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'Still a humanitarian power? EU maritime security policies in the face of insecurity'

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Abstract

The European Union (EU) is often described as a 'normative' or 'humanitarian' foreign policy power, due to its limited military capabilities and its focus on promoting norms rather than material interests. But what happens to EU foreign policy in a rapidly changing and more insecure geopolitical context? Today, the EU is faced with new security threats on a various of fronts, ranging from increased Russian aggression, an explosion of immigrants due to conflicts in the EU's near abroad, to an increased fear of terrorist attacks on EU soil. Against this background, following much of the international relations and EU foreign policy literature, one would expect the EU's foreign and security policies to change: Rather than promoting norms, EU policies will be oriented towards increasing the member states' security, drawing on all means necessary. This paper explores the relevance of this hypothesis by a comparative study of three cases of EU maritime security policies: The EU's Maritime Security Strategy, EU Arctic policies and the EU's naval missions. Is the EU becoming a great maritime power in the realist sense, or can EU maritime security policies be characterized as 'humanitarian' even in the face of changing geopolitics?

Introduction

Scholars studying EU foreign policy have argued that it differs from the way in which we traditionally conceive of foreign policy. Duchêne described the EU as a 'civilian power' already in 1973, but in particular since the 1990s, the EU has been characterised as a 'civilian' (Orbie 2008), 'normative' (Manners 2002), 'humanitarian' (Sjursen 2015) and 'soft power' (Cross 2011; Nye 2004). An important part of this description is the EU's global promotion of

1

multilateral institutions and norms (Jørgensen, Laatikainen..Orbie), and the active role it has taken to fight climate change (Bretherton and Vogler 2006; Falkner 2007). But what happens to EU foreign policy in a rapidly changing and more insecure geopolitical context? Will it then still be correct to talk of the EU as a 'normative' or 'civilian' power, or will a uncertainty make the EU more inclined to instead promote its interests on the world scene? Today, the EU is faced with new security threats on a various of fronts, ranging from increased Russian aggression in Ukraine and beyond, an explosion of immigrants due to conflicts in the EU's near abroad, to an increased fear of terrorist attacks on EU soil. Against this background, following much of the international relations and EU foreign policy literature, one would expect the EU's foreign and security policies to change: Internally, one would expect the member states to be more concerned with securing their own borders and citizens' immediate security, which would thus limit their ability to reach agreement on common policies, or to delegate tasks to the EU institutions (Macfarlane & Menon 2014; Mearsheimer 2014; Posen 2014; Walt 2014). Or, to the extent that the member states are able to agree, EU policies would be increasingly oriented towards bolstering the member states' interests, drawing on all means necessary (Hyde-Price 2008; Mearsheimer 2001; Moravscik 2010; Walt 2014; Waltz 2000). Following this neo-realist perspective, norms are always secondary to material interests, which is why the EU's acclaimed focus on norms is explained as a pursuit of the "*second order normative concerns* of EU member states" (Hyde-Price 2008: 32). Strategically rational foreign policy actors promote non-security goals only as long as this does not conflict with other more important economic or strategic interests (Hyde-Price 2008; Mearsheimer 1995). Thus, in a more insecure environment, one would expect the EU to develop into a more traditional, real-political type of foreign policy power. This paper explores the relevance of this hypothesis by a comparative study of two cases of recently adopted EU maritime security policies, asking why these policies were adopted: The EU's Maritime Security Strategy and action plan and the EU Arctic policies. EU maritime security policies are useful cases for examining whether the EU's behaviour changes or if there is something normatively distinct about EU foreign policy that is independent of the security risks and threats the member states are facing. The EUMSS and EU Arctic policies were both adopted when the EU's external polycrisis (Fligstein) were at its highest and are thus cases where it is most likely to find support for the neo-realist hypothesis that EU policies will change to promote the member states' first order material interests when their security is threatened. At

the same time, however, the EU itself claims that its maritime security policies and Arctic policies are based on norms (….)Perspectives linking EU security policies to the member states interests and relative powers cannot explain such behaviour. Thus, to investigate whether or not the EU continues to be a 'normative/civilian/ethical power despite crises and insecurity, this paper also discusses the relevance of an alternative hypothesis building on Eriksen (2009) and Sjursen's (2006a, 2007) concept of a humanitarian foreign policy. The defining criteria of what will be called a 'humanitarian foreign policy' is linked to whether the foreign policy actor seeks to overcome power politics through a focus on strengthening cosmopolitan law in the international system, and that in conducting its foreign policy it is willing also to bind itself to such norms. Has this been so? Is the EU becoming a great maritime power in the realist sense, or can EU maritime security policies be characterized as 'humanitarian' even in the face of crises and changing geopolitics?

The remainder of the paper has four parts. Firstly, I give a short description of the two cases. Secondly, I lay out the theoretical framework and the methodological approach used in order to study why the EU member states adopted these policies. I here develop two alternative models and corresponding hypotheses of EU foreign policies, and set out what one would expect to find if any of these hypotheses are substantiated. Thirdly follows the analysis which is conducted in two steps. First, I elaborate on how external security crises linked to the Russian invasion in Ukraine and the increase in seaborn immigration have been drivers of EU maritime security policies in the two cases studied. Having shown their importance for understanding the development of common EU policies, I go on to discuss the relevance of the two hypotheses of EU maritime policies. If EU maritime security policies have developed in response to crises, does this also imply that the EU with the EUMSS is developing towards a state-like traditional great power in the realist sense; mainly searching for the most efficient means to increase the member states' security? The conclusion sums up the findings and discusses their broader empirical and theoretical implications.

Cases and puzzle

Several of the EU member states have developed their own Arctic and maritime security strategies. When in this study referring to EU Arctic/maritime policies, I however refer to the

common EU policies decided within the framework of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, the CFSP. Although the Lisbon Treaty removed the pillar structure, the member states decided to keep the CFSP as an intergovernmental instrument, run by special procedures: The member states are formally both agenda-setters and decision-makers, and they all have the power to veto common policies.

EU Arctic policies goes back to the adoption of a Northern Dimension policy in 2000, following a proposal by the 1999 Finnish Presidency. With the enlargement to Sweden and Finland in 1995, the EU got a common border to Russia, and the two states have been the strongest champions of a Northern security focus, later together with the Baltic states. Following the next Finnish presidency, the Northern Dimension policy was revised in 2006 (Council of the European Union 2000, European Commission 2006). The first formal steps in the development of a distinct EU Arctic policy did however not come until 2008. In October 2008 the European Parliament (EP) adopted a resolution on Arctic governance, and in November the same year, the Commission presented its first Communication on the EU and the Arctic region (Commission 2008). On this background, in December 2009, the EU foreign ministers adopted a first Council Arctic Conclusions (Council 2009). However, in practice, nothing much came out of these legal decisions in terms of a common EU Arctic policy. From 2007-2014, EU policies towards the Arctic region focused largely on research (€20 million/year, 2007-13), regional and cross-border investments and issues linked to the region discussed in international organizations dealing with maritime issues and the environment (Council 2014). Following the establishment of the EEAS in 2010, the Commission and the EEAS, partly in parallel to working on the EU's Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS), started working on a Joint Communication that was eventually presented in June 2012; "Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps" (EEAS and the Commission 2012). But it was not until 2014 that things really started to happen with regard to a specific common EU Arctic policy: First, with a new EP resolution in March 2014 and then with a new Foreign Affairs Council conclusion on the developing of a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region (Council 2014). In its conclusions, the Council requested "the Commission and the High Representative to present proposals for the further development of an integrated and coherent Arctic Policy by December 2015" (Council 2014: 3). <mark>FILL IN UPDATE</mark> Since 2008, the EU (Commission) has also applied

for observer status in the Arctic Council, but this has so far not been granted due to opposition from permanent members: First and until solved in 2014 due to disagreements between the EU and Canada on the import of seal fur. Second, from 2013/2014 and still ongoing, due to increased tensions between the EU and Russia, in the Arctic region linked to EU sanctions targeting oil projects in the Russian Arctic (Depledge 2015). The EU thus participates as an observer in the Arctic Council *ad-hoc,* meaning that the Commission has to apply to attend the meetings (Arctic Council 2015)

The basis of the *EU's Maritime Security Strategy* (EUMSS) can be found in the European Security strategy (ESS 2003) and the revised implementation report from 2008 (ESS implementation report 2008). The Council adopted its first Conclusions on maritime security in April 2010 following an initiative by the Spanish Presidency. In this brief conclusion, the HR (i.e. in practice the EEAS) was tasked to work together with the Commission and the member states in "preparing options for the possible elaboration of a Security Strategy for the global maritime domain, including the possible establishment of a Task Force" (Council 2010). The Council also underlined that "work will take place in the context of CFSP/CSDP" (ibid). In December 2013 the European Council called for "an EU Maritime Security Strategy by June 2014" (European Council 2013: 4) – this time "on the basis of a joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative, taking into account the opinions of the Member States, and the subsequent elaboration of action plans to respond to maritime challenges" (Ibid). The Communication "For an open and secure global maritime domain: elements for a European Union maritime security strategy" was published in March 2013. The final EUMSS was adopted at the General affairs council (GAC) 24 June 2014, following the conventional CFSP procedures, i.e. discussions amongst the member states' Permanent Representatives in the special CFSP committee, the PSC. As the final EUMSS is multi-sectorial, the Greek Presidency also activated the ad hoc expert "Friends of the Presidency group" to prepare the Council discussions. Followed by a detailed and regularly updated action-plan, it "covers both the internal and external aspects of the Union's maritime security (Council 2014a, 2014b. Also see Germond 2011, 2015; Landmann 2015; Riddervold 2016).[1]

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[1] Being cross-sectoral, the EUMSS includes policies such as fisheries, port state control, maritime training, environmental protection and a substantial EU common foreign and security

From the outset, it was however far from evident that the EU member states would agree to these policies in 2014. Actually, just a few years ago, there was fierce resistance amongst several of the member states to *any* EU cooperation within the maritime security domain due to the national sensitivity both of maritime and of security and defense issues.[2] Many European states have strong economic or strategic maritime interests, and have been keen to act upon these as they see fit, without the involvement of the EU institutions or other member states.[3] Due to particular national interests, the fear of too much Commission involvement, and a loss of sovereign control of developments, some member states – including Germany and the United Kingdom – even opposed *any* EU coordination of within these domains as late as 2010 and 2011 (Germond 2015; Offerdal 2011; Weber and Romanyshyn 2011). So why did they only a few years later, in 2014 and 2015 all agree to develop common EU Arctic and maritime security policies?

Analytical framework, hypotheses and operationalizations.

To tease out what explains EU Arctic and Maritime policies, the paper explores the relevance of two theoretically deduced hypotheses of EU foreign policy power. The hypotheses are derived from alternative theoretical perspectives, and are thus analytically distinct. Their empirical relevance might however vary over time and across cases.

Hypothesis 1: A realist great power in the making

A basic neo-realist assumption is that foreign policy actors operate in an anarchical environment where they engage in a zero-sum game, aiming to increase their relative security by all available means. Structural factors and relative power relations shape states' actions (Mearsheimer

policy (CFSP) – including defence – component. Examples of foreign and security actions include border control and information exchange systems, maritime surveillance, maritime capabilities, naval operations and defence industry cooperation, in addition to EU coordination in international organizations dealing with maritime issues and the integration of maritime issues into all EU's external actions and the EU external action service's (EEAS) work (Council 2014; Germond 2015; Riddervold 2016). The EU's newest naval mission in the Mediterranean, "Sophia," and the Commission's suggestions on a common border control system both fall under this framework

[2] Interviews 2010, 2013, 2014 – see below. Also see A. Frontini, 'The European Union Maritime Security Strategy: sailing uncharted waters?', 26 June (2014), http://www.epc.eu/pub_details.php?pub_id=4569; Germond 2015.
[3] Germond 2015; Riddervold 2015.

1994/1994, Walt 1998; Waltz 2000). Although one would not expect states to give up their sovereignty, they may have an incentive to cooperate and form alliances with other states if structural factors make this necessary; to balance against other powers; to better shape their external environment, or to be better able to enforce common security interests, which is how the CFSP is explained on the basis of this perspective (Hyde-Price 2006, 2012; Posen 2006). On this basis one would expect the EU's Arctic policy and the EUMSS to be part of an attempt to balance other (emerging) powers and thus better protect and promote the member states' security-related and economic interests in a changing geopolitical environment. Yes, the EU might claim to promote norms and environmental protection, but this will be soft power means in search for material interests, or at least secondary to material interest Strategically rational foreign policy actors promote non-security goals only as long as this does not conflict with other more important economic or strategic interests (Hyde-Price 2008; Mearsheimer 1995). A traditional great power's main priority is always to protect its territorial sovereignty and its citizens' security and well-being.

Hypothesis 2: Still a humanitarian power

Another school of thought builds on empirical studies, and describes the EU as a "civilian" (Duchène 1972; Diez Whitman 2002), "ethical" (Aggestam 2008), "humanitarian" (Eriksen 2009; Sjursen 2007), "normative" (Manners 2002; Lucarelli and Manners 2006; Orbie)", "smart" (Cross 2011b) and "soft" power (Nye 2004). Although there are many differences between these different models and characteristics, a common feature is the argument that EU foreign policy differs from foreign policy as it is conventionally perceived because it is based on norms rather than material interests. A particular perspective on global environmental policies has moreover been part of this description of the EU as a humanitarian/normative actor. As Falkner (2007: 509) sums up in a study of the EU as a "green normative power"; "the central role it played in creating the climate change regime (Vogler and Bretherton 2006) and promoting sustainable development at the UN (Lightfoot and Burchell 2005) arguably lends support to the claim that a commitment to global environmental norms is integral to the EU's unique foreign policy identity…. the EU has emerged as a pivotal actor in global environmental policy-making."

Methodology

The methodological approach applied in this paper is to study the justifications given for the EUMSS and EU Arctic policies in order to uncover the mobilising arguments behind these policies (Sjursen 2002).

The relevance of this analysis, as well as the credibility of its findings, might be questioned on the grounds that there is often a considerable gap between what policy-makers say and what they actually mean. In the analysis, this is controlled for by triangulating between different sources, by examining the consistency of the arguments presented, and not least by controlling for consistency between what is said and what is actually done. Most importantly, I make no claims regarding the real or true motives of the EU actors. As rational choice theorists argue, it is impossible for us to reach into the 'hearts and souls' of policy-makers and uncover their 'real' or 'sincere' beliefs and convictions. For methodological reasons, rationalist perspectives therefore assume that actors are motivated by the aim of maximising self-interest. The approach applied in this paper instead builds on two alternative assumptions. First, I expect that social action can be accounted for by interpreting what it was that made it intelligible to the actors involved (Eliaeson 2002, p. 52). Second, I assume that actors are *communicatively* rational, meaning that they have the ability to justify and explain their actions, and that they coordinate their behaviour through communication (Deitelhoff 2009, Eriksen and Weigård 2003, Risse 2004, Riddervold 2010, Sjursen 2002, 2006a). Thus, I assume that also EU policy-making is based on arguments given by proponents that have to be comprehensible and acceptable for at least some co-decision makers for decisions such as those on the EUMSS and the Arctic to come about. Uncovering the arguments that led to a particular decision or action thus amounts to an explanation of this outcome. The arguments leading to agreement on a given policy (i.e. the mobilising arguments) can of course refer to material interests, as one would expect if EU maritime security and EU Arctic policies were based due to geopolitical, strategic concerns. However, by defining actors as communicatively rational one also opens up to the possibility that the actors can 'reflect on the validity of different norms, and why they should be complied with' (Sjursen, 2006b, p. 88), hence allowing also normative, and thus humanitarian, behaviour to be considered rational.

Empirical expectations.

In line with the two models of EU foreign policy outlined above, i.e. the traditional great power and the humanitarian model, I make an analytical distinction between two types or categories of arguments that might have been used to justify common EU policies (Sjursen 2002).[i]

Traditional great power – pragmatic arguments.
First, *pragmatic* arguments are characterised by reference to utility. Such arguments refer to a policy's expected material output and is what you would expect to find if the EU with EUMSS and its Arctic policy testifies to a *traditional great power* model.

For the *great power hypothesis* to be supported, one would first expect EU actors across institutions and member states to refer to the strategic and importance of maritime issues and the Arctic region in light of geopolitical factors. The EU may refer to environmental concerns following climate change and promote multilateral solutions, but such norms would not be promoted consistently, and will in any case be sidestepped if in conflict with strategic interests. Due to the priority given to strategic interests, one would thus expect to see EU policies following and reacting to geopolitical changes. In calm periods, the EU might promote green maritime policies. But in times of more insecurity, the environmental focus will be down-played and EU policies more clearly focus on security issues. In particular, one would thus also expect to observe a pattern where EU policies react to Russian foreign policy actions. One would also expect the EU's actual policies to reflect such trends and concerns, evident for example in spending priorities, energy-security projects, and military capability building.

Second, *moral arguments* are characterized by reference to justice and rights – to what is good for all, independent of material interests (Riddervold 2011, Sjursen 2002). If instead the humanitarian power hypothesis is substantiated, one would expect EU Arctic policies and the EUMSS to be oriented towards addressing climate change through multilateral institution-building and global regulation. When justifying the need for a common EU approach, EU actors across different institutions and member states would refer to the importance of environmental protection and sustainable development. The means to achieve this would be global regulation through multilateral institutions, that everyone, also the EU and the member states are bound by

– a main aim would be to "domesticate" international politics in this region (Sjursen 2007: 13). This focus must also have been followed up consistently, even when colliding with material interests, such as when conflicting with economic interest or when faced with uncertainty – such conflicts between material interests and the promotion of norms/environmental protection are the real test of the EU's humanitarian power. This means that we would expect the EU to stand firm on these principles and actions also in periods of more tension, such as those linked to Russian aggression in 2007 and 2013. If EU maritime security policies are driven mainly by considerations for the environment, one would not expect this to vary according to security or economic consideration.

Data

To explore the relevance of these hypotheses of EU Arctic policy, the analysis relies on the following sources:

First, altogether 25-30? interviews across member states and EU institutions conducted between 2010-2016: In different member states' delegations (NatDel#1-x), in the EEAS (EEAS#1-x), in the Commission (Comm#1-x), in the Council secretariat (CouncSekr#1-x) and in the EP (EP#1-x) To trace developments over time, some were interviewed several times. To control for the EU's own perspective, we also conducted xx interviews with external actors: In NATO (NATO#1-), in the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and in the US administration.The interviews are triangulated with written data, containing all official EU documents on EU Arctic policies and the EUMSS from the different EU institutions (2008-2015), other studies and reports conducted, as well as informal working documents from our key informants, both on the broader EU Maritime Security Strategy and on specific EU Arctic policies. I take an interpretative approach to these data, seeking to understand what characterizes and explains EU policies from the actors own perspective. A key tool in this type of analysis is however as discussed above to control for consistency – across different actors internally and externally, across different data sources and over time, and to the extent possible (given the relative newness of EU policies) between policy-aims and statements and policies actually conducted (Checkel 2005; 2006).

EU foreign and security in times of insecurity: The impact of the Ukraine crisis

The Ukraine crisis has been a key driver both of EU maritime security and EU Arctic policies-Developments towards a distinct *EU Arctic policy* came in two steps – in 2008/2009 and in 2014 - and can only be understood against the broader geopolitical landscape: EU decisions on the Arctic have followed as a reaction to geopolitical events and increased tensions with Russia, in the Arctic and Georgia and not least in Ukraine. Two events are key: The planting of the Russian flag on the North pole in 2007, and Russia's increased aggression and eventual intervention in Ukraine in 2014. Before the planting of the Russian flag in 2007, there was no EU Arctic policy to speak of. The Commission wanted to develop an EU Arctic policy, amongst other things discussing this in its work towards an Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP 2007, 2007). And some of the Scandinavian EU member states were as mentioned pushing for a stronger Northern dimension to the EU's common foreign and security policies (Huebert 2012; Offerdal 2011; Weber and Romanyshyn 2011). But there was not much support amongst the other member states for an EU Arctic policy; they either had no or little interests in the area, or common Arctic policies were considered outside of the scope of common EU security policies due to sovereignty considerations (ibid. Also interviews 2013, 2014). As put by one our informants, before this episode, there was "not much appetite for an EU Arctic policy. (The Arctic) was considered a regional issue, it was not considered an international issue' (EEAS#6/NATDEL#14).

Geopolitics changed this. Although without any real practical implications, the Russian planting of its flag strongly symbolized the changing geopolitical realities of the Arctic area. This "led to a virtual blizzard of new policy statements and initiatives from Arctic stakeholders, including Canada, Iceland, Norway, Russia, the United States, Finland, Denmark and Sweden, the EU, NATO, and the Nordic countries jointly (Huebert 2012: 17). This "clear shift in interest in Arctic affairs among EU policymakers" (Offerdal 2011:864) is evident in the first wave of EU initiatives and documents on EU Arctic policies from 2007/2008. However, nothing much came out of these initiatives in terms of a common EU Arctic policy. The member states did not follow up on the calls from the EU institutions. Their Council conclusion was vague and limited in terms of actual policy-proposals – in particular as regards Common foreign and security policies. Several of the member states either remained reluctant to the idea of the EU developing a coherent policy towards this region, or toward further developing EU foreign and security cooperation more generally (interviews 2010, 2013, 2014). Denmark was particularly reluctant to

any EU inference in its sovereign rights as an Arctic state, but also other member states, including big countries UK, Italy and Germany were lukewarm to any bigger "hard policy" role for the EU in the Arctic region due to the perceived sensitivity of these unsettled territorial issues (interviews 2013; 2014; Haftendorf 2011; Offerdal 2011). As put by Weber and Romanyshyn (2011: 854), the EU member states preferred "to play a gatekeeping role in the gradual development of EU Arctic policy and, thereby, seek to avoid potential complications with the Arctic states as an ultimate result of this process."

The Ukraine crisis, escalating with the Russian annexation of Crimea in March 2014 changed this, putting security on top of the EU member states' agenda. And this time, in sharp contrast to the vague 2009 conclusions, and by reference to the Arctic as "a region of growing strategic importance", they agreed to move forward with "the further development of an integrated and coherent Arctic Policy" (Council 2014). Similarly, the Commission and the EEAS' joint communication starts with the following sentence: "A safe, stable, sustainable and prosperous Arctic is important not just for the region itself, but for the European Union (EU) and for the world. The EU has a strategic interest in playing a key role in the Arctic region" (Commission and EEAS 2016: 1). The increased strategic importance of the Arctic due to the Ukraine crisis was also underlined by policy-makers themselves, both from the member states and the institutions. A key higher official informant from the EEAS who was directly involved in the making of the Communication for example argued that "this is all about security and strategic interests in this region. It is security first" (EEAS#6/Natdel#14). As put by one of our EEAS key informants, with the ice melting and with maritime issues becoming more and more popular, member states' attention towards the Arctic gradually increased from 2007/2008 onwards. But the Ukraine crisis was the "catalyst to get this issue mainstreamed, to get member state support' for an EU Arctic policy (EEAS#6/NatDel#14). "The Cocktail got richer and richer, then we got this Russia incident that made everything crystal clear" (ibid).

The Ukraine crisis was also a catalyst behind the EUMSS. Just twelve days after the Joint EUMSS Communication was launched – just when the member states were to start their negotiations on the EUMSS – Russia very surprisingly invaded Crimea. Thus, in the midst of the making of a maritime strategy, European security was on top of the EU agenda, and key events all had a clear maritime imprint. After all, a main reason why Russia annexed the Crimea was to

secure a key strategic harbor for its Black Sea fleet (Mearsheimer 2015). The impact of the Russia/Ukraine crisis for the discussions, context and eventual adoption of the EUMSS was underlined by the member states' representatives themselves (NatDel#8-13). An illustrative example is this quote from a PSC ambassador during the final negotiations, when asked about the impact of the Ukraine crisis on the EUMSS discussions: "For example, there was nothing about the Black Sea in the communication, now we have Ukraine and everyone wants the Black Sea in… For the Baltic states the vital concern is sovereignty vis a vis Russia – they are really scared" (NatDel#11). And with the increased uncertainty facing the EU member states, the Greek presidency, supported by the EEAS and the Commission, could gather support for the EUMSS' adoption amongst previously reluctant member states. Several countries, including France, Spain, Italy and Portugal, were already in strong support of an EU maritime security strategy, in line with their traditional security orientations. However, also member states who opposed an EU maritime strategy in the first phase, were clearly affected by the insecurity caused by the Russia/Ukraine crisis. Not least, because of this crisis and consequent uncertainty suddenly facing them, the member states' discussions on the EUMSS were taken up to a level of discussing EU security and defence cooperation more generally (Comm#4; EEAS#4, NatDel#8-13; unpublished drafts). The impact of the Russia/Ukraine crisis and the corresponding new security situation facing the member states on this process and its outcome is evident also in the EUMSS drafts and in the final text. Instead of basing the member states' discussions on the Joint Communication text, in face of the increasing tensions over Ukraine, the Greek Presidency decided that it "wanted its own paper" (Comm#4, NatDel#8-9), instead drafting a much more security and defence oriented text that formed the basis of the member states' discussions. The cross-sectoral approach was kept, but the conventional security focus was much stronger – in all the different informal drafts and in the final strategy (Council 2014b; unpublished drafts and working documents). For example, in the EUMSS: "The Union stresses the importance of its assuming increased responsibilities as a global security provider, at the international level and in particular in its neighbourhood, thereby also enhancing its own security and its role as a strategic global actor" – including by the use of military tools (Council 2014: 2). This is a clear reference to the EU's eastern neighbor, Russia (interviews with participants 2014). In comparison, the Joint Communication that was written *before* the crisis only mentions the EU's neighbourhood

once, and then linked to the need to improve "information-sharing arrangements with international partners" (Council 2014a).

Still a humanitarian power?

At the outset, the strong impact of the Russia/Ukraine crisis on the EUMSS process and outcome seems to be in line with neo-realist expectations to why states cooperate in the field of foreign and security policy. As discussed above, following such perspectives, states are mainly concerned with their relative security and their external behavior is thus mainly driven by structural factors. Changes in their security environment might therefore trigger them to cooperate to be better able to face common threats. In particular, states might want to join forces to balance other states that they perceive as a risk to their security or to the achievement of common interests, which is how the CFSP is most often explained from a neo-realist perspective (Hyde-Price 2006, 2012; Posen 2006; Waltz 2000, Walt 1998). At the outset, this seems to fit rather well with what happened in the EUMSS and Arctic case. True, EU maritime security cooperation has developed gradually over a number of years, not least due to the increased threat posed by piracy to EU shipping and the increasing number of refugees coming by sea to Europe (Germond 2015). And as also discussed above, the EEAS and the Commission were key actors in driving the EUMSS forward and are key to understand its cross-sectoral content. However, the Russia/Ukraine crisis is the most important factor for understanding the final adoption of the EUMSS and the development of an EU Arctic policy.

But does this also imply that the EU is becoming a traditional maritime power in the realist sense? I.e. that the EU when responding to external threats by increasing security cooperation also is becoming more oriented towards the protection and promotion of the member states' material interests at the expense of norms, as a neo-realist perspective would predict? The data does not support this hypothesis. As we recall, if EU policies can be explained by a neo-realist proposition, one would not only expect it to be driven by external, geopolitical events and factors. One would also expect them to reflect the sum of the member states' interests and relative powers. One would thus expect EU policies and actions to be directed towards identifiable security threats to the member states' territories or their strategic interests. Any

normative considerations would have been secondary to material interests only.[4] The data, however, do not fit these expectations. One important difference is the strong role played by the EU institutions. In fact, both Commission and EEAS officials influenced the EUMSS much more than one would expect following *any* state-focused perspectives assuming that such institutions are merely agents of the member states.[5] Most importantly - the policy aims and means described in the EUMSS and in EU Arctic policies are not in line with a neo-realist great power model. Rather than focusing on particular territorial security threats and their foremost military response, the main aim and tool referred to in the EUMSS is global regulation. The overall external objective is "to promote better rules-based maritime governance and make effective use of the EU instruments at hand".[6] "Respect for international law, human rights and democracy and full compliance with UNCLOS, the applicable bilateral treaties and the values enshrined therein are the cornerstones of this Strategy and key principles for rules-based good governance at sea".[7] In line with this, "maritime security is understood as a state of affairs of the global maritime domain, in which international law and national law are enforced, freedom of navigation is guaranteed and citizens, infrastructure, transport, the environment and marine resources are protected".[8] In comparison, the revised US Maritime Strategy (USMSS) instead "describes how the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard will design, organize, and employ naval forces in support of national security interests and homeland security objectives".[9] Although also underlining the duty to conduct humanitarian operations and the need to cooperate with allies and partners, the USMSS confirms the naval forces' priority of "continued commitment to maintain the combat power necessary to deter potential adversaries and to fight and win when required".[10] In line with what one would typically expect of a traditional neo-realist great power, American"(f)orward-deployed and forward-stationed naval forces use the global maritime commons as a medium of maneuver, assuring access to overseas regions, defending key interests in those areas, protecting our citizens abroad, and preventing our

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[4] Hyde-Price 2006; 2012.
[5] NatDel#8-13. Observations 2014.
[6] Council 2014a: 10.
[7] Council 2014a: 5.
[8] Council 2014a: 3.
[9] US Defence 2015.
[10] USMSS 2015: i.

adversaries from leveraging the world's oceans against us".[11] Similar references cannot be found in the EUMSS.

Without conducting a systematic, comprehensive comparison of the two strategies, these examples suggest that the EUMSS is more in line with what one would expect of a "humanitarian", norm-oriented foreign policy actor than a traditional, neo-realist great power. As discussed above the main indicators of a humanitarian foreign policy actor is precisely that is it is promoting a change from power politics and 'an exclusive emphasis on the rights of sovereign states within a multilateral order to the rights of individuals in a cosmopolitan order' (Sjursen 2007, p. 215). Further in line with such a foreign policy model, the rule oriented EU approach and the weight put on this approach during negotiations were underlined by the participants themselves, both from the member states and the EU institutions.[12] Also the Commission – the EU actor traditionally most focused on EU policies' economic aspects – argued that although the "maritime strategy makes sense from a military economic perspective, the starting point is a military perspective. But the military EU perspective is different from a traditional geopolitical military focus. The military perspective of the EEAS is one that promotes global regulation of the maritime global commons".[13] The reason being that "when a particular maritime space is not particularly governed, you can't enforce rules".[14] This focus on the EU as a different type of actor was also evident in the interviewees with the member state officials, across the different countries and groupings.[15]

Also *EU Arctic policies* are more line with a humanitarian than a realist foreign policy model. While the data strongly suggests that the EU member states responded to geopolitical events and tensions in another part of the world when agreeing on an EU Arctic policy, they did so in a way that emphasized global governance to secure sustainable development. In 2014, member states in their conclusions argued that the EU should get access and influence over Arctic developments "to assist in addressing the challenge of sustainable development in a prudent and responsible manner (…); to find common solutions to challenges that require an international response (…);

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[11] USMSS 2015: 1.
[12] Comm#3; EEAS #4; NatDel#8-13.
[13] Comm#2.
[14] Comm#5.
[15] NatDel#1-13.

to securing access to, and promoting safe and sustainable management of raw materials and renewable natural resources (…) (and;) to develop joint approaches and best practice to address the potential environmental impact and safety concerns related to increasing activities in the region' (Council 2014). The EU needs to help find "common solutions to challenges that require an international response" (Council 2014: 1). This focus on cooperation to secure a sustainable development and the need for much more and better coordinated research on Arctic issues in this regards is even clearer in the 2016 Joint Communication, which "sets out the case for an EU policy that focuses on advancing international cooperation in responding to the impacts of climate change on the Arctic's fragile environment, and on promoting and contributing to sustainable development, particularly in the European part of the Arctic (Commission and EEAS 2016:1). And we see this focus in the member state debates and documents. Thus, both EU member states and EU institutions have been consistent in claiming that regulation through common global and regional institutions to protect the environment is the preferred solution for the future of the Arctic, in spite of changing geopolitics. As one of our EEAS key informant sums up: "The EU has a great capacity of thinking strategically, much more than the member states. But you must not make mistake strategic with security. Here, strategic is about climate change. This is the key frame by which the EU looks at security in the Arctic. Our first, long term strategic focus is on climate, and then then later security and geopolitical events were the triggers that helped us get the member states' support" for an EU Arctic policy (EEAS#6/NatDel#14). As argued by a key Commission official when asked about the EU's Arctic policies (11/3-2014), "it is not very legitimate to focus on transport routes. It fits the EU better to have an environmental focus' (Pending more research on member states' positions and "outsiders' view/interviews with US officials.) In other words, the long term EU approach is to promote sustainable development through international regulation. But it was the Ukraine crisis that triggered the support from the member states for an EU Arctic policy from 2014 and beyond.

The argument that the EU needs to get a stronger voice to protect the maritime global commons has in other words been consistent across the cases. Both EU Arctic policies and the EU Maritime Security Strategy, are justified by the need for global regulation and protection of the maritime global commons and the environment more broadly (IMP 2007; EUMSS 2014;

Commission and EEAS 2016). The consistent reference to global regulation as the main aim and mean of EU policies – across member states, institutions and different documents in both cases – indicates that such normative considerations were important for its adoption and implementation: That although responding to external threats, the member states joined forces to pursue global regulation and sustainable development of the maritime global commons, in line with what one would expect of a humanitarian foreign policy actor (Eriksen 2009; Sjursen 2007). For such a proposition to be substantiated, the EU's behaviour must however also be consistent to such norms in its actions, and it must be willing to bind itself to global law, also in cases where this involves costs to the EU or the member states themselves. As the EU's Arctic and maritime security policies substantiate, further studies should explore whether its humanitarian aims and tools are also followed up in the EU's actual behaviour.

Concluding discussion

So overall, then, what does the analysis tell us about EU foreign and security policies in times of crisis and increased uncertainty – is the EU still a humanitarian power, or is the EU becoming a realist great power? The analysis does not support the hypothesis that the EU is becoming a realist great power. On the one hand, the main developments of EU Arctic and maritime security policies have followed geopolitical events, in line with what one would expect following a neo-realist, traditional great power model of foreign policy: As external powers become more threatening, the EU member states' have joined forces to become collectively stronger too. However, the EU's maritime security and Arctic policy *tools and aims* do not fit with a neo-realist great power foreign policy model – the EU does not foremost seek increased territorial control and powers for itself or some or all of the member states. Despite the fact that the development of EU policies has varied in line with geopolitical events – increasingly also putting member states' interests to the center – the EU's stance has remained consistent over time: The EU's position is that the Arctic and the seas should be regulated and governed by international law to ensure its sustainable development.

What about alternative explanations? The big leap in EU policies from 2014 cannot be explained sufficiently by other factors. If *economic considerations* drive EU Arctic and maritime security policies, then developments would have occurred in light of increased knowledge of economic opportunities in the Arctic, or in line with financial turbulence. However, oil and gas

opportunities in the Arctic, for example, were known well before 2014. The main reference used when discussing the prospect of natural resources in the Arctic area, the US Geological Survey, for example came in 2009, indeed suggesting its potential for big oil and gas finds (US Geological Survey 2009). Similarly, the financial crisis hit the EU in 2009/2010, again suggesting that common EU policies should have come earlier if driven mainly by concerns for economic gain or the need for pooling and sharing in light of the financial crisis. The analysis also suggests that *EU institutions*, such as the EEAS and the Commission, were important drivers of these EU policies. As mentioned above, the two played an important role in substantiating and driving the EUMSS and EU Arctic policies forward, not least with their Joint Communications. However, there was no automatic process from the presentation of the Joint Communications to the adoption of EU policies. Their active involvement only set the groundwork. It really took member state initiative to move the policy forward in 2014.

Although one should be careful with drawing general conclusions on the basis of two cases, the findings in this paper have broader empirical and analytical implications.

First, the findings contribute to the discussion on the EU's global ambitions, supporting the claim that the EU indeed is becoming an important player in world politics. This development is important also for our understanding of the EU as such. Being the only remaining intergovernmental policy-area in the EU and the one most strongly linked to member states' sovereignty, EU foreign and security policies have been referred as *a sine qua non* in order to achieve full European integration. And the EUMSS and the EU Arctic policy indeed take collective European security policies a substantial step forward. In times where some commentators are questioning the EU's very survival, the findings in this article in other words lead to the opposite prediction - of more rather than less EU integration in the face of increasing security threats and challenges.

Second, as the analysis shows, none of the 'typical' models of EU foreign and security policy really fits these two cases. As neo-realist perspectives predict, changing geopolitical structures and threats created a need for common policies to increase the member states' security, affecting the member states' preferences in favour of the EUMSS and common EU Arctic policies. At the same time, however, the EU response to these crisis and challenges is more in line with what one

expect of a humanitarian actors. Rather than becoming a security-maximizing actor in the neo-realist sense, findings suggest that norms matter also in the member states' final negotiations. Even in a situation that is clearly threatening member states' security interests, with Russia annexing territories close to EU border, data indicate that the EU is developing a humanitarian maritime security policy.

Third, the study suggests that real-political factors and crises increase the likelihood that the EU member states will search for common EU solutions and more cooperation also in other policy-areas. To a large degree, the CFSP is driven by events: In the cases studied here, geopolitical factors and threats drove the EU member states to the negotiation table in a quest for solutions through common EU policies. In that sense one could argue that such events drive the EU towards developing more state-like features, i.e. towards integrating more also in what is often referred to as core state powers (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2013) including in the area of security and defence. Given that the international system today is becoming more and more precarious, we can also expect that the EU's bid to become a stronger global player will further increase. Future research will explore the extent to which this reaction from the EU is present in other cases. This study however adds further to the existing literature by exploring how external events in one policy-area affect policy-making in other areas of the CFSP and by suggesting how the impact of different factors may vary across different phases of EU foreign and security policy-making. The EUMSS and EU Arctic policies were not direct policy-responses to the Russia/Ukraine crisis. Still, this study shows that this crisis also strongly influenced already on-going, parallel day-to-day policy-processes. Moreover, findings in this paper shed light on *how* external geopolitical events may influence policy processes and outcomes: In particular, the analysis suggests that they are important for understanding first, that the idea of common EU policies reaches the EU agenda, and second, why member states' preferences change in favor of common EU policies during their negotiations. The analysis however also suggests that although real-political factors and crises increase the likelihood that the EU member states will search for common EU solutions, this is not sufficient to explain the actual policies eventually agreed to and conducted. There is no "automatic" adoption of (the most efficient) security-enhancing measures even if member states prefer a common EU response to new or increasing threats.

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[i] Empirically, the two types of arguments will always overlap.