergovernmentalism

According to Stanley Hoffmann (1966; 2000), the initiator of the intergovernmentalist school, the creation of central institutions for the sharing of common tasks—with the consequent spillover effect in connected areas—was only predictable in low politics issues. By contrast, states would have never shared key prerogatives in areas of high politics, as these were too connected to the idea of sovereignty at the origin of the state. In other words, while integration was possible in trade or agriculture (where it first occurred, indeed) it would have hardly developed in high politics domains, such as foreign and security policies. For Hoffmann, this analysis corresponded with the description of the European Community—and later of the EU—as an (intergovernmental) organization contributing to the strengthening, and not to the disappearance, of the nation-state.

In the early 1990s, intergovernmentalist assumptions were challenged by the progressive evolution of the European Political Cooperation and, most importantly, by its integration with the Community's institutional framework (Maastricht Treaty, 1992). Also in light of these transformations, Andrew Moravcsik refined classical intergovernmentalism to formulate new hypotheses about the causes of European

integration. Moravcsik's 'liberal intergovernmentalism' (Moravcsik 1998, 1993) explained European integration by combining rationalist assumptions about the creation of international institutions with a liberal approach to preferences formation. Accordingly, the EU is conceived as an ensemble of separated decision-making regimes, and the preferences of Member States on one regime are considered independent from the preferences on another one. With particular reference to economic integration, Moravcsik (1998; 1993) argued that Member States created common institutions to solve collaboration problems,³³ and to maximise their utility according to the preferences of dominant economic groups that have emerged from within the domestic political context.

Even though Moravcsik focused on economic integration, other scholars used his approach to explain EU foreign policy cooperation (Pohl 2008; Wagner 2003; Soetendorp 1999). In order to explain the specific institutional mechanisms typical of this policy domain, Wagner (2003), for example, has argued that EU foreign policy institutions were created to solve collective problems that are different from those of other policy fields. The creation of the single market, for example, forced Member States to delegate central institutions strong powers necessary to solve collaboration problems and avoid the risk of defection. In the foreign policy domain, by contrast, common institutions were created to deal with coordination problems.³⁴ Even though at times collaboration problems may arise also in this field (like in the case of imposing sanctions or for the creation of new military structures), indeed, the most common activity under the CFSP has been to address international crises abroad. Whenever similar situations arise, governments are expected to issue joint statements and to voice common positions, something that generates a coordination problem. Crisis-management, moreover, renders necessary fast decision-making, that is different from that required, for example, to

³³ Collaboration problems are characterized by individual incentives to defect and the existence of equilibriums that are not Pareto optimal. The problem states face in this situation is finding ways to bind themselves and others in order to reach the Pareto frontier. An obvious example of collaboration problems is represented by the Prisoner's dilemma (Martin and Simmons 1998: 744).

³⁴ Coordination games are characterized by the existence of multiple Pareto-optimal equilibria. The problem states face in this situation is not to avoid temptations to defect, but to choose among these equilibriums. In the case of coordination games, therefore, a centralized, formal organization with strong mechanisms for monitoring and enforcement is not necessarily required. Since no state would gain by departing from an established agreement, each member of a group needs to devote little attention to the prevention of cheating.

decide over the EU budget or to implement the common market (Wagner 2003; Moravcsik 1998).

A similar perspective has been shared by other scholars. Koenig-Archibugi has argued that national governments delegate powers to central institutions in the field of the CFSP in order to gain legitimacy or to “lock-in” agreements vis-à-vis domestic audiences (Koenig-Archibugi 2004). Accordingly, central bodies in the field of EU foreign policy can be described as weak intergovernmental institutions, created to help national governments share information and reduce transaction costs. As such, these institutions play a key role in mediating and facilitating intergovernmental communication, but are not required for other purposes and thus are sidelined as soon as their contribution in this regard is not necessary.

These approaches, all based on rational choice assumptions, provide a sophisticated explanation of European cooperation in the field of foreign policy and are able to explain its specific features vis-à-vis other EU policy domains. Nevertheless, they present some shortcomings. First, the need to solve coordination problems alone does not explain all EU foreign policy institutional instruments. The creation of a Policy Unit, initially meant to act as a European think-tank (Treaty of Amsterdam), for example, suggests that Member States were ready to delegate this institution additional tasks beyond simple information sharing. Similarly, bodies and institutions created in the field of security and defence play a much more proactive role than the resolution of coordination problems. Second, the assumption that in EU foreign policy only coordination and no collaboration problems exist seems too simplistic. Indeed, this assumption discounts the importance of specific tools that have always characterised EU foreign policy. The launch of sanctions against third countries, for example, was one of the first tools at disposal of the European Communities in this field; more recently, the creation of defence and security capabilities has become one of the driving forces of EU foreign policy cooperation and yet, these activities do not seem to rise only coordination problems. In general, by stressing the importance of information asymmetries, rational choice scholars have tended to discount the distributional effects that delegation has in every field (Kassim and Menon 2003). For these reasons, in order to account for EU

foreign policy cooperation, scholars working within rational choice institutionalism have recently started looking for alternative explanations.

Principal-agent approaches

In opposition to liberal intergovernmentalism and in order to address its shortcomings, scholars have recently conceded that, even in the field of foreign policy, EU institutions have at times a greater degree of autonomy than that conceded by existing rational choice approaches. In order to explain this autonomy, some of these scholars have applied to the study of EU institutions principal-agent models developed in the literature on the US legislature (Tallberg 2006; Kassim and Menon 2003; Pollack 1997). In line with rationalist assumptions, the principal-agent approach posits that the principal—in this case Member States—delegate agents—in this case EU institutions—key tasks to enhance their expected utility. In contradiction with liberal intergovernmentalism, yet, principal-agents scholars argue that the relation between the principal and the agent is inherently problematic, thus admitting a certain degree of autonomy of the agent. In line with hypothesis formulated about US institutions, scholars who have applied this model to EU institutions have argued that agents' autonomy varies depending upon mechanisms of ex-ante and ex-post control (monitoring and sanctioning) by principals (Tallberg 2006).

Other scholars, moreover, have argued that the degree of agents' autonomy within the EU depends on negotiating skills, policy networks, process or content-expertise agents provide to policy processes. Accordingly, these resources, rather than the lack of control, have been the driving factors for the acquisition of agenda setting powers by the Commission in some policy field (Pollack 1997).

More specifically, scholars who have applied this approach to EU foreign policy have argued that, in the CSFP and the CSDP, Member States delegated key competences to the Council's Secretariat rather than to the Commission due to the sensitivity of foreign policy issues (Dijkstra 2010b, 2009). In addition, these scholar have attributed the agenda-setting and policy implementation powers acquired by the Council Secretariat

in EU foreign policy to the added value it could provide in terms of content or process expertise and visibility (Karlás 2005; Dijkstra 2008, 2010b). Indeed, while the HR was asked to complement and support the action of the Presidency when the latter was held by a small Member State, it was rather marginalised when the Presidency was held by a big Member State having adequate resources on its own (Dijkstra 2010a).

The new arguments developed by principal-agent scholars have certainly enhanced rational choice claims, and help explain recent institutional developments in the field of EU foreign policy. It is evident, for example, that the HR has enhanced the visibility of EU foreign policy and provided to it expertise that national diplomats or institutions could not offer. It cannot be denied, moreover, that EU foreign policy benefited from the negotiating skills, policy networks, and policy expertise of HR Solana. Powers delegated to the HR, however, have not always been associated to the level of expertise or visibility this institution could provide. There is no reason to believe, for example, that the visibility and expertise that the HR could have offered in dealing with the 2003 Iraq crisis would have been any different from those provided in the negotiation with Iran, began shortly after. However, this did not prevent Member States from giving it a very different role with regard to the two policy dossiers. The necessity to provide visibility and expertise alone, therefore, cannot explain observed variations in the role of the HR in the foreign policy domain.

Even though formulating powerful propositions about EU institutions, in conclusion, rational choice institutionalism has ended up depicting governments as members of a market, seeking to maximize short term material utility, thus attributing them always predictable behaviours. In addition, by attributing political choices to asymmetries of information or to exogenous changes beyond actors' control, rational choice scholars have overlooked the political processes that lie behind most international agreements. For these reasons, they have been recently criticized by an increasing number of scholars.

Comparative politics: the challenge to intergovernmentalism

Starting from the early 1990s, following the progressive evolution of the European Political Cooperation and, most importantly, its integration into the Community's institutional framework (Maastricht Treaty, 1992), a number of scholars have challenged the definition of the EU as an intergovernmental organization by using the tools of comparative politics (Hix 1994).

In opposition to intergovernmentalism, Hix (2005), for example, conceived the EU as a political system comparable to European nation-states. According to Hix, the EU displayed a combination of the fundamental elements constituting these systems and, in particular: a “stable and clearly-defined set of institutions for collective decision-making”; citizens and social groups seeking “to achieve their political desires through the political system”; “collective decisions having a significant impact on the distribution of economic resources and the allocation of social and political values”; and “a continuous interaction between these political outputs, new demands on the system, new decisions and so on”.

Following the works of Hix and other scholars (Majone 1997) investigating the nature of the EU political system, since the 1990s scholars on EU foreign policy have started adopting the tools of comparative politics and foreign policy analysis. These scholars have rejected the interpretation of EU foreign policy as an intergovernmental regime proposed by rational choice institutionalists. In opposition to the works of Hix and other scholars who had focused on economic integration, moreover, they have recognised that, because of the strong decentralisation of powers in this policy field, EU foreign policy cannot be assimilated to that of other European political systems. In order to account for its exceptional features, therefore, these scholars have resorted to innovative and ad hoc conceptualizations of EU foreign policy processes and institutions.³⁵

By looking specifically at the CFSP, for example, Wallace (2000) has argued that EU foreign policy cooperation presents a higher intensity and coordination than in

³⁵ For a review of this literature see Carlsnaes (2004) and White (2004).

international organizations and can be described as ‘intensive transgovernmentalism’. Under this mood, governments are prepared to commit themselves to rather extensive engagement and discipline. According to Wallace, the emergence of this mood in EU foreign policy governance occurred since the 1990s may suggest important systemic changes within the integration process, where “new areas of sensitive public policy are being assigned by EU member governments to collective regimes, but using an institutional format over which they retain considerable control” (Wallace 2000).

Wallace’s criticism of traditional intergovernmentalism has been shared by a number of scholars. Piana (2002), for example, has labelled CFSP decision-making processes as a ‘transgovernmental/transinstitutional’ system of governance, which could be situated “between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism”. Piana has identified the main features of this mode of governance in the commitment of national governments to reach consensual agreement, in the increasing power of the Council Secretariat—especially due to the emerging political role of the HR—and in the increasing importance of intergovernmental over supranational institutions. Similarly, Muller-Brandeck-Bouquet (2002) has argued that CFSP decision-making is characterised by a “new method of governance” whose emerging features are: the domination of intergovernmental (over supranational) institutions; the introduction of new elements of shared sovereignty within traditional intergovernmental institutions (such as constructive abstention); the increasing role of Brussels’ based functionaries and diplomats in formulating decisions; the slow introduction of supranational elements (enhancement of the role of the Commission and the European Parliament).

Other scholars have detected additional trends. For Keukeleire and MacNaughtan developments in EU foreign policy “have not been confined to the process of ‘Brusselization’, but extend also to the processes of ‘operationalization’ and ‘commonization’” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008). In particular, following the ‘operationalization’ of the CSDP (achieved with the launch of EU operations in third countries), Member States delegated central intergovernmental institutions new implementation powers. This transformation has led to question “whether the central actors of the CFSP/CSDP framework now play a role similar to that of the Commission

in the first pillar, that is identifying and operationalizing the common ‘European interest’” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008: 77).

While scholars mentioned so far have analysed EU foreign policy mostly with the tools of foreign policy analysis, other scholars have used governance approaches and the tools of policy network analysis. This evolution has followed an analogous ‘governance turn’ in EU studies (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2006), which has led an increasing number of scholars (Marks, Hooghe, and Blank 1996; Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2006) to conceive the EU political system as a “stable set of public and private actors who share an interest in a particular issue area, who routinely interact with each other and who are connected to each other through stable formal and informal relations”,³⁶.

Following this turn in EU studies, an increasing number of scholars has argued that rather than as a form of government—traditionally intended as a single central authority vertically imposing its power on dependent entities—EU foreign policy has to be described as a governance system (Webber et al. 2004; Norheim-Martinsen 2008) or a policy network (Krahmann 2003). The latter is to be intended as a public space where multiple sources of power and multiple types of actors coexist. Accordingly, these scholars have investigated European foreign policy as the actions of all “European states and the multilateral organizations to which they belong” (Krahmann 2003).

Although interesting for understanding the general features of EU foreign policy, these works are of limited contribution for the purposes of this research. Indeed, by investigating EU foreign policy system, these studies have not conceptualised the specific role of single institutions (such as the HR), in relation to that of others (the Commission, the Presidency). In general, moreover, by adopting ad hoc conceptualizations of EU foreign policy, these studies have not shed much light on the connection between EU foreign policy and the integration process.

³⁶ Atkinson and Coleman (1992) cited by Krahmann, (2003: 17).

EU institutions and socialization processes

Recently, a new literature has emerged on the role of norms in EU foreign policy. This literature has drawn on various works on norms in international relations, ranging from regime theory to sociological institutionalism. Even though these works display a significant variety, they will be treated here together for their similar ontological assumptions. Unlike rationalist approaches, indeed, both regime theory and sociological institutionalism posit that not only material, but also ideational factors may affect the behaviour of political actors.

Scholars who have applied these approaches to the investigation of EU foreign policy have aimed to expand the findings of rational choice institutionalism, by explaining the unexpected levels of cooperation emerged in the 1990s and 2000s. Their findings have pointed at the development, within EU institutions, of socialization processes producing new norms and identities. So far, however, only limited conclusions have been drawn about the impact of these new norms on policy processes.

The role of norms in IR: from regime theory to sociological institutionalism

The investigation of the connection between norms and governance in international politics is not recent. Already in the early 1900s, the German sociologist Max Weber argued that the rise of capitalism is intimately associated with the evolution of a Calvinist religious doctrine (Weber 2009). In the field of international relations, in between the 1960s and 1980s scholars of the English School observed that international politics display a surprisingly high level of order and peace given the situation of anarchy in which states act. In order to explain this phenomenon, these scholars argued that order is favoured by the spreading of a similar culture and identity (Wight 1977), or a common “diplomatic culture” (Bull 1977), that is a system of conventions and institutions that are utilitarian rather than cultural or moral in character and that have the goal to preserve order between states (Burchill et al. 2005: 90).

More recently, Krasner (1982) has conceived regimes as a sum of norms, rules, principles, and decision-making procedures. In particular, principles and norms provide the basic defining characteristics of regimes: accordingly, changes in rules and procedures produce changes within the regime, while changes in norms and principles lead to changes of regimes. Once created, Krasner has argued, regimes so conceived take a life on their own and may have an independent impact on outcomes and behaviours or may alter power and interests of international actors. In particular, Krasner has posited that norms and principles constituting international regimes could be treated as either as an intervening (Table 1) or an independent variable (Table 2) in the investigation of policy outcomes. By applying a similar approach to regimes for trade and money, Gerard Ruggie (1982) has argued that international regimes are made of power relations as well as of ideas and beliefs that define their legitimate social purpose. Accordingly, change may occur following a change in power relations or a change in ideas and beliefs.

While scholars like Krasner and Ruggie have investigated the role of norms in the international system in general, since the 1990s other scholars have started looking at the emergence of socialization processes at the micro level, within international organizations (Finnemore 1996c). Their works have been based on Weber's investigation of modern bureaucracies and on Allison's model of bureaucratic politics. By adopting a sociological approach, Weber (1947) stressed that organizational culture and processes of socialization shape the way bureaucrats see the world and perceive the problems they face. In other words, bureaucratic rules shape activities, understanding, identity, and practices of the bureaucracy and consequently define the bureaucratic culture (Barnett and Finnemore 2004b: 19). The latter, in turn, prescribes behaviour for actors both inside and outside the organization and becomes constitutive of the identity of the organization.

By applying these assumptions to the analysis of the Cuban missile crisis, Allison (1969; 1971) applied Weber's assumptions to foreign policy analysis. This scholar contested the idea that happenings in international relations are the result of "purposive acts of unified national governments", criticising the conceptualization of governments and institutions as coherent and unified

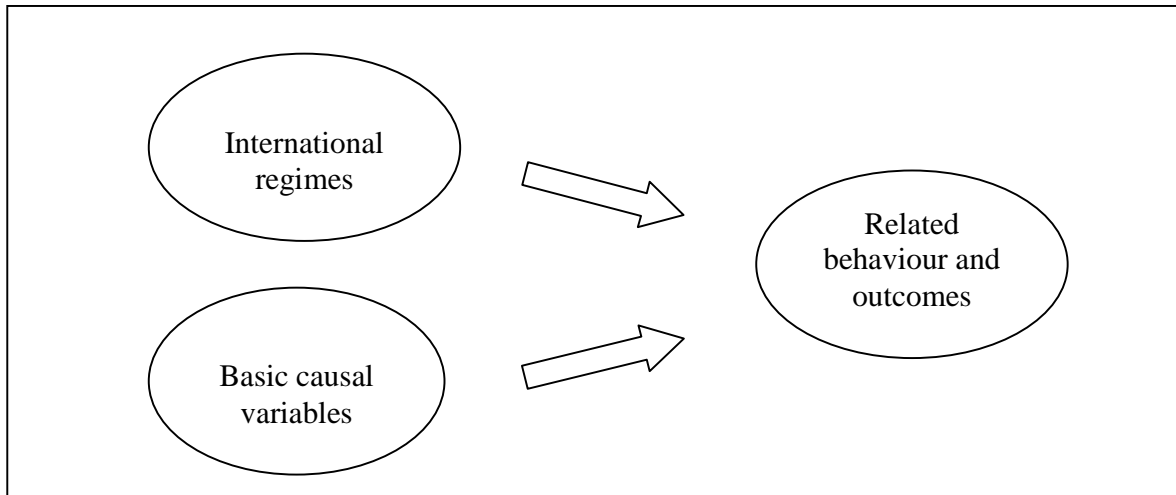


Table 1. (Krasner 1982)

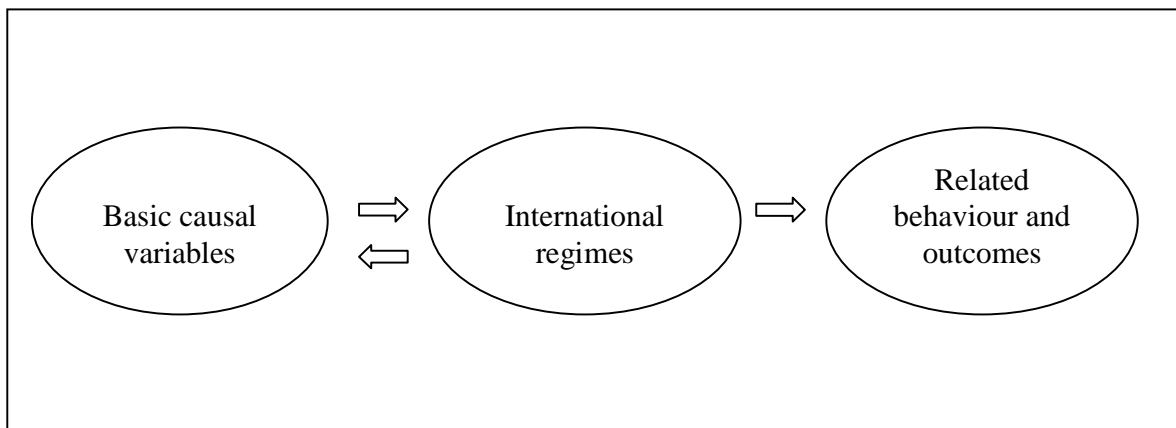


Table 2. (Krasner, 1982)

actors. In opposition to these assumptions, he argued that “large acts are the consequences of innumerable and often conflicting smaller actions by individuals at various levels of bureaucratic organizations”. In addition, this scholar hypothesised that, within organizations, individuals behave according to processes and criteria which they have routinely learned and applied. These standard operating procedures become the “lenses” and “the paradigm” through which they interpret the external world. Starting

from these observations, Allison proposed an alternative to the prevailing rationalist approach to decision-making which he labelled 'organizational process model'.³⁷

The works of Allison and Weber had a major influence on the subsequent literature on international relations. In opposition to rational choice institutionalism, scholars drawing on the works of Allison and Weber have refused the definition of states as rational players and conceptualise them as actors with socially constructed identities and preferences.³⁸ In line with the works of Max and Weber, contemporary sociological institutionalists have treated international institutions as social environments (Johnston 2001) where socialization occurs at given conditions. Accordingly, they have posited that "[social] rules can shape how bureaucrats see the world and perceive the problems they face" and that, vice versa, bureaucrats "use their rules to help create or constitute the social world and tend to so do in ways that make the world amenable to intervention by bureaucrats themselves" (Barnett and Finnemore 2004a: 18). Socialization, in other worlds, is able to influence decisions not only about goals but also about the strategies to be pursued.

By pointing at the role of norms, and not only to that of material interests in international politics, regime theory and sociological institutionalism have had a significant impact on EU studies, including on the literature on EU foreign policy.³⁹

³⁷ Yet, Allison acknowledged that not all choices of an organization can be attributed to the systematic application of standard operating procedures. From the assumption that organizations are composed of different subunits, he also argued that political decisions are the result of a bargaining process "along regularized channels among players positioned hierarchically" within the organization. (Allison 1969: 707). Allison labeled this second logic of behavior the 'bureaucratic politics model'. The implications of this model are closer to the rational choice version of new-institutionalism as, while positing that organizational actors may have autonomous preferences, it also defines them in mainly rationalist terms (Hall and Taylor 1996; March and Olsen 1984).

³⁸ In this regard, the work of sociological institutionalists is in line with new-institutionalism as it treats international institutions not only as structure, but also as actors with an autonomous impact on policy-making (Hall and Taylor 1996).

³⁹ For a review see Welch (1992). On EU studies: Maurer (2009), Dijkstra (2009), Rhinard and Boin (2007), Stacey (2005), Christiansen (2001), Piana (2001).

Norms, socialization, and EU foreign policy

Both, regime theory and sociological institutionalism have had a significant impact on EU studies. Scholars applying these approaches to the investigation of European integration have investigated how norms, rules, and identities produced within common institutions affect policy decisions and policy processes (Tonra 2003; Christiansen, Jørgensen, and Wiener 2001). Scholars adopting sociological institutionalis, moreover, have depicted the EU as an ambiguous institutional framework, where different norms exist. This ambiguity is mainly associated to the coexistence of supranational and intergovernmental interests and identities.

Laffan (2004), for example, has argued that representatives of Members States sitting in the Council respond to different role and identity configurations: they act “as representatives of a member government or constituency while, at the same time, having responsibility to the Union as a whole”. While on the one hand they must represent national interests, on the other hand they have the task to reach common agreements. Far from implying the substitution of the national identity with a supranational one, this process implies the coexistence of two different identities or what has been called ‘double hatting’.

Similarly, Lewis has argued that the Council can be described as a Janus face institution which, like the Roman God Janus, looks at the same time into two different directions: Brussels and national capitals (Lewis 2003, 2005, 2008). According to his analysis, Representatives of Members States sitting in Council of Ministers can behave according to different logics: they can adopt a strategic behaviour, following the logic of consequentiality, or respond to specific rules developed in their circle according to the logic of appropriateness (Lewis 2003).⁴⁰ In particular, the process of socialization occurring within the EU leads governments to seek consensual agreements. This process, together with the growing importance of informal politics, is the key to understand the increasing role of the Council of Ministers in EU policy-making.

⁴⁰ For other arguments about the intergovernmental and supranational nature of the EU Council of Ministers see Beyers and Dierickx (1998), and Allerkamp (2009).

Students of EU foreign policy have formulated similar observations. Studies on the PSC (the Council's preparatory body in the CFSP), for example, have highlighted that "informal norms and rules play an important role" and that "interaction can make a difference both to the representatives themselves and to the actual substance of national foreign and security policies" (Juncos and Reynolds 2007: 147).⁴¹ Accordingly, scholars have detected the emergence of coordination reflexes, cooperative bargaining and general commitment to reach consensual agreements within the PSC that can not be explained by rational choice institutionalism (Juncos and Reynolds 2007; Lewis 2003, 2005, 2008).

Finally, the coexistence of different norms and culture within the Council of Ministers has been confirmed by scholars investigating EU bureaucracies. Christiansen and Vanhoonacker (2008), for example, have argued that civil servants working within this body have developed a precise administrative culture; the entrance into this institution of a high number of national diplomats after the establishment of the office of the HR and the launch of the Saint Malò process endangered this prevailing culture by injecting a significant component with strong national identities. Similarly, Juncos and Pomorska (2010) have shown how EU officials and national diplomats working in the Council's Secretariat have developed different perceptions of their role and the role of their institution.

Even though highlighting the emergence of socialization processes within EU institutions, the works mentioned so far have drawn only limited conclusions on the impact of these processes on EU policy-making. It is not clear, in particular, what is the impact of the perceptions of the Council's Secretariat civil servants (Juncos and Pomorska 2010) on this institution's intervention in policy processes. Similarly, it is not clear if and how 'coordination reflexes' existing within the Council of Ministers affect policy decisions. In order to fill this gap, other scholars have integrated sociological institutionalism with regime theory and rational choice institutionalism.

By applying rational choice and sociological institutionalism to an historical analysis of EU foreign policy cooperation, for example, Smith (2004) has concluded that

⁴¹ See also Duke and Vanhoonacker (2006), and Meyer (2006).

international cooperation has contributed to shape EU institutions in three ways: through a functional logic, that is by showing that actors can enhance their utility by institutionalising their cooperation; through a logic of appropriateness, or by developing new norms of appropriate behaviour; through a socialization logic, that is by spreading these norms among all members (Smith 2004: 33, 241). According to Smith, in other words, EU foreign policy processes are the result of exogenous policy preferences of the Member States, as transformed by institutionally-led processes of socialization.

Other scholars have looked more specifically at the impact of socialization processes on the role of single institutions. By looking at the political dynamics within the Council, for example, Lewis (2003) has concluded that, through to the use of informal politics, intergovernmental institutions have developed what he calls a ‘transgovernmental mood of governance’, produced by informal politics and socialization processes (which lead governments to seek consensual agreements). According to Lewis, this mood is responsible of the empowerment of central intergovernmental actors (the Presidency, the Council’s Secretariat) vis-à-vis Member States.

Some scholars, by contrast, have argued that not only socialization processes matter, but also the precise content of norms to which actors get socialized. By looking at EU foreign and interior policies, for example, Stetter (2004; 2007) has argued that the power of executive central actors—the Commission and the Council Secretariat—is increasing to the detriment of the legislative and judiciary branches. In his analysis, Stetter has attributed this development to the ability of executive institutions to exploit to their favour the allocation function of these policies, which relates to the designation of an inside and an outside, or to the definition of EU’s *self* and *other*.

These works certainly represent some of the most innovative products of the recent literature on EU foreign policy. In fact, so far most of them have focused on socialization processes occurring within a single institution (the Council), disregarding the broader organization (the EU). In addition, only few scholars have looked at the content of norms, to investigate if the impact of socialization processes varies also depending on the norm to which institutional actors get socialized. Yet, by revealing the

emergence of socialization processes within EU institutions, these works have drawn attention on the role of ideational factors, which may provide new explanations also to variations in policy processes. With regard to the HR, for example, one may argue that, given the ambiguous job description of this institution, Member States limited its role where national interests and identities prevailed, and asked it to represent, identify, and operationalize the common “European interest” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008: 77) where a supranational shared identity existed. Thus, at times the HR played the role negotiator, in line with its duty “to give assistance to the Council with the preparation, formulation and implementation of foreign policy decisions” (Treaty of Amsterdam), and at times it played a more proactive role.

Conclusion

Scholars drawing on rational choice institutionalism have been traditionally sceptical about the possibility of European foreign policy cooperation. Accordingly, they have failed to explain the unexpected raise in cooperation in this field occurred in the 1990s, and intensified after the Kosovo war. Even though scholars working within this framework have addressed this shortcoming by formulating new hypotheses, the latter cannot account for the inconsistent involvement of the HR in foreign policy-making.

Scholars drawing on the literature on comparative politics, by contrast, have posited that common institutions, not only Member States, can have an autonomous foreign policy role. In order to highlight the peculiarity of EU foreign policy, these scholars have mainly described it as a *suis generis* policy. Although providing detailed accounts of foreign policy processes, these conceptualizations have not helped understand the connection between EU foreign policy and integration process, nor have they shed light on factors that affect the role of single institutions such as the HR.

Recently, a new body of literature investigating the role of norms and ideas in EU foreign policy has emerged. This literature has highlighted the slow emergence of shared norms concerning EU foreign and security policies. The findings of this literature seem particularly relevant for this research. The ambiguity in the role of the HR which cannot

be explained by existing principal-agents approaches, indeed, might be explained by the role of norms and culture. Accordingly, as we will see in the following Chapter, this research investigates how changing norms and perceptions produce variations in policy processes which cannot be accounted for by rational choice approaches.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Existing conceptualizations of the EU as an intergovernmental organization or a political system similar to European nation-states have provided powerful explanations to the emergence of EU common institutions. In different ways, however, they have both failed to account for the role the HR, which is not typical of the secretary of an intergovernmental organization, nor of a national foreign minister.

Accordingly, in order to account for the ambiguity of EU foreign policy institutional system, this research conceptualises the EU as a compound political system (Fabbrini 2007), characterised by the coexistence of two principles of legitimacy based respectively on European peoples (represented in the European Parliament) and Member States (represented by national institutions and, at the central level, by the Council of Ministers). This double source of legitimacy is at the origin not only of a vertical division of powers, between the centre and the periphery—like in federal systems—but also of a horizontal division of competences between central intergovernmental (the Council) and supranational (the European Parliament) bodies. The coexistence of this double principle of legitimacy at the supranational level, in particular, differentiates the EU from other intergovernmental organisations and national European political systems (where usually one or the other principle prevails). Accordingly, as a compound polity, the EU is characterised by a fundamental ambiguity as power relations (in different policy areas) as well as identity configurations (in different policy dossiers) may vary depending on which principle of legitimacy prevails. It is this oscillation that allowed the HR to play an ambiguous role in different policy dossiers.

In particular, this research posits that the HR has played at times the role of policy entrepreneur, similar to that of the Commission in various areas of economic integration, and at times a more limited role of mediator or norm entrepreneur. Drawing on Roberts

and King (1991), this research defines policy entrepreneurs as political actors which intervene in all phases of policy-making—creation, design, and implementation—in opposition to mediators, norm entrepreneurs, or policy managers that only intervene in one or two of them.

Starting from the conceptualizations of the EU as compound polity, and of the HR as (potential) policy entrepreneur, this research investigates under what conditions supranational vs intergovernmental dynamics prevailed in EU foreign policy, thus letting the HR play the role of policy entrepreneur by focusing on the content of norms developed within the EU security community. Even though revealing the coexistence of ‘national’ and ‘European’ identity configurations in common institutions, so far sociological institutionalism has not clarified when one or the other identity configuration prevails. Studies drawing on this approach, moreover, have only focused on socialisation processes taking place at the central level, particularly (with regard to the CFSP and the CSDP) among representatives of national governments sitting in the Council of Ministers. By contrast, in order to understand how the HR could play the role of policy entrepreneur in some policy dossiers, and how it could not in others, this research looks at norms concerning the definition of external threats and the best way to deal with them emerged not only within Brussels based bodies, but also at the national level. Accordingly, this research asks to what extent, in the context of institutional ambiguity provided by the EU, the emergence of a shared culture within the EU security community has been a necessary condition for the HR to play the role of policy entrepreneur. By drawing on Meyer (2006; 2005), security culture is defined as the socially transmitted norms shared among a majority of actors within the EU security community, which help shape its options for the pursuit of security.

The EU institutional structure: neither a state nor an intergovernmental organization

As explained in the previous Chapter, since the 1960s the slow path of integration in the foreign policy domain has provided justification for the predominance in this field of

intergovernmentalist positions (Hoffmann 1966), as opposed to neo-functionalist theories dominating the debate on economic integration (Haas, 1958). It was only starting from the 1990s that a number of scholars contested the definition of the EU as an intergovernmental organization, and started conceptualising it as a single polity (Hix 2005; Majone 1997). Despite their strength in explaining important features of the EU institutional system, such as the significant empowerment of central institutions in market integration, these studies partially failed to give an adequate explanation to the peculiar institutional structure of EU foreign policy.

In order to overcome the shortcoming of these approaches, this work conceptualises the EU as a *compound polity* (Fabbrini 2007; Fabbrini and Sicurelli 2004). This conceptualization permits to account for the specific features of the EU system already highlighted by other approaches, while at the same time accounting for the special features of EU foreign policy-making. Most importantly, this conceptualisation permits to account for how it was possible for the HR to oscillate between different roles in different policy dossiers.

The conceptualization of the EU as a compound polity corresponds to four fundamental assumptions. First, in line with current comparative politics approaches, this study conceptualises the EU as a single political system. Thus, in line with comparative politics literature, it contests the definition of the EU as a system of independent regimes offered by intergovernmentalism. This means that EU policy processes and political decisions taken in one policy field are not independent from the one of other policy fields, and that the role central or national institutions are recognised in a given policy area has an impact on identity configurations in other areas. This means, for example, that, the prevalence of common (vs national) interests in one policy area (for example market integration) may have an impact on policy processes also in other policy areas (such as foreign policy), as policy processes in the different areas do not work as separated regimes.

Second, in line with governance approaches, by conceptualising the EU as a compound polity, this study views it as an inherently anti-hierarchical and anti-hegemonic institutional order. While governance approaches consider the participation of

any kind of actor (including private actors and international organizations) in European foreign policy-making, however, the compound polity approach focus on the role of specific bodies and political actors and, in particular, on the role of public national and supranational bodies. This in line with the focus of this research, which concerns the policy processes involving the HR.

Third, along with comparative federalism and multilevel network analysis, this work views the EU as a political system characterised by the vertical separation of powers and competences between a centre (supranational bodies) and a periphery (national institutions). This separation of powers derives from the fact that the EU, like any federation or confederation, reflects the union of different units (Member States). Accordingly, as opposed to mono-centric European states, the EU is based on a fragmented or polycentric concept of sovereignty (Fabbrini 2007). In the field of foreign policy, this polycentric notion of sovereignty is reflected by the co-participation of national and supranational bodies in the definition of political choices. While in some areas, such as trade or development cooperation, central bodies perform major tasks, in the field of high foreign politics issues (such as the CSDP and the CFSP) central bodies have a weaker role.

Last but not least, this research posits that, within the EU, the vertical division of competences is supplemented by a horizontal separation of competences at the supranational level. Unlike in most European parliamentary democracies, where the legislative and the executive are legitimised through the same parliamentary majority,⁴² the EU legislative, executive, and judicial competences are split among different bodies on the basis of different principles of legitimacy.⁴³ While, on the one hand, the role and competences of the European Parliament are legitimised on the basis of the need to protect common supranational interests, the powers and role of the Council reflect the need to represent and protect national interests. The stronger or weaker empowerment of

⁴² Formally, in most European parliamentary democracies legislative power belongs to parliament while the executive power belongs to the government. Yet, as in parliamentary systems the two bodies draw their legitimacy from the same source, de facto they are fused in the hand of a single majority.

⁴³ The European Parliament draws its legitimacy from the European people which represent its electorate; the Council of Ministers draws its legitimacy from national governments.

these bodies in different policy areas depend on which interest enjoys the greater legitimacy. This aspect of the conceptualization of the EU as a compound polity permits to account for the peculiarities of foreign policy cooperation in the context of European integration. The oscillation between centralisation and decentralisation, and between different sources of power and legitimacy, indeed, is one of the basic features of this system. Accordingly, while for example in market integration supranational interests enjoy greater legitimacy, and supranational bodies (the European Parliament, the Commission) have greater powers (such as in the common market), in other policy areas such as foreign policy intergovernmental interests (and institutions) prevail.

Similarly, the conceptualisation of the EU as a compound polity permits to account for the ambiguity of EU policy processes in a single policy area, such as in the case of the HR. As shown by sociological institutionalism, indeed, the existence within the EU political system of different sources of power drawing their legitimacy from the European peoples and Member States respectively generates ambiguous normative frameworks. Accordingly, even though in the field of foreign policy EU Treaties clearly privilege intergovernmental vs supranational institutions, representative of Member States sitting in the Council of Ministers at times defend 'national' interests, at times respond to a common 'supranational' interest. It is this oscillation that permits a single body, like the HR, to assume an ambiguous role in different policy processes. When supranational identity configurations emerge, the HR is able to play a key role in EU foreign policy, similar to that of the foreign minister of a national political system; by contrast, when national identity configurations prevail, the HR plays its statutory role of mediator.

The purpose of this research is to investigate when one or the other dynamic prevails. Before formulating hypotheses in this regard, the next section clarifies better how the ambiguous role of the HR will be conceptualised throughout this study.

The role of the HR: conceptualization

In the common political discourse, the ambiguity arising from the vague job description of the HR was expressed by the dichotomy between ‘bureaucrats’ and ‘politicians’.⁴⁴ The existence of a clear distinction between the two roles was a postulate of the classical literature on public administration.⁴⁵ Accordingly, while bureaucrats are charged with the implementation of policies, politicians are entitled to formulate them. Yet, recent studies on policy processes of democratic countries have proved that, in most of them, the role of bureaucrats and politicians cannot be neatly separated, and thus traditional assumptions about the division of tasks between the two roles have been contested.⁴⁶

In alternative to this conceptualization offered by the classical public administration literature, international relations literature has investigated the role of key international institutions as mediators (Wall, Stark, and Standifer 2001). In international relations, mediation generally refers to the intervention of a third party—which is considered neutral—to solve the conflict of two opposing actors. At times the neutral mediator may propose its own solutions, but most of the times it is simply conceived as an actor transmitting and interpreting the proposals of the principal parties (Wall, Stark, and Standifer 2001). This definition is in line with intergovernmentalist assumptions about the role of EU institutions and, yet, it does not reflect recent findings about their role in policy implementation and agenda setting, nor the conceptualisation of the EU as a political system.

More recently, in order to investigate the role of the executive heads of national and international political systems, scholars have used the concept of leadership. This concept was originally developed by scholars of foreign policy analysis to investigate elements affecting the role of politicians in domestic politics (Kaarbo 1997). Subsequently, the use of this concept was extended to the study of top ranking officials of international organizations (Cox 1969; Scully 2003). A significant component of this

⁴⁴ While some Member States wanted the HR have a *political* role, other preferred it to be a high ranking *bureaucrat*. See Chaper 1.

⁴⁵ See Wilson (1941), Goodnow (1900: 92-93), and Gulick (1937: 10), cited by Colin Campbell (1988).

⁴⁶ Claire (1934), cited by Colin Campbell (1988).

literature is currently dedicated to the role of personal determinants of leadership and to personal characteristics that render an individual a leader. By contrast, this research focuses on structural rather than personal determinants of the role of the HR. Solana was certainly a strong character and left a significant imprint on the institution which he has occupied for ten years. Yet, his personality does not provide an adequate explanation for the variance observed in his involvement in different policy dossiers.

Lately, scholars on international relations have investigated the role of key international actors as norm entrepreneurs, or those “agents having strong notions about appropriate or desirable behaviour in their community,” able to mobilize the support of this community for particular standards of appropriateness (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Finnemore 1996c). By focusing on the CSDP, for example, Kurowska (2009; Kurowska and Pawlak 2009) has shown that, by arguing that “improved military capabilities are consistent with Europe’s growing role in the world”, HR Solana played a significant role in shaping EU political discourse in favour of a new ‘militarised’ version of EU foreign policy, increasingly relying on Council resources and opposed to the ‘civilian’ version supported by the Commission. The definition of norm entrepreneur, however, only partially grasps the role played by the HR in various policy dossiers. Indeed, in line with the perceptions of diplomats and civil servants working within the Council’s Secretariat (Juncos and Pomorska 2010), scholars attributed a key role to the HR not only in setting the general political debate, but also in fostering policy proposal, more similar to that of policy initiator or agenda setter played by the Commission under the first pillar (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008; Piana 2002; Buchet de Neuilly 2002).

For this reason, in order to conceptualise the role played by the HR in EU foreign policy, this research looks at the conceptualization of the role of the European Commission under EU first pillar. As already mentioned in Chapter 1, the powers of the Commission in EU first pillar go well beyond those under the second pillar. In EU first pillar, the Commission detains an exclusive right of initiative and has fundamental implementation tasks. As shown by the literature, moreover, over the time the European Commission has been able to exploit these tasks to further erode the power of Member States and to extend its intervention to all phases of policy-making. Evidence has been

found in policy fields as diverse as research and development, telecommunications, environmental policy, regional policy, social policy and education (Cram 1994; Hooghe 1994; Wallace, Wallace, and Pollack 2005). For this reason, by challenging the traditional assumptions of intergovernmentalism, many scholars have conceptualised the role of the European Commission in the Community pillar as that of a policy entrepreneur. Yet, scholars have provided different definitions of what a policy entrepreneur is (Laffan 1997: 423).

Divergences on this issue originate in the literature on public policy analysis. Scholars working in this field, indeed, have not found a common agreement on criteria defining policy entrepreneurship. Some have focused on political discourse and have argued that policy entrepreneurs specialize in identifying problems and finding solutions.⁴⁷ Others have investigated resource commitments and have argued that policy entrepreneurs are individuals "willing to invest their resources in return for future policies they favour" (Kingdon 1984: 214).

In light of the goals of this study, this research adopts an adapted version of the conceptualization of policy entrepreneurs provided by Roberts and King (1991). Following Schumpeter,⁴⁸ Roberts and King define public entrepreneurship as a "process of introducing innovation to public sector practice". In their analysis, innovation is translated into policy practice through a process defined by the following stages:

- Creation: when the creating idea develops and emerges
- Design: when the innovative idea evolves into a formal statement or a policy proposal
- Implementation⁴⁹

Even though Roberts and King (1991) have talked about public entrepreneurship, their definition can be applied to policy entrepreneurship in general (and indeed the two authors have used the two terms interchangeably). Accordingly, this research defines

⁴⁷ Polsby (1984: 71) cited by Roberts and King (1991).

⁴⁸ Schumpeter (1939), cited by Roberts and King (1991: 149).

⁴⁹ Roberts and King (1991) identify also a fourth phase: institutionalisation, that is when the innovative idea becomes institutionalised to the point that it is not considered any more an innovative idea. This phase is not addressed in this study as, given the limited time range analysed by it, it could not be covered exhaustively.

policy entrepreneurs as those individuals who participate in all three stages of policy entrepreneurship: they develop a new idea, translate it into a more formal statement (such as a proposal, bill, or law), and then help transform it into public practice. With reference to the latter, in particular, it is important to notice that by referring to the ability to introduce innovation in the implementation phase, this study means the ability to transform policy proposals into policies of the EU.

The definition provided by Roberts and King can be easily applied to policy-making within the EU and it is particularly suitable for the purposes of this research for its ability to distinguish the role of policy entrepreneur from that of other actors. First, policy entrepreneurs are distinguished from norm entrepreneurs, who, in the literature on international norms, are regarded as those individuals or organizations which propose innovative ideas, regardless of their involvement in the policy-making process (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001, 1998). Accordingly, norm entrepreneurs participate in the first stage of the process identified above. By contrast, policy entrepreneurs participate in all of them, also designing and translating ideas into concrete policy proposals.

In addition, following the conceptualization of Roberts and King, policy entrepreneurs are distinguished from policy managers. Like policy entrepreneurs, policy managers take part in the implementation of policies. Yet, unlike policy entrepreneurs, they do not utilise their implementation powers to extend their influence to other phases of policy-making. As already seen, according to rational choice institutionalists EU Member States entrusted the European Commission with policy management under the first pillar while they gave it to the office of the HR under the second (Dijkstra 2008). Accordingly, a key issue of this research is to understand under what conditions the HR, like the Commission in the first pillar, was able to take advantage of its implementation powers to extend its role to other phases of policy-making.

Finally, by drawing on the definition of Roberts and King it is possible to distinguish policy entrepreneurship from the mediation and assistance activities traditionally provided by the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers. Given that EU foreign policy is based on decisions taken collectively by all Member States, this role acquires a greater importance than within nation-states. With reference to this particular

research, in addition, this distinction acquires significant importance as the Amsterdam Treaty entitled the HR to give assistance to the Presidency in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy decisions. The Presidency, in turn, is a facilitator of decisions among Member States. Following the conceptualization proposed by Roberts and King, this study posits that while norm entrepreneurs intervene in the launch of new ideas and policy manager in the implementation of them, mediators intervene only in the intermediate phase as they assist policy-makers in transforming general ideas into policy proposals.

Research question

This research investigates the observed ambiguity in the role of the HR by relying on the conceptualization of the EU as a compound political system. It is this compoundness, and the existence, at the supranational level, of ambiguous identity configurations that permitted the HR to play an inconsistent role in different policy dossiers. In order to understand under what conditions, in this context of institutional ambiguity, the HR was let play the key role of policy entrepreneur, and when the prevalence of 'national' identity configurations constrained its role to that of mediator, this research looks at the content of norms and ideational factors concerning security emerged within the EU security community. In particular, by drawing on the literature on EU security culture, this research asks the following question:

RQ: To what extent, in a context of institutional ambiguity, has the existence of a shared EU security culture been a condition for the HR to play the role of policy entrepreneur?

By asking this research question, this study aims to understand if the emergence of a shared culture concerning security within the EU security community has been a precondition for the prevalence, in EU foreign policy-making, of supranational over intergovernmental dynamics and, thus, for the empowerment of the HR. Similarly, this question permits to investigate to what extent a more limited involvement of the HR in different phases of policy-making has been associated to a lack of shared perceptions

about security and the external world. The hypothesis which is at the origin of this question is that the existence, within the EU, of converging norms and perceptions regarding external threats, and the best way to deal with them generated a sense of common belonging among political actors involved in EU policy processes. In turn, this sense of general belonging constituted a positive context which led supranational vs national identity configurations prevail, thus permitting the HR to play the role of policy entrepreneur.

Security culture

The literature on security and culture emerged in the 1970s to explain the different attitudes of great powers towards nuclear proliferation. Since then, scholars have applied the concept of culture to the investigation of a broader number of issues relating not only to nuclear policies, but to security and defence policies more generally. Although these studies have long remained stato-centric, recently a new literature has emerged which investigates EU security culture. So far, this literature has focused on two main research questions: whether a shared EU security culture exists, and to what extent it is different from that of other international actors, such as the US. This research aims to extend this literature by focusing on the relation between security culture and policy processes. By drawing on Meyer (2005; 2006), it defines security culture as the socially transmitted norms which are shared among a majority of actors within the EU security community, and help shape its options for the pursuit of security.

Security culture: the origin of a research programme

Traditionally, scholars investigating states' foreign and security policies have privileged explanations based on military power or the maximisation of economic interests. Yet, as early as the 1970s, a group of scholars investigating US and USSR nuclear policies started contesting this focus by drawing attention on values and norms diffused in the

security community of a given country. These scholars argued that the difference between US and USSR attitudes towards nuclear proliferation during the Cold War could be attributed to the two countries' different styles, or strategic cultures (Gray 1981, 1986). According to Snyder—the initiator of this literature—strategic culture was “the sum total of ideals, conditional emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of the national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to [nuclear] strategy” (Snyder 1977).

After a period of neglect, in the 1990s, along with a renewed interest for the role of norms and culture in international relations (Checkel 2006; Wendt 2003; Risse 2002; Ruggie 1998; Katzenstein 1996b; Wendt 1992) a new group of scholars has revitalised this approach and extended it not only to the investigation of nuclear strategies, but also to the investigation of the use of force (Johnston 1995; Gray 1999; Poore 2003; Glenn, Howlett, and Poore 2004; Poore 2004) and of security policies in general (Katzenstein 1996b, 1996b; Kirchner and Sperling 2010; Kirchner 2010).⁵⁰

Unlike scholars on international regimes and sociological institutionalism, who have focused on what Katzenstein calls the ‘cultural-institutional context’ affecting states’ foreign and security policies, scholars on security culture look also at the role of ‘collective identity’ (Katzenstein 1996b: 17). In other words, while international regimes scholars have considered the impact of ideational factors on states’ behaviour as limited to those norms emerging from the international system that get crystallised and assume a value on their own, security culture scholars have considered states as socially constructed actors, with a history and identity of their own that emerge from the interaction of different social environments, not only international, but also domestic.

Most scholars investigating security culture have conceived it as shaped by formative experiences and able to alter, either fundamentally or piecemeal, at critical junctures (Longhurst 2000: 200). Accordingly, scholars have investigated the determinants of states’ security cultures by looking at the evolving perceptions and beliefs of those domestic actors more closely involved in decisions-making processes concerning foreign and security policy.

⁵⁰ Reviews of this literature are offered by Desch (1998), Lantis (2002), and Farrel (2002).

In most cases security culture studies have aimed to explain states' policy preferences. Recently, however, some scholars have looked at security cultures in order to explain states' preferences over policy processes. Kirchner and Sperling (2010), in particular, have analysed the impact of national security cultures on the attitude of states towards security governance. The two authors have investigated if variations in state structure (particularly between Westphalian and post-Westphalian states) and national security culture are able to affect states' attitudes towards bilateral or multilateral security cooperation. On the one hand, the two scholars have argued that the distinction between Westphalian and post-Westphalian states provides a structural explanation for variations in state behaviour with respect to global (and regional) governance (that is in the inclination to cooperation at the two levels). On the other hand, they have argued that variations in the security culture of national elites explain the patterns of behaviour towards security policies, distinguished between policies of prevention, protection, assurance, and compellence.⁵¹

Security culture and the EU

In line with the literature on international relations just described, in 2000s scholars have started investigating EU security culture. On the one hand, interest for this subject has been triggered by the institutional reforms launched within the EU after the 1998 S. Malò Declaration. Scholars, in particular, have investigated whether the creation of common CSDP capabilities was pointing at the emergence of common perceptions about external threats (Cornish and Edwards 2001). On the other hand, the development of the research programme on EU security culture has been a response to divisions emerged in 2003 between the US and Europe about the military intervention in Iraq, and to Kagan's (2003) fortunate criticism of European choices. In response to these divisions, scholars have asked if different normative backgrounds in EU Member States could hamper EU

⁵¹ The two authors have also recognised that the two variables are not necessarily separated and that states' structures have an impact on national security culture and vice versa.

foreign policy and to what extent EU security culture is different from that of other international powers.⁵²

So far, most scholars investigating EU security culture have defined it as the convergence of norms, perceptions, identities of EU Member States.⁵³ This approach finds its justification in the major role of intergovernmental institutions in EU foreign policy. However, scholars working on EU security culture have adopted different definitions and used different methodologies to investigate it (Biava and Drent 2011; Meyer 2005). Cornish and Edwards, for example, have focused on the narrower concept of strategic culture as “the institutional confidence and processes to manage and deploy military force as part of the accepted range of legitimate and effective policy instruments together with general recognition of EU’s legitimacy as an international actor with military capabilities” (Cornish and Edwards 2001). On the basis of the analysis of EU institutional developments, they have concluded that the creation of common bodies and institutions under the CSDP proves the emergence of a common perception of external threats and of the way to deal with them (Cornish and Edwards 2005, 2001). A similarly narrow conceptualisation has been adopted by other scholars.⁵⁴ Similarly to Cornish and Edwards, some have concluded that divergences on strategic visions among EU Member States are narrowing and that there is a progressive doctrinal convergence on rules concerning the use of force in the international arena (Heisbourg 2000). Others have expressed scepticism (Lindley-French 2002; Hyde-Price 2004; Rynning 2003).

In contrast to these work, other scholars have adopted a broader definition of EU security culture. Howorth (2002), for example, has included in his study ideational factors concerning not only the use of force in the international arena, but also the

⁵² To a certain extent, the discussion about what sort of culture the EU is developing in the field of security and defence overlaps with the debate about what sort of international actor the EU is (Manners 2002; Tocci 2008b; Sjursen 2006; Zielonka 2011).

⁵³ For a notable exception see Biava (2011). By adopting a narrower approach than that of this study, Biava has proposed to analyze EU strategic culture in the CSDP as the convergence ideational factors developed: 1) at the operational level (EU missions and operations in third countries); 2) at the top-down institutional level (EU’s institutions guidelines on the CSDP); 3) at the bottom-up level (in the socialization processes among governments’ representatives in Brussels).

⁵⁴ Rynning (2003), for example, has defined EU strategic culture as including perceptions about zero-sum conflicts in the international arena and the way to solve them. Unlike Cornish and Edwards, yet, Rynning has relied on evidence coming from policy outputs (i.e. decisions) as well as from political discourse.

preferred *modes* of cooperation and the importance attributed to transatlantic relations. This approach has led this scholar to positive conclusions about the existence of a common EU “strategic culture”. Similarly, Matlary (2006) has used the term strategic culture to designate norms concerning not only military force, but also what he has termed the ‘soft power use of hard power’. Following this conceptualization, this scholar has noted that the sensitive issue of developing a strategic culture for coercive diplomacy and the concomitant use of force within the EU is not progressing. Yet, he has also argued that a new post-national EU strategic culture is emerging, which is based on the concept of human security.

This much broader use of the term strategic culture in EU studies reflects an analogous trend in the literature on security and strategic studies (Katzenstein 1996b, 1996b; Kirchner and Sperling 2010; Kirchner 2010). In light of the evolution of the concept of security and of principles inspiring the use of force in the international arena, scholars working in these fields increasingly refer to *security* rather than *strategic culture*. So far, however, this term has rarely been used to investigate the emergence of common beliefs concerning security within the EU.⁵⁵

In conclusion, from a general survey of the literature on EU security culture, it emerges that the existence of a shared EU security culture has been measured as the convergence of ideational factors inspiring the foreign policies of Member States. Even though scholars disagree on the emergence (or lack) of a shared EU security culture, their divergences can be mostly attributed to different conceptualizations of the object under investigation (Meyer 2005; Biava 2011; Biava and Drent 2011). In general, scholars agree that even though different perceptions exist on some issues, a common vision is emerging about others. In particular, even though national governments have divergences about the way to use hard power, a common perception is emerging on the necessity of a common approach towards the use of soft power.

⁵⁵ Given the similarities between the two terms, yet, at times they are used interchangeably (Edwards 2006).

EU security culture: definition

As already seen, scholars drawing on sociological institutionalism have looked at EU bureaucratic culture, and at how socialization processes emerging within Brussels based bodies produce coordination reflexes, the common commitment to consensual agreement, or a sense of general belonging that affect Council's decisions. These scholars, however, have not investigated under what conditions this sense of general belonging prevails over national identities; their findings, therefore, have permitted to draw only limited conclusions on the impact of socialization processes on EU policy-making.

In order to understand under what conditions supranational vs national identity configurations prevailed within EU institutions dealing with foreign policy, this research looks at the content of norms concerning security developed within the EU security community. By drawing on Meyer, security culture is conceptualised as "*the socially transmitted, identity derived norms, ideas and patterns of behaviour that are shared among a broad majority of actors and social groups within a given security community, which help to shape a ranked set of options for a community's pursuit of security and defence goals*" (Meyer 2005: 528).⁵⁶

In other words, in order to understand the ambiguous involvement of the HR in policy processes, this research looks at the role of those socially constructed norms that were shared by a majority of actors belonging to the EU security community with regard to external security.

Meyer's conceptualization of security culture is appropriate for this study because, by referring to the pursuit of security and defence, it does not refer only the use of force or defence policies, but it also refers to other areas of foreign policy concerning security which fall under the responsibility of the HR. This approach is in line with more recent trends in the international relations literature, which have applied a sociological approach not only to the narrow investigation of states' military strategies, but more broadly to the investigation of the "culture of national security" (Katzenstein 1996a;

⁵⁶ Italics in the original.

Kirchner and Sperling 2010). As pointed out by Biava and Drent (2011), moreover, this broader approach to security culture reflects both the recognition of the emergence of new threats in the international arena, and the consequent adaptation of EU's instruments to face them. The operationalization of this concept is further elaborated in the following Chapter.

Norms, interests, and institutions

By focusing on the role of security culture, this study refers to the basic concept of norm, rather than that of interest, as key element for understanding actors' behaviour. As already seen, rational choice scholars have argued that EU Member States delegate central institutions key tasks to maximise their interests. In their investigation, however, these scholars have treated interests as a given, and defined them outside their theory. By referring to norms rather than to interests, by contrast, in line with the literature on social constructivists and sociological institutionalists this research aims to take into consideration how it is that political actors determine interests.

By rejecting rational choice approaches, this literature has defined norms as the result of the social interaction of different political actors. Finnemore (Finnemore 1996a), for example, has defined norms as a set of intersubjective understandings. Similarly, Katzenstein has defined norms as "collective expectations for the proper behaviour of actors with a given identity" (Katzenstein 1996a: 5). Norms so conceived can be distinguished between constitutive norms that specify "what actions will cause relevant others to recognize a particular identity", and regulative norms that "specify standards of proper behaviour." Through the investigation of norms so defined, scholars have aimed to take into consideration the role of social construction in shaping behaviour.

In line with this literature, interests and actors' behaviour are understood here by "investigating an international structure, not of power, but of meaning and social value." By referring to norms rather than to interests, in other words, this research does not aim to oppose norms to interests; rather, it aims to recognise that interests are not given and are socially constructed (Finnemore 1996b: 2).

Second, in this research norms so conceived “are not isolated variables, but should rather be seen as interrelated elements of and derived from an overarching identity narrative of a given community in its relation to the outside world” (Meyer 2005: 529). The sum of norms defining—as in this study—the appropriate behaviour concerning the external environment, in other words, shapes and reflects a community’s identity and culture. As different actors can recognise different norms and norms can be contested, at times actors’ choices can differ from the expected behaviour as defined by a given norm, and pursue different purposes or interests. When norms are deeply internalised, however, actors’ interests are defined accordingly.

Scholars have identified various ways in which norms may matter in international politics. Some have looked at how international organisations change and reconstitute states, or at the way political leaders affect them by spreading new norms (Finnemore 1996b, 2003). Others have looked at the role of epistemic communities (Adler 1992; Haas 1992). In order to understand states’ behaviour, including states’ preferences over international governance, security culture studies have focused on domestic processes of socialisation.

By drawing on this latter body of literature, this study investigates if converging norms among a majority of political actors belonging to the EU security community, and thus the emergence of a shared EU security culture, were associated to a greater involvement of the HR in policy processes. In particular, this investigation aims to understand if, in the context of institutional ambiguity provided by the EU political system—where norms defining different supranational and national interests coexist—the existence of shared norms concerning the perception of the external environment generated a permissive context in which supranational as opposed to intergovernmental dynamics were activated, and representatives of Member States delegated key tasks to the HR.

Conclusion

The EU is a complex political system which cannot be assimilated to an intergovernmental organization, or to a European nation-state. In fact, the EU is better represented as an inherently anti-hierarchical and anti-hegemonic compound polity, in which the vertical division of competences (between the centre and the periphery) coexists with a horizontal separation of competences among central institutions with different sources of legitimacy. This horizontal division of competences leads to the coexistence, at the central level, of intergovernmental and supranational dynamics, founding respectively their legitimacy in the Member States and the European peoples. The coexistence of these different dynamics creates an ambiguous institutional system in which the role of a single institution, such as the HR, may change and oscillate depending on the different roles of supranational or intergovernmental instances.

Having accounted for how this fluctuation is possible, however, does not amount to an explanation of how it take place, and of why in some policy dossiers national governments let the HR play a role of policy entrepreneur, similar to that of the Commission, while in others they limited its role to that of a mediator. In order to explain this oscillation, this research looks at the role of EU security culture, intended as the convergence of socially transmitted norms among a majority of political actors belonging to the EU security community.

On the basis of this theoretical framework, this research aims to contribute to the existing literature in two ways. First, it extends hypotheses developed so far on conditions permitting common institutions to have a greater say in EU foreign policy processes. In particular, this research argues that, in the context of institutional ambiguity provided by the EU, the existence (or lack) of shared norms concerning the appropriate way to address the external environment—and thus of a shared culture—plays an important role in shaping political actors' perceptions of EU policy processes.

The second contribution of this research to the existing literature concerns the study of EU security culture. This research is based on an innovative definition of security culture, which (as it will be seen in the following Chapter) permits to investigate

it not only as a unitary and monolithic object, but as a complex entity which can develop at different times in different policy fields. On the basis of this conceptualisation, this research investigates the emergence of a common security culture among EU Member States vis-à-vis two specific external challenges: nuclear proliferation (in the case study on negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme) and state-building (in the case study on Macedonia).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This research is based on few epistemological and ontological assumptions. First, from an ontological point of view this research admits that real world exists independently for individual and subjective understanding; yet, it posits that this reality is only knowable to the researcher and to every individual through human mind and socially constructed meanings. This approach is in line with what has been defined as ‘subtle’ or ‘critical realism’ (Snape and Spencer 2003: 527).

Second, this research assumes that “for the purpose of evaluating rival explanation, the most fundamental divide in methodology is neither between qualitative and quantitative research nor between small-N large-N researches. Rather, it is between experimental and observational data” (Collier, Brady, and Seawright 2004: 230). Following this assumption, qualitative research is not to be discharged as less rigorous or less scientific than quantitative research—as it is by many social scientists. In fact, the two approaches have more similarities than commonly thought and both suffer from similar pitfalls typical of non-experimental sciences. In line with this assumption, increasing the number of cases is not to be considered the only way to enhance the validity of research conclusions,⁵⁷ as this standard was set by quantitative social sciences and does not reflect the principles of qualitative research. Following these assumptions, this study investigates the role of the HR vis-à-vis two external threats: nuclear proliferation and ethnic conflicts, through the analysis of two case studies—the negotiations with Iran over the nuclear programme, and the 2001 Macedonia crisis—in which the HR played different roles.

⁵⁷ This postulation seems to have success in the mainstream social sciences literature as represented by King, Keohane and Verba (1994).

This Chapter specifies the methodology adopted in this study and explains the reasons behind its choice. The Chapter starts by presenting the operationalization of the concept of security culture adopted in this study (first section). Subsequently, it presents the controversial debate on the relation between ideational factors and behaviour in international relations (second section), and explains the reasons behind the choice of case study analysis and the criteria for case studies selection (third section). Finally, the last sections introduce the main criteria for the choice of evidence concerning norms (fourth section), and the methods for data collection (final section).

Security culture: operationalization

As already seen in the previous Chapter, even within the limited field of EU studies, security culture remains an ambiguous concept for which many different definitions and operationalizations have been given (Biava and Drent 2011; Meyer 2005). By drawing on Meyer, this study conceptualises security culture as “*the socially transmitted, identity derived norms, ideas and patterns of behaviour that are shared among a broad majority of actors and social groups within a given security community, which help to shape a ranked set of options for a community’s pursuit of security and defence goals*” (Meyer 2005: 528). By adopting this definition, this study aims to provide for a clear and efficient operationalization of this concept. Indeed, one of the greatest problems associated to the study of culture in political science concerns the operationalization of the concept, rather than its definition. With regard to the goals of this study, an effective conceptualization of the term needs to allow for a clear definition of: 1) what is the meaning of *shared* norm; 2) what norms and beliefs are parts of *security* culture; 3) how can *culture* be investigated.

As for the notion of *shared* security culture, Meyer’s conceptualization stresses a majoritarian notion of this concept, defined as norms and ideas that are shared among a broad majority of actors and social groups within a given security community. In other words, shared security culture is defined as the framework culture adopted by the majority of relevant actors in a given community. Since the CFSP remains a mainly

intergovernmental policy, this research focuses on norms emerging from EU Council, and EU Member States. The notion of a *majority* of actors, however, is not to be intended formalistically. It is obvious that EU Member States have different say vis-à-vis different policy issues. Norms and principles proposed by any of them do not have the same impact on general behaviour. National governments representing large Member States, especially those that are part of the UN Security Council, play a prominent role when dealing with security and high politics issues which are the subject of this research. This prominent role is confirmed by the literature on ideational factors and foreign policy. Indeed, especially when testing hypotheses about strategic culture (regardless if the concept is used in a narrow or broad sense), scholars tend to pay particular attention to large Member States, at times drawing conclusions on the general EU strategic culture only from their observation. Hyde-Price (2004), for example, bases his conclusions on EU strategic culture on the analysis of national cultures of four large Member States: France, Germany, United Kingdom, and Poland. Similarly, Matlary (2009) focuses on France, Germany, and United Kingdom.

However, besides the role of large Member States, on specific policy dossier also small Member States may gain a stronger say in light of their historical legacy, their longstanding experience in dealing with similar subjects, or their stakes in the issue under discussion. The definition of shared security culture needs to take into consideration both these elements. Accordingly, in the investigation of the EU security culture this study takes into particular consideration the role of national governments of large Member States, and the empowerment of governments of single Member States due to the specific features of the issue under investigation.

The second operationalization problem associated to the definition of shared security culture arises from the fact that the word *security* is generally too broad and includes norms, principles, and beliefs concerning a high number of issues. Before starting any empirical research, therefore, it is necessary to delimit further the scope of this study. As mentioned in the previous Chapter, the literature does not provide a single working definition of security culture. Scholars have attributed different meanings to this concept depending on the scope and purposes of their research. The proliferation of such

differentiated approaches is considered the main reason for the lack of unanimous findings on the emergence of a shared EU strategic culture (Meyer 2005). The proliferation of different definitions of strategic culture, in addition, has facilitated the adoption of different methodological approaches, contributing to produce a hardly coherent research programme. Following Katzenstein (1996b), Meyer (2005) has proposed to overcome the existing confusion in the definition of strategic culture by identifying it with a set of prescriptive norms. Moreover, this scholar has identified security culture with specific norms concerning: the goals in the use of force; the way in which force is used; the preferred *modes* of cooperation in the international environment; the threshold for domestic and international authorisation to the use of force in third countries.

The approach adopted by Meyer offers a valuable example of how the investigation of culture may be facilitated by the definition of its various components.⁵⁸ Following Meyer's example, in this research security culture is defined as a group of prescriptive norms on clearly identifiable issues. In particular, by partially drawing on Kirchner and Sperling (2010), prescriptive norms constituting EU security culture are defined as those concerning: 1) the definition of security threats (whether or not an issue is framed as a security threat); 2) interaction norms concerning the preferred levels of cooperation in the international environment 3) instrumental norms identifying the instruments to be used to respond to external threats. Table 3 represents the concept of security culture so defined. In line with this operationalization, the empirical research presented in the following chapters addresses ideational factors concerning EU foreign policy which fall within the three categories mentioned above.

This definition seems comprehensive enough to be adapted to the purposes of this study, that is investigating the role that the HR may assume in a wide range of policy issues.⁵⁹ Few remarks, however, are necessary to further explain the content of the three

⁵⁸ A similar approach has been adopted by Howorth (2002: 89): 89), who has distinguished the strategic cultures of EU Member States on the basis of six dichotomies: allied/neutral, Atlanticists/Europeanists, power projection/territorial defence seeking, nuclear/non-nuclear powers, military/civilian instruments, large/small states, weapons providers/consumers.

⁵⁹ In fact, to the three components mentioned above, in their original work Kirchner and Sperling (2010) added the investigation of: the elites' consensus about dynamics of world order, the viability of state's

Type of norm	Aim
Security threat identification	Identifying international security threats
Interaction norms	Defining the appropriate arenas and modes for cooperation in international relations
Instrumental norms	Identifying the appropriate instruments to respond to external threats

Table 3. Fundamental norms constituting security culture: classification (author’s elaboration on the basis of Kirchner and Sperling 2010).

groups of norms just identified and, in particular, of interaction norms. While addressing interaction norms among EU Member States, most scholars investigating EU security culture have stressed the importance of choices concerning the most appropriate arenas for cooperation. Accordingly, they have paid major attention to Member States’ perception of NATO or the EU as the privileged *arena* for cooperation in the field security and defence, and have viewed in diverging norms in this regard the major obstacle to the emergence of a shared security culture within the EU (Giegerich 2006; Howorth 2002).

In opposition to these scholars, and along the lines of Kirchner and Sperling (2010), this study includes among interaction norms also norms concerning different *modes* of international cooperation.⁶⁰ Starting from the distinction between Wesphalian

sovereignty, and national identity (defined as the extent to which national elites have retained an egoistic definition of national interest or have embedded it in a broader group). These components are considered here as interaction norms, as defined hereafter.

⁶⁰ Other scholars have resorted to other devices to describe a similar cleavage. While analysing the impact of different national strategic cultures on the development of the Europeans Security and Defence Policy, for example, Giegerich (2006) has distinguished Member States considering security and defence policies as an autonomous or as a cooperative endeavour. The distinction of Kirchner and Sperling is preferred here

vs post-Westphalian states, Sperling (2010) has argued that a distinction can be made among Westphalian states pursuing “autonomy from external influence, and power maximization”, and post-Westphalian states attending “the voluntary and structural erosion of sovereignty”. While the former pursue a “multilateralism of choice”, which is instrumental in obtaining other foreign policy goals, the latter recognise that in the contemporary world no country can pursue national security alone, and consequently lean towards what has been called “reflexive multilateralism”.⁶¹

In order to simplify the definition of security culture provided by Kirchner and Sperling (2010), moreover, this study incorporates among interaction norms also elements such as the consensus about the dynamics of world order or the viability of state’s sovereignty identified as further elements by the two scholars.

Finally, a further problem associated to the operationalization of security culture is due to the fact that *culture* generally refers to a relatively stable principle, which develops over time and does not change too often.⁶² Accordingly, most scholars investigating EU security culture have asked whether or not such common culture exists, assuming that this question could be given a definitive yes or not answer. Even though this approach is reasonable in investigations with a narrow scope (e.g. focusing only on the use of force), it collides with the definition of security culture adopted by this study. By defining security culture as a sum of prescriptive norms, indeed, this study implicitly assumes this is a compounded concept, which cannot be treated univocally.

By drawing on Meyer’s conceptualization presented in this study, indeed, one may assume that while EU national governments have developed a common understanding of one of the three sets of norms identified in Table 3, they can still lack a

because, not being referred exclusively to the development of a common defence policy is more in line with the purposes of this research.

⁶¹ A distinction between instrumentalism and reflexive multilateralism was identified by Anderson and Goodman (1993). Referring to post Cold War Germany, the two authors argued that “the formulation of state objectives and interests in Germany not only took institutions into account but accorded value to these institutions as such”. International institutions, in other words, “become embedded in the very definition of states interests and strategies”.

⁶² For Duffield (1999: 770) “cultures are relatively stable (...). Most of the time, culture changes only very slowly, if at all, even in the presence of an evolving material environment.” For Hoffmann and Longhurst (1999: 31) culture is “continuities and discernible trends across time and contexts rather than change (...) change is generally portrayed as gradual in the absence of dramatic shocks and trauma.”

common perception of others. For example, while they may have achieved a common definition of threats, they could maintain different norms as regards the instruments to be used to deal with them. Similarly, while they may agree on how to deal with some security threats, they can disagree on how to deal with others. Accordingly, this research does not aim to establish whether a shared EU security culture exists or not. Rather, it investigates to what extent decisions concerning a given policy dossiers were adopted within the EU security community on the basis of a shared ideational framework. In other words, the existence (or lack) of a shared security culture is defined on a case-by-case basis.

Even though it helps overcome important limitations in the operationalization of security culture, the adoption of this case-by-case approach is not immune from risks. A case by case approach, in particular, renders it difficult to appreciate to what extent an observed behavior (be it a policy choice or a discourse) reflects the normative background of a given actor, or is just an isolated phenomenon. This research addresses this issue in two ways. First, by focusing on principles and values expressed by national elites rather than on those of public opinion this study considers a component of security culture that is more stable and constant over time. Second, in this study the interpretation of norms as expressed by elites' discourses and policies concerning the case studies under investigation is corroborated with evidence from long standing national policies, discourses, and interpretations of them offered by secondary literature.

Norms and behaviour: what relation?

Once clarified the definition and operationalization of security culture adopted by this study, it is necessary to clarify the connection between this concept and actors' behaviour. Following the 'constructivist turn' in international relations (Checkel 1998), the debate on the link between norms and behaviour has gained increasing importance in the discipline. A significant divide has emerged between conventional and critical constructivists. Scholars of both schools share the assumption that international relations are socially constructed (Checkel 1998; Wendt 1992, 1995; Risse 2002). In addition,

conventional constructivists argue that states do not behave according to a 'logic of consequentialism', which lead them to maximise their material utility, but according to a 'logic of appropriateness,' which imposes social rules of behaviour (March and Olsen 2009; Risse 2002). According to the 'logic of consequentialism,' competing options are evaluated on the basis of their expected utility. By contrast, according to the 'logic of appropriateness' choices are affected by the perception of the surrounding environment and of the expected behaviour which an actor is supposed to maintain. Accordingly, conventional constructivists give the concepts of *utility* or *rationality* adopted by rational approaches a new definition (Hopf 1998; Sterling-Folker 2000). In particular, they oppose to the material ontology which neo-liberalism and neo-realism have drawn from economic theory and propose a a new socially constructed definition of utility and rationality (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

By contrast, critical constructivists (Jacobsen 2003) argue that, by subscribing to the concept of socially constructed utility, conventional constructivism surrender to the same functionalist logic of rational choice approaches. To this 'thin' understanding of norms, they oppose a 'thick' notion of them, arguing that norms shape not only actor's behaviours, but also their identity and preferences (Risse 2002). In line with these assumptions, critical constructivists ask 'how', or more specifically 'how possible' are certain behaviours, and not 'why' they occur (Finnemore 2003: 15).

The debate between conventional and critical constructivists is somehow mirrored in the literature on strategic culture by an analogous divide between so-called first and third generation scholars (Gray 1999; Poore 2003; Johnston 1995). First generation scholars argue that identity and behaviour cannot be separated and that norms cannot be regarded as independent variables shaping the behaviour of states. These scholars treat culture as 'context,' and investigate it to 'understand' rather than to 'explain' behaviour. Accordingly, first generation scholars posit that the study of strategic culture does not permit to formulate predictions, but only to map a corridor of 'normal' or 'probable' behaviour (Poore 2003; Gray 1999; Meyer 2005). By contrast, third generation scholars treat strategic culture as an independent variable affecting strategic behaviour (Meyer 2005; Johnston 1995). Accordingly, they investigate how norms affect the behaviour of

states. This approach is in line with the goal of producing falsifiable results, able to challenge the neo-realist dominance in the field of strategic studies.

Both methodological approaches have strengths and weaknesses. The approach adopted by strategic culture third generation scholars and conventional constructivists guarantee methodological rigour as it permits to formulate falsifiable statements that can be tested against alternative hypotheses. This approach renders it possible the formulation of predictions on future outcomes, in line with the traditional purpose of scientific research of rendering the world predictable and manageable for human beings. The approach adopted by critical constructivists, however, has a stronger coherence in epistemological terms. By rejecting the universal meaning of causality, this approach confirms the assumption that reality is socially constructed and that “actors do not start with a blank sheet, when they are faced with a problem or an opportunity to act, but draw on pre-existing and usually stable schemata” (Meyer 2005: 527). Accordingly, critical constructivists reject the idea that the formulation of testable predictions is a criterion for good scientific research and propose a notion of social research as critical understanding, with the purpose of unveiling of societal dynamics.

The origins of these divides go back to the foundation of scientific research and of philosophy of science, and solving it is beyond the goals of this research. Following Meyer (2005), this study acknowledges the advantages and disadvantages of both methodological positions and adopts a middle ground approach. In other words, this research accepts the empirical value of social research on the one hand, without necessarily conforming to the methodological principles established by natural sciences on the other. Accordingly, this study posits that norms and ideas cannot be treated nor affect behaviour in a similar way as power or economic resources, which are the independent variable of neorealist scholars. By referring to norms rather than to interests, in other word, this research does not aim to oppose the logic of appropriateness to the logic of consequentialism. Rather, it aims to investigate culture as a coherent system of thoughts and actions that cannot be investigated separately. At the same time, however, this study rejects the idea that social research cannot be used to formulate hypotheses that help render the world more manageable.

Case study selection

In order to understand to what extent a shared security culture has been a necessary condition for the HR to play the role of policy entrepreneur, this research relies on a case studies analysis (Brady and Collier 2004; Dion 1998; Gerring 2007). Following this method, the research focuses on a deep analysis of few cases, rather than on analysis of a large number of cases typical of quantitative approaches. The main reason behind this choice is that this study offers the first comparative analysis of the involvement of the HR in EU foreign policy-making and does it on the basis of an innovative operationalization of security culture. Accordingly, to the purpose of formulating new hypotheses rather than testing existing ones, a deep analysis of a small number of cases seems more useful than the comparison of a large number of them.⁶³

Moreover, case study analysis is preferred to cross-case comparison for practical reasons. First, as foreign policy issues are, by definition, very different among each-other and the variation in the role of the HR is rare or not frequent, the investigation of some particular cases is more urgent than that of others.⁶⁴ Second, the analysis of decision-making processes in EU foreign policy requires close contact with privileged individuals and the exam of sensitive information, both elements which reduce the feasibility of a study including a large number of cases.

In order to understand the connection between EU security culture and the observed ambiguity in the role of the HR, case studies are selected according to the *different case* principle (Gerring and Seawright 2007). Accordingly, the research focuses on policy dossiers in which the HR played different roles: the 2001 Macedonia crisis, and the negotiation over Iran's nuclear programme. In the first case—the 2001 Macedonia crisis—the HR was involved in all phases of policy-making and played the role of policy entrepreneur. In the second case—the negotiation over Iran's nuclear programme—the

⁶³ On the 'affinities' between case study analysis and different theoretical purposes of empirical research see Gerring (2007). On the role and importance of induction in social sciences see Brady, Collier, and Seawright (2004: 12-13).

⁶⁴ Even though some social scientists condemn this kind of case selection on the dependent variable (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994), scholars are not unanimous on this subject (Dion 1998; Gerring 2007).

HR had a more limited role. While the Macedonia's crisis is a case of ethnic conflicts in EU's neighbourhood, the case of Iran regards nuclear proliferation.

What follows is a brief presentation of the two cases examined in depth in the next chapters and of why they are considered different. Subsequently, the conclusion to this section highlights few key similarities which permit to exclude the intervention of other important variables highlighted in the literature.

The 2001 Macedonia crisis

At the beginning of 2001, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (hereafter Macedonia) witnessed the eruption of violent tensions between the Macedonian majority and its Albanian minority. The crisis originated from the protest of a group which called itself the National Liberation Army (NLA) and claimed to be defending the interests of Albanians in Macedonia. At the time this crisis erupted, the UN and NATO were the main multilateral actors present in the region. Yet, the EU took the lead in efforts by the international community to solve the emerged tensions and became the main broker of the peace agreement signed in Ohrid in August 2001.

During the Macedonian conflict, the HR and its depending entities played a major role in establishing a leading position for the EU in the international community. Since the beginning of the conflict HR Solana viewed the crisis as an opportunity for the EU to project its political power in the area, and engaged in an intense diplomatic effort to find a political solution to it. Accordingly, he convinced the EU Swedish Presidency to let the HR represent the interests of the EU in the crisis. Subsequently, when escalation of the conflict rendered evident that a more stable EU presence was needed, Solana's role was subsumed by the EU Special Representative Francois Leotard, acting under the HR's authority. Thanks to their presence on the ground, Leotard and his team gained further room for manoeuvre from the Member States. The team not only implemented common policies formulated in Brussels, but also put forward original policy proposals which reversed stances previously adopted by the EU. In particular, Leotard and his team suggested to open an informal channel of negotiation with the NLA, something that had

been previously refused by both NATO and the EU. Thanks to the support of the US and NATO, Leotard's proposals paved the way for a mediated agreement. In the Macedonia case, in other words, the HR took part in all phases of policy-making: ideas formulation, policy formulation, and policy implementation. Indeed, this case is often quoted by the literature as a major success of HR Solana, and a landmark in the establishment of the institution of HR (Piana 2002). In line with the definition adopted in this study, the Macedonia case is considered as an example of policy dossier in which the HR played the role of policy entrepreneur.

The negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme

In spring 2003, the Iranian President Mohammad Khatami announced to the world that Iran aimed to develop a full nuclear fuel-cycle programme. This declaration raised concerns among the international community for its implications for non-proliferation. In October 2003, the foreign ministers of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (the E3/EU) visited Tehran to try to resolve the issue. Subsequently, in autumn 2004 their initiative was brought within the EU institutional framework and the HR Solana was associated to the talks. Consequently, negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme became a test case for EU foreign policy and were soon considered as one of the most significant foreign policy actions undertaken by the EU in the last years (Everts 2004a; Heisbourg, Clawson, and Sazhin 2005). Thanks to its involvement into these talks with Iran, the HR increased significantly its credibility and visibility.

As already highlighted by the literature, however, the Iranian dossier did not expand significantly the powers of the HR. Indeed, the involvement of HR Solana into the talks was mainly aimed to guarantee the E3 initiative with the support of the rest of the EU. During negotiations within the EU, the HR maintained a low profile and never challenged the position of big Member States. Accordingly, even though bringing an important contribution to EU foreign policy coherence and visibility, the HR did so by playing the role of mediator or of bargaining chip among Member States, not that of policy entrepreneur.

Conclusion

Apart from the main difference concerning the role of the HR in policy-making, the two selected cases display important similarities, and another key difference, that must be taken into consideration in view of a correct generalisation of research findings.

First, both the Macedonia and Iran case related to policy dossiers which were considered a priority by EU Member States and to which the HR committed a significant amount of resources and time. Both the stabilisation of the Balkans and non-proliferation, for example, were listed among the priorities of EU foreign policy in the European Security Strategy (ESS).⁶⁵ Both the 2001 Macedonia crisis and negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme relate to a policy dossier which became a key priority in the HR's agenda.⁶⁶ Finally, both cases played an important role in establishing the role and reputation of the HR. In particular, the positive solution of the Macedonia crisis had a major role in establishing the credibility of the HR vis-à-vis Member States. Similarly, the HR's involvement into the talks with Iran increased significantly the visibility of this institution at the international level. This success was granted a sort of recognition when, after the extension of the negotiating team to China, Russia, and the US, HR Solana became chief negotiator of the new group. Accordingly, no difference in the empowerment of the HR can be attributed to the priority given to the two issues by EU Member States collectively or by the HR itself.

Second, in both cases the HR could provide resources that other institutions (especially the EU Presidency) could not guarantee. To solve the Macedonia crisis, for example, the HR travelled timely and frequently to the country in a short period of time, something that other EU institutions could not guarantee due to other national and

⁶⁵ European Council (2003b).

⁶⁶ For example, over the years HR Solana dedicated a significant amount of time for travelling and meetings related to the Iran negotiation. Similarly, although in a different laps pf time, when the Macedonia crisis erupted, he travelled to the region very frequently (at time even once per week, for Solana's agenda, see <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/App/Solana/Agenda.aspx?lang=EN&cmsid=1592> accessed on 28/6/2011). In addition, in order to deal with the Macedonia crisis, the HR was helped by a Special Representative in the FYROM; in order to deal with Iran (and not only), it was assisted by a Personal Representative for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. On Solana's commitment in the Balkans see Stahl (2011).

international commitments. Similarly, by taking part in negotiations with Iran, the HR guaranteed continuity of action, something that the Presidency could not provide due to its rotating structure. Accordingly, the different empowerment of the HR in the two cases cannot be attributed to different perceptions of the added value that this institution could have brought to EU policy processes.⁶⁷

Finally, besides these similarities, the two cases under investigation have at least one important difference. While one case refers to a small country—Macedonia—and to an issue which is usually considered of regional relevance (ethnic conflicts), the other refers to a big country—Iran—and to an issue which is mostly attributed global relevance (nuclear proliferation). Accordingly, one may argue this difference in the nature of the two cases justifies the difference in the involvement of the HR in policy processes. According to the epistemological approach of this research, the definition of a policy issue as one of global or regional relevance is also socially constructed, and finds its definition in norms defining security threats, and in interaction norms concerning the appropriate arenas and *modes* for cooperation in the international arena. Accordingly, this distinction may be viewed as part of the concept of security culture investigated in this study.

Norms and EU foreign policy: evidence from what?

The investigation of norms and ideational factors in international relations relies on indirect evidence. By a close observation of the literature, it is possible to detect few trends in the methods adopted by scholars in this regard. In the investigation of security and strategic culture, a first group of scholars has relied on the analysis of ‘informational sources’. The latter include official documents, public speeches, and interviews from officials and politicians. In order to detect change in the EU strategic culture, for example Meyer (2006) has combined data from five different sources: semi-structured interviews with officials; proceedings of parliamentary sittings on defence select committees;

⁶⁷ This is the rationale for the empowerment of the HR identified by principal-agents scholars (Dijkstra 2008, 2010b; Karlas 2005).

documents produced by experts from think-tanks; press coverage; public opinion surveys. Depending on the purposes of their research, scholars conducting comparative studies have relied also on legal sources and secondary literature (Kirchner and Sperling 2010; Glenn, Howlett, and Poore 2004).

Drawing on classical realism and foreign policy analysis, a second group of scholars has investigated norms and beliefs on the basis of the analysis of policy outcomes. Cornish and Edwards (2001), for example, have detected the emergence of a shared EU strategic culture from the observation of institutional reforms in the field of the CSDP. Coşkun (2007) has contested the argument of the two scholars by relying on evidence from the choices of selected national governments on the eve and during the Iraq war of 2003.

Most scholars, however, have adopted a mixed approach and have relied on both instruments: informational analysis and policy observation. Manners and Whitman (1998), for example, have suggested to investigate EU foreign policy identity by looking at the EU “informational, procedural and overt identity”. Formal identity “concerns the promulgation of overviews of the rationale of the Union's relationship with a state or a group of states” and emerges from EU documents on official positions. The procedural dimension of the Community identity refers to the creation of a standing institutionalized relationship with a third party state or group of states. Finally the overt identity emerges from the physical presence of the Community and its representatives outside the Community. Puetter and Wiener (2007), by contrast, have defined the content of international and national normative frameworks during the 2003 Iraq crisis on the basis of the analysis of legal sources and of discursive interventions of key decision-makers. Subsequently, they have observed how norms were operationalized in the debates regarding the decision about military intervention.

By drawing on this mixed approach, this study relies on multiple sources. In particular, its empirical research relies on the use of:

- 1) informational instruments and communicative actions provided by national elites, national governments, and EU institutions in order to identify prescriptive norms and the existence (or lack of) a shared EU security culture.

2) long term policy decisions. These decisions may take the form of framework or implementation legal acts, as well as of security doctrine documents approved by national bodies.

3) literature and secondary sources. These sources are used in particular to extend observations on norms to a higher number of Member States and overcome the limitations to the access to primary sources posed by different languages.

4) interviews with national diplomats and EU officials (see Annex I).

Data Collection

In turn, evidence concerning EU security culture and the empowerment of the HR in the EU decision-making process are investigated through the analysis of the following sources.

Primary sources:

1. Documents

- ✓ At the EU level:
 - Decision and common positions emanated by the Council of Ministers
 - Communications and reports of the European Commission
 - Speeches and interviews of public officials
 - Parliamentary debates, reports and resolutions
- ✓ At the national level:
 - White papers and national strategies of EU Member States
 - Bills and regulations concerning the selected case studies
 - Parliamentary debates, including reports and resolutions adopted by national parliaments
 - Interviews and speeches of politicians and public officials
- ✓ Documents produced by third countries involved.
 - White papers and national strategies of EU member States
 - Bills and regulations concerning the selected case studies

- Parliamentary debates, including reports and resolutions adopted by national parliaments
- Interviews and speeches of politicians and public officials

These documents have been consulted through official websites, inquiries to the institutions and officials working on the subjects.

2. Expert interviews. In depth semi structured interviews with politicians and officials involved in the decision-making processes are fundamental for corroborating the information collected through document analysis. In particular, interviews permit to gain a better understanding of the content of written documents and to unveil drafting and negotiation procedures behind them. In addition to that, important political processes often lack an accompanying body of documentation; accordingly, expert interviews serve to trace these processes and to unveil the role of informal politics in decision-making.⁶⁸

In depth individual interviews is preferred to fixed-format interviews for the flexibility they permit (unlike in questionnaires, questions can be adapted to the information that the experts have and want to share), and for the greater chances they give to have access to sensitive information under investigation. In addition, individual interviews permit an in depth exam of norms and identities inspiring the work of key actors in decision-making.

Experts have been selected on a non-probabilistic basis. After having identified an initial list of experts on the basis of a positional criterion, further experts have been identified through snowballing,⁶⁹ and on the basis of a reputational criterion.⁷⁰ In total 37 interviews with national diplomats, EU officials, and experts have been conducted. The number of interviews is limited mainly due to

⁶⁸ On the role of expert interviews in process-tracing see Tansey (2007; 2006).

⁶⁹ The snowball, or chain-referral, sampling method involves identifying an initial set of relevant respondents, and then requesting that they suggest other potential subjects who share similar characteristics or who have relevance in some way to the object of study. The researcher then interviews the second set of subjects, and also requests that they supply names of other potential interview subjects. The process continues until the researcher feels the sample is large enough for the purposes of the study (Tansey 2007: 6).

⁷⁰ While positional sampling permits to select experts on the basis of their professional position, reputational sampling selects them on the basis of their “reputation” as experts among other experts (Tansey 2007).

the high turnover of officials in EU institutions and national diplomacies, and the consequent difficulties in finding and reaching officials who have been involved in the selected policy dossiers in the past years.

Secondary sources:

- ✓ Online and in print news sources
- ✓ Working papers and policy briefs produced in the academic debate and within relevant think tanks
- ✓ Academic literature on national security culture

CHAPTER 5

THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN MACEDONIA: THE EMERGENCE OF A POLICY ENTREPRENEUR

At the beginning of 2001, Macedonia witnessed the eruption of violent tensions between the Macedonian majority and its Albanian minority. The crisis originated from the protest of a group which called itself the National Liberation Army (NLA) and claimed to be defending the interests of Albanians in Macedonia. During the first months of 2001, the NLA attacked police stations in the north-west of the country and subsequently extended its revolt to the north-east and towards the capital, Skopje.

At the time the crisis erupted, the UN and NATO were the main multilateral actors present in the region. The UN was in charge of the Interim Administration of Kosovo (UNMIK), and NATO was responsible for the security of the country. In addition, NATO officials were involved in the mediation of a negotiated solution to ethnic tensions that emerged in the Preševo Valley, an area of southern Serbia bordering Macedonia. Despite the involvement of these organizations, the EU took the lead in efforts by the international community to solve the Macedonian crisis and became a main broker of the peace agreement signed in Ohrid in August 2001.

The major role played by the EU in the resolution of this crisis represented a significant change from the stance it had taken during previous Balkan wars in the 1990s. In order to understand this change, commentators have highlighted that the solution of the Macedonian conflict represented one of the best examples of the positive contribution of the HR to EU policy-making (Piana 2002, 2004). During this crisis, the HR and its depending entities abandoned the role of mere executor attributed them by the Treaties, and intervened in all phases of EU policy-making—elaboration of ideas, policy formulation, and policy implementation—de facto playing the role of policy entrepreneurs. In particular, since the beginning of the

conflict HR Solana viewed the crisis as an opportunity for the EU to project its political power in the area, and engaged in an intense diplomatic effort to find a political solution to it. Thanks to these activities and the proved ability to guarantee a continuous presence on the ground, Solana managed to convince the EU Swedish Presidency to let the HR represent the interests of the EU in the crisis. Subsequently, when escalation of the conflict rendered evident that a more stable EU presence was needed, Solana's role was subsumed by the EU Special Representative François Leotard, acting under the HR's authority. Thanks to their presence on the ground, Leotard and his team were able to play a proactive and autonomous role in subsequent talks. The team not only implemented common policies formulated in Brussels, but also put forward original policy proposals. Thanks to the support of the US and NATO, these proposals paved the way for a mediated agreement envisaging the disarmament of rebels and the introduction of political reforms.

Even though the contribution of the HR to the leading role acquired by the EU in the solution of this crisis cannot be overestimated, the analysis of discourses and policies formulated by EU national leaders shows that this outcome occurred in a positive political context. As the revolt did not involve wide sectors of Macedonia's society, Member States agreed that the best way to solve the conflict was by supporting the national government and the inviolability of the existing border. This agreement was rendered possible by the fact that the crisis emerged after the Kosovo and Bosnia conflicts had dramatically changed prescriptive norms and perceptions about security of Member States. Following these conflicts, EU leaders had developed a new understanding of their interests and shared responsibilities vis-à-vis conflicts emerging in the EU's immediate neighbourhood. Consequently, when the HR promoted EU's intervention in Macedonia, national governments agreed that the best way to address the problem was to adopt a common proactive approach.

In order to substantiate these arguments, this Chapter proceeds in three steps. The following section illustrates the main events which led to the eruption of the Macedonian crisis, its development, and subsequent resolution. The second section examines the role of the HR in the resolution of the crisis. It argues that the HR contributed to the mediation of a political solution to the crisis by intervening in all phases of policy-making and, thus, according to the definition adopted by this study,

by playing the role of policy entrepreneur. The third section analyses how the crisis was perceived within the EU. This section argues that, following the lesson learned in the conflicts of Bosnia and Kosovo, EU leaders developed a shared perception of the threat coming from Macedonia. The latter, in particular, was depicted as a common threat to EU values and credibility, and as an event for which the EU had a responsibility to act.



Map of Macedonia (source: <http://lib.utexas.edu/>)

Macedonia 2001: a crisis coming from abroad

The Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia declared its independence from the Yugoslav federation in September 1991.⁷¹ Since then, strained relations between the ethnic Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority have existed in the country. In 1991, ethnic Albanians boycotted the referendum on Macedonia's independence and the census (Liotta and Jebb 2002a).⁷² In 1996 sporadic ethnic Albanian protests took place in Tetovo's Albanian-language University. Until early 2001, however, these tensions never escalated into violence. The peaceful coexistence between the two ethnicities was guaranteed by the good relations between political parties representing them at the national level. Since the mid-1990s, indeed, successive governments have included ethnic Albanian parties as coalition partners. A factor contributing to peaceful coexistence was also brought by the 1993 declaration by the ethnic Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) that Albanian autonomy was not on its agenda and that it rather sought the recognition of the Albanian nation in the constitution (Liotta and Jebb 2002b).

Due to its internal stability and the peaceful coexistence between different ethnic groups, Macedonia successfully managed not to be involved in the wars enflaming Western Balkans during the 1990s. Nevertheless, the country was seriously affected by these conflicts. Macedonia's economy was damaged by the international embargo imposed on Serbia, which the government implemented as part of its effort to become integrated in the international community. In March 1999, when NATO began its bombing campaign against Yugoslavia, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees from Kosovo recovered in Macedonia and this raised tensions among the different ethnic groups of the country.⁷³ In spite of these problems and unlike other countries of the area, for some observers Macedonia received little

⁷¹ Despite the positive opinion of the Arbitration Commission of the Peace Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (headed by Robert Badinter), the international community put on hold the recognition of the country's independence because of a dispute over the name raised by Greece. On this subject Sokalsky (2006).

⁷² Macedonia has a population of about 2 million people, the majority of which is Slavic; the ethnic Albanian minority is considered to account for a quarter of the whole population. This figure, taken from the 1994 census, is contested by some Albanians who claim that the Albanian Ethnic minority accounts for a greater proportion of Macedonian population (Sokalski 2006; Gaber and Joveska 2004).

⁷³ According to the UNCHR (2000), Kosovo refugees in Macedonia were 344,500.

infrastructure support and no massive international assistance (Liotta and Jebb 2002a; Liotta 2000). In 2000, while granting the candidate status to other countries with no better political (Cyprus) or economic (Romania) conditions, the EU decided to delay Macedonia's application for membership, associating it with the Balkan group.

In early 2001, accumulated tensions erupted in a violent conflict among ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians.⁷⁴ In January, a Macedonian police station was attacked by an organization calling itself the National Liberation Army, which claimed to be fighting for the rights of ethnic Albanians of Macedonia. At the beginning of March violence erupted in Tetovo, the second largest city in Macedonia, which had a majority of ethnic Albanians. The government reacted by arguing that disorders were the result of an aggression led from Kosovo and by denying that the rebels enjoy the support of most Albanians in Macedonia. Even though there is no compelling evidence on the connection between the NLA and foreign forces,⁷⁵ commentators investigating the causes of this conflict identify two elements supporting this thesis. First, in spring 1999 China had vetoed the renewal of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), which had been monitoring the border between Serbia and Macedonia since the early 1990s.⁷⁶ The departure of UN soldiers is believed to have increased the porosity of the border, favouring the transit of rebels and possibly arms from Kosovo to Macedonia. Second, starting from 2000 disorders and ethnic tensions had persisted in Macedonia's neighbouring area of Preševo Valley, in Southern Serbia. Disorders were caused by the action of the Liberation Army of Preševo, Medveđa, and Bujanovac (UCPMB), a movement modelled on the Kosovo Liberation Army that sought to unify the three municipalities with Kosovo.⁷⁷ According to some commentators (Preschern 2008: 78), Albanian rebels coming from this region may have joined the NLA as they left

⁷⁴ For a detailed account of the events of 2001 see Schneckener (2002). For an examination of the causes of the conflict: Perry (2002), Matthiesen (2004), Chivvis (2008).

⁷⁵ For some commentators NLA's claims were made to gain the support of Albanians of Macedonia and were widely taken from the political agenda of existing Albanian parties in the country (Liotta and Jebb 2002a). On the role and composition of NLA and alleged connections with the Kosovo Liberation Army see Perry (2001) and International Crisis Group (2001b).

⁷⁶ The Chinese veto has been considered retaliation for Macedonia's recognition of Taiwan. On this issue see Sokalski (2006) and Rumiz (2004).

⁷⁷ According to the Serbian authorities, in the period between June 1999 and November 2000 the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac, and Medvedja received almost 300 terrorist attacks and incursions from the rebels. Milo Gligorijevic, (2001), *Serbia After Milosevic: Program for Solution of the Crisis in the Pčinla District*, Liber-Press, Belgrade. Cited by Sokalski (2006).

southern Serbia, due to the readmission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) army in this region in spring 2001.⁷⁸

After the eruption of the first disorders in January, the crisis escalated in the following months. In March, the government decided to give rebels a 24-hour deadline to lay down their arms and/or leave the country. After few days, the troops of the army of Macedonia entered into the villages over which the NLA had taken control. Although successful, this campaign did not solve the political causes of the crisis, which concerned the position of ethnic Albanians in the country. Arben Xhafery, the leader of the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) threatened to quit the governing coalition if ethnic Albanians' demands were not met.

Following several weeks of calm, clashes resumed in early April. NLA militants moved their front from the north-west to the east, taking control of villages close to the border between Serbia and Macedonia. The rebellion triggered a reaction by ethnic Macedonians, leading to the destruction of thousands of houses and properties of ethnic Albanians in the south western city of Bitola. The government reacted by bombing villages over which the NLA had taken control.

It was at this time that the international community initiated its first concrete attempts to mediate a political solution to the crisis. The Macedonian government addressed its requests to NATO, which was in control of the border between Kosovo and Macedonia and was responsible for readmitting the FRY army in Southern Serbia. The organization, however, reacted indecisively. The US administration, in particular, was against a major involvement in the country and, together with other NATO Members, rejected the proposal to redeploy troops they were withdrawing from Bosnia-Herzegovina in Kosovo.⁷⁹ Also due to this void left by the US and NATO, the EU took the lead in the efforts of the international community and in May convinced political leaders in Skopje to create a national unity government.⁸⁰ The

⁷⁸ The FRY army had left the area in spring 1999 due to the agreement with Nato on the creation of a three-mile "Ground Safety Zone" (GSZ) along the border between Kosovo and Serbia. Following this agreement, attacks were carried out by UCPMB in the area exploiting virtual impunity and impossibility of any retaliation from the Yugoslav Army. In order to sedate the rebellion, starting from March 2001 the FRY Army was gradually readmitted in the area. See NATO (2001a).

⁷⁹ Financial Times, (2001f; 2001d; 2001c).

⁸⁰ The government included the Macedonian nationalist party Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization- Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) and the DPA which had been in government since 1998, plus the opposition parties: the Social Democrats (SDSM) and the PDP, which is the main rival of DPA for the support of Albanians.

government was established in order to encourage a negotiation among ethnic Albanian and Macedonian parties over the introduction of reforms which could pave the way for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. A compromise on the issue, however, was no within reach. Indeed, the PDP joined the government reluctantly after asking unsuccessfully the suspension of the military campaign and threaded to quit it if progress not was made before mid-June. The coalition's survival, moreover, was endangered by the mediation attempt of Robert Frowick, Special Envoy of the Chairman in office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which resulted in a joint declaration between the NLA and the leaders of ethnic Albanian political parties. The declaration threatened the credibility of the government as ethnic Macedonian political parties continued to reject any dialogue with the NLA. This position was supported by the EU and NATO, which continued to back the government's official line of no dialogue with the rebels.⁸¹

Given the deterioration of the situation, at the beginning of June Prime Minister Georgievski threatened to seek a parliamentary declaration of a state of war. A few days later the NLA entered in Aracinovo, only ten kilometres from the capital Skopje, scoring a significant psychological victory as the fight was brought within few kilometres from the capital. International mediators from NATO and the EU intervened to negotiate the evacuation of NLA fighters from Arcinovo. Ethnic Macedonians were frustrated by this episode and saw it as a betrayal and humiliation.

Following the Aracinovo episode, the international community realised it needed a stronger and more stable presence on the ground. In order to have this presence, the EU appointed the former French Minister of Defence François Leotard as Special Representative for Macedonia. On 29 June also the Bush administration "swallowed its reluctance to accept new commitments in the Balkans" (International Crisis Group 2001a) and appointed James Pardew as US envoy. In the following month, the two envoys acted as a joint mediation team to find a political solution to the crisis, exerting coordinated economic and political pressures on the parties involved. While the EU could offer the Macedonian government economic aid and

⁸¹ Following Frowick's attempt, the US Embassy said that Washington "rejects any kind of attempt to bring the so-called NLA into the negotiation process". A similar statement was issued by the EU (Phillips 2004: 119). Other sources, however, report a more positive stance by NATO (International Crisis Group 2001b).

the prospect for membership, the influence of the US was based on the protection offered to Albanians in Kosovo and on Macedonia's desire to become member of NATO. US participation, moreover, was fundamental for guaranteeing NATO's offer to deploy a mission for the disarmament of the NLA inside Macedonia (Financial Times 2001b).

A few weeks after their arrival in Skopje, Leotard and Pardew presented the Macedonian government with a document prepared in cooperation with the French jurist Robert Badinter and addressing all the most divisive issues on the table.⁸² On the basis of this text, negotiations resumed between the four main political parties of the country. At the end of July negotiations were moved to the town of Ohrid. Under the pressure of the international community and of the EU, the representative of ethnic Albanian and Macedonian political parties found a compromise on all the main issues under negotiations. On the 13th of August an agreement was signed at the presence of the two envoys, HR Solana, NATO Secretary General Robertson, and OSCE Chairman in Office Mircea Geoana.⁸³ The Agreement foresaw a significant improvement of the status of ethnic minorities in Macedonia. Among other things, it provided for the usage of the Albanian language as official language in municipalities where Albanians comprised at least 20% of the population; the proportional representation of ethnic minorities in the public administration, including police; amendments to the preamble of existing Macedonia's constitution. Following the Agreement, the leader of the NLA accepted the disarmament and disbandment plan of NATO,⁸⁴ and welcomed an amnesty offer by President Trajkovski.

⁸² This proposal is known as the Framework Document. Most of its provisions were incorporated in the final agreement.

⁸³ The full text of the Ohrid Framework Agreement can be found at the web site of the Council of Europe: http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal_affairs/legal_co-operation/police_and_internal_security/OHRID%20Agreement%2013august2001.asp. Besides the signatures of the four main political parties of Macedonia, the document bears the signatures of Francois Leotard and James Pardew as guarantors.

⁸⁴ At the end of August NATO deployed the operation Essential Harvest, which was aimed to disarm rebels of NLA. Essential Harvest was followed by the operations Amber Fox, aimed to guarantee the protection of international monitors overseeing the implementation of the peace plan, and operation Allied Harmony, meant to advise and assist the host nation authorities with the normalization process. In April 2003 the EU replaced NATO by deploying the military operation Concordia. Subsequently, this operation was replaced by the police mission Proxima, aimed to monitoring, mentoring and advising the country's police, and later on by a smaller police advisory team (EUPAT).

January

22: the police station of Tearce is attacked by rocket grenade

February

16: a three-person crew from an independent television station is captured in Tanusevci

28 February: first state visit between Macedonia and Serbia; the two countries reach an agreement on the demarcation of the joint border

March

5: after clashes in the bordering area, the Macedonian government closes the border with Kosovo

8: NATO decides to let Serbian forces to enter parts of the buffer safety zone between Serbia and Kosovo close to the border with Macedonia

12: Preševo ceasefire agreement

13: the NLA spreads the fighting to Tetovo

19: western news agencies report a list of political demands by the NLA rebels

20: the Ethnic Albanian political parties of Macedonia sign a declaration condemning the use of violence and supporting a political dialogue

21: Macedonia's government gives rebels an ultimatum to disarm and/or leave the country

25: the government launches a military campaign in the areas of the country taken over by the rebels. Shortly after, the UN passes the resolution 1354 expressing unanimous support for Macedonia's democratically elected and multiethnic coalition

29: the Army of the Republic of Macedonia declares the military campaign was ended successfully

April

2: Macedonia President Trajkovski convenes a meeting of representatives of all of Macedonia's political parties to address inter-ethnic issues. The NLA is excluded from these negotiations

29: killing of 8 Macedonian soldiers near Tetovo

May

11: the four main parties represented in Macedonia's Parliament (the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia, the Democratic Party of Albanians, the Party for Democratic Prosperity, and the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) form a national unity government

22: the leaders of the two Albanian parties (DPA and PDP) sign a joint declaration of support with NLA. Allegedly, the declaration is mediated by Robert Frowick, Special Envoy of the Chairman in office of the organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

June

6: anti-Albanian riots in Bitola

6: The Prime Minister Georgievski threatens to seek a parliamentary declaration of a State of War

9: NLA takes control of the village of Aracinovo, few kilometres from Skopje

11: a ceasefire is agreed with rebels in Aracinovo so that humanitarian assistance can be delivered to people in the trapped villages

<p>14: President Trajkovski formally requests NATO to send forces for monitoring the disarming of Albanian extremists</p> <p>22: the Macedonian army launches an offensive to recapture Aracinovo</p> <p>25: NATO steps in to solve the Arcinovo issue and supervise the evacuation of NLA from the occupied villages</p> <p>25: following the evacuation of Aracinovo, crowds gather in front of the Pparliament protesting against Albanians and asking for the resignation of the President</p> <p>25: the EU appoints the Special Representative Leotard</p> <p>27: NATO agrees to send a mission to supervise the disarming of ethnic Albanian rebels</p> <p>29: the Bush Administration appoints Pardew as new US envoy to Macedonia</p> <p>July</p> <p>5: NATO mediates a ceasefire between insurgents and government forces</p> <p>7: EU Special Representative Leotard and US Envoy Pardew present a Framework Document, containing a mediation proposal to the four principal parties in the unity government</p> <p>22: escalation of the conflict</p> <p>24: NATO officials negotiate with Ali Ahmeti a new ceasefire with NLA</p> <p>26: ceasefire</p> <p>26: NATO Secretary General Robertson and HR Solana are in Macedonia. Negotiations on national reforms are moved out of Skopje, in Ohrid</p> <p>August</p> <p>5 August: HR Solana arrives in Ohrid</p> <p>13 August: the Ohrid Agreement is signed</p> <p>27 august: NATO operation Essential Harvest begins collecting weapons in Macedonia</p>
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Table 4. Chronology of the 2001 Macedonia crisis.

The mediating role of the High Representative: from policy implementation to policy formulation

During the Macedonia crisis, the EU displayed a proactive and timely reaction which permitted it to acquire an unprecedented leading role in the international arena. Certainly, this outcome was favoured by the reticence of the US to take the lead in the crisis, thus leaving a diplomatic void which was filled by the EU. At the same time,

however, it was strongly influenced by the proactive role displayed by the HR in EU decision-making (Stahl 2011). Since the beginning of his first mandate, indeed, HR Solana took an active role in the debate about EU foreign policy. As the Macedonia crisis erupted, moreover, Solana immediately saw in it an opportunity to project EU political power in the international arena and committed time and energies to its resolution. Thanks also to this commitment, Solana extended the HR's intervention to all phases of policy-making, from ideas to policy formulation and policy implementation. For this reason, this crisis provides one of the best examples of the positive contribution of the HR to EU foreign policy and, according to the definition adopted in this study, one in which the HR played the role of policy entrepreneur. The following section elaborates this argument by presenting the HR's contribution to the three tasks performed by policy entrepreneur (according to the definition adopted in this study, see Ch. 3)

The HR and ideas formulation: the Balkans as a priority for EU foreign policy

Even though the Amsterdam Treaty established the HR as a merely executive institution, since their appointment in 1999, Solana and his "milieu" (Kurowska 2009) contributed to the development of EU foreign policy "not only through management coordination, but also via conceptual engineering and agenda management".⁸⁵ In his public interventions, HR Solana constantly stressed the need for the EU to develop an autonomous capacity "to respond effectively to events world-wide" and justified this need on the basis of existing domestic and international pressures (Solana 2000c). In Solana's opinion, EU citizens' expectations of a more proactive response to external challenges could not be discharged any longer.⁸⁶ Even if international crises do not put EU's survival at stake, moreover, as "Europe is above all a community built on a set of principles and a set of values [...] [it] must be intransigent when these fundamental values and principles are under threat" (Solana 2000a). At the international level, according to Solana, the disintegration of the Soviet Union confronted Europe with a range of new risks for its stability that fall

⁸⁵ In this regard see also Algieri (2011).

⁸⁶ "we must react the sincere concern felt by Europe's public at the crises, humanitarian tragedies and conflicts which they see on a daily basis on their television screens or through the Internet" (Solana 2000d).

short of threatening its very existence, but renders necessary a prompt reaction (Solana 2000a). This EU shared responsibility is prompted even more by the enlargement to ten new countries of central eastern and southern Europe.⁸⁷

Starting from these observations, HR Solana argued that the EU can no longer limit its relations with the rest of the world to the economic and commercial fields, but need to extend them to the political sphere (Solana 2000d). Also to this purpose, during his two mandates, HR Solana dedicated significant efforts to the development of EU's hard power, or what Kurowska (2009) calls a "militarised civilian power". Yet, the development of military and civilian crisis management capacities was never, for HR Solana, a goal per se, nor was it his only goal. Solana believed that EU international role had to be built from experience rather than prescriptive action, or as a consequence of events rather than in view of them.⁸⁸ As a consequence, during his two terms in office Solana spent most of his energies dealing with current issues and controversial foreign policy challenges.⁸⁹

At the beginning of Solana's first mandate, in particular, the situation in Western Balkans and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict became the main priorities of the HR's agenda (Gallach 2011). To a certain extent, this priority was a consequence of events, such as the eruption of the Macedonia crisis in early 2001, or the decision of President Chirac to send Solana to the 2000 Summit on the Middle-East in Sharm el Sheik on the Middle East (which paved the way for the HR's participation in the Mitchell Commission). It would be a mistake, however, to consider the HR's special commitment to these areas as a mere accident. In fact, it is a consequence of a precise vision that HR Solana always supported in his public interventions. Since his appointment in 1999, indeed, HR Solana had kept highlighting the need for the EU to bring a more solid contribution to security in the two regions (Solana 2000c). In his speeches, for example, he argued that only "long-term stability in the Balkans" can bring "greater security and prosperity for Europe as a whole", and that Europe "not

⁸⁷ According to HR Solana, "an enlarged Union will itself bring greater influence in the world" (Solana 2000c).

⁸⁸ According to Solana the EU had to avoid falling into the trap of overly concentrating on the institutional arrangements at the expense of substance (Solana 2000a). See also Kurowska (2009) and Gallach (2011).

⁸⁹ By contrast, Solana spent little time and energies dealing with the Council's Secretariat internal issues, gaining a reputation of "man of policy and not a manager, or man of institutions". Interview with an EU Council official, November 2009. See also Gallach (2011).

only has a fundamental interest in bringing peace, stability and prosperity to the Balkans but [...] it is in a unique position to do so” (Solana 2000b). In line with these arguments, Solana made his first visit abroad as HR to the Balkans (Kosovo). In conclusion, therefore, HR certainly contributed to the political debate and the elaboration of new ideas concerning EU policies towards Macedonia.

The HR in Macedonia: transforming ideas into policy proposals and implementing them

Having identified security and stability in Western Balkans as a main priority of EU foreign policy, HR Solana played a crucial role in shaping concrete policy proposals to this purpose as well as in implementing EU policies,.

Even though recognising that the Stabilisation and Association Process (managed by the European Commission) was the EU core policy towards the region, Solana warned about the limitations of this policy, and of the fact that it could not avoid the emergence of further crises in the short term (Solana 2000e). Moreover, when the Macedonian crisis erupted, HR Solana viewed in it an opportunity to build EU crisis management capabilities and made it a top priority in his agenda. During the first months of the crisis, the HR was invited by the European Council to monitor the situation in the region (European Council 2000). In this phase, Solana travelled to Skopje in what has often been labelled ‘shuttle diplomacy’. Thanks to the time and energies devoted to this crisis, Solana proved that the HR was the institution best suited to represent the interests of the EU in the region as it could guarantee a continuous presence on the ground, something that the Presidency could hardly do due its commitments at the national and international level.

In line with its mandate, during the initial phases of the conflict the HR focused on the implementation of the policy lines identified by EU Member States:

- Support for the government and condemnation of rebels (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001b)
- Inviolability of the Macedonian border (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001b)
- Refuse for the use of violence and support for a political solution (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001b)

Along these lines, Solana urged “all ethnic Albanian political leaders in the region [...] to clearly distance themselves from these acts of violence, to isolate these extremists and to express support for the respect of the border demarcation agreement recently signed between Belgrade and Skopje” (Solana 2001b). Similarly, he confirmed “the full support of the European Union to the Government” and asked Macedonians “to address urgently the root causes of legitimate grievance, through political and democratic mechanisms” (Solana 2001c).

To help stabilise the situation, few weeks after the eruption of the crisis, in February 2001, HR Solana endorsed an increase in the number of EU monitors in the Preševo Valley. The monitors were supposed to enhance the control on the bordering region from which the Macedonian government deemed most rebels were introduced in the country.

Subsequently, in March, the HR urged the launch of a political dialogue between ethnic Macedonian and Albanian political parties (European Voice 2001). To this goal, following a meeting of the EU troika with the Macedonian Foreign Minister in mid March, Solana initiated an intense diplomatic activity. On the one hand, he tried to convince ethnic Albanian political parties to detach themselves from the rebels. Following his efforts, the leaders of ethnic Albanian parties of Macedonia and Kosovo signed declarations condemning violence and supporting a political dialogue.⁹⁰ On the other hand (in coordination with External Relations Commissioner Patten) Solana used his diplomatic skills and the economic leverage given by the EU to convince the Macedonian government to open a political dialogue with representatives of ethnic Albanians in Parliament. The dialogue was aimed to the introduction of reforms in favour of the Albanian minority, something that in Skopje was regarded as surrender to the NLA. Thanks to these efforts, the EU managed to establish roundtable talks with all parties represented in Macedonia’s parliament—including the two main ethnic Albanian parties—under the auspices of the President Trajkovski (Financial Times 2001e).

⁹⁰ Declaration of the Albanian Parties of Macedonia, 20 March 2001, and Declaration by Kosovo Leaders, 23 March 2001. Following the pressure of the international community, the Albanian DPA was convinced to remain in the government coalition (which it threatened to quit) and the Albanian opposition party PDP no longer boycotted parliamentary sessions.

As already mentioned, the political dialogue did not succeed immediately. Yet, thanks to the intense diplomatic activity he had performed at the beginning of the crisis, when violence escalated by HR Solana managed to convince the Presidency to let the HR represent the interests of the EU. Accordingly, since April the HR further intensified its presence in the region, by acting in close coordination with NATO Secretary General Robertson. In this phase HR Solana gained himself the reputation of a good diplomat and an extremely able negotiator (Phillips 2004: 117). In May, in particular, Solana persuaded all ethnic Albanian political parties to create a government of national unity (Schneckener 2002: 30; Popetrevski and Latifi 2004: 30). Subsequently, at the beginning of June, in coordination with the Swedish EU Presidency, he helped dissuade the Macedonian President from declaring a state of war, which would probably have put an end to the political dialogue.⁹¹ Through all these efforts Solana gave a fundamental contribution to the implementation of the policy lines identified by Member States, in support of the Macedonian government and against the use of force from the NLA.

With the escalation of the crisis and especially after the Aracinovo episode, however, it became clear that the internal dialogue launched by the EU could not succeed without the constant presence in Skopje of a team of negotiators.⁹² As for the EU, in particular, a full-time special envoy was felt to be necessary to carry out similar work to that of Pieter Feith (Personal Representative of NATO's Secretary General) in the Preševo Valley crisis. To this purpose, EU Member States appointed the French François Leotard EU Special Representative in the country (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001a). Being detached from the Commission and attached to the HR, Leotard's mandate was to implement the decisions of Member States. The appointment of Leotard was soon followed by that of the US Special Envoy James Pardew. A closer involvement of the US seemed necessary, in particular, to exert stronger leverage on Albanian political parties.

When the team of negotiators arrived in Skopje, it injected new hope and energy for a negotiated solution. The international mediators no longer left the negotiation process to the parties, but tabled their own proposal addressing the main

⁹¹ Interview with a national diplomat, July 2010.

⁹² According to EU officials, "a more hands-on approach" was needed as "the minute Solana turns his back the government reverts to infighting and foot-dragging" (Financial Times 2001g).

issues under debate: the recognition and usage of the Albanian language; the increase of ethnic Albanian police; the introduction of parliamentary guarantee in order to avoid minorities to be outvoted; and changes in the constitution (Schneckener 2002). Subsequent negotiations held in Skopje and in Ohrid started from the document proposed by this team.

The appointment of Leotard marked a shift in the policy of the EU. So far, EU negotiators had always refused to open a dialogue with NLA, recognising as their legitimate interlocutors only Albanian political parties represented in parliament. The only contacts between NLA and the international community had occurred informally, between NATO's Special Representative to Macedonia Hans-Joerg Eiff and Ahmeti (the NLA leader) to obtain a decrease in the violence (Ackermann 2001: 73). The proposal for a dialogue previously formulated by Robert Frowick, moreover, had failed because of the indecisiveness of the international community. While NATO's approach in this regard had remained more open, the EU had strongly opposed direct negotiations with the NLA (International Crisis Group 2001b).

The Aracinovo crisis, however, had rendered evident the need for opening a communication channel with the rebels.⁹³ Since they reached Skopje, therefore, Special Representative Leotard and his team reversed the stance held by the EU until that moment and endorsed an indirect dialogue with the NLA.⁹⁴ On the basis of this new position, informal contacts were opened between NLA and Pieter Feith (Personal Representative of NATO's Secretary General), supported by the Austrian diplomat Stephan Lehne, member of the EU Policy Unit (Phillips 2004: 122).⁹⁵ Once negotiations were opened, moreover, NLA leader Ahmeti remained in constant touch with the Albanian political parties (Schneckener 2002: 34; Popetrevski and Latifi 2004: 31). Besides the proposal on the merit of reforms tabled by the two envoys, this U turn in the policy of the EU realised by Leotard and his team renders evident how,

⁹³ The departure of rebels from Aracinovo was negotiated by Pieter Feith (Personal Representative of NATO's Secretary General). Other scholars attribute the decision to negotiate with NLA on the Aracinovo issue to Solana and identify in this first move the decision to reverse the previous EU policy not to communicate with NLA (Phillips 2004: 120).

⁹⁴ Interview with a national diplomat (July 2010). This U turn in the EU policy is highlighted by Phillips (2004: 120) who writes that, after rejecting the Frowick proposal: "only a few weeks on, NATO would effectively follow Frowick's example by seeking NLA approval for a last-ditch peace plan."

⁹⁵ The two had already worked together in the informal mediation of a resolution for the Preševo Valley crisis.

starting from its implementation powers, the office of the HR gained room for manoeuvre and was able to formulate autonomous policy proposals.⁹⁶ Thanks to the support of the EU, the team of negotiators managed to convince NATO Secretary General Roberston and the Macedonian government (which so far had been adamantly opposed to any dialogue with the rebels) of their new line.

Last but not least, the arrival in Skopje of the two envoys was accompanied by the readiness, expressed by NATO, to a stronger involvement in the country. Despite the initial reluctance of the US and other Member States, NATO agreed to deploy a military contingent in Macedonia on the basis of an invitation of the Macedonian President, in order to implement the peace agreement and to disarm rebels.⁹⁷ Thanks to all these elements and the coordinated pressure of the international community, an agreement between the main Albanian and Macedonian political parties was signed in Ohrid only few weeks after Leotard and Pardew's arrival in Skopje.

Conclusion

According to the definition adopted by this study, policy entrepreneur are those political actors that are able to introduce innovative ideas, translate them into policy proposals, and implement them (Chapter 3). In this section we have seen how, since its creation, the HR has helped shape an idea of the EU as a political, not only economic international actor, able to take more responsibilities for regional security. When the Macedonian crisis exploded, HR Solana used his role to transform these ideas into concrete actions and to push for the EU's intervention in the conflict. During subsequent negotiations, moreover, HR's depending entities presented key policy proposals that became the policy of the EU. For this reason, this crisis can certainly be considered as an example of policy dossiers in which the HR played the key role of policy entrepreneur.

⁹⁶ Interview with a national diplomat, July 2010.

⁹⁷ See Financial Times (2001b; 2001h).

The EU coordinated response: in the wake of the Balkan wars

Previous sections have shown that during the Macedonian crisis EU Member States displayed a coordinated and proactive response, something that had not occurred during the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts of the 1990s. Even though the contribution of the newly appointed HR had certainly a major role in this outcome, one cannot disregard the fact that the EU faced the Macedonia crisis in a different political context.

The analysis of EU discourses and policies, indeed, reveals that, in the aftermath of the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts, EU national leaders had developed a new perception of security threats not only as issues of territorial integrity—as foreseen in traditional security doctrines—but also as violations of EU principles and values. The two wars, moreover, had pushed EU leaders to develop a new sense of responsibility towards this kind of emerging threat, especially when it originated from their neighbourhood. Finally, national leaders had started considering the EU as the political entity best suited to face this responsibility.

Accordingly, when violence erupted in Macedonia EU Member States adopted behaviour in line with the norms and culture as developed during the previous Balkan conflicts. First, they defined the crisis as a security threat.⁹⁸ Second, they recognised that the EU should take on the responsibility to deal with the issue. Third, they rejected the use of force and opted for a mediated political solution. The continuity between these positions and norms constituting Member States' ideational background are represented in Table 5.

Even though it is not possible to verify the existence of a causal link between culture and behaviour, understanding the security culture emerged in the aftermath of the Kosovo and Bosnia helps understand how EU's leadership, and the empowerment of the HR in the Macedonia crisis were possible. The perception of a shared threat, and the sense of common belonging generated by common norms, indeed, constituted a positive context which let supranational vs intergovernmental dynamics prevail within EU institutions. This argument is developed here as follows. The first section

⁹⁸ In light of the long tradition of peaceful coexistence of ethnic minorities in Macedonia, unlike the Kosovo crisis the Macedonia crisis did not represent a threat to the human rights of the population, but rather to its enduring peace and peaceful coexistence.

Type of norm	Aim	Prescribed behaviour by EU norms	Observed behaviour during the Macedonia crisis
Security threat identification	Identifying international security threats	Menaces not only to territorial integrity but also to funding values have to be considered as security threats	The Macedonian crisis is considered a threat to the EU
Interaction norms	Defining appropriate arenas and modes for cooperation in international relations	European countries need to take on greater responsibilities for emerging threats	EU Member States intervene in the Macedonian crisis
Instrumental norms	Identifying the appropriate instruments to respond to external threats	Even though the use of force in international relations is to be rejected, it can be accepted for humanitarian reasons	Use of force is rejected; all possible efforts are made to find a peaceful solution

Table 5. EU security culture in the resolution of the Macedonian crisis of 2001.

describes the legacy of the Bosnian and Kosovo wars on the three key groups of norms identified in this research as constituting EU security culture: norms on threats identification, international cooperation, and the instruments to be used to face

external threats. Subsequent sections explain how EU policies in the case of Macedonia were in line with these and thus generated a sense of shared belonging.

The Bosnia and Kosovo precedents: shaping a new EU security culture

The Macedonian crisis of 2001 occurred short after the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995) and in Kosovo (1998-1999) had confronted Western European leaders with the new threats emerging from Eastern Europe following the Cold War. The literature on the EU is almost unanimous in considering these two conflicts key turning points in the emergence of a new EU foreign policy identity. The Kosovo war, in particular, has widely been depicted as a decisive catalyst in the development of EU's international security role (Martin 2010; Sheperd 2009).⁹⁹ Together with the Bosnian conflict, the Kosovo conflict has been described as a 'formative moment'¹⁰⁰ of a new common narrative about EU foreign policy (Heiselberg 2003). The two events, in other words, favoured the emergence of new interpretations of the present, which have formed the basis for new prescriptions for the future since then. Accordingly, for the purpose of this study, the Bosnian and Kosovo conflicts are regarded as key moments in the development of a new EU security culture.

First, during the Kosovo and Bosnian wars, EU leaders developed a new extended definition of security threat. For the first time, these two conflicts faced these leaders with the violent ethnic tensions resulted from the difficult political, economic, and social situation of post-Communist Europe. These tensions challenged EU principles of peace, democracy and rule of law. Even though they did not threaten directly the territorial integrity of any Member State, these challenges were soon considered like a security threat. In opposition to doctrines and cultures developed during the Cold War, EU leaders justified and supported a military intervention to deal with them.

⁹⁹ Apart from the literature, this argument is spread in the EU political discourse. According to Elmar Brok, for example, the Kosovo conflict "acted as a catalyst for Europe's consciousness" and "will be considered in the future as a milestone in the history of the EU" (Mauil 2000: 7). For Javier Solana the Kosovo crisis "was a wake-up call for European leaders and European public opinion" (Solana 2000a).

¹⁰⁰ By formative moment we mean a moment in which existing meanings and narratives are contested and new ones emerge. Narratives are the stories that a society tells about itself, that place it in the past and the present, and that form its actual history. Inevitably, they not only affect self perception, but also choices and behaviour.

Evidence of this transformation can be easily found in the political discourses and in choices implemented by EU Member States. In December 1995, just few months after the Srebrenica massacre, Joschka Fischer (not foreign minister at that time) argued in the Bundestag:

We are in a real conflict between basic values. On the one hand, there is the renunciation of force as a vision of a world in which conflicts are resolved rationally, through recourse to laws and majority decisions, through the constitutional process and no longer through brute force; [...]. On the other hand, there is the bloody dilemma that human beings may be able to survive only with the use of military force. Between solidarity for survival and our commitment to non-violence - that is our dilemma.¹⁰¹

In order to address this dilemma, British Prime Minister Tony Blair argued that a “new doctrine of international community” was needed, in which “the principle of non-interference must be qualified in important ways”.¹⁰² On the basis of this new doctrine, the need to protect human rights became a basis for justification of a military intervention in third countries. A few years after the eruption of the Bosnian conflict, this doctrine served as a justification for the support by EU Member States for NATO intervention in Kosovo.¹⁰³ The need to protect human right was used to justify this intervention not only by Member States with a traditionally proactive foreign policy (such as the UK), but also by those countries, such as Germany and Italy, which for historical reasons had always refused (or strongly limited) their military intervention in foreign countries.¹⁰⁴ On the basis of this principle, also neutral Member States (such as Sweden or Austria) took a positive stance towards

¹⁰¹ Joschka Fischer, Speech given in the Bundestag on 6 Dec. 1995, quoted in Harnish and Maull (2001).

¹⁰² Tony Blair, “Doctrine of the International Community”, speech delivered to the Economic Club of Chicago, 22 April 1999, cited by Sheperd (2009: 516).

¹⁰³ The only EU Member State which significantly contested Nato intervention in Kosovo was Greece.

¹⁰⁴ The importance of this change for Germany and Italy’s foreign policy is highlighted by the debate about the constitutional legitimacy of the deployment of armed forces in Bosnia (Germany) and the contribution to the military campaign in Kosovo (Germany and Italy). With reference to Germany in particular, there has been a debate on whether the Kosovo war represented a turning point in Germany’s post Cold War foreign policy or only consummated it (Maull 2000; Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2006; Duffield 1999; Overhaus 2004).

NATO intervention, de facto drifting away from the traditional conception of neutrality.¹⁰⁵

Second, the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts shaped a new sense of shared responsibility of EU leaders in front of the new emerging threats. In light of the dramatic consequences of their divisions on the Bosnian conflict, in particular, European leaders became more aware of the need for a *coordinated* response to crises emerging in EU's neighbourhood. Accordingly, the EU's Security Strategy adopted in 2003 asserts, for example, that "no single country is able to tackle today's complex problems on its own" (European Council 2003c).¹⁰⁶ The frustration provoked by the inability to support their diplomatic efforts with enforcing actions in Kosovo, moreover, accrued EU leaders' perception of the need for a *European* response to external crises. In line with these two elements, EU Member States developed the understanding that the best way to address their growing responsibilities towards the external environment (especially the neighbourhood) was through a more proactive EU foreign and security policy.

Evidence of these transformations is provided by policies developed at the EU and national level. Following the Bosnian and especially the Kosovo conflict, the EU took on greater responsibilities for stabilisation of its neighbourhood by accelerating its 'soft power' policies in Eastern Europe.¹⁰⁷ In addition, in 1999, EU Member States decided to ease the interpretation of conditionality criteria and accelerate the accession of ten new members from Central and East Europe.¹⁰⁸ Last but not least, the Kosovo conflict is deemed to have opened the way to the launch of the European

¹⁰⁵ Heiselberg (2003) notes that Swedish leaders adopted an ambiguous discourse vis-à-vis the Kosovo crisis. While on the one hand they continued to proclaim formal adherence to neutrality, on the other hand they depicted the Kosovo crisis as the example that peace in Europe could not be maintained without a stronger EU (and Swedish) intervention, de facto drifting away from neutrality.

¹⁰⁶ More generally, Giegerich (2006: 53) has argued that the need for a coordinated reaction was prompted by the new features of emerging threats. The asymmetry, anonymity, deterritorialisation and connectedness of post- Cold War threats, in particular, led all EU Member States to be affected more or less in the same way, favouring a coordination of their responses

¹⁰⁷ This was done through the launch of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) in the Western Balkans (2000). Macedonia was the first country to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (in 2001) under the auspices of this new policy. In the Framework of the SAP, membership was offered as a mean of supplementing post-conflict measures being undertaken by other international actors and by the EU itself (Martin 2010).

¹⁰⁸ While until 1999 the EU applied a rigid conditionality to EU accession, after 1999 the criteria for accession were released allowing for the entrance of 10 Member States in 2004 (Martin, 2010).

Security and Defence Policy (Sheperd 2009).¹⁰⁹ It is not by chance, indeed, that the first commitments undertaken by EU Member States under this policy concerned the creation of conflicts management tools suitable for dealing with crises similar to those of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo.¹¹⁰

The launch of the CSDP, in particular, represented a major evolution in the security doctrine of some Member States. In fact, EU national governments depicted the launch of this policy differently. In France, for example, the launch of the CSDP was described as a way to promote national interests through the European forum. In the UK, the CSDP was presented as an instrument to reinforce the Atlantic Alliance by providing a stronger and more reliable partner to the US. In those Member States refusing the use of force for historical reasons (such as Germany and Italy), or in the neutral Member States (such as Sweden or Austria), national leaders stressed the role of the CSDP for peace and democracy promotion.¹¹¹ It would be misleading, however, to describe the launch of the CSDP only as the consequence of the accidental convergence of different interests, or as a single tool for justification of policies de facto different. Even with the nuances in the national discourses just mentioned, indeed, the launch of the CSDP represented a major, although not dramatic departure from of separated national doctrines towards the convergence around the common principle that a coordinated approach was to be preferred to a national one (Cornish and Edwards 2001).

Third, as already noted by scholars of strategic and security studies (Heiselberg 2003; Howorth 2002; Matlary 2006; Meyer 2006), shared norms emerged in the aftermath of the Bosnian and Kosovo crises concerned the use of soft more

¹⁰⁹ In particular, the Kosovo war has been seen as a main catalyst of Tony Blair's decision to give up UK's long standing veto to a common European defence policy. In Blair's words: "Europe needs to develop the ability to act alone in circumstances where, for whatever reason, the US is not able or does not wish to participate" (Blair 1998b). See also Blair (1998a). For a revision of how the political discourses of EU Member States (in particular: France, United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany) converged in the case of Kosovo (with the important exception of Greece), see also Giegerich (2006) and Harnisch and Stahl (2010).

¹¹⁰ In 1999, EU Member States undertook the commitment to acquire the capability to deploy within 60 days a military contingent of 50,000-60,000 persons and to sustain it for one year. This commitment was clearly modelled on SFOR and KFOR, NATO's operations in the Balkans (Sheperd 2009: 522).

¹¹¹ Heiselberg (2003) has argued that the EU and the CSDP have played an important role in moving Sweden away from its traditional neutrality, which had become a "sacred cow difficult to sacrifice" after the end of the Cold War. Similarly, referring to the Austrian debate, Giegerich (2003) has defined the CSDP as the "permitted alliance", that is the only alliance which render possible for national leaders seeking security in international fora without formally renouncing to neutrality.

than hard power instruments and was limited to the cases of human rights violations. Even though the perception of the need of a more proactive EU foreign and security policy was developed, the attachment to the Cold War values of peace, cooperation, and rule of law of some Member States, as opposed to the assertive stance of other Member States, prevented the EU from developing a shared understanding concerning the use of force in a wide number of issues (Rynning 2003). At the same time, the attachment of other Member States to NATO and the Transatlantic Alliance as main provider of hard security did not allow for the emergence of a common understanding of the EU role in this field. Convergence around a European coordinated approach, therefore, regarded the use of soft rather than hard power and only the promotion of EU values. It is not by chance that following the launch of the CSDP the EU developed its capabilities especially in the soft range of Petersberg Tasks. Despite these limitations, it cannot be denied that the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts changed considerably the approach of national leaders to EU foreign policy. As we will see in the following section, the new culture emerged in their aftermath had a major impact on subsequent choices concerning the Macedonian crisis.

The Macedonia crisis as a security threat

In line with the norms developed in the aftermath of the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts, EU leaders treated the Macedonia crisis as a security threat. These leaders started addressing this crisis in their public intervention as early as February 2001.¹¹² In March 2001, before the crisis reached its peak, the European Council received Macedonia's President Trajkovski and issued a special statement on the crisis. Other statements were issued by NATO and single Member States. Unlike during the Kosovo intervention, EU leaders never mentioned the need to protect Albanians' human rights. Rather, they highlighted the long history of peaceful coexistence among different ethnicities in Macedonia,¹¹³ testified by the presence of Albanian parties in major national institutions. Along with this, and in clear opposition with

¹¹² See for example Council of Ministers of the EU (2001b). For the declarations of Italian leaders RaiNews22 (2011).

¹¹³ According to the Nato Secretary General Lord Robertson, Macedonia "stands out as a successful example of a well-functioning, multi-ethnic society in a region which has for too long suffered from conflicts among different ethnic groups" (NATO 2001b).

their behaviour vis-à-vis the Serbian government during the Kosovo conflict, they highlighted their support for the Macedonian government, condemning the “the ethnic-Albanian extremist attempts to destabilise fYROM and the region” (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001b).

Even though they did not stress this risk in public, EU leaders associated the crisis to the possibility that Albanians of Macedonia connect their requests with those of Albanians of Kosovo, Serbia, and Albania, ultimately pushing for a revision of the political geography of the region.¹¹⁴ Despite this concrete risk, in their public statements EU leaders did not describe the Macedonia crisis as an immediate or direct threat to European security in a traditional sense, which is a threat to national territorial integrity. After all, Macedonia is a small country and the violence occurred in it mostly remained to a low scale. However, the Macedonian crisis was presented as a direct threat to EU founding values. Accordingly, EU leaders stressed that “Political demands should be put forward in a peaceful manner and in accordance with democratic principles” (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001c) and argued that:

What is at stake here is not only Macedonia. What is at stake here is really everything that we have been trying to do in the Balkans: democracy, people living together, inter-ethnic cooperation.¹¹⁵

Similarly, EU leaders rejected the use of violence by the Albanian rebels, which was presented as violating the principles of democracy and human rights for which they stood in Kosovo. National governments, in addition, “condemned the rising number of incidents in fYROM” and “called on all involved to isolate extremists, to promote reconciliation and multi-ethnic co-operation and work constructively towards a peaceful solution of the conflict” (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001b), and stressed their commitment to

¹¹⁴ Indeed, with regard to this crisis EU leaders stressed on many occasion the principle of inviolability of states’ borders. See for example Council of Ministers of the EU (2001b).

¹¹⁵ UN Special Envoy in the Balkans Carl Bildt cited by Johansen (2001). See also Phillips (2004) and Dempsey (2001).

do all that it [they] can to facilitate the resolution of the problems in the region in order to continue to play a constructive role in the international efforts to bring lasting peace, security and stability to the Balkans NATO 2001a).

EU's responsibility to act

In order to avoid the mistakes committed in previous Balkan conflicts, when the Macedonia crisis erupted, the EU assumed a leading role in the resolution of it and became a key player in the mediation of a political agreement. For this reason, the Macedonia crisis has been described as the first case of crisis management in the history of the EU.¹¹⁶ Certainly, the major role played by the EU in this crisis was favoured by the ongoing involvement of EU institutions in the region (the European Commission was finalising the negotiation of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Macedonia¹¹⁷ and the HR was involved in the political dialogue between Serbs and Albanians in the FRY).

These elements alone, however, cannot justify the major role acquired by the EU in brokering a peace agreement between the two parts in conflict. Indeed, in early 2001 EU leaders had various choices at their disposal to deal with the Macedonia crisis. First, EU Member States could decide to commit themselves to the resolution of the crisis or not. As we have seen, however, previous experiences in the Balkans had developed a new culture among EU leaders, allowing for the intervention of the international community to avoid human rights violations. Second, EU leaders could choose to act unilaterally or to coordinate their actions through an international forum. If a coordinated solution was to be preferred, moreover, they could choose to intervene through NATO or the UN. As already mentioned, NATO was present on the ground with the military operations SFOR and KFOR, deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo respectively.¹¹⁸ The UN was in charge of the administration of Kosovo. As already seen, however, the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts had

¹¹⁶ Sahlin (2007), Whyte (2001), La Repubblica (2001), and The Financial Times (2001a).

¹¹⁷ In the first phases of the conflict, the EU Presidency acted in the context of these talks to suggest the opening of a political dialogue between the main (Albanian and Macedonian) political parties represented in parliament.

¹¹⁸ In 2001 there were still 20,000 Nato troops deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina under operation SFOR (down from the original 32,000) and 60,000 deployed in Kosovo under operation KFOR. A huge part of these contingents was provided by EU Member States.

developed a new sense of responsibility among EU leaders, especially vis-à-vis crises emerging in EU's neighbourhood.

Accordingly, when violent tensions emerged in Macedonia, the HR and his team viewed it as an opportunity to test EU's ability to project its political influence in the region. They presented the Macedonia crisis as a threat to the credibility of the whole international community and, particularly of the EU, arguing that the Macedonia crisis puts at stake:

Not only the stability of the Balkans but also the credibility of the EU's emerging security and defence policy. [...] We cannot afford to fail in Macedonia. (Financial Times 2001f).

In light of the new sense of responsibility developed in EU Member States, with these arguments the HR managed to convince the Swedish Presidency to let it represent the interests of the EU and take the lead in the attempts of the international community to find a mediated solution to the Macedonia crisis.

Macedonia as a target for EU soft power

When ethnic tensions erupted in Macedonia, EU Member States unanimously supported a resolution of the crisis based on the maintenance of the existing border, the refusal of use of force, and the dialogue between ethnic Albanians and Macedonians.¹¹⁹

Certainly, the decision to use soft rather than hard power in the resolution of this conflict was prompted by two elements. First, unlike during previous conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s, the NLA uprising in Macedonia did not gain the support of wide parts of the local population (by contrast, various elements suggested the intervention of forces coming from abroad, as seen in the first section). Accordingly, the international community (and EU Member States) interpreted it as an illegitimate uprising against a democratic government. Second, the Macedonian government was not willing to allow KFOR forces deployed in Kosovo to enter the country to sedate the revolt (Financial Times 2001f).

¹¹⁹ The decision to use force in Kosovo, by contrast, was marked by some divisions. Greece, in particular, is the country that most signalled its reticence to support Nato intervention.

In addition, the choice to support the national government and the inviolability of the existing border was in line with traditional norms on sovereignty that were developed much earlier than the 1990s Balkan conflicts, and with the norms developed during these conflicts. The decision to seek a diplomatic solution, in particular, was in line with a general perception of the use of force as an instrument of last resort but reflected also the lack of a common understanding on the use of hard power in the EU. Even though the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts had developed a greater sense of responsibility towards the external threats among EU Member States, considerable divisions still existed on the use of hard power, particularly between Member States favouring a proactive projection of EU's hard power in international relations and those reluctant to accept it (Rynning 2003). Accordingly, during the Macedonia crisis EU Member States found a common agreement on the use of diplomatic tools for the resolution of the conflict.

Conclusion

The EU's intervention in the 2001 Macedonia is often recalled as the first case of EU crisis management policy (Sahlin 2007). Certainly, it also provides an example of a policy dossier in which the HR played a very significant role in EU policy-making. Thanks to Solana's personal skills, and to the continuous presence on the ground of his team, in this crisis the HR not only implemented EU policies lines, but also put forward autonomous policy proposals, which became EU common policies.

At least two elements concurred to this successful outcome: the unwillingness of the US to play a major role in the region; and the advantage of the HR vis-à-vis other institutions (in particular the Presidency) in granting a continuous presence on the ground. As the HR did not play a similar role in other crises where it could have brought a similar added valued, however, this latter element alone does not explain how the HR could achieved it in this specific case.

Accordingly, this chapter has focused on the role of EU security culture in creating a positive context for the involvement of the HR in policy-making. The analysis has shown that the successful intervention of the HR's in EU policy-making took place in a favourable political context. In the aftermath of the 1990s Balkan wars, EU Member States had developed new norms representing the core of an

emerging EU security culture. These norms did not amount only to a generic desire to avoid public diplomacy failures, or to downplay public divisions, but regarded key issues in national security policies, such as the need to adopt a coordinated approach and to take on greater responsibilities especially in their neighbourhood. These norms—especially those concerning the identification of threats and the responsibilities of EU Member States—played a key role in shaping EU’s response to the Macedonia crisis. Even though the literature stresses that after these conflicts important divergences endured as concern the use of hard power, these divergences did not represent an obstacle to the development of a shared approach due to the fact that the NLA never reached the support of wide parts of Macedonia’s population (and thus the use of hard power was never really an option).

In conclusion, even though one cannot say that the security culture generated by the emergence of these shared norms directly ‘caused’ the involvement of the HR in policy processes in a traditional sense, its investigation helps understand how the HR was able to convince EU Member States to let it represent and operationalize the interests of the EU during the Macedonia crisis.

CHAPTER 6

THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE NEGOTIATIONS OVER IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME: FROM BARGAINING CHIP TO MEDIATOR

In August 2002, thanks to revelations by the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), the international community learnt that Iran was secretly developing a nuclear programme. The news was confirmed in February 2003, when Iranian President Khatami officially acknowledged the existence of nuclear facilities in the country and of plans to realize a full fuel production cycle. Despite denial from the Iranian authorities, the fact that this information had been kept secret led many to doubt the Iranians' peaceful intentions and to fear that the programme aimed at constructing nuclear weapons. In turn, this suspicion raised concerns for its implications for non-proliferation and regional security.

In October 2003, the foreign ministers of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom—the E3—launched a diplomatic initiative to convince Iran to stop its plan to develop a full production cycle. In autumn 2004, they associated to the talks the HR, a move which brought their initiative within the EU institutional framework. Subsequently, in 2006, the E3/EU further evolved into the E3+3, following the association of China, Russia, and the US and the appointment of the HR as chief negotiator. For some time, the lack of substantial public divisions among EU Member States led many to consider this initiative as EU foreign policy success, especially in comparison with the public diplomacy failure just occurred on the eve of the US-led military intervention in Iraq. This success was often associated to the involvement of the HR in the talks.

In fact, despite being identified as a major success of the HR, the Iranian dossier did not expand significantly the powers and prerogatives of this institution. The involvement of the HR into the negotiations was aimed to guarantee the E3 initiative with the support of the rest of the EU (Sauer 2008: 276). Even though HR Solana devoted to these negotiations significant time and resources, he did not extend his role to all phases of policy-making. In particular, even though he was involved in the implementation of EU policies, and acted as a term of reference for all Member States, his policy proposals always remained subordinated to those of the E3. Accordingly, even though bringing an important contribution to EU's coherence and visibility, the HR did so by playing more the role of mediator or of bargaining chip among Member States, than that of policy entrepreneur played in other policy dossiers.

Moreover, during negotiations with Iran, even though EU Member States had a shared perception of the importance of nuclear proliferation as a security threat, they displayed different positions on how to respond to it. Behind the closed doors of diplomacy, in particular, national leaders disagreed on the role of international fora and on the preconditions for negotiations. The analysis of discourses, security documents, and policies adopted by national leaders shows that these divergences reflected a lack of common norms on the role of international cooperation vis-à-vis nuclear proliferation.

In order to substantiate these arguments, this Chapter proceeds as follows. The first section illustrates the events which led to the discovery of Iran's nuclear programme and to the launch of negotiations. As this study focuses on the role of the HR, this section considers only events which took place while this institution was in place (from 1999 to 2009). The second section illustrates the role of the HR in the negotiation process. It argues that the involvement of the HR into negotiations was aimed to guarantee the E3 initiative with the support of the rest of the EU. The HR's participation in negotiations enhanced EU cohesion by allowing into the talks the interests of all Member States, and by enhancing the visibility of the EU. Unlike the case of Macedonia, however, the HR avoided formulating explicit policy proposals on key divisive issues and hardly translated them into policies. The final section analyses norms and cultures that shaped the response of EU leaders to the discovery of Iran's programme. This section argues that,

like the EU's intervention in Macedonia (triggered by the lessons learned during the Bosnian and Kosovo conflicts), EU's reaction to the discovery of Iran's nuclear programme was triggered by the desire to avoid the repetition of a previous crisis (the public diplomacy failure on the 2003 Iraq war). Unlike the Bosnian and Kosovo conflicts, however, the 2003 Iraq war did not enhance the development of common interaction norms among EU leaders (and thus, of a shared culture) on how to deal with nuclear proliferation. Accordingly, as negotiations with Iran started, EU Member States showed important cleavages on the appropriate forum for the adoption of sanctions against Iran and the preconditions for negotiations over a long term agreement.

The E3/EU initiative: an alternative to the US?

In August 2002 the NCRI, an Iranian exile group, claimed that the Iranian government had built new nuclear related-facilities near Natanz and in Arak, which had failed to reveal to the international community. After denying it at first, during a visit of the IAEA Director General El-Baradei in Iran in February 2003 the Iranian government admitted it was building two facilities for the uranium enrichment (IAEA 2003b). Further investigations concluded that Iran had failed to provide adequate information about these plans, in violation of the obligations undertaken under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).¹²⁰ This violation generated fear in the international community that Iran aimed to build nuclear weapons in explicit breach to the NPT.¹²¹ This suspicion was generated not only by the fact that Iran had hidden its programme but also by the lack of convincing evidence supporting the Iranian claim that the programme was aimed to power production (Fitzpatrick 2006). The development of nuclear weapons, moreover, was considered in line with Iran's security concerns and its long standing ambition to be recognised as a regional power (Takeyh 2006: 21; Harnisch 2007b: 9).

¹²⁰ Iran was considered in violation of the clauses of the Safeguards Agreement to the NPT requiring it to provide IAEA with information "concerning nuclear material subject to safeguards under the Agreement and the features of facilities relevant to safeguarding such material." See IAEA (2003b; 2003a).

¹²¹ See for example Fisher (2006).

The finding of Iran's nuclear programme in 2002 generated different reactions. The US had suspended its diplomatic relations with Iran in 1979 and was not ready to resume them. Top levels of the US administration did not rule out a military intervention against the country if the nuclear programme was not stopped (U.S. 2002).¹²² China and Russia, by contrast, were opposed to any move against Iran and were cooperating with it on nuclear technology. The EU, finally, had recently upgraded its relations with Iran and many of its Member States had good economic and diplomatic relations with the country.

In the spring of 2003 the E3 started to discuss how to deal with the Iranian issue,¹²³ with the aim of both preventing Iran from acquiring the feared capability to produce nuclear weapons and restoring the credibility of EU foreign policy. A few months earlier, US' unilateral decision to intervene against Iraq had generated deep public divisions among EU Member States, culminated in the publication of an article in support of the US move by the heads of state and government of eight Member States (Aznar et al. 2003). As the Iranian issue was gaining momentum, therefore, the foreign ministers of the E3 were keen to prevent a possible US unilateral move from generating new divergences among them and within the EU. To this purpose, the adoption of a proactive rather than a reactive attitude appeared the best approach. Accordingly, during the summer of 2003, representatives of the E3 established contacts with the Iranian counterparts on the possibility of negotiations over a long term agreement. Italy, which was at the time at the Presidency of the EU and had strong economic and diplomatic relations with Iran, did not show interest in the talks.¹²⁴ In October 2003, a first accord was reached on the launch of these negotiations: the so-called Tehran Agreement (Iran 2003).¹²⁵

In order to create the conditions for the launch of the dialogue, in this Agreement the E3 recognised "the right of Iran to enjoy peaceful use of nuclear energy". On its part,

¹²² Lower level of the administration, however, gave contradictory signals. See Agence Europe – Bulletin Quotidien Europe (2003).

¹²³ Interview with EU foreign policy expert, July 2009.

¹²⁴ Interview with a national diplomat, December 2010. Even though the reasons of this choice are not clear, one may note that Italy's strong economic and diplomatic ties with Iran may have led the country to enter into opposition with US foreign policy, something that the ruling coalition, led by Prime Minister Berlusconi, may have been willing to avoid.

¹²⁵ The agreement took the form of an agreed declaration.

Iran accepted to sign the IAEA Additional Protocol (allowing for further IAEA inspections), and to implement it on a voluntary basis while ratification was pending. In addition to that, Iran agreed to a voluntary suspension of all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities, a precondition which was considered as fundamental by the E3.

Following the Tehran Agreement, the E3 managed to prevent the IAEA Board from referring the Iranian dossier to the UN Security Council (UNSC), reaching a result which was hailed as a major success by international media. The Agreement, however, was meant to be only a preliminary accord in view of future negotiations and had unsolved major issues. In particular, the text did not specify clearly what kind of activities Iran was meant to suspend before the beginning of negotiations. In the following months, divergences emerged on this point and culminated in June 2004 when, following a negative report issued by the IAEA, the Iranian government openly violated the Agreement putting negotiations to an end.¹²⁶

In light of this stalemate, the IAEA threatened to refer the dossier to the UNSC (IAEA 2004). The move, however, was not supported by some members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which were critical of E3 requests to Iran as they considered they implied a denial of Iran's right to develop a nuclear programme also for civilian purposes.¹²⁷ Consequently, the E3 tried to reinvigorate the talks by widening the international legitimacy of their initiative and obtaining stronger incentives to be offered to Iran. In order to do that, they looked for the support of other EU Member States and, since the autumn of 2004, involved the HR in the negotiations, leading to the creation of a new format soon called the E3/EU.

¹²⁶ Reportedly, in February 2004 the E3 and Iran found a new agreement on the issue. In spring 2004, however, Iran started manufacturing centrifuges for uranium enrichment, though not actually enriching uranium: while for Iran this activity was not prohibited by IAEA, for the E3 this represented a violation of the Tehran Agreement (IISS 2004).

¹²⁷ Members of NAM challenged the E3 interpretation of the NTP, according to which Iran's inalienable right is conditional upon the provision of 'objective guarantees' that its nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful. Given Iran's past record of violations of IAEA constraints, these objective guarantees could be granted by Iran by renouncing to produce nuclear fuel and acquire it from abroad (Giannella 2005). NAM's opposition to this interpretation emerged during the 2005 NPT Review Conference: when European officials, and German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer challenged Iran's assertion that it held an inalienable and unrestrained right to engage in the full nuclear fuel cycle non-aligned countries, such as Egypt, Malaysia, and other non-aligned countries supported the Iranian claim and rejected the strict E3/EU interpretation (Harnisch 2007b; Tocha 2009).

Thanks to this move and to the threat to refer Iran to the UNSC, in November 2004 the E3/EU reached a further accord with the Iranian government: the so-called Paris Agreement (Iran - E3/EU 2004). In this new Agreement, Iran committed itself to suspend, on a voluntary basis, a series of better defined nuclear-related activities and to permit IAEA's inspections. The E3/EU, on their part, committed themselves to open a negotiation on "nuclear, technological and economic cooperation", including "firm commitments on security issues." The dialogue was meant to reach a "mutually acceptable agreement on long term arrangements," which would "provide objective guarantees that Iran's nuclear programme is [was] exclusively for peaceful purposes."

Following the Paris Agreement, negotiations on a long term agreement started around three baskets: transfer of nuclear technology, economic cooperation, and security. Thanks to the support gained within the EU, in this phase the E3/EU offered Iran further economic incentives, including the negotiation of an EU-Iran Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA). Since February 2005, moreover, their offer was further strengthened by a partial US support. Indeed, following President Bush' visit in Europe the US government decided to lift objections to Iran's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) and to the sale to Iran of spare parts for commercial planes.¹²⁸ Yet, the US still refused to enter into direct talks with Iran and made its support conditional to the request to Iran to suspend its nuclear programme.

Despite these evolutions, Iran was not convinced by the package of benefits offered by the international community. A major obstacle to the prosecution of the dialogue concerned the suspension of the nuclear programme. The E3/EU, on the one hand, insisted on asking complete suspension as a precondition for talks as it considered it as the only 'objective guarantee' Iran could provide on its intention not to develop a nuclear weapon (Harnisch 2007b: 12). Iran, on the other hand, was not ready to renounce to these activities completely and indefinitely, and considered the suspension a voluntary

¹²⁸ See The Independent (2005). Even if the move corresponded to the adoption of softer tones on the part of the US administration, it was accompanied by a certain ambiguity. While the Secretary of State seemed supportive of the E3/EU initiatives, the President and the Pentagon remained wary of it (Toronto Star 2005).

measure it could enforce temporarily as a confidence building measure.¹²⁹ Despite Iran's alleged willingness to reach an agreement, provided its right to develop nuclear activities for peaceful purposes was recognised, in 2005 the intransigence of the E3/EU on this point prevented the formulation of a broader compromise.¹³⁰

While diplomats were confronted with this major obstacle, in June 2005 national elections in Iran brought to power a new conservative coalition. Immediately after the vote, in a move clearly aimed to stress the different stance of the new government, newly elected President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad declared that Iran would not suspend its nuclear programme. When the E3/EU presented their offer in August 2005,¹³¹ the Iranian government rejected it in few days without taking the time to examine it in depth. Shortly later Iran restarted uranium conversion,¹³² and—in January 2006—uranium enrichment.¹³³ In addition, it announced that it would suspend the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the NPT. In other words, the change of government ended the window of opportunity opened by the E3 initiative in the autumn of 2003, undermining significantly the possibilities for a diplomatic resolution.

Having failed to find an agreement with Iran, EU Member States dropped their objections to the referral of the Iranian dossier to the UNSC, something that led, in February 2006, to the adoption of a IAEA resolution in this regard (IAEA 2006).

¹²⁹ The Paris Agreement left this point unresolved by specifying only that Iran accepted inspections in its facilities “while negotiations over a long-term agreement are underway”.

¹³⁰ Interview with a national diplomat, December 2010 and BBC (2004). For a critical view on the E3 strategy in this regard see Zammit Borda (2005).

¹³¹ IAEA (2005). In order to guarantee Iran's right to enrichment activities, the E3/EU offered to provide fuel supply and management for Iran's nuclear power programme (if Iran ended its fuel-cycle programme) and help Iran to acquire a light water research reactor (if Iran cancels its current plans to build a heavy water research reactor). In the area of economic cooperation, the Europeans reiterated the offer to make progress on an EU–Iran TCA, support Iran's accession to the WTO, and relax restrictions on exports of various dual-use technologies to Iran. Finally, in the area of regional security, the E3/EU offered positive and negative security assurances, cooperation against terrorist organizations, a comprehensive security dialogue with Iran, and pursuit of the objective of a Middle East free of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

¹³² Before becoming usable, the uranium extracted from a mine has to go through a series of transformation. The conversion is the most important of these and permits to transform the uranium oxide into uranium hexafluoride (UF₆). Once converted, UF₆ can go through the process of enrichment.

¹³³ Uranium enrichment consists of separating the UF₆ (produced by conversion) into two different isotopes (U235 and U238). Through reprocessing (which can be obtained with different procedures) U235 can be enriched to a low percentage (3-7 percent Uranium 235) and used in modern nuclear reactors to produce electricity, or it can be enriched over 20 percent, which then makes it usable in nuclear weapons.

Following Iran's decision to resume enrichment activities, moreover, the EU/E3 publicly asserted they were ready to approve sanctions against Iran (New York Times 2006; Independent 2006). However, while the US wanted to impose sanctions on Iran even without the support of the international community, a majority of EU Member States were ready to do it only after the approval of the UNSC. De facto, this stance led to a progressive change of the central locus of decision-making. Indeed, from the beginning of 2006, the E3/EU intensified their dialogue with the Members of the UNSC and particularly with the US, Russia, and China, leading to the emergence of a new format, composed of the E3 plus the other permanent members of the UNSC: the E3+3 (Council of Ministers of the EU 2006d).

Within the UNSC, the EU and the US initiatives to impose sanctions on Iran found the opposition of China and Russia. Following this disagreement, in June 2006 the group agreed to present to Tehran a new joint proposal (Council of Ministers of the EU 2006a).¹³⁴ In this new proposal, the US agreed to recognise the right of Iran to develop nuclear energy on its soil and, for the first time, to sit at the same table to negotiate a long term agreement. At the same time, however, the US continued to demand for the suspension of the nuclear programme as a precondition for the talks. In case of rejection, in addition, the proposal contained the threat of retaliation through the approval of sanctions by the UNSC (for this reason it was called 'take-or-break').¹³⁵

Iran's response to the 2006 proposal amounted neither to a rejection nor to a full acceptance. Reserves were expressed concerning the request to suspend any enrichment related activity, which was assimilated to waiving a sovereign right. Consequently, even though maintaining the diplomatic channels with Iran open, in the following months the E3+3 began an internal negotiation on the adoption of sanctions against the country.¹³⁶ These talks led to the adoption of a first package of sanctions by the UNSC in December

¹³⁴ One of main novelties of this proposal was the plan for the creation of an international consortium to construct civilian nuclear power plants in Iran. The creation of the consortium was aimed to ensure Iran's right to develop nuclear energy while giving to the international community adequate guarantees about the purpose of its nuclear related activities.

¹³⁵ Although disincentives are not mentioned in the text, they were probably reported orally to Iran. See also US (2006).

¹³⁶ In October, the EU Council of Ministers backed the move (Council of Ministers of the EU 2006c).

2006 (United Nations 2006); a second package was approved the following March (United Nations 2007).¹³⁷ Even though adhering to the UN decision, the EU maintained a “double track approach”: it adopted sanctions against Iran but at the same time continued to support efforts to find a diplomatic solution.

In the following years, negotiations remained in a stalemate. The US and Iran continued to play a repetitive game aimed more to gain the support and legitimacy of the international community than to reach a final agreement. After rejecting a proposal formulated by Iran in May 2008, in June of the same year HR Solana handed over to Iran a further proposal formulated by the E3+3.¹³⁸ The incentives offered did not differ substantially from those of the 2006 proposal.¹³⁹ Yet, in light of the intransigence showed by the Iranian government, the 2008 proposal contained a softened request concerning the suspension of the nuclear programme. The E3+3 suggested that preliminary talks could begin under a six-week ‘freeze-for-freeze’ period in which Iran would halt the expansion of its enrichment programme while the six countries would agree not to pursue additional sanctions against Tehran. In response to this offer, the Iranian negotiators continued to maintain their ambiguous approach: they deemed the proposal interesting but not completely satisfactory, asking for further clarifications on its content. In the autumn of 2008, the election of Barack Obama as new President of the US appeared to have the potential to change the course of negotiations. Yet, the window of opportunity open in 2003 was already closed. Even though the new US administration seemed ready to soften the request of suspension of the nuclear programme as precondition for talks and to partially recognize Iran’s right to carry on autonomous enrichment activities, at this point Iranian negotiators did not seem ready for a dialogue.

¹³⁷ Further sanctions were adopted in 2008 (United Nations 2008).

¹³⁸ An overview of the proposal can be found at: http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008_07-08/IranIncentives. For the first time the Secretary of State Rice signed the letter handed over to the Iranian negotiators; in addition, in July the US sent the under Secretary of State William Burns to meet the Iranian counterparts, together with Javier Solana and the other negotiators. Yet, the US President Bush continued to maintain a hostile rhetoric, affirming that even if diplomacy was the preferred solution, “all options are on the table”. Cited in CBS News (2008).

¹³⁹ In addition, the proposal contained considerations on the treatment of Iran’s nuclear programme as any other NPT non-nuclear-weapons state once confidence is restored, offer of technological and financial assistance for Iran’s nuclear energy programme and further details on the prospect for cooperation on agriculture, the environment and infrastructure, civil aviation, and social development and humanitarian issues.

2002

August: the NCRI reveals that Iran has built nuclear facilities that it has not revealed to the IAEA in Natanz and Arak

2003

February: IAEA inspectors visit Arak and Natanz and confirm suspects on the development of a clandestine nuclear programme in Iran

April: the EU Swedish Presidency launches a debate on nuclear non-proliferation (the debate will lead to the formulation of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction)

May: the Iranian authorities send a message to the US administration through the Swiss ambassador Tim Guldemann. The message contains proposals for a dialogue. The US do not reply to the offer

June: following February inspections, IAEA report says Iran has failed to comply with the NPT

21 October: during a visit in Tehran, the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom render public a common statement agreed with the Iranian authorities concerning the launch of a long term negotiation. The statement is known under the name of Tehran Agreement

2004

June: Iran re-starts uranium enrichment related activities in Natanz. For the EU, this move is a break to the Tehran Agreement

15 November: Paris Agreement

2005

February: visit in Europe of the US President Bush

11 March: in a public declaration, for the first time the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice affirms that the US is ready to support talks with Iran

June: following presidential election, a new conservative coalition led by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is brought to power in Iran

5 August: the E3/EU presents Iran a new proposal, which is not considered satisfactory by the Iranian authorities.

8 August: Iran announces it is restarting uranium conversion in its nuclear facilities in Isfahan

2006

9 January: Iran removes UN seals at Natanz enrichment plant and resumes nuclear fuel research

4 February: AIEA resolution refers the issue to UNSC

6 June: the E3/EU+3 presents Iran a new take-or-break proposal

31 July: UNSC demands Iran suspend its nuclear activities by Aug. 31. In a resolution, the Council for first time makes legally binding demands on Iran and threatens sanctions.

23 December: the UNSC approves resolution 1737 containing a first package of sanctions against Iran

2007

24 March: the UNSC approves resolution 1803 containing further sanctions against Iran

21 October: the Iranian chief negotiator Larijani resigns. His post is taken by Jalili, who is thought to have a tougher position.

2008

3 March: UNSC Resolution 1803 of March 2008 extends asset restrictions and travel bans on more Iranian individuals said to be involved in nuclear work and on more Iranian companies.

13 June: in Tehran HR Solana presents a further proposal to the Iranian authorities. For the first time, the proposal is signed also by the US Secretary of State. The proposal is known as the *freeze-to-freeze*.

19 July: during a meeting between HR Solana and the Iranian chief negotiator Jalili, the US surprises the world by sending Under Secretary of State William Burns to the talks.

2009

21 March: Obama sends a video message to Iran. De facto an invitation to talks.

12 June: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is declared to have won presidential election. The rival candidates challenge the result. Their supporters generate street protests.

19-21 October: talks in Geneva. Despite some agreement on side issues, the dialogue seems to have reached a stalemate.

Table 6. Chronology of negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme

Indeed, since the appointment of the Jalili as new Chief Nuclear Negotiator in October 2007, Iran had shown an intransigent attitude towards the talks.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, while the US was not ready to publicly engage with Iran on an extended political dialogue, Iran wanted to address broad political issues involving Middle East and the US policy in the Gulf. These divergences led to the failure of the last round of negotiations in which the HR took part, occurred in Geneva in October 2009.¹⁴¹

High Representative: policy entrepreneur or bargaining chip?

In early 2003, the EU had at its disposal various instruments to deal with the Iranian issue. At that time, Iran and the EU were negotiating a TCA and participating in a political dialogue focusing on four political issues: violation of human rights, the

¹⁴⁰ Interview with EU Council official, January 2010.

¹⁴¹ In particular, Iran agreed to consider in the talks issues related to technology cooperation, not to the nuclear programme directly.

political situation in Middle East, the fight against terrorism, and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. While the negotiation on the TCA was led by the Commission, the HR in conjunction with the Troika was charged with the political dialogue.¹⁴² When the existence of the Iranian nuclear programme became public knowledge, HR Solana had already presented to the Iranian counterparts the EU's main request in this regard, which was the signature of the Additional Protocol to the NPT.¹⁴³ Moreover, in spring 2003 the EU had started developing a document establishing the main lines for a common strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (European Council 2003a). In order to support the development of this newborn policy, in October 2003 a Personal Representative of the HR on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction was appointed.

Despite the multiplicity of instruments at the EU's disposal, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom launched a dialogue with Iran over the nuclear programme outside the EU institutional framework. The HR became involved in the talks starting in 2004. Once involved, HR Solana invested in them significant time and energy (Roudsari 2007: 16), while severely limiting his public interventions. Thanks to this commitment, Solana bolstered his reputation as reliable negotiator and, after the broadening of the negotiating team in 2006, was appointed chief negotiator. Despite this privileged position, and even though he acted as term of reference for most member States, however, HR Solana paid constant attention to respect sensitiveness of Member States and always avoided entering into open contradiction with them. Consequently, with regard to this policy dossier, the HR never really played a role of policy entrepreneur similar to that played in other policy dossiers. The following sub-sections develop this argument by analysing the HR's performance with regard to the three main tasks performed by policy entrepreneurs. Following the definition of adopted in this research (see Ch. 3), these tasks

¹⁴² As part of this dialogue, for example, in January 2004, while the talks between E3 and Iran were already ongoing, the EU Council of Ministers sent HR Solana to Tehran to evaluate relations between the EU and the country (Council of Ministers of the EU 2003a). Solana visited Iran on 12-13 January 2004 and referred to the Council on 26 January 2004 (Council of Ministers of the EU 2004).

¹⁴³ See Stauton (2003), The Independent (2004), and Fathi (2003).

are: shaping innovative ideas; transforming them into policy proposals; implementing them.

Shaping ideas against inaction: non-proliferation as a security threat

During his two terms in office, HR Solana often participated in the public debate on EU foreign policy and used public diplomacy, speeches, and interviews to foster his ideas on it. In particular, Solana stressed the need for the EU to project not only its economic but also its political power in the international arena (Solana 2000c). At the beginning of his first term in office, Solana's assertion of the EU's global ambitions was contrasted by a greater emphasis on regional rather than global challenges (Duke 2004).

Like most political leaders of Western countries, Solana changed dramatically his discourse after 9/11. Following the Twin Towers attacks, Solana observed that the EU was now faced with new responsibilities and a changed international environment. To face this challenge, the EU needed to develop a strategy not only to project its political influence abroad, but also to defend its interests from external threats.¹⁴⁴ From this perspective, the emergence of new actors not linked to states and the spread of non-conventional weapons had become the main sources of concern. In order to face these threats, Solana suggested enhancing the dialogue with the Arab and wider Muslim world and supporting the universal role of the UN. The emergence of these new threats, moreover, confirmed the need for the EU to further develop the security and defence dimension of its foreign policy.

Apart from Solana's speeches and public interventions, the HR contributed to shaping the debate about EU foreign policy by drafting the European Security Strategy (European Council 2003c), hereafter ESS. This document did not take the form of a legally binding text negotiated in the Council working groups, but that of a policy paper approved by consensus. Due to this special procedure, HR Solana and his team that drafted it enjoyed an unexpected autonomy in drafting it (Biscop 2005; Bailes 2005).

¹⁴⁴ Confront Solana's speeches in 2000 with Solana (2001a).

The ESS identifies the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as “potentially the greatest threat to our security”.¹⁴⁵ The importance attributed to this threat, moreover, is stressed by the fact that the text lists the need to face external threats as the EU’s first strategic objective. In order to address the proliferation threat the document stresses the role of “effective multilateralism” and the promotion of a rule-based international order with a strong international society and well functioning international institutions.

The concepts expressed by the ESS were reinforced by the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (European Council 2003a)—hereafter WMD Strategy—adopted in the same period with a similar procedure.¹⁴⁶ The main contribution of the WMD Strategy to formulating new ideas about EU foreign policy has been to frame the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as an EU shared responsibility. Indeed, “the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery such as ballistic missiles” are defined as “a growing threat to international peace and security”; consequently, “all the States of the Union and the EU institutions have a collective responsibility for preventing these risks by actively contributing to the fight against proliferation.” While stressing EU’s responsibilities, however, the WMD Strategy places this threat within a broader multilateral framework. The text urges the EU to “contain proliferation while dealing with its underlying causes” and to “seek an effective multilateralist response.”

Opinions about the impact of the two strategies on the debate over EU foreign policy differ. While some commentators have downplayed the importance of the strategies (Toje 2005), others have argued that they reveal the emergence in Brussels of a

¹⁴⁵ Other key threats are: terrorism, regional conflicts, state failure, and organized crime (European Council 2003b). While the description of these threats was located at the beginning of the first draft of the document, presented in Thessaloniki in June 2003, it was later moved to the body of the text, a move which remarked the difference between the EU and US approach.

¹⁴⁶ The proposal to draft a programmatic document on EU policy against weapons of mass destructions was put forward by the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs only a couple of weeks after IAEA Director-General Mohammed El Baradei confirmed existing rumours about the Iranian nuclear programme. This initiative was subsequently linked to the European Security Strategy, whose drafting followed an initiative of France, Germany and United Kingdom, which clearly aimed to reassure the US about the loyalty of its European allies while rebuilding the credibility of EU foreign policy (Portela 2003; Pullinger and Quille 2003; Sauer 2007b; Bailes 2005).

new operational and cohesive approach to security (Bailes 2005). In fact, the documents fail to address key non-proliferation issues that have been a source of long standing divisions within the EU, such as the relation between nuclear proliferation and disarmament and the cases in which resort to the use of force can be allowed. The two documents rather focus on existing agreement within the EU on less controversial issued. In general, however, the two strategies have been considered as important “inspirational documents” (Toje 2005; Duke 2004), which have given separate emphasis and momentum to various separate discourses already developed by EU institution.

After the adoption of the two strategies, HR Solana and his team used public interventions to confirm and reinforce the approach proposed by them. Accordingly, they stressed the global ambitions and responsibilities of the EU in the international arena while at the same time highlighting the importance of multilateralism and the rule of law.¹⁴⁷ The HR’s commitment and activism in the area of non proliferation, moreover, was enhanced by the interventions of the HR’s Personal Representative for Weapons of Mass Destruction.¹⁴⁸ As for the Iranian threat, finally, the HR confirmed the priority given by the EU to this threat; unlike the leaders of some Member States (see the following section), however, in its public interventions the HR made little reference to the security of Israel, only stressing the importance of the Iranian issue for the nonproliferation regime and for the stability of the region in general.¹⁴⁹

In conclusion, even though it did not publicly address major controversial issues on how to deal with nuclear proliferation, the HR did contribute to the public debate on this issue. It did so especially by framing nuclear proliferation as an urgent threat which the EU needs to address, and thus legitimizing a European proactive approach in this field.

¹⁴⁷ At the same time, the HR continued to list regional security among the EU priorities, followed by the relations with global partners. See for example Solana (2004a), Giannella (2007).

¹⁴⁸ The EU, for example, elaborated non proliferation clauses to be inserted into the treaties with third countries. In addition, it approved various joint actions in the field of chemical weapons proliferation, on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and other issues. On EU nonproliferation policies see Kienzle (2006).

¹⁴⁹ Compare Giannella (2005) and Douste-Blazy et al. (2005).

Policy formulation and implementation: the HR as bargaining chip and mediator

Given the sensitivity of the issue, and the fact that most activities took place behind the closed doors of diplomacy, little information is available on the role of the HR in EU's decision-making process. In general, research based on experts' interviews confirms that the involvement of the HR contributed to ease EU internal tensions emerged after the launch of the E3 initiative. In particular, by increasing the visibility of the EU and acting as a term of reference for all Member States, HR Solana enhanced significantly EU's internal cohesion. Solana's prominent role in the negotiations with Iran, nevertheless, did not permit his policy proposals to gain a prominent role within the EU, as the debate was conditioned mainly by the E3.

The involvement of HR Solana in the talks in late 2004 followed a proposal by the E3 which, with this move, aimed to gain stronger backing from the rest of the EU.¹⁵⁰ As the launch of the dialogue with Iran outside the EU institutional framework raised significant concerns among other EU Member States, the participation of the HR in the talks was deemed the best way to achieve this goal. In this context, the personal abilities and diplomatic skills of HR Solana provided an important guarantee to all participants in the talks. Not only had Solana been previously engaged in a political dialogue with Iran, but he also had significant international experience. In addition, the peculiar design of the HR granted it (unlike the EU Presidency) the ability to guarantee continuity of action without posing a formal threat to the primacy of the E3.

The E3 proposal to involve the HR into the talks gained the immediate approval of other Member States. The involvement of the HR was considered an important signal by the E3 of their willingness to place their initiative within the EU multilateral framework. Most importantly, the move permitted other Member States to be physically represented in the talks. The involvement of the HR into the talks, in other words, represented a key bargaining chip in a sensitive deal among EU Member States.

¹⁵⁰ Interview. EU Council official, Brussels, November 2009.

Once involved into the talks, the HR acted carefully, and avoided formulating public policy proposals or addressing key divisive issues in public interventions.¹⁵¹ In particular, the HR avoided addressing explicitly the most divisive issues within the EU—the definition of the preconditions for the launch of a long term dialogue with Iran and the adoption of sanctions. By contrast, the HR stressed the importance of the threat posed by Iran’s nuclear programme to the non-proliferation regime, and the need for action. As for the best policy to be adopted, HR Solana restrained its comments along the lines of EU official documents. First, he confirmed the importance of multilateralism and the need for the EU and the international community to adhere to weapons-control regimes.¹⁵² Second, he stressed the need to stop Iran’s nuclear programme, framing it as a threat to European security. Third, Solana stressed the need to continue diplomatic efforts in this regard.¹⁵³ This attitude can certainly be justified in light of the role Solana acquired during the negotiation. As part of the negotiating team first, and chief negotiator later, indeed, the HR’s main priority was to appear as a reliable negotiator and avoid jeopardising the credibility of the Western negotiating strategy.

Apart from public interventions, the HR participated in the EU’s decision-making process which took place behind the closed doors of diplomacy. HR Solana handled his involvement in the negotiations with the support of only a small group of collaborators. The latter were carefully selected among members of the cabinet, the Policy Unit, officials working at the Iran’s desk, and the staff of Solana’s Personal Representative for Weapons of Mass Destruction.¹⁵⁴ This small group of people worked separately and with little formal contacts with the rest of the Council’s Secretariat. Separation was due to the confidentiality and informality of the HR’s policy-making, and to the enhanced role of national components in his milieu.

During negotiations, this team acted as a point of reference for all Member States. Solana referred periodically before the General Affairs and External Relations

¹⁵¹ See Solana’s speeches, interviews and press releases at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>

¹⁵² See Solana (2008; 2007; 2006; 2005).

¹⁵³ Ibidem.

¹⁵⁴ At meetings at the political director level, the HR was represented by Robert Cooper, the Council Secretariat’s Director General for External Relations.

Council;¹⁵⁵ on few occasions, he took part in informal meetings with the Ambassadors of the Political and Security Committee.¹⁵⁶ According to some interviewees¹⁵⁷ Solana and his collaborators used these interventions more to gain backing from the whole EU for the E3/EU initiative rather than to refer to EU Member States about the content of the talks. Following a long established practice within the EU, moreover, information was exchanged through direct contacts between foreign ministries or between the ambassadors of the E3 in Brussels and in European capitals. As through these informal channels information is often distributed asymmetrically among different Member States, this practice further enhanced the power of the HR, which became an important term of reference for those Member States gaining less information through bilateral contacts. This latter task was performed by the HR's staff formally, through the participation in the PSC, or informally through contacts with representatives of single Members.

As for the content of these contacts, most interviewees agree that HR's interventions mostly aimed to stress the need to assure the cohesion among EU Member States and to maintain open the dialogue with Iran. Opinions diverge, however, on the ability of Solana and his team to formulate policy proposals. For some, the HR maintained a clear position on most divisive issues within the EU and bolstered it within the Council of Ministers. For others, HR Solana avoided entering into open contradiction with EU Member States, and proved willing to pay particular attention to EU big Members.¹⁵⁸ All interviewees, however, agree on the fact that, due to the prominent role

¹⁵⁵ According to Solana's agenda, between November 2004 and December 2005 Solana took part in 15 meetings (formal and informal) with EU foreign ministers (Council website accessed January 2010. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/App/Solana/agenda.aspx?id=246&lang=en>). In many cases Solana provided only oral and informal reports.

¹⁵⁶ According to the agenda published in the Council's website, between November 2004 and December 2005 Solana had two informal meetings with members of Coreper and three informal meetings with the Members of PSC. Ibid. Despite requests of some Member States for more frequent contacts, Solana always refused to chair the PSC and to take part in its official meetings (allegedly, he considered his role should be played at the ministerial level). In most cases, the duty to speak on his behalf on the Iranian dossier before the PSC was given to the Director General of the Council Secretariat Robert Cooper.

¹⁵⁷ Interviews with EU officials and national diplomats.

¹⁵⁸ The same attitude was adopted with regard to other policy dossiers. For example, with regard to the launch of a debate on intelligence cooperation within the EU, even though recognizing the need for EU action, HR Solana avoided formulating even informal proposals and preferred to wait for an initiative to come from EU Member States. For this reason, according to an EU official, HR Solana was "a political

of the foreign ministers of the E3, the HR's proposals had a limited role and always remained subordinated to those of the E3.

The HR's role was partially extended in the last phase of the talks, following the involvement of the US, Russia, and China into the team of negotiators. As the extension of the negotiating team rendered necessary the appointment of a head negotiator, HR Solana emerged as the best candidate for this position. Not being a fully fledged foreign minister, the HR resulted as the most reassuring figure for other countries; Solana's personal skills, moreover, provided an important guarantee for the success of the talks. After becoming the E3+3 representative, HR Solana discussed E3+3 proposals with the Iranian negotiators in bilateral meetings not always known to the press and gained access to further sensitive information.¹⁵⁹ On key occasions, Solana handled alone team proposals to Iran.

At this point, also EU Member States asked the HR to prepare policy options as regard the approval of sanctions against Iran.¹⁶⁰ Following an established practice within the EU Council of Ministers, decisions concerning this issue were discussed by national foreign ministers and the PSC at the political level, and then negotiated at a more technical level by specific working groups. At the political level, the HR continued to act mainly behind the closed doors of diplomacy, and to avoid formulating policy proposals that could endanger the credibility of its role. In the Council's working groups, the Council's Secretariat performed the traditional tasks of note keeper and assistant to the Presidency.¹⁶¹

In conclusion, after having been involved in the talks with Iran as a bargaining chip among big and small EU Member States, the HR enhanced its role significantly. By acting as term of reference for all Member States, and by stressing the importance of a

dwarf, but none could tell he was, as he never stood up." Interview, seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010.

¹⁵⁹ Interview, EU Council official, January 2010.

¹⁶⁰ On 10 April 2006, for example, EU foreign ministers discussed paper drawn up by Solana with options for sanctions. In March 2008, Solana sent a memo to EU member States highlighting that sanction would probably not solve the issue (Kubosova 2007).

¹⁶¹ During the period under investigation the EU adopted three main common positions implementing sanctions against Iran (Council of Ministers of the EU 2007a, 2007b, 2008), each of these common positions was then implemented by various regulations). All these common positions implemented sanctions approved by resolutions of the UN Security Council (United Nations 2006, 2007, 2008).

cohesive action, it significantly enhanced the coordination among national governments. In this policy dossier, however, Solana's exceptional skills and personality could not make for the HR's weak powers. Consequently, the HR's policy proposals always remained subordinated to those of the E3, and the HR never really played the role of policy entrepreneur displayed in other policy dossiers.

Iran: a testing case for EU foreign policy

During the negotiations over the nuclear programme, EU Member States abstained from taking independent initiatives that could endanger the ongoing dialogue and the credibility of EU foreign policy. This behaviour marked an important change if compared with divisions concerning the Middle East or non-proliferation that EU Member States had previously displayed. Most importantly, it marked a significant change as compared to the diplomatic fiasco occurred in 2003 over the US intervention in Iraq.

Even though they never broke their unity in public, behind the closed doors of diplomacy EU Member States had significant disagreements. First, some governments expressed discontent about the format of negotiations and the fact that the E3 initiative was taken outside the EU framework.¹⁶² Second, after the involvement of the HR in the negotiation resolved the issue, other governments complained about the lack of information on the content of talks by the E3.¹⁶³ Major divisions, moreover, emerged on the negotiation strategy and on the preconditions for opening the talks over a long-term agreement with Iran. Germany proposed to start talks while accepting Iran's desire to

¹⁶² EU officials (interview with a seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, November 2009) report intense tensions among EU Member States as long as negotiations were carried out in the E3 format. The subsequent involvement of the HR (in the E3/EU) significantly eased these tensions, although it did not eliminate them completely.

¹⁶³ Member States were unsatisfied with the amount of information shared by the E3 with the rest of the EU (interview with a national diplomat, December 2010). Complaints emerged, for example, because the E3/EU did not share with the other Member States their proposal to Tehran of Summer 2005 (interview, EU foreign policy expert, July 2009). Similarly, during the summer 2006 Member States complained for not having been given access to Iran's counterproposals (Beundermann 2006).

conduct limited enrichment activities on its own territory (Beundermann 2006).¹⁶⁴ This position was supported by the IAEA Director General El-Baradei (Kraleev 2007). By contrast, France and the United Kingdom opposed this proposal and demanded Iran to suspend its nuclear activities before the beginning of the talks. At times, outside the negotiating team, concerns over this approach were voiced by the governments of Italy, Spain, Austria, Sweden, Greece and Cyprus. Concerns were also expressed about the adoption of sanctions against Iran.¹⁶⁵ Strong divisions among Member States, finally, concerned the approval of sanctions outside the UN framework: while some Member States (particularly: France) were strong supporter of this option, others accepted it with reluctance (Reuters 2007).¹⁶⁶

Even though the origins of these divergences have not been widely investigated, so far most commentators have attributed them to varying economic interests in Iran. Some analysts have noted, for example, that Member States willing to adopt a softer approach towards Iran are also those having the most significant economic relations with it (Oezbek 2010: 287; Sauer 2008).¹⁶⁷ Although important, this kind of explanation is not exhaustive. In 2007 the German government expressly rejected allegations in this sense, accusing France and the United Kingdom of hypocrisy: German exports towards Iran had fallen substantially during the talks, while French and American firms were still secretly dealing with Iran.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, also the policy adopted by another player—the Italian government—appears much more ambiguous than what its economic interests would predict. Given Italy's strong economic and political ties with Iran, indeed, it could be expected that the government would prefer to search for a diplomatic solution over a

¹⁶⁴ Germany tried again to soften the conditions during the first half of 2007 (Dombey and Findler 2007).

¹⁶⁵ See Kubosova, (2007) and Dinmore, Bozorgmehr, and Barker (2009). For a general overview of EU divisions see Oezbek (2010), Sauer, (2008), and Bergenäs (2010).

¹⁶⁶ EU Member States adopted sanctions going beyond those foreseen by the UNSC in 2010.

¹⁶⁷ Germany, Italy, and Austria, in particular, are the EU Members with the strongest economic ties with Iran, and those adopting at times the softest approach towards the nuclear threat. Major links in the gas and energy sectors belong to Denmark, Spain, Italy and Austria; Cyprus, Malta and Greece are sensitive on selected sectors, such as shipping lines. Finally, the Central and Eastern European countries have negligible economic relations with Iran (Oezbek 2010).

¹⁶⁸ 'Berlin Says US and France Guilty of Hypocrisy', *Der Spiegel*, 24 September 2007 cited by Sauer, (2008: 281).

confrontational stance.¹⁶⁹ In 2003, however, the Italian government refused to take part in the initiative of the E3.¹⁷⁰ This position was reversed in 2006, when a new government led by a centre left coalition tried to join the group. In a similar vein, after rejecting the approval of sanctions against Iran, the Italian government agreed to it in the UNSC and eventually promoted the adoption of further measures.¹⁷¹ Even though economic interests may have had a role in shaping Member States' foreign policies in the Iran's case, therefore, other factors played an important role. As some scholar have noted, for example, it is "not by chance that Germany, the only nonnuclear weapons state in the EU-3 [the E3/EU], takes the softest approach" (Sauer 2007a: 624).

Accordingly, this section analyses policies and discourses of EU governments with the aim of establishing to what extent, at the time Iran's programme became public, EU Member States shared common norms about the definition of this event as a security threat and about the best way to deal with it. The main argument developed here is that when the Iranian issue emerged most EU Member States shared common norms as regard the definition of nuclear proliferation as a security threat; minor differences in this regard could be overcome thanks to lessons provided by the 2003 Iraq crisis, the visibility acquired by the E3 initiative, and the role of the HR. In addition, EU Member States agreed that a confrontational stance towards Iran had to be avoided and that a diplomatic solution should be sought. The divergences mentioned at the beginning of this section, however, prove the existence of differing interaction norms—that is of norms defining the role of international cooperation vis-à-vis nuclear proliferation. While some Member States viewed international cooperation and multilateral institutions as an instrument to project power in the world, others valued multilateralism in itself. Accordingly, while some wanted the EU to adopt an assertive stance, others supported efforts for a mediated solution and multilateral institutions. In this context, despite the desire of national governments to downplay divisions and rebuild the credibility of EU

¹⁶⁹ This position, however, would have led it to enter into opposition with the US which, especially until 2008, maintained a tough stance towards Iran.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with a national diplomat, December 2010, and interview with an expert of EU foreign policy, August 2009.

¹⁷¹ In particular, in 2007 Italy vetoed the adoption of sanctions (Kubosova 2007). Only one year later, the government changed its position (Fratini 2010).

foreign policy, intergovernmental over supranational dynamics prevailed and the HR only played the role of policy entrepreneur.

Table 7. EU security culture in the negotiation over the Iranian nuclear programme

Type of norm	Aim	Prescribed behaviour by EU norms	Observed behaviour during negotiations with Iran
Security threat identification	Identifying international security threats	Nuclear proliferation is to be considered a security threat	Public speeches and declarations defining the Iranian nuclear programme as a security threat
Interaction norms	Defining appropriate arenas and modes for cooperation in international relations	Reflective multilateralism <u>or</u> multilateralism of choice; International cooperation is a foreign policy goal per se <u>or</u> a way to project power	Internal frictions on the appropriate forum for the adoption of sanctions and on the definition of pre-requisites for negotiation
Instrumental norms	Identifying the appropriate instruments to respond to external threats	Soft power instruments are to be preferred over hard power instruments	Two track approach: support for the dialogue with Iran and adoption of economic sanctions

This section develops this argument, which is summarised in Table 7. The first part presents the different approaches of EU member States to nuclear proliferation and argues that, even though EU Member States have developed a common understanding of nuclear proliferation as a security threat, no shared interaction norms have emerged on how to deal with it. The following parts show the reaction of EU Member States to the nuclear threat and argues that observed divisions derived from the lack of common norms concerning national and international security vis-à-vis nuclear proliferation.

The EU and nuclear proliferation: diverging norms and perspectives

Even though nuclear proliferation has long been a privileged area of investigation of realism and rational approaches, an emerging literature has recently highlighted the role of norms and culture in shaping national responses to this kind of threat.¹⁷² The revision of this literature, and of the policies adopted by the EU in the last years shows that, even though many efforts have been made to develop a common understanding of it, strong divergences still exist on how Member States perceive it and no common culture has developed yet.

Since the Second World War, European countries have considered nuclear weapons to be a major threat to their security and have become signatories of defence alliances which placed them under nuclear deterrents, or proclaimed themselves neutral states. When nuclear proliferation started, in the 1960s, they all became signatories of the NPT and decided to support international regimes preventing the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, thus developing a converging understanding of nuclear proliferation as a security threat.¹⁷³ Following the end of Cold War, threat perceptions developed during the previous phase underwent significant developments and transformations. Comparisons of national security documents (Giegerigh 2006), and of the opinions of national elites (Kirchner and Sperling 2007) show that, following the end

¹⁷² The role of norms and ideational factors in non-proliferation has been recently stressed by the literature. See Sagan (1996/97) and Johnson, Kartchner, and Larsen (2009). As regards EU Member States, see Müller (2003), and Arnett (1998).

¹⁷³ Most EU Member States became member of the NPT in the 1960s. Exceptions are, among the others, France (1992), Spain (1987), and newly independent Member States.

of the Cold War, fear about traditional threats such as nuclear proliferation lost momentum, while growing concern emerged about new threats, such as terrorism, natural disasters, and illegal immigration. Even though nuclear proliferation was not listed among *major* security threats any more, it continued to be identified as a source of concern, especially if associated with terrorist groups or religious fundamentalism.¹⁷⁴ This common understanding is confirmed by public declarations of national leaders. In a famous speech presenting the French nuclear doctrine of 2006, for example, French President Chirac (2006) stated that:

Notre monde est également marqué par l'apparition d'affirmations de puissance qui reposent sur la possession d'armes nucléaires, biologiques ou chimiques. D'où la tentation de certains Etats de se doter de la puissance nucléaire, et ceci en contravention avec les traités. [...]. C'est ce constat qui a conduit le Conseil de Sécurité des Nations Unies à reconnaître que la prolifération des armes de destruction massive, et de leurs vecteurs associés, constituait une menace réelle pour la paix et pour la sécurité internationale.

Within the EU, the existence of shared concerns about nuclear proliferation—and of a common understanding of it as a security threat—is confirmed by key programmatic documents. As already mentioned, both the ESS and the WMD Strategy identify proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as an important threat to European security¹⁷⁵, and depict the most frightening scenario as “one in which terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction” (European Council 2003c). In conclusion, even though concerns about nuclear proliferation have declined after the end of the Cold War, they have never completely disappeared from EU or national policies and security documents. Accordingly, one may affirm that most EU Member States share common norms defining nuclear proliferation as a security threat.

¹⁷⁴ See Giegerich's (2006). The analysis of this scholar is based on a number of documents. In particular: Sharping (2000: par. 4-6), Struck (2003: par. 5-7), both reports of German Defence Ministry on the reform of the Bundeswehr, (Germany 2000). For France see Raffarin (2002), and Assemblée Nationale (2002a; 2002b). For a more recent doctrine see France (2008). For Spain see the White Paper of the Defence Ministry (Spain 2003: 34). For the United Kingdom see the 2003 Defence White Paper (United Kingdom 2003), prepared at the end of the Labour government defence review launched in 1998. For Austria an expert's report attached to a resolution by the Austrian parliament (Austria 2001). See also Ireland (2000).

¹⁷⁵ For the ESS “Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is potentially the greatest threat to our security” (European Council 2003c: 3); for the WMD Strategy “The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery such as ballistic missiles are a growing threat to international peace and security” (European Council 2003a).

Even though developing a common understanding of nuclear proliferation as a security threat, however, in the Cold War and post-Cold War phase EU Member States have not developed common interaction norms on how to deal with it. During the Cold War, the national security of most European countries was guaranteed by the membership in either the Atlantic Alliance or the Warsaw Pact, both of which provided the umbrella of a nuclear deterrent for their members.¹⁷⁶ In this context, most EU Member States started considering nuclear proliferation as a universal threat and non-proliferation as a sort of public good, thus placing the responsibility to deal with it on great powers or international regimes (NPT) and universal organizations (IAEA, UN). By contrast, France and the UK developed their own nuclear deterrents, thus treating nuclear proliferation as a national threat and becoming less supportive of universal disarmament policies (Santoro 2010; Hanson 2010; Sauer 2003).¹⁷⁷

These differing approaches still exist in the security cultures of different EU Member States and reflect differing ideas about the role of international cooperation in general. In order to explain this difference, scholars have divided EU Member States among those pursuing a ‘multilateralism of choice’—that is instrumental in guaranteeing national security—and those adopting a ‘reflexive multilateralism’—following the assumption that no country can guarantee its national security on its own (Kirchner and Sperling 2010).¹⁷⁸ In the first group, the UK and France have been characterised as linking their security and defence policies to important global ambitions, which are the legacy of their imperial pasts. In line with these ambitions, the two countries conceive cooperative security structures mainly as instruments to counter their post-imperial loss of influence (Smith 2010; Giegerich 2006: 151). French policy-makers, for example, have been characterised as perceiving the process of European integration as an

¹⁷⁶ Even though the position of neutral Member States was different in this phase, it converged towards reflective multilateralism in the following phase. See hereafter.

¹⁷⁷ Following an analysis based on the “Distance Index” of Paul Luif, Sauer (2003) concluded that, between 1979 and 2000, the United Kingdom and France were among the Member States voting more often against resolutions approved by a majority of others in the field of security and disarmament. More recently, differences among Member States on nuclear proliferation have emerged in the context of NPT 2000 and 2005 Review conferences (Portela 2003; Sauer 2003; Overhaus, Maull, and Harnisch 2005).

¹⁷⁸ The distinction between instrumentalism and reflexive multilateralism was identified by Anderson and Goodman (1993).

instrument to counter balance US influence, interpreting integration in the field of security and defence as an issue of influence (Giegerigh 2006). Similarly, motivated by the desire to “punch above its weight”, the UK has always identified NATO as the multilateral institution of choice, while disregarding (at least in operational terms) active participation in UN missions (Smith 2010).

In opposition to the multilateralism of choice of France and the UK, other Member States have been characterised as embracing ‘reflective multilateralism’. During the Cold War, many small EU Member States of Western Europe¹⁷⁹ justified international cooperation (and, in most cases, the entrance into NATO) with the need to defend national interests with limited national resources. Over the time, the connection between the two elements (international cooperation and national interests) became looser and looser, thus leading multilateralism to become an independent part of national security culture. The multiplication of external threats and the increased sense of vulnerability emerged after the end of the Cold War further reinforced this trend and the assumption that the security of a single country cannot be separated from international security was reinforced.

Austria, for example, adopted neutrality at the end of the II World War as a price to be paid for keeping independence. The emergence of new threats following the end of the Cold War reinforced the desire of this country to find a new way to guarantee national security. Accordingly, although formally maintaining neutrality, the government enhanced its contribution to international cooperation initiatives and multilateral organizations, intended not only as instruments to promote national interests but also to create a stable international environment (Giegerigh 2006).¹⁸⁰ Similarly other countries,

¹⁷⁹ Not much investigation has been conducted so far on the security culture developed by EU Member States from Central and Eastern Europe which had been part of the former Soviet block. In general term, one may say that given that these Member States have reached full independence relatively recently, their national leaders are reluctant to let the transformation into post-Westphalian states enter into national doctrines and affect national foreign policies. Yet, as for the adoption of sanctions against Iran, these countries are generally skeptical about the efficacy of sanctions against autocratic regimes (Oezbek 2010: 73)

¹⁸⁰ In line with this approach, when the Iranian threat emerged Austria supported the adoption of sanctions by the EU only if in conjunction with a resolution of the UNSC. Interview with a national diplomat, Brussels, November 2009.

such as Sweden, perceive active internationalism and international cooperation as the appropriate instrument to deal with external contemporary threats.

In between these two groups of countries, there are two Member States—Germany and Italy—that share the characters of both (Kirchner and Sperling 2010). The foreign and security policies of these two Member States suffered significant restrictions after World War II. These restrictions, enshrined in the peace treaties and in each country's constitution, were linked to the need to satisfy others' perceptions, by signalling a clear detachment from the respective national legacies (Giegerigh 2006). During the Cold War, the endurance of these constraints led national leaders to internalise these restrictions together with the need to meet external expectations in order to forge an effective foreign policy. These elements led to the emergence of a security culture based on multilateralism and cooperation, as opposed to unilateralism and the use of force.¹⁸¹ The transformations emerged after the end of the Cold War led these two Member States to adopt a more assertive stance in the international arena (Noetzel and Schreer 2008) and to participate in important military missions abroad (such as in Kosovo in 1999 and in Afghanistan in 2001). This move represented a significant, though not definitive evolution from the traditional civilian power identity (Harnisch and Wolf 2010; Maull 2000; Rosa and Foradori 2010).

In the context of EU foreign policy, EU Member States have tried on many occasions to bridge their differences in this regard and to build a common understanding on how to deal with nuclear proliferation. The definition of the ESS and of the WMD Strategy certainly represents a major example in this regard. However, scholars have noted that, despite being hailed as a turning point in the development of a EU shared security doctrine, the two documents have remained very generic on key issues concerning the appropriate instruments to deal with nuclear proliferation. As already mentioned, according to some commentators the composition of the ESS was aimed more to reassure the US about the consistency of its European allies (in a moment in time in which it appeared unsteady, just after the divisions emerged on the 2003 US

¹⁸¹ Many commentators have pointed at multilateralism, cooperative institution building, and rejection of the use of force as the basic norms inspiring in particular Germany's foreign policy during and after the Cold War (Duffield 1999; Hoffmann and Longhurst 1999).

intervention in Iraq) than to define new principles for a common foreign policy. Moreover, even though making reference to multilateral regimes and the NPT, the text does not take a stance on the relation between non-proliferation and disarmament, which is at the origin of longstanding frictions between EU nuclear weapons Member States (NWS) and non-nuclear weapons Member States (NNWS).¹⁸² Finally, the WMD Strategy does not address the problems generated by the inconsistent behaviour towards different countries and regions (Portela 2003).

Indeed, the adoption of the two documents did not prevent EU Member States for showing important divergences short after. During the 2005 NPT Revision conference, in particular, the positions adopted by the UK and France placed them at odds with other Member States. The UK, on the one hand, retracted its support for the ban on the production of fissile materials. France, on the other hand, supported the omission to any reference to the “thirteen steps to disarmament” (agreed in the 2000 NPT conference) in the final document of the 2005 conference. Both stances contradicted previous common positions adopted with the other Member States and thus demonstrated that, apart from general statements, Member States still disagreed on how nuclear proliferation had to be tackled.

Similar observations can be made, finally, as regards instrumental norms concerning nuclear proliferation, that is whether hard or soft power instruments have to be used. The WMD Strategy adopted in December 2003 defines the use of force to stop WMD proliferation as an instrument of last resort,¹⁸³ thus putting a distance between the EU and the pre-emption doctrine which had just been embraced by the US administration when the document was issued for the first time. The document envisages a system of ‘sticks and carrots’ which should be used to convince states willing to develop nuclear weapons to abandon their intention. In this regard, the document states that the EU aims to “contain proliferation while dealing with its underlying causes”. To this purpose, the WMD Strategy proposes the mainstreaming of non-proliferation objectives into all common policies, which means that EU initiatives undertaken in all sectors, such as trade

¹⁸² On this subject see Overhaus, Maull, and Harnisch (2005) and Portela, (2003).

¹⁸³ See in this regard see Portela (2003).

or international cooperation, are expected to take into consideration non-proliferation goals. The text, however, does not specify how the EU intends to deal with states which ultimately fail to comply with multilateral rules (Portela 2003).

Norms concerning the definition of nuclear proliferation as a security threat and of the best way to deal with it shaped Member States' understanding of the Iran's challenge and of the appropriate way to deal with it,

Nuclear proliferation and the Iranian nuclear programme: a common security threat

Since the existence of Iran's nuclear programme became public, EU institutions and Member States maintained a coordinated approach, never entering into major public contradictions and defining this challenge as a major security threat. As early as June 2003, the EU Council of Ministers started warning that "The nature of some aspects of Iran's programme raises serious concerns" (Council of Ministers of the EU 2003a) for international security. After the beginning of negotiations, this institution openly stressed its "increasing concern" about the proliferation risk implied by the programme, a concern that was regularly reiterated throughout the talks (Council of Ministers of the EU 2003a, 2003b, 2004).¹⁸⁴

In addition to central institutions, national leaders issued converging statements deeming Iran's nuclear programme an important security threat. In an article published in the *Washington Post*, for example, the German Foreign Minister Fischer (2006) argued that it is Iran's "combination of hegemonic aspirations, questioning of the regional status quo and a nuclear program" that is threat. According to Fischer:

Iran's acquisition of a nuclear bomb—or even its ability to produce one—would be interpreted by Israel as a fundamental threat to its existence, thereby compelling the West, and Europe in particular, to take sides. Europe has not only historical moral obligations to Israel but also security interests that link it to the strategically vital Eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, a nuclear Iran would be perceived as a threat by its other neighbors, which

¹⁸⁴ Further concerns were expressed at Iran's decision to resume enrichment related activities (Council of Ministers of the EU 2006b).

would probably provoke a regional arms race and fuel regional volatility further. In short, nuclear Iran would call Europe's fundamental security into question. To believe that Europe could keep out of this conflict is a dangerous illusion.

Similar concerns were expressed by other national leaders. For example, Italian Foreign Minister Frattini (2010) stated that:

Italy believes that a nuclear weapons-equipped Iran would pose a vital threat to the security of the entire Middle East, particularly as regards Israel, who sees us as its best ally in Europe, but also those moderate Arab countries on whom we are counting to build lasting peace in the region. A nuclear Iran would pose a vital threat also to global security, triggering a nuclear race among other countries and increasing the security risks for everyone.

Declarations such as those of Fischer and Frattini were only partially contradicted by French President Chirac who, in a comment of surprising frankness, argued that:

The danger does not lie in the bomb it (Iran) will have, and which will be of no use to it. Where will it drop it, this bomb? On Israel? It would not have gone 200 meters into the atmosphere before Tehran would be razed to the ground. What is dangerous is proliferation. It is really very tempting for other countries in the region that have large financial resources, to say: "Well, we too, we're going to do it. We're going to help out others to do it." Why wouldn't Saudi Arabia do it? Why wouldn't it help Egypt to do so as well? That is the danger. So one has to find a way to settle this problem. That, then, is the military issue (New York Times, International Herald Tribune, and Nouvel Observateur 2007)

Even though President Chirac immediately retracted these declarations (New York Times 2007), interviews with EU officials and national diplomats confirmed the idea flowed by Chirac's interview that, rather than being focused on implications for Israel's security or on the possibility of a direct attack, EU's fears about the Iranian programme mostly concerned its implications for the non-proliferation regime. Indeed, by the time the programme became public knowledge most EU Member States (and the EU itself) had developed good political and economic relations with Iran and considered

it more of a partner than of a threat.¹⁸⁵ Many commentators, moreover, have stressed that the desire to reassure the US about the existence of shared concerns and the loyalty of its European allies played an important role in shaping the response to this crisis by some Member States (Davidson and Powers 2005; Bergenäs 2010; Meier and Quille 2005).¹⁸⁶ This observation provides a partial explanation for the different emphasis on the implications of the Iranian threat by some governments. In any case, divergences in this regard never became a key issue, and did not prevent EU Member States from maintaining a cohesive approach.

The cohesion shown by the EU about the Iranian dossier was certainly the consequence of many elements. On the one hand, after the fiasco of the Iraq crisis, national governments were anxious to show unity in order to restore the credibility of EU foreign policy. This attitude is in line with coordination reflexes and the shared commitment to consensual decisions highlighted by the literature drawing on sociological institutionalism (Jørgensen 1997; Juncos and Reynolds 2007; Lewis 2003). Most probably, the participation of HR Solana in the talks increased the visibility of the EU, thus diminishing Member States' willingness to enter into public disagreement.¹⁸⁷ Yet, the coordinated approach displayed by national leaders in the definition of Iran's programme as a major security threat especially reflected convergence of relevant norms emerged during the Cold War and endured in the post-Cold War era.¹⁸⁸ Even though, when the programme became public, some governments put different emphasis on its various implications for international security, these differences should be considered in light of the desire of some Member States to give stronger reassurance to the US about the loyalty of its European allies. Yet, these differences remained rather minor and do not

¹⁸⁵ Unlike the US, after breaking political relations with Iran in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution, the EU resumed them in early 1990s through the launch of the so-called "critical dialogue". This dialogue was upgraded to "constructive dialogue" in late 1990. Having compared the different attitude displayed by EU Member States towards Iraq and Iran in the recent past, Goldthau has concluded that the critical and constructive dialogues were decisive in building trust between EU and Iran. This trust allowed all EU Member States to reject the use of force against Iran and opt for a negotiated solution (Goldthau 2008). On the German perception of the Iranian threat and how it is different from US perceptions see Müller (2003).

¹⁸⁶ Interview with a national diplomat, December 2010.

¹⁸⁷ The Iranian case was soon considered as a fundamental test case for EU foreign policy (Everts 2004b).

¹⁸⁸ For an analysis of EU nuclear proliferation policies see Sauer (2003).

contradict the existence of shared norms on threat identification. Indeed, they did not prevent Member States from maintaining a coordinated approach.

Dossier Iran: what role for international cooperation?

As opposed to the identification of nuclear proliferation as a security threat, EU Member States did not display common preferences in responding to this threat. As already mentioned, two main divergences emerged. First, EU Member States had different attitudes concerning the identification of the appropriate forum for the adoption of sanctions against Iran. While Member States such as France or the United Kingdom pushed for the adoption of sanctions outside the UN framework, others such as Austria maintained the importance of UN approval. Second, EU Member States were deeply divided over preconditions for starting negotiations with Iran over a long term agreement. France and the United Kingdom argued that international security could only be guaranteed if Iran stopped its full fuel production cycle. Other Member States, such as Germany or Sweden, were prepared to open the dialogue while Iran's related activities were ongoing. These differing approaches reflect a general cleavage in the attitude of EU Member States towards nuclear proliferation and, in particular, in interaction norms on the best way to deal with it.

So far, most scholars using the concept of security culture in the framework of EU studies have focused on interaction norms concerning the most appropriate *arenas* for cooperation. These scholars have argued that different perceptions by Member States of NATO and the EU as privileged arenas for cooperation in the field security and defence represent a major obstacle to developing a shared EU security culture and of an effective foreign policy (Giegerigh 2006; Howorth 2002). However, this argument is not relevant with regard to this case study since during negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme, different attitudes towards the US and NATO were not a major cause of division among Member States. The different attitude towards the US and NATO, for example, did not prevent France and the UK from closely coordinating their activities. Not only were the two Member States among the original promoters of the dialogue with

Iran, but they acted in unison in subsequent negotiations. While at times other Member States raised concerns about negotiation preconditions established by the E3, or about the timing and quantity of economic sanctions, France and the United Kingdom coordinated closely on this issue. Rather, its timing¹⁸⁹ and character confirm that the desire to prevent US unilateralism from dividing EU Member States was one of the main driving forces of the E3 initiative (Davidson and Powers 2005).

Rather than differing norms about the preferred *arenas* for cooperation, the divergences emerged among Member States in the case of Iran reflect differing *modes* concerning the role of international cooperation. While some Member States viewed non-proliferation more as a public good, others connected the problem to the self-perception as an important power and viewed it as a national problem (Oezbek 2010: 74). Accordingly, while some wanted the EU to safeguard the credibility of international non-proliferation regimes, intended as the ultimate guarantors of their security, others wanted the EU to assume a more assertive stance. This difference was clearly reflected by the declarations of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Greece and Finland, who stressed that “nuclear disarmament is an integral part of the NPT regime”, and called for nuclear disarmament by the NWS, arguing that otherwise their “appeal to aspiring nuclear weapon states” like Iran would be “less credible” (Frevalds, Papandreou, and Tuomioja 2004).

Iran: instrumental norms

Finally, when the Iranian threat emerged EU Member States shared a common approach as regards the appropriate instruments to deal with this threat and, in particular, about the use of force. This common approach included the preference for diplomatic instruments, the recognition of the use of force as an instrument of last resort, and the support for the use of force in case of humanitarian issues.

¹⁸⁹ Although the E3 initiative became public in August-Autumn 2003, talks on it between the leaders of France, United Kingdom, and Germany started in February of the same year, in coincidence with the deterioration of the EU divide on the Iraq war. Interview with EU foreign policy expert, July 2009.

This common position does not necessarily reflect a shared perception of instrumental norms concerning nuclear proliferation. As already mentioned, important differences exist especially among NWS and NNWS: NWS have always considered their right to maintain and use nuclear weapons to deter external threats, and have based their non-proliferation policies on a case-by-case basis.¹⁹⁰ By contrast, NNWS have always seen international disarmament as the best solution to nuclear proliferation. However, these differences were not a main reason of concern or division in the case of Iran. With regard to this issue, all EU Member States agreed that the use of force had to be avoided. This approach reflected a common denominator expressed in a number of EU documents. On the basis on this common denominator, when the Iranian threat emerged EU Member States maintained a cohesive “dual track” strategy, based on the promotion of the dialogue and the adoption of sanctions against Iran.¹⁹¹

Conclusion

When the Iranian threat emerged, EU Member States shared common norms concerning the identification of nuclear proliferation as a security threat, and the need to use all available instruments to find a diplomatic solution to it. This, together with the desire to avoid another diplomatic fiasco like that of Iraq, the inactivism of US diplomacy, and the role of the HR helped EU Member States adopt a coordinated public response to this issue. Yet, behind the closed doors of diplomacy national leaders had important divergences about the preconditions for negotiation and the role of the UN. These divergences reflected key differences in the national security culture of national

¹⁹⁰ While explaining France’s nuclear doctrine, for example, Chirac stated that France “will only be able to go forward on the road towards disarmament in the event that the conditions of our overall security are maintained” (Chirac 2006). On UK’s nuclear doctrine see United Kingdom (2006). On the differences between NWS and NNWS see Santoro (2010) and Hanson (2010)

¹⁹¹ Despite these common norms, many commentators have considered the EU strategy towards Iran ineffective in various ways (Roudsari 2007; Bergenäs 2010; Tocha 2009). First, offers by the EU were partially undermined by the lack of international legitimacy, due to the different interpretation of NPT commitments by many countries of the Non-Aligned Movement (Tocha 2009). In addition, at the beginning of the dialogue the E3/EU offered Iran with little carrots, which could not make up for the important commitment asked in exchange for them—the suspension of the nuclear programme. In the long term this strategy met with Iran’s unwillingness to give up its right to enrichment related activities for good.

governments. While Member States like France and the UK consider nuclear proliferation as a threat to their status and dealing with it a primarily national responsibility, other Member States assume national security cannot be detached from international security, and thus see cooperation as a necessary instrument to achieve it. The lack of a common understanding on this point generated divisions over the Iran cases, which led emerge intergovernmental over supranational coordination reflexes.

Conclusion

Despite its long stalemate, the E3/EU initiative to open a dialogue with Iran gained the EU a prominent role in the international arena and prevented external initiatives from dividing its Member States. Media have often identified this success with the involvement of the HR, which transformed the E3 initiative into a joint E3/EU initiative. However, the analysis presented in this Chapter shows that the visibility acquired by the HR during the negotiations did not correspond to effective powers. In fact, the HR played a more limited role in this than in other policy dossiers. In particular, even though shaping ideas about EU foreign policy and intervening in the implementation phase, the HR played a very limited role in the formulation of policy proposals. Accordingly, this institution contributed to the effectiveness of EU foreign policy, and acted as a term of reference for most Member States, but did not turn into a policy entrepreneur.

The participation of the HR into the talks, together with the desire to display unity and cohesion after the Iraq diplomatic fiasco helped Member States to overcome minor differences concerning the perception of the Iranian threat and to display a coordinated approach. However, behind the closed doors of diplomacy national leaders had deep divergences on the appropriate way to deal with this issue, and on the preconditions for negotiations. These divergences reflect long term differences in what EU Member States consider as the appropriate *modes* for cooperation. While some Member States consider national security vis-à-vis nuclear proliferation as inevitably linked to international security, and thus value international cooperation in itself as a mean to obtain it, others

continue to view it as a national threat and thus value international cooperation only as an instrument to protect national interests.

In conclusion, the observation of the HR's role in the negotiations over the Iran's nuclear programme suggests that this institution's intervention in EU policy processes is limited in cases in which Member States do not share relevant norms delimiting the area of appropriate behaviour. As we will see in the following Chapter, this observation leads to wonder to what extent EU common institutions can build an effective EU foreign policy in absence of a common vision about external security among a majority of EU political actors (Bonvicini and Regelsberger 2007). In addition, it leads to a reflection on the importance of socialization processes generated by EU institutions, but on the importance of leadership in shaping common norms.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Recent events have shown enduring difficulties in the development of an effective EU foreign policy. Central institutions have found it hard to make their voices heard as big EU countries have taken the lead on major events (Howorth 2011). Negotiations over new bodies—such as the European External Action Service (EEAS)—have been delayed, among other things, because of the mistrust between small and big Member States, with the former accusing the latter of occupying all most influential positions (Willis 2011a, 2011b). These difficulties arouse just after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty which, according to most commentators, was to promote a more effective EU foreign policy by significantly enhancing the powers of central institutions.

Traditionally, in order to explain cooperation (or lack of it) among EU Member States, scholars have looked at the ability of central institutions to maximize Member States' utility and to deliver efficient policy outcomes. However, while looking at the involvement of the HR in foreign policy processes, this research has been based on the assumption that Member States' interests are socially constructed. Accordingly, this study has started from the observation that, within the EU, 'supranational' and 'intergovernmental' sources of power and identity configurations coexist, which allow the HR to play at times the role of mediator, at times that of policy entrepreneur. In order to understand when one or the other dynamic is activated, this study has compared prescriptive norms developed within the EU security community concerning two different policy issues—nuclear proliferation and ethnic conflicts.

The comparison of these norms and of policy processes involving the HR vis-à-vis two case studies leads to some observations. First, the evidence suggests a stronger involvement of the HR in policy processes is associated to the emergence of shared norms and, thus according to the definition adopted by this study, of a shared EU security

culture. Given the current ambiguous institutional framework of the EU, therefore, the emergence of a shared culture within the EU security community broadly conceived seems to be a pre-condition for the further empowerment of central bodies. During negotiations over the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 many commentators placed major expectations on the possibility that Member States delegate key powers to central institutions to develop a more effective EU foreign policy. However, this research has pointed at the role of norms and at the emergence of a shared security culture as a precondition for delegation. Accordingly, in order to develop a more effective EU foreign policy, this study points at the ability of national and European leaders or central institutions to enhance socialization processes or to act as epistemic communities to spread shared norms across the whole EU security community.

Second the comparison of the two case studies reveals that major obstacles to the development of a shared EU security culture and, thus, to the empowerment of EU central institutions lies not only in Member States' different positions towards the US or the use of force in international relations, but also in their different perceptions of the role of multilateralism in providing security vis-à-vis different external threats. In the future, the lack of a shared vision in this regard may thus represent a major obstacle to the further development of EU foreign policy.

The first section of this Chapter compares the findings of the two case studies and shows how differences in norms shared by the majority of EU political actors were associated to different levels of empowerment of the HR. The following section presents the theoretical findings of this study with regard to EU security culture and common institutions. Finally, the last section elaborates the political implications of this study.

Looking at the two cases: Macedonia and Iran

The office of the HR was created in 1999 following the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty and remained in place as such until 2009, when it was reformed and renamed by the Lisbon Treaty. After tough negotiations, the Amsterdam Treaty created an institution with little power, comparable to a "high ranking bureaucrat" (Grevi,

Manca, and Quille 2005a, 2005b). At the same time, however, national governments attached to the authority of the HR a Policy Unit which was considered to be a fledging EU foreign policy think tank. In addition, they appointed as a first incumbent a personality with a high political profile: the former Secretary General of NATO Javier Solana. Finally, following the St. Malò compromise, national governments further expanded the role and powers of the HR by attaching to its authorities new structures and bodies.

During its ten years of life, at times the office of the HR performed key tasks traditionally reserved to Member States, and assumed a leading role in EU foreign policy similar to that of the Commission in the first pillar. On other occasions, however, the HR was marginalised or played only a secondary role. Starting from this observation, this research asked to what extent the existence of a shared EU security culture has been a necessary condition for the HR to play the role of policy entrepreneur. In order to answer this question, this research has compared prescriptive norms concerning security in relation to two policy issues and dossiers: the 2001 Macedonia crisis and the negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme.

The Macedonia's and Iran's dossiers were dealt with in a somehow similar political context. Both the Macedonia crisis and the discovery of Iran's nuclear programme occurred just after the EU had experienced a public diplomacy fiasco—the 1990s Bosnia and Kosovo wars, and the 2003 Iraq crisis respectively—which had revealed deep divisions among its Member States and jeopardised the credibility of its foreign policy. While dealing with both issues EU institutions and national governments were keen to downplay further divisions and to reaffirm the role of the EU in the international scene. The different empowerment of the HR in the two policy dossiers, however, reveals that the emergence of coordination reflexes and of a shared understanding of the need to protect the credibility of EU foreign policy alone cannot account for the empowerment of central institutions.

The analysis of speeches, documents, and policies of EU and national leaders concerning the two dossiers, shows that at least one important difference exists between the two cases. After the Bosnia and Kosovo wars, EU Member States developed a

common discourse and common norms on how to deal with similar events in the future. Following the leadership of key personalities such as the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, EU national governments developed a shared understanding of their responsibility to deal with crises coming from the near abroad. The 1990s Balkan wars, moreover, not only convinced national governments of the need to intervene in similar crises, but also that their intervention could only succeed if they maintained a coordinated position. Accordingly, when in 2001 an internal crisis aroused in Macedonia, EU national governments could count on common norms concerning their responsibility to act, and the need to do it through the EU.

In turn, in the case of Macedonia, the existence of these shared norms enhanced the sense of general belonging of representatives of national governments, thus leading them to let the HR play the role of policy entrepreneur. During this crisis, indeed, the HR did not act as a mere executor—in line with the little power attributed to it by the Amsterdam Treaty—but participated in all phases of policy-making. Already before the beginning of the crisis, HR Solana intervened in the general debate about EU foreign policy by stressing the need for the EU to adopt a more proactive stance and take on greater responsibilities in the region. After the escalation of tensions, the HR was delegated by the Presidency the key task to represent the interests of the EU in the resolution of the crisis. Subsequently, thanks to their presence on the ground, the HR and its depending entities gained a wider room for manoeuvre and reversed Member States' position on the possibility of a political dialogue with the NLA. De facto, through their implementation powers, they extended their influence to all phases of policy-making, thus playing the role of policy entrepreneurs.

By contrast, the 2003 Iraq crisis did not produce deep transformations in the ideational factors inspiring EU national governments. Even though after this crisis national leaders felt more strongly the need to downplay public divisions and to restore the credibility of EU foreign policy, their divergences concerning the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction endured. Even the drafting of the ESS—occurred just after the Iraq crisis—reflected more the need to satisfy an external audience (particularly in the US), than the maturation of new norms.

In particular, while the 2003 Iraq crisis triggered a debate on national governments' divergences on the alliance with the US or the use of force in the international arena, less attention was paid within the EU to divergences concerning the relation between national and common responsibilities vis-à-vis nuclear proliferation. When the Iranian issue emerged, divergences among national governments on the role of the alliance with the US and on the use of force in the international arena were downplayed, thanks also to the early activism of the EU (together with the lack of activism by the US), and the agreements on sanctions as the best instrument to deal with the nuclear threat. Yet, EU leaders could not overcome divergences concerning the relation between nuclear proliferation and national, common, and international security. Indeed, while some governments perceived Iran's nuclear programme as a threat to the national power, other linked it to collective security, to which they viewed national security as inextricably associated. Accordingly, while some national governments wanted the EU to support a resolution to the problem boosted by multilateral organizations, others preferred the EU to adopt an independent and more assertive policy.

In terms of policy processes, the absence of shared norms on how to deal with the Iranian threat and of a shared understanding of this threat as a shared security threat generated a different outcome. Like in the previous case, HR Solana actively engaged in the general debate about EU foreign policy priorities with regard to this issue. Solana and his team, in particular, enjoyed wide room for manoeuvre in the drafting of key programmatic documents (the EU Security Strategy and the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction), which defined the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction a key foreign policy priority. Unlike in the Macedonia case, however, during negotiations with Iran the HR generally abstained from entering into contradiction with (especially big) national governments, and its policy proposals always remained subordinated to the E3. Rather than playing the role of policy entrepreneur, thus, the HR acted as a bargaining chip or mediator among national governments.

In conclusion, the comparison of the two cases indicates that the existence of shared norms concerning external threats and, thus, the emergence of a shared EU security culture were a pre-condition for the HR to play the role of policy entrepreneur.

Theoretical findings: a twofold contribution

At the theoretical level, the findings of this research contribute to two different bodies of literature: the literature on EU institutions and on EU security culture.

EU institutions

This study has analysed the relation between norms concerning security and EU policy processes concerning the HR. So far, scholars adopting rational choice approaches have argued that the empowerment of central European institutions depend on their ability to provide efficient policy processes. Similarly, scholars drawing on sociological institutionalism have treated EU institutions as the independent variable, and emerging norms as the dependent variable. Accordingly, they have analysed socialization processes occurring within a single body, or compared the bureaucratic cultures developed by different institutions (mostly: the Council and the Commission), thus revealing the emergence of coordination reflexes and shared commitments to consensual agreements (Juncos and Pomorska 2010; Juncos and Reynolds 2007; Lewis 2003, 2005, 2008; Laffan 2004). By doing so, these scholars have looked at the EU more as an organization than as a political system, and have disregarded the role of norms concerning the external environment, and those emerging outside EU institutions, for example at the national level.

This study has rejected both these approaches and has argued that EU policy processes can be affected by norms triggered by socialization processes generated by EU institutions, as well as outside them. Accordingly, this study has recognized on the one hand that institutions are a major variable affecting policy processes. Indeed, this work has started from the observation that the EU is characterized by the coexistence of

supranational and intergovernmental sources of power and identity configurations. This ambiguity in the EU institutional framework enabled the HR to play at times a role more similar to that of a secretary of an intergovernmental organization, at times more similar to that of a foreign minister of a national political system.

At the same time, however, this study has shown that in order to understand how EU ambiguous institutions are declined in different cases in the field of EU foreign policy, and under what conditions the HR was able to play a more prominent role and when it was not, one needs to look at the content of norms concerning security developed within the EU security community. In particular, the findings of this study indicate that, in the context of institutional ambiguity provided by the EU, the existence of shared norms concerning external challenges and the best way to deal with them in general—that is the emergence of a shared EU security culture—has been a pre-condition for a substantial involvement of the HR in foreign policy processes.

This finding concerning the role of a shared security culture leads to some observations about the future development of the integration process. First, this research highlights that the empowerment of central bodies is linked to the emergence of common norms that go beyond Brussels based political actors, and reach the majority of the EU security community. Accordingly, one may wonder if the development of the integration process may be sustainable in the long term without the development of a shared culture not only among Brussels-based diplomats, but involving the whole EU. Any formal empowerment of central bodies, in other words, which may solve the ambiguity of the EU institutional framework by granting more coherence and efficiency to EU foreign policy, may be linked and subordinated to this.

Traditionally, scholars have attributed differences between the security cultures of Member States to different national histories and traditions. For example, while some Member States have an imperial past, others have not; while some won the Second World War, others lost it. Facts alone, however, do not justify differences in cultures and

perceptions.¹⁹² As the existing literature on norm entrepreneurs and epistemic communities (Adler 1992; Haas 1992) has highlighted, for facts to change actors' perceptions and ideational factors, new narratives need to be created for their interpretation. This is true also for European security (Howorth 2004). By pointing at the importance of norms emerging not only from the bureaucratic culture of common institutions, but also from the whole EU security community, this study has highlighted that the future of the integration process may depend on socialization processes occurring within Brussels' based bodies, as well as on the ability of these bodies or of national or supranational leaders to transmit new narratives for the interpretation of common challenges to a broader national and European audience. Even though Brussels-based political actors are in a privileged position to produce new norms, and to affect socialisation processes across the whole EU, they compete, in this role, with other important national and international actors.

Second this research has shown that the HR was able to play a more prominent role in EU policy processes when a majority of political actors belonging to the EU security community shared common norms concerning the relation between national and collective security vis-à-vis external threats. Indeed, while in the case of Macedonia EU Member States shared the common understanding that the crisis endangered common interests, and could be dealt effectively only by maintaining a common approach, this was not clear in the case of Iran. As we will see in the following section, the emergence of shared perceptions of external threats as threats to common interests, and to collective and not only national security seems thus fundamental for the future empowerment of central institutions.

¹⁹² France or The Netherlands, for example, are two countries with an imperial past, which were invaded during the Second World War, and were part of the coalition that finally won it. Yet, one cannot say that their security cultures are alike. Similarly, the Macedonia crisis and the negotiations with Iran over the nuclear programme were both preceded by an EU public diplomacy fiasco—the Kosovo war and the Iraq crisis—which rendered EU Member States more willing to avoid further divisions and to restore the credibility of EU foreign policy. However, while in response to the Kosovo crisis national governments developed new common norms on how to deal with similar crises, they did not do it after the Iraq crisis.

EU security culture

Current divergences in the debate on the existence of a shared EU security culture may be attributed to the adoption of different definitions and on the lack of methodological rigour (Meyer 2005; Biava and Drent 2011). By asking whether a shared security culture exists or not, existing studies have investigated EU security culture as a monolithic and indivisible entity. By contrast, by drawing on Meyer (2005), this research has been based on an innovative conceptualization of security culture as a group of prescriptive norms shared by a majority of actors belonging to a given security community. In particular, this study has conceived EU security culture as composed by three groups of norms concerning: security threat identification, the definition of the appropriate instruments to deal with these threats, and the interaction with the international community. According, this study has treated security culture as a complex and compound concept, which may change over time and space, and may evolve along with socialization processes. This conceptualization has permitted to explore aspects of the emerging EU security culture that have not been clearly addressed so far.

In line with the existing literature, the analysis of norms concerning ethnic conflicts in EU's neighbourhood and nuclear proliferation indicates that EU Member States have not reached a complete harmonisation of norms about external security. According to the existing literature, divergences on the alliance with the US (the dichotomy Atlanticist/non Atlanticist Member States), and on the instruments to be used for the resolution of conflicts (the dichotomy neutral/non-neutral Member States) are to be considered the main responsible for that (Howorth 2002; Coşkun 2007; Hyde-Price 2004; Kienzle 2009). The comparison of relevant norms concerning the Macedonia and Iran dossiers, however, suggests that these divergences may not be the main or the only obstacle to the empowerment of central institutions. The Iran and Macedonia cases, in particular, show that a low profile by the US administration may leave wide room for manoeuvre to the EU and enable its Member States to overcome their differences. Similarly, the two cases show that the use/non use of force is not always the most relevant question in conflict or dispute resolution.

Even putting aside divergences on the US alliance or on the use of force, however, at least another important difference exists in the ideational background through which each Member States interprets security. While some Member States maintain what has been called a Westphalian security culture, others have developed a post-Westphalian security culture. In other words, while some view national and international security as inextricably related, other treat them separately. Even though the case of Macedonia shows that Member States seem to be developing a converging understanding of the relation between national and collective security vis-à-vis state-building actions in EU's neighbourhood, similar shared norms have not emerged with regard to other threats, such as nuclear proliferation, as shown by the Iran case.

Starting from this observation, important considerations can be made on the future development of a shared EU security culture and of a more coherent EU foreign policy. A major obstacle to the development of a shared EU security culture may lie not only in Members States' positions towards the US or the use of force, but more generally on the lack of a common answer to increasing international interdependence. While some Member States remain attached to the concept of national security and continue to view the national state as the main bastion against external threats, others have developed a post-Westphalian perception of it, and value the role of the national state in the broader context of global interdependence. Even in presence of a converging perception of the role of the US in the international environment, or of rules concerning the use of force in the international arena, in the future enduring divergences on this aspect may become an obstacle to the development of a shared security culture and, according to the findings of this study, of common institutions.

Empirical implications and future perspectives

The institution of the HR, in the form investigated in this research, has remained into place for ten years, from the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty (1999), to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (2009). The latter represented the end point of a long process of reform initiated in Laeken, continued with the European Convention on

the Future of Europe, the French and Dutch rejection of the Constitutional Treaty, and the renegotiation of a new text. The reforms introduced in Lisbon, especially those associated with the High Representative, generated major expectations for a more effective and coherent EU foreign policy.

In Lisbon Member States changed not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively the references to the role of the HR in the EU funding texts (Rüger 2011). The Lisbon Treaty charged the High Representative of the Union not only with assisting the Presidency in its tasks, but also with “conduct[ing] the Union’s common foreign and security policy” and contributing “by his proposals to the development of that policy” (art, 18 Lisbon Treaty). Most importantly, the new Treaty eliminated the divisions into pillars introduced in Maastricht and charged the High Representative of the Union with ensuring the consistency between the different areas of EU external action (art, 21 Lisbon Treaty). To this purpose, the role and powers of the HR were personally unified with those of the Commissioner for External Affairs (art 18 of the Lisbon Treaty). In addition, the High Representative of the Union was to become Vice-President of the European Commission, with a right of initiative, and control over the Commission’s budget for external relations.

Following these reforms, many expected this institution to gain greater independence vis-à-vis Member States than its predecessor (Brady and Sola 2010; Avery 2009; Zwolski 2011). Even though any evaluation on the impact of Lisbon reforms is still premature, so far the membership of the High Representative of the Union in the European Commission has been more a source of bureaucratic battles than of further coherence. By disregarding newly established authority of the High Representative of the Union, for example, as early as February 2010 the President of the European Commission Barroso appointed the new ambassador to the US (something that should have been under the High Representative of the Union’s authority under the new Lisbon procedures). Frictions with the Commission, moreover, were generated by divergences over what directorate generals would be incorporated by the EEAS, and what would

remain under Commission's control.¹⁹³ As for its role of Vice-President of the Commission, moreover, the High Representative of the Union has been appointed as coordinator of a group of Commissioners dealing with EU external relations. The group includes Commissioners for Enlargement, Development, and Humanitarian Aid and, yet, it excludes the Commissioner for Trade. It is not clear, moreover, what the High Representative's coordination will entail and how it will be conducted.

Even though the instruments just mentioned will certainly enhance the High Representative of the Union's role in policy formulation, the HR's legacy shows that common institutions have hardly become influential in all phases of policy-making in absence of a shared culture and of the perception of external threats as shared threats.¹⁹⁴ Accordingly, rather than at the High Representative of the Union's new role within the Commission, this research points at other reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty as important tools for the transformation of EU foreign policy processes. In order to develop a shared culture within the EU, in particular, the new powers that the High Representative of the Union will have within the Council seem particularly relevant. First, following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the High Representative of the Union has become the chairman of the EU Foreign Affairs Council, thus gaining a say on the agenda of ministerial meetings. Apart from adding continuity to EU foreign policy, this innovation offers the High Representative of the Union new powers to persuade Member States to discuss priorities decided in Brussels and not in national capitals and, possibly, to launch new ideas on them,

Second, through the creation of the EEAS, the Lisbon Treaty has given the EU unified delegations in third countries. These delegations put together existing representations of the Council and of the Commission, and are composed for one third of national diplomats from EU Member States. By guiding these delegations, the High Representative of the Union has two fundamental opportunities to forge new ideas and a

¹⁹³ DG Relex and DG Development have become part of the EEAS, while DG trade, Europaid and ECHO remain under Commission's control.

¹⁹⁴ This finding is in line with the findings of Major who has argued that HR Solana was clearly "Strong with the member states, not against them" (Major 2011).

common culture in EU foreign policy. Delegations, indeed, will act as interlocutor for third countries, as well as coordinator for the work of national embassies (something which was previously done by the rotating Presidency) and source of information and analysis of developments on the ground (Balfour and Ojanen 2011). Accordingly, not only will they develop their own culture, but they will also have great chances to spread it to Brussels and to national capitals, acting as new epistemic communities.

To conclude, in spite of all expectations generated by the reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, in December 2009 the appointment of Catherine Ashton as first incumbent for the post of High Representative of the Union generated surprise and, in most cases, disappointment (Barber 2010; Howorth 2011). Unlike Javier Solana, Ashton has little experience in foreign policy and virtually no personal contacts with world's leaders.¹⁹⁵ For some, she was elected "to define her position as that of a secretary rather than as that of a general" (Howorth 2011: 139).

This research has investigated EU foreign policy by pointing at structural factors different from leaders' skills. There is not doubt, however, that if a shared security culture is to be spread within the EU security community, also personality matters. Ashton does not seem to have the authority (and maybe not even the aspiration) to shape a shared EU security culture, and sees herself "as a facilitator rather than a doer" (Howorth 2011: 319).¹⁹⁶ During the first months in office, Ashton has been criticized for failing to boost EU visibility on world stage on major policy dossiers¹⁹⁷ and for missing key meetings with national ministries.¹⁹⁸ By contrast, commentators have recognized her strong determination in establishing the new EEAS. During the establishment of this new

¹⁹⁵ Before being appointed to this post, Ashton was EU Commissioner (for one year), and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the UK Department for Education and Skills.

¹⁹⁶ By contrast, while he was presenting his European Security Strategy, HR Solana noted that "Une Europe plus forte dotée d'une vision stratégique commune, c'est aussi une Europe capable de consolider ses relations à la fois avec les autres grands acteurs (...) et avec les autres grandes organisations" (Solana 2004b).

¹⁹⁷ She was criticised for not visiting Haiti, after the earthquake of January 2010, and for not having promptly issued declarations enhancing the visibility of her role and of EU foreign policy after the emergence of the Middle East spring.

¹⁹⁸ See also European Voice (2012).

structure, Ashton was able to resist important pressures¹⁹⁹ and to establish the EEAS as an independent body which will certainly give her a strong leverage vis-à-vis other institutions and the Member States. This determination seems to confirm Ashton's preference for institutions rather than for policies, something that may lead her to contribute more to EU bureaucratic rather than security culture.

As this research has pointed out, however, not only the efficient setting of central institutions matter, and one may wonder to what extent EU foreign policy can grow without a common vision or grand strategy that goes beyond common bodies and reaches national capitals (Bonvicini and Regelsberger 2007; Biscop, Howorth, and Giegerich 2009). Although the new powers attributed by the Lisbon Treaty to the High Representative of the Union have enhanced the chances of this institutions to contributing to this vision, the appointment of Ashton seems to leave space for and the burden of developing this vision in the hands of national leaders.

¹⁹⁹ For example, the European Parliament had previously asked that the new body be associated to the European Commission.

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ANNEX I

INTERVIEWS

1. EU foreign policy expert, phone interview, July 2009
2. EU foreign policy expert, Brussels, November 2009
3. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, November 2009
4. EU Council official, Brussels, November 2009
5. EU Council official, Brussels, November 2009
6. EU Council official, Brussels, November 2009
7. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, November 2009
8. EU Council official, Brussels, November 2009
9. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, November 2009
10. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, November 2009
11. EU Council official, Brussels, November 2009
12. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, November 2009
13. European Commission official, Brussels, November 2009
14. European Commission official, Brussels, November 2009
15. European Commission official, Brussels, November 2009
16. Seconded national diplomat, national representation to the EU, Brussels, November 2009
17. PSC representative,* Brussels, November 2009
18. Seconded national diplomat, national representation to the EU, Brussels, November 2009
19. PSC representative,* Brussels, November 2009
20. Seconded national diplomat, National Foreign Ministry
21. PSC representative,* Brussels, November 2009
22. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010

23. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010
24. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010
25. EU Council official, Brussels, January 2010
26. PSC representative,* Brussels, January 2010
27. Seconded national diplomat, Council, Brussels, January 2010
28. European Commission official, Brussels, January 2010
29. Seconded national official, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010
30. European Commission official, Brussels, January 2010
31. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010
32. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010
33. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010
34. European Commission, Brussels, January 2010
35. Seconded national diplomat, EU Council, Brussels, January 2010
36. National diplomat, national Foreign Ministry, July 2010
37. National diplomat, national Foreign Ministry, December 2010

* When cited in the text, PSC representatives are referred to as national diplomats.
