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PUBLISHED BY:
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The 'Political Economy of Conflicts': A Window of Opportunity for CFSP?

Moritz Weiss

Abstract

The European Union (EU) is frequently criticised for lacking substantive military capabilities and thus not being able to conduct an effective security policy. The objective of this article is to challenge the underlying assumptions of this critique in light of the features of contemporary security problems and the 'demands' they pose to effective security policy. Firstly, the article points towards some conceptual fallacies that these assumptions tend to be based on. Secondly, it presents an exemplary empirical exploration of the EU's emerging potential to address what has been termed the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. Finally, the article suggests that the distinct characteristics of today's security challenges might indeed constitute a 'window of opportunity' for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) to further evolve as a prominent actor in world politics.

THE HISTORICAL RECORD OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S (EU) COMMON FOREIGN AND Security Policy (CFSP) is mixed at best. On the one hand, after several drawbacks, there has been an increase in both substantive scope and institutional depth. Even with regard to geographical range, there are remarkable developments, such as the deployment of an EU mission to monitor the implementation of the recently arranged peace agreement in Aceh, Indonesia (Kirk 2005). On the other hand, many academics and practitioners still emphasise the general ineffectiveness of the EU (Shepherd 2003; Rummel 2003: 5; Gourlay 2004: 416-419; see also Manners 2002; Aldis and Herd 2004). The common explanation for the EU's alleged incompetence is primarily its lack of military capabilities and secondarily its insufficient institutional capacity. The EU is considered to have the potential to be successful with respect to 'soft power' issues but is – due to its embryonic military capabilities – incapable of conducting an effective security policy. Thus, scholars, who regard the EU as not being able to accomplish the raised prospects, have identified a 'capability-expectations gap' (Hill 1993; 1998).

This account implicitly rests upon a widespread 'actor-environment' understanding of the international system: The actors of global politics are primarily states, which are characterised by distinct properties, such as the monopoly of legitimate force and the disposability of military power. The environment of global politics is the anarchic international system. The corollary is that security problems are primarily associated with the interaction of clearly separated communities being organised in states. This 'methodological nationalism' (Beck 1997: 44-45) reversely suggests that inter-state war and military interventions represent the essential threats to peace and security.

I would like to thank first and foremost Monika Heupel, with whom I started this project. She offered me great insights into her research on the 'political economy of conflicts'. Furthermore, I would like to thank Julian Eckl, Achim Kemmerling, Wolfgang Wagner, and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments at several occasions.

ISSN 1815-347X online – Weiss, M. (2008). 'The "Political Economy of Conflicts": A Window of Opportunity for CFSP?', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp.1-17.

Hence, large parts of the political science literature implicitly infer a historically emerged 'evolutionary fit' between states, which possess sufficient military capabilities, and the anarchical international system (Tilly 1990). This assumption, in turn, suggests an 'evolutionary misfit' between the EU as an actor, which does not have substantial military capabilities at its disposal, and the security problems resulting from the global political system. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that both of the EU's stated deficiencies – its negligible military might and its inadequate institutional capacity – are exactly those that differentiate it most clearly from modern nation states. Even though rarely stated explicitly, this assumption forms the basis of many scholarly contributions to the EU's international role.

In contrast, this article proposes that the presumption is only plausible if inter-state war and military interventions were indeed today's central threats to peace and security. If one takes note of the relevant literature, however, one can see that it is not inter-state wars but other forms of violent conflicts, which are widely considered to be of utmost importance in the contemporary security environment. For example, in recent years, numerous scholars have identified so-called 'new wars' – intra-state wars differing from inter-state wars as well as from the classical civil wars of the Cold War period – as crucial security problem (see Kaldor 1999; Münkler 2005). In particular since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, an increasing number of scholars refer to the dangers posed by transnational terrorism (e.g. Cronin, 2002/3). Finally, weak, failing and failed states are increasingly considered as a global security problem, since they do not only fail to provide security to its citizens but also 'export' insecurity (see Rotberg 2004). If we, accordingly, witness a transformation of threats to peace and security, some of the above-mentioned assumptions, which underpin the EU's supposed inability to qualify as an effective actor in global security politics, are worth to be challenged.

Hence, the article's objective is twofold. From a policy perspective, we explore the alleged impotence of the EU to pursue an effective security policy; and, from a conceptual point of view, we critically question the theoretical underpinnings of this claim. By briefly reviewing two distinct literature strands of the discipline, namely the debate on the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and – as an example for a contemporary security problem – on the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' (i.e. on of the most distinct feature of the 'new wars'), we arrive at a somewhat paradoxical conclusion. The analyses of the CFSP criticise the EU for not being a proper actor in an international system dominated by nation-states (see Hill, 1996). In contrast, the literature on the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' emphasises the limitations of both states as suitable actors and military capabilities as appropriate instruments to respond effectively to this facet of the changing security environment (see Sherman 2002; Heupel 2005). Therefore, it is argued in this paper that the stated transformations of the security environment might offer a 'window of opportunity' for the EU to evolve as an effective actor in global security politics. Indeed, there seems to be a certain 'fit' between the EU as an international institution which is developing effective political and economic policy instruments and the changing security environment – exemplified by the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. In short, we may expect the EU to be increasingly able to *supply* what the contemporary security environment *demands*.

This basically functionalist argument unfolds in three steps. Firstly, there is a briefly review the literature on CFSP and the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' of the 'new wars'. It is demonstrated that, given the characteristics of today's security problems, military capabilities do not represent a *conditio sine qua non* for effective security policy. In particular, in the context of a comprehensive approach to security, their significance has decreased, whereas civilian means have gained in importance. Secondly, there is an empirical exploration of the extent to which the EU has so far utilised this 'window of opportunity', and which is apparently emerging from the proliferation of the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. Finally, the conclusion summarises the main findings and briefly discusses the scope of the article's argument.

Why the Critique of the EU's Lack of Military Capabilities Misses the Point

CFSP: neither a 'single voice' nor 'sufficient military power'?

The debate on the (in-)effectiveness of European security policy centres on two supposed problems: the EU's weak institutional capacity and its lack of military capabilities.¹ Firstly, there has been a vivid discussion on the EU's institutional design or respectively its 'actorness' (e.g. Ginsberg 1999). Since the signing of the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties, however, and the concomitant progress of the institutional dimension,² this strand of the critique has relatively lost in prominence. Secondly, many authors share the critical assessment that the lack of military capabilities represents the EU's main 'Achilles' Heel'. In order to qualify as a 'true actor' in the international system, coercive power is regarded indispensable for effective policy-making (Hill 1998: 24-29). This issue is framed less as choice or opportunity, but rather as a *conditio sine qua non*: Europe must project military power to achieve desired effects in global politics (Shepherd, 2003).

While Christopher Hill's 'capability-expectations gap' (1993, 1998) had originally been conceptualised along three dimensions (resources, instruments, cohesiveness), the subsequent debate has been increasingly confined to aspects of military power. This was mainly based on the preoccupation of wide parts of the discipline with the (obsolescence of the) concept of Europe as a 'civilian power'. There were numerous modifications and adjustments to the CFSP's actual development in the end of the 1990s, but the concept still represents the most wide-spread *sui generis* approach to the problematique and it has generated important empirical and normative insights (see Smith 2000; Stavridis 2001; Mannes 2002).

Even though critically observed by most of the latter scholars, the EU has not only made progress in the institutional dimension, but also – at least to some degree – improved and enhanced its military capabilities. Since the British shift in St. Malo and the following Cologne and Helsinki European Councils, a European Rapid Reaction Force has been initiated. Moreover, new military units have been created within the Council bureaucracy and some EU missions have been quite successfully launched (Hill 2001: 319-20; Rummel 2003: 22-24). 'Operation Concordia' in Macedonia, for instance, suggests that the EU might indeed be capable of conducting small-scale military crisis operations in support of its CFSP objectives (Mace 2004: 487). Furthermore, the European Defence Agency has been established to support EU member states developing their military capabilities for crisis management operations. Finally, the European Security Strategy attempted to formulate a strategic vision of genuinely European objectives in world politics (European Security Strategy, 2003). Notwithstanding these developments, though, many commentators continue to point to the enduring weaknesses in the EU's capability dimension (Shepherd, 2003).

In contrast, we argue that this one-sided focus excludes alternative perspectives. Such exclusion is related to the historical emergence of the states system and the traditional narrow understanding of security. Firstly, it has been taxation and particularly the monopoly of force, which made the sovereign state prevail against competing social organisational forms such as city leagues (Spruyt 1994). Thus, both hierarchical organisation and military capabilities are associated with the nation-state's success in this 'struggle for the survival of

¹ The article focuses primarily on the EU's second-pillar, namely the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). We are aware of the fact that the European Security and Defence Policy has meanwhile developed, but the acquisition of military capabilities on behalf of the EU member states is not the focus of the paper. After all, it does not discuss whether the EU members are currently about to close the 'capabilities-expectations gap'. Instead, the primary focus is on the question whether 'military capabilities' represent, in fact, a *conditio sine qua non* to conduct effective security policy today. In other words, it is primarily about 'new' demands of the security environment and the potential 'supply' through existing instruments within CFSP.

² See for instance Qualified Majority Voting in implementation decisions, Mr. CFSP, 'Strategy and Policy Unit' in the Council, etc.

the fittest' (Tilly 1990). Secondly, during the Cold War political actors advanced an implicit equation of security with military capabilities. Parallel to this 'real-world' development, the International Relations sub-discipline of 'security studies' was increasingly dominated by approaches representing first and foremost 'strategic studies' (Walt 1991: 213-222). This tendency finally culminated in Kenneth Waltz's influential structural realism, which explains not only security politics but the whole domain of international politics via the 'distribution of military capabilities' (Waltz 1979). This article critically questions this one-sided perspective and aims to find ways to facilitate a re-conceptualisation of the problems under investigation. In fact, it means to contribute to overcoming the often-criticised 'methodological nationalism' of large parts of the literature.

Hence we first of all ask what purposes the EU's apparently required military means are supposed to achieve. In his meanwhile classical formulation, Robert Art distinguished four functions of military force: defence, deterrence, compellence, and 'swaggering' (Art 1992). According to the EU's ambitions, we can plausibly exclude deterrence and 'swaggering' as functions it aims to accomplish. While the latter has generally lost in importance (at least in the OECD world), deterrence might still be an end for nation-states and alliances, but not for the EU (European Security Strategy 2003). Thus, the disposability of military force could be particularly required with regard to, firstly, compellence³ and, secondly, (pre-emptive) defence. Indeed, this is what critics insist on: the EU's lack of military capabilities prevents it from achieving these purposes. Thus, we have to clarify whether the EU's contribution to supplying these two functions actually is that marginal or even non-existent. If this was the case, the criticisms might be justified. Yet, if not, we need to question some of the literature's premises.

So far, we have merely discussed the properties that institutions need to dispose of to *supply* certain policies and to qualify as an appropriate actor in international security policy. Below, we turn to the environment, in which these actors are embedded and confronted with certain security problems (i.e. *demand*). As an illustration of a contemporary security threat and the potential of the EU to respond to it, the article focuses on the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'.

Challenges posed by the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'

The term 'Political Economy of Conflicts' (hereafter, PEC) refers to two interconnected features associated with the 'new wars'. Since the late 1990s a debate on the transformation of warfare has emerged, triggered by scholars who argued that 'new wars' have gained in importance. The latter can be differentiated both from inter-state wars and from the classical civil wars of the Cold War period (see Kaldor 1999; Münkler 2002). The 'new wars' are characterised by the involvement of numerous private, internally fragmented actors, increased violence against civilians, criminal activities to fund warfare, and heightened significance of economic motives (Heupel 2005). The concept 'Political Economy of Conflicts' commonly refers to the two latter features, namely the so-called criminalisation of war economies and economisation of motives.

The article's selection of challenges posed by the emergence of the PEC as an example of a contemporary security problem is based on three reasons. Firstly, the European Security Strategy (2003) itself relates to features associated with the notion of the PEC – in particular the trafficking of natural resources as means to fund warfare – as a 'key threat' (European Security Strategy 2003). Secondly, while both the novelty and the empirical reality of the 'new wars' *per se* is contested (see Kalyvas 2001), many of the trends associated with the

³ 'Compellence can come in three forms: (1) diplomatic use – the issuance of threats to use force against an adversary if it does not change its behavior, (2) demonstrative use – the exemplary and limited use of force, and (3) full-scale use, or war – the use of whatever amount of force it takes to get the adversary to change its behavior' (Art 2003a: 9). If we apply this concept to the EU's objectives, it becomes obvious that merely the first two forms are relevant.

concept of the PEC are widely acknowledged even by critics of the 'new wars' thesis (see Gantzel 2002). Finally, it has been demonstrated that instruments, which weaken the supply structures of warring parties, are particularly important when it comes to terminate warfare as they can create the conditions for comprehensive peace-building (Heupel 2005).

As mentioned above, the notion of PEC mainly corresponds to two interconnected phenomena. On the one hand, it relates to the *criminalisation of war economies*. With the end of the Cold War, the great powers, which had hitherto frequently supported aligned governments and rebel groups in the developing world, widely suspended their assistance. Hence, rebel groups that aimed at continuing warfare had to acquire alternative sources of income. In particular, they increasingly resorted to illicitly producing and trafficking natural resources and other commodities in cooperation with transnational criminal networks. This so-called shadow-trade provided rebel groups with the necessary proceeds to import – aided by criminal networks – arms, ammunition and other goods needed for warfare (Ross 2004). In Afghanistan and Tajikistan, for instance, various warlords obtained revenues from cultivating opium, processing opium to heroin and trading in opium and heroine, which they could use to finance private militias (International Crisis Group 2003: 12-13; Conrad 2001). In the Democratic Republic of Congo, various rebel groups generated income by illegally trading in diamonds, coltan, gold, copper and coffee (Paes 2004: 6-7). Finally, in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia clandestine trade in looted goods across front lines and borders has been instrumental in sustaining the parties involved in the conflicts (Andreas 2004).

On the other hand, PEC refers to the *economisation of motives* pursued by the warring parties. This means that ideological and identity-based motives are increasingly mixed and interfered with economic ones. Typically, economic motives play only a minor role in the outbreak and early stages of violent conflicts, but gain in significance, as soon as the conflict parties develop sources of income in the course of warfare (Nitzschke 2003: 4; Chojnacki/Eberwein 2000: 20). Certainly, the emergence and proliferation of economic motives does not imply that rebel groups do not aspire to topple governments any more. Rather, rebel groups, like for example Charles Taylor's NPLF4 in Liberia still aimed to assume political power since this provided better opportunities to generate profits. Ideological and identity-based war motives do not disappear but are to an increasing degree primarily applied as rhetoric means to mobilise supporters for an ultimately economically motivated conflict (Collier 2000: 92; Münkler 2005). The Cambodian Khmer Rouge, for example, had widely adhered to Maoist thinking during the Cold War, but since the 1990s predominantly strove for generating profits through the control of precious gemstone reserves and woodlands (Lechervy 1999). In Sierra Leone, the RUF5 rebel group justified its attempts to overthrow the government by referring to the corruption of the political, military and economic elites and the dire socio-economic situation of broad levels of the population, even though control of the country's rich diamond mines had increasingly become their primary motivation (Hirsch 2001: 150). Also the parties involved in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina have at least partly been motivated by sustaining their contraband trade-based war economies (Kaldor 1999: 31-68).

In recent years, scholars and think tanks have increasingly dealt with the question of how to cope with the challenges posed by the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. In particular, four distinct strategies are frequently conceived of as effective responses to the criminalisation of war economies and the economisation of motives. Firstly, the imposition and enforcement of so-called *smart sanctions* is considered to be supportive in terms of drying up shadow-trade war economies. Most notably, targeted sanctions against trade in natural resources as well as arms embargoes are frequently suggested (Cortright/Lopez 2000; 2002). Secondly, another recommended strategy is to establish and implement global or regional *certificate of origin regimes*. By obliging signatories to refrain from trading in specific resources (e.g. rough diamonds) not endowed with certificates of origin, such regimes aim at regulating trade in goods by actors which might use their revenues for funding warfare (Lunde/Taylor 2003).

⁴ National Patriotic Front of Liberia

⁵ Revolutionary United Front

Thirdly, another approach brought up by scholars is to support penal action reform in conflict-prone and conflict-torn countries. The development of respective legislation and strengthening the judicial and police services, it is argued, can help prevent rebel groups from engaging in illicit transactions with impunity and thus might deter rebel groups from building up shadow trade war economies (Sherman 2002). Finally, there are opportunities to promote *economic well-being* of the population in risk countries. It is pointed out that strategies targeted on disrupting shadow trade are by themselves not sufficient as they not refer the transformation of both supply structures and motives. Rather, the disruption of criminal war economies needs to be supplemented by strategies which focus on incentives for peaceful behaviour. Improvement of the socio-economic condition of the population in general and of former and potential combatants in particular is thus perceived as an indispensable element of a long-term response to the challenges posed by the PEC (Sherman 2002: 5; Ballentine/Nitzschke 2003: 455).⁶

In contrast, the use of military pressure is not regarded as a necessary component of a comprehensive strategy to respond to the challenges posed by the PEC. Admittedly, the experience of peace-building in Cambodia and Angola, for instance, suggests that military force to oust rebel groups from resource-rich territory has been highly supportive in weakening their shadow-trade war economies. However, these cases likewise suggest that military pressure has only proven effective in combination with the application of non-military instruments. Indeed, like other cases such as Somalia and Afghanistan they indicate that military pressure without additional application of civilian instruments aimed at tackling the threats posed by PEC has so far failed at bringing about stable peace (Heupel 2005; Dobbins 2006: 26).

The 'Political Economy of Conflicts': a window of opportunity for CFSP?

This review of the two distinct debates suggests a counter-intuitive result. On the one hand, the predominant part of the literature on the CFSP⁷ concludes that the EU is not a 'proper actor' since it is militarily not capable of shaping the contemporary environment. On the other hand, the debate on the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' draws two conclusions. Firstly, it is not military capabilities but rather non-military instruments that are essential for coping with the posed challenges. Thus, military capabilities do not seem to be the *conditio sine qua non* for an adequate response to this widely discussed facet of the contemporary security environment. Secondly, nation-states are not regarded to be the best suited actors to deal effectively with the delineated challenges. In contrast, given the strategies presented above, international organisations might be for various reasons better qualified to respond to the challenges posed by the PEC: Sanctions, for instance are likely to be evaded if imposed by one state alone. Certificate of origin regimes, to give another example, can only work if a group of states agrees upon and implements binding rules. Thus, even the former U.S. ambassador to NATO acknowledged this trend: "[I]ndeed, the EU has some unique advantages in dealing with situations in a *holistic way* – including political, civilian, nongovernmental organization, and economic instruments – that NATO cannot match" (Hunter 2002: 141; emphasis added). According to that, the highly institutionalised assembly of 27 member states within the EU context offers unique prospects.⁸

Based on these considerations, we presume that the proliferation of trends associated with the notion of the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' might constitute a *window of opportunity* for the EU to emerge as an effective actor in global security politics. Indeed, as an international organisation it should be able to make an important contribution to respond to the

⁶ For detailed case studies and a summary of how to curb shadow-trade war economies see Heupel 2005.

⁷ The 'civilian power' proponents represent an exception in this respect.

⁸ The author is aware of the fact that the EU is in security issues a collective, rather than a corporate actor (Scharpf 1997: 54/5). This suggests that the Union is – to a large extent – dependent on and guided by the preferences of its members. When this article, therefore, speaks of the EU as an actor, it refers, on the one hand, to the member states acting commonly through CFSP, and on the other hand, to the Commission acting primarily through its 'External Relations'.

criminalisation of war economies and the economisation of motives. This reasoning becomes even more plausible if we relate it back to the potential purposes of European military capabilities, namely compellence and (pre-emptive) defence. Does the EU really require military capabilities to achieve these two purposes? In other words, can the EU realise compellence and defence despite its embryonic military capabilities, or are military capabilities indispensable for these tasks?

Firstly, as far as *compellence* is concerned, military force is likely to remain crucial. Compelling groups to comply with an agreement and stop warfare is – at least to a certain extent – among the objectives of the EU when dealing with conflict-torn countries. Obviously, military capabilities are not obsolete when it comes to tackling these problems. The threat and use of military force can under certain circumstances also play a crucial role in coping with conflicts linked to the notion of the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. In Sierra Leone, for example, it was the increasing effectiveness of smart sanctions to curb the shadow trade war economy of the RUF rebel group and military pressure by British special forces that strongly contributed to the termination of warfare (Heupel 2005). Furthermore, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the EU military observer troop, which was stationed around Bunia in the Eastern part of the country, made at least some contribution to prevent some of the worst excesses of violence against civilians (Ulriksen *et al.* 2004). This means that military capabilities remain necessary for compellence. Therefore, we can expect the EU to be only partly effective in contexts in which (the threat of) force remains indispensable.⁹

Secondly, as far as *defence* is concerned, we argue that the EU has partly emerged and is likely to increasingly evolve as a central actor. Although military capabilities will remain useful to achieve effective defence on behalf of the member states, it refers today to a lesser degree to defending one's own territory than during the Cold War. Instead, defence has become more complex. This can also be considered through the conceptual lenses of Art's original conception of defence, which includes '*pre-emptive* defence'. Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, this notion particularly relates to the threat of transnational terrorism linked to fragile states. We argue that the four strategies delineated above, which are considered to be effective in dealing with the proliferation of the PEC, may actually contribute to pre-emptive defence against transnational terrorism operating from fragile states. In fact, terrorists frequently cooperate with rebel groups with respect to illicit trade in natural resources. It is well known, for instance, that al Qaeda financed itself by collaborating with the Taliban in Afghanistan in terms of trafficking opium (Rashid 2003: 21). Furthermore, also in Sierra Leone did al Qaeda cooperate with a rebel group, the RUF, and jointly traded in so-called 'conflict diamonds'. Before 9/11, al Qaeda even urged the RUF to enhance its diamond production and promised to pay higher prices, because it aimed to change cash against diamonds to dispose of liquid funds in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks (Campbell 2002: 187-194). This interrelationship between fragile states, terrorism and new security strategies is summarised well by one of the leading scholars on the 'failed states problematique':

In the wake of September 11, the threat of terrorism has given the problem of failed nation-states an immediacy and importance that *transcends its previous humanitarian dimension*. (...) Although the phenomenon of state failure is not new, it has become much more relevant and worrying than ever before. In less interconnected eras, state weakness could be isolated and kept distant. Failure had fewer implications for peace and security. Now, these states pose dangers not only to themselves and their neighbours but also to peoples around the globe. Preventing states from failing, and resuscitating those that do fail, are thus strategic and moral imperatives (Rotberg 2002: 127; emphasis added).

Accordingly, 'pre-emptive defence' against terrorists can hardly be achieved by military means alone, but rather by a mixture of economic and political 'carrots and sticks'. The aim

⁹ However, one has to keep in mind that the empirical findings of several case studies on the threat and (demonstrative) use of force by the U.S. for humanitarian purposes clearly point to similar problems for the sole superpower to achieve its objectives – even in the presence of vast military capabilities. Indeed, scholars rather emphasise the critical role of escalatory fears and motivational asymmetries affecting success or failure of humanitarian interventions. The latter, in particular, is independent from the disposability of military capabilities (Art 2003b: 372-373).

must be to strengthen governance structures in fragile or even failed states.¹⁰ The EU members may apply the organisation's economic and 'social engineering' capacities to ameliorate the problems associated with the PEC in fragile states. Therefore, not those institutions, which can project military force, but rather those, which possess the civilian as well as economic instruments and a high degree of legitimacy, may be the more effective actors with regard to these contemporary security problems. In other words, some aspects of the changing security environment may 'demand' new kinds of 'supply' by the political actors because the use of force increasingly proves to be insufficient.

After having elaborated at a conceptual level that the changing security environment might offer some promising opportunities for the EU to establish itself as an effective actor, the question arises of which role the EU has played so far in the practice to address issues related to the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' of the 'new wars'.¹¹ While the literature review and the previous conceptual analysis opened up a *potential window of opportunity* for the EU, the following section *empirically explores* the Union's contribution with respect to the four strategies. That way, we aim at assessing whether there could be a certain 'fit' between the EU as an emerging actor in global security politics and the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' as one of the extensively changing aspects of the security environment. In short, is the EU about to step through this window?

The EU's Response to the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'

The subsequent sections explore how the EU member states responded through the Common Foreign Security Policy and the EU's External Relations towards the challenges associated with the 'political economy of conflicts'.

The EU and smart sanctions

The imposition and enforcement of smart sanctions – in particular of targeted sanctions against the trade in natural resources by specific actors as well as of arms embargoes – have been identified as being among the most effective responses to the challenges posed by the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. In the past, smart sanctions have in many cases decisively contributed to weakening shadow-trade war economies of rebel groups and so helped ending protracted wars. In Angola and Sierra Leone, for instance, UN Security Council sanctions against the trade in illegally produced diamonds have severely impaired the UNITA¹² and RUF rebel groups which have predominantly relied on diamond trafficking for funding their military operations (Cortright and Lopez 2002).

¹⁰ Indeed, a widespread consensus emerged within the EU that a comprehensive approach to security must start abroad. Two measures seem particularly important in this context: The framework of the new Neighbourhood Policy involves cooperation combating terrorism. What is more, the European Community has provided significant assistance to support countries' efforts to implement the relevant UN Resolutions in their fight against terrorism (e.g. 'conditionality clauses'). See 'Conceptual Framework on the ESDP dimension of the fight against terrorism', available at:

<http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/04/st14/st14797.en04.pdf>, accessed 20 August 2005, and, *Note to the European Council* (16-17 June 2005). Submitted by the Presidency and the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator: Implementation of the Action Plan to combat terrorism, available at: <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/newWEBre01.en05.pdf>, accessed 20 August 2005.

¹¹ For a comprehensive overview covering the previous years from the perspective of the EU Commission, see, European Commission Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management Unit: 'Civilian instruments for EU crisis management', (Brussels: April 2003), available at: http://europe.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cfsp/doc/cm03.pdf, accessed 10 April 2006. For a stronger focus on the EU Council activities, see, 'EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts', (European Council, Gothenburg: 15-16 June 2001), cited from: Rutten (2002: 64-68), and subsequent 'Presidency Reports'.

¹² União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola

In the context of its Common Foreign and Security Policy the EU frequently applies sanctions as a policy instrument (Kreutz 2005: 17-19). Not only does the EU make efforts to contribute to the execution of sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council but it also imposes and implements – frequently in tight cooperation with the U.S. – autonomous sanctions. In doing so, the EU concentrates on so-called smart sanctions (i.e. targeted trade, financial, diplomatic sanctions and flight bans) in order to hurt specific governments, their armies as well as rebel groups, but at the same time to affect the local population as little as possible. Taking the surge of shadow-trade war economies and its war-prolonging effects into account, the EU focuses on sanctions against trade in specific natural resources and arms embargoes, which are regarded as instrumental in curbing resource-based war economies.¹³

In relation to Liberia, for example, the EU promoted the implementation of the targeted sanctions, which had been imposed by the UN Security Council. During the war in Liberia in the 1990s and early 2000s various militias equipped and maintained their fighters by exchanging diamonds and timber with weapons, ammunition and other goods (Adebajo 2003). In order to stabilise the peace process in the aftermath of the abdication of President Charles Taylor and the establishment of a new government, the UN Security Council reinforced its targeted sanctions against Liberia in 2003. Responding to this initiative, the EU Council composed a regulation which provided for the implementation of the sanctions against Liberia. Amongst others, the EU Regulation prohibited the 'direct or indirect import into the Community of all rough diamonds from Liberia [...] whether originating there or not' as well as the 'import into the Community of all round logs and timber products originating in Liberia'. In addition, it arranged for the implementation of the embargo against arms and related material against Liberia declared by the UN Security Council.¹⁴

The EU and certificate of origin regimes

Certificate of origin (CO) regimes are targeted on regulating the global trade in specific natural resources. They aim to do so by obliging signatories to exclusively trade in those resources, which are provided with a CO. So far a CO regime for the trade in rough diamonds, that is the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), has been established. Moreover, various actors have made efforts to advance the development of different CO regimes for the trade in timber. The EU has contributed to initiate and implement the KPCS and actively promotes the development of a CO regime regulating the trade in timber (Rummel 2003: 17-18/27; Brack 2005).

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) binds its 50 signatory states and organisations to restrict themselves to trading in rough diamonds endowed with a CO guaranteeing their 'legal' production.¹⁵ From the early planning stage up to the signing of the agreement, the EU, represented by the European Commission, has supported and advanced the development of the KPSC. The final agreement was signed by the European Community (EC) on behalf of all EU member states. During the implementation phase, the EC established a system of certification as well as import and export controls for rough diamonds. Furthermore, the EC backs the set-up of instruments to strengthen the implementation of the agreed-upon stipulations of the KPCS. Currently, the European Community chairs or participates in several working groups established to upgrade

¹³ For information on the EU sanctions policy see: EU, External Relations, 'Common Foreign & Security Policy, Sanctions', available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cfsp/sanctions/index.htm, accessed 20 March 2006. See also International Crisis Group (2005: 45-46).

¹⁴ Article 6 and 2, Council Regulation (EC) No 234/2004 of 10 February 2004 concerning certain restrictive measures in respect of Liberia and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1030/2003; *Official Journal of the European Union*, available at: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2004/l_040/l_04020040212en00010010.pdf, accessed 20 July 2005.

¹⁵ For information on the KPCS see <http://www.kimberleyprocess.com:8080/site/>, accessed 22 July 2005.

implementation of the KPCS. Moreover, the EC was in charge of the first review mission undertaken by the KPCS.¹⁶

With regard to the regulation of the trade in timber, the EU is one of the driving forces, which seek to explore options to establish a CO regime in this field. In 2003, the Commission released an EU Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT), which arranges for Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VAP) between the EU and timber producing countries. States, which would enter into VAPs with the EU, would commit themselves to only import licensed roundwood and rough sawnwood into the EU. At the same time, the EU would pledge itself to help combat illegal logging in timber producing countries by providing support for capacity-building. In order to expand the scope of the FLEGT Action Plan beyond EU member states and their trading partners, the EU conducts consultations with crucial timber-consuming countries, such as the U.S. and Japan (Brack 2005).¹⁷

The EU and penal action reform

Penal action reform (i.e. legislation reform, reforms of the judicial and police services) is regarded to be another suitable strategy to respond to the challenges posed by the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. For effective penal action enhances the risk of trafficking natural resources and, thus, possibly prevents rebel groups from building up shadow-trade war economies. During the last few years, the EU has attempted to upgrade its civilian capabilities needed to promote penal action reform in conflict-prone and conflict-torn countries. The EU member states have shown increasing preparedness to provide police officers and rule of law specialists for deployment in fragile states. Thus, up to now the EU has been able to dispatch several police and rule of law missions to different regions (International Crisis Group 2005: 30-31; Gourlay 2004: 413-416).

The first EU Police Mission (EUPM) was delegated to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2003. During the war in Bosnia, various parties involved in the conflict had relied on contraband trade to fund military operations (Kaldor 1999: 31-68). After the termination of warfare in 1995, the legacy of the clandestine war economy undermined the consolidation of the peace-building process (Andreas 2004). To counteract this legacy and combat organised crime, the EU mandated EUPM to support the build-up of a professional law-enforcement system by monitoring and mentoring the local Bosnian police forces. Even though EUPM could not meet all raised expectations, it still contributed to the establishment of a de facto state-level police authority endowed with the competences to carry out investigations with regard to organised crime and other offences.¹⁸

The first EU Rule of Law Mission (EUJUST THEMIS) was sent to Georgia in 2004. Similar to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the legacy of the contraband war economy, which had helped to fund the war in the late 1980s and early 1990s, has destabilised the Georgian peace process. In secessionist Abkhazia, for instance, various groups still gain income from trafficking timber, scrap metals, drugs, fuel, foodstuffs and tobacco (Wennmann 2003). Due to the fact that Georgia is confronted with shortcomings in all dimensions of the rule of law, EUJUST THEMIS was mandated to support the local authorities in planning and

¹⁶ For an account of the EU contribution to the development and implementation of the KPCS see: EU, External Relations, 'The EU & the Kimberley Process (conflict diamonds)', available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/kimb/intro/, accessed 20 July 2005. See also, Brack (2005).

¹⁷ For information on the EU Action Plan FLEGT see: EU, Development, 'The EU Action plan for FLEGT', available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/theme/forest/initiative/index_en.htm, accessed 20 July 2005.

¹⁸ For information on EUPM see European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=585&lang=EN, accessed 20 July 2005. See also International Crisis Group (2005: 49-51) and Rummel (2003: 20).

implementing a comprehensive reform strategy for the improvement of the criminal justice system.¹⁹

In Afghanistan, to give a further example, militias, which finance themselves by controlling opium cultivation and trade in opium, heroin and other goods, seriously undermine the fragile peace process. Here, the EU and its member states strive for support of penal action reform, too. The EC, for instance, is the main contributor to the Law and Order Trust Fund of Afghanistan (LOFTA), which focuses on funding police salaries, training and non-lethal equipment. Italy and Germany took the lead in supporting justice and police sector reform. The UK, finally, has helped the Afghan authorities to frame a Counter-Narcotics Strategy and set up a Counter-Narcotics Police, mobile detection units and a Central Eradication Planning Cell.²⁰

The EU and promoting socio-economic well-being

Many scholars point out that an effective response to the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' must not only restrict itself to dry up the sources of income and to combat shadow-trade, but also has to promote socio-economic well-being of the population in conflict zones. It is argued that this reduces incentives and demands to build up shadow-trade war economies. Thus, development cooperation targeted on reducing poverty and social inequalities is considered to be a central element of a comprehensive response to the challenges posed by the spread of trends associated with the PEC.

The EU (and its member states) provides approximately half of the development assistance worldwide, thereby increasingly taking the interrelation between development, peace and security into account. The European Security Strategy, for instance, states that economic failure and poverty can under certain circumstances advance violent conflict (European Security Strategy 2003). Furthermore, the Cotonou Agreement, which determines the framework for development cooperation between the EU and the ACP (African, Caribbean, Pacific) states, emphasises that efforts to improve conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building instruments constitute an integral part of development cooperation.²¹

In relation to Afghanistan, to give an example, the EU is one of the main donors of development assistance since the break-up of the Taliban rule in late 2001. At the first major donor conference after the regime change, the European Commission pledged to make available up to one billion Euro until the end of 2006. Thereby, the focus of EU development assistance to Afghanistan is the promotion of rural development, labour-intensive work schemes, food security and economic infrastructure.²² Special attention is given to efforts providing sustainable alternative livelihoods to farmers cultivating opium poppy. This is mainly realised via the 'generalised system of preferences', which is an important instrument for the EU to influence politics through trade.²³

¹⁹ For information on European Union Rule of Law Mission to Georgia EUJUST THEMIS see, <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Factsheet%20THEMIS%20041026.pdf>, accessed 22 July 2005. See also International Crisis Group (2005: 30).

²⁰ European Commission, 'European Union in the World: External Relations, The EU's relation with Afghanistan', available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/afghanistan/intro/, accessed 15 March 2006.

For an acknowledgement of the crucial EU contribution in Afghanistan, see also, Dobbins (2006: 26).

²¹ The Cotonou Agreement, Part 1, Article 11; available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/cotonou/agreement/agr06_en.htm, accessed 20 July 2005.

²² European Commission, External Relations Directorate General, 'Country Strategy Paper (CSP) Afghanistan 2003-2006', 11 February 2003, available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/afghanistan/csp/03_06.pdf, accessed 21 July 2005.

²³ EU Council Secretariat, 'Factsheet, The EU and Afghanistan', available at: http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/050511_Afghanistan.pdf, accessed 21 July 2005.

With respect to Sierra Leone, where warfare could be brought to an end in 2001, the EU likewise aims at supporting peace consolidation via development cooperation. The promotion of sustainable economic development and poverty reduction is among the EU's highest priorities in its peace-building approach. Given the substantial number of former combatants and uprooted persons, an emphasis of EU development assistance to Sierra Leone is thereby providing funds for demobilisation, resettlement, rehabilitation and reintegration programs, which are deemed to advance reconciliation and long-term stability.²⁴

Finally, the promotion of the population's socio-economic well-being is a central pillar of the EU's crisis management and peace building strategy in Macedonia. In the wake of the eruption of violence in 2001 the EU disbursed emergency aid packages in order to facilitate the negotiation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. In particular, the EU tried to bolster the implementation of the agreed-upon stipulations of the peace treaty by offering substantive financial assistance for infrastructure reconstruction and economic recovery. The framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), which is to prepare Macedonia for acquiring candidate status for admission to the European Union, systematically provides economic and financial aid (Mace 2004; Bjoerkdahl 2005: 265). Thus, considering these illustrations, the EU has significantly changed its development policies towards instable regions. Its nature is not primarily economic anymore. The issue of long-term conflict prevention and short-term crisis management (e.g. via the Commission's Rapid Reaction Mechanism, established in 2001)²⁵ has drastically gained in prominence in order to address the root causes of violent conflict (Faria 2004).

In sum, this brief empirical exploration suggests that the EU actually *has the potential* to make a significant contribution to tackle the challenges posed by the 'Political Economy of Conflicts' of the 'new wars'. It was pointed out that the EU has already developed some effective strategies and instruments. For sure, the EU has not always been successful in reaching the desired outcomes. Nevertheless, it has adopted and – at least in part successfully implemented – smart sanctions to prevent rebel groups from trading natural resources against arms and other goods. It actively supports the development of certificate of origin regimes for the trade in conflict resources. Moreover, the EU has enhanced its civilian capabilities instrumental for the improvement of penal action reform in instable countries. Finally, it has focused on using development assistance as a means to deter potential or actual spoilers from establishing shadow-trade war economies.

Conclusion and Prospects

This article's point of departure has been the widespread assumption that nation states and not international institutions like the EU with minor military capabilities were the *only* effective actors in global security politics. The study has critically questioned this assertion by making two observations. Firstly, *despite its genuine lack of military capabilities*, the EU has a certain potential to play a crucial role in dealing with the trends associated with the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. Above all, the EU's economic but also its other civilian instruments are capable to make a valuable contribution to conflict prevention and peace building in

²⁴ European Commission, 'Development > Countries > Sierra Leone', available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/country/country_home_en.cfm?cid=sl&status=new, accessed 21 July 2005.

²⁵ For the Rapid Reaction Mechanism see, Council Regulation (EC) No. 381/2001, (Brussels: 26 February 2001), available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cpcm/rrm/index.htm, accessed 12 May 2005. For the more long-term instruments see, European Commission Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management Unit: 'Civilian instruments for EU crisis management', (Brussels: April 2003), available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cfsp/doc/cm03.pdf, accessed 10 April 2006. For a stronger focus on EU Council activities, see, 'EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts', (European Council, Gothenburg: 15-16 June 2001), cited from: Rutten (2002: 64-68), and subsequent 'Presidency Reports'.

countries such as diverse as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Georgia, and Afghanistan.

Secondly, *due to its quality as a (unique) international institution*, the EU's CFSP appears principally well equipped with respect to curbing shadow-trade war economies and responding to the proliferation of economic motives underlying warfare. The above-mentioned smart sanctions against Liberia, for instance, could not have been adopted by states alone. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme as well as the FLEGT Process to regulate the trade in rough diamonds and timber would miss the point were they developed uni- or bilaterally. Likewise the police and rule of law missions to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Georgia would surely lack capacity as well as legitimacy were they undertaken not by the EU but by single states. Furthermore, the EU even has several comparative advantages vis-à-vis other international institutions. On the one hand, the militarily potent NATO might be suitable to enforce, but not to initiate economic or smart sanctions. On the other hand, the UN Security Council can only impose sanctions in situations regarded as a 'threat to international peace', which often represents a considerable hurdle. Kreutz (2005: 15; emphasis added) argues, 'UN sanctions can still mainly be used as a *response rather than a preventive action*. The EU (...) can choose to impose sanctions in pursuit of a wider array of objectives'.²⁶ Thus, our exploration can provide some empirical backing in support of the claims of those who – such as Andrew Moravcsik – argue that Europe's achievements through non-military means contribute significantly to global security (Moravcsik 2002).

Yet two clarifications are to be made. Firstly, our findings do certainly not imply that military capabilities are generally meaningless instruments in the contemporary security environment – especially in cases of desired compellence. Obviously, they remain crucial for tackling *some* of today's security challenges. The threat and use of military force can also under certain circumstances play a pivotal role when it comes to coping with conflicts linked to the notion of the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. In Sierra Leone, for example, it was the increasing effectiveness of smart sanctions to curb the shadow-trade war economy of the RUF rebel group and military pressure by British Special Forces which notably facilitated the termination of warfare (Heupel 2005).

However, it is essential to acknowledge that compellence in general and coercive diplomacy in particular constitute extremely difficult endeavours. Even the most formidable military actor, namely the U.S., has often failed in this respect. Robert Art (2003b: 387), for instance, notes: 'Coercive diplomacy is difficult to execute successfully, succeeding in only one-third of [twenty-two examined] cases and failing in almost half'. This has even wider implications for defendants of an exclusive 'capabilities perspective' on CFSP: Firstly, military superiority is no guarantee for success (Art 2003b: 406-408); secondly, positive inducements are a powerful tool (Art 2003b: 393-397); and finally, the conditions that facilitate but do not guarantee success in coercive activities are largely independent from pure military force (Art 2003b: 371-374). These findings suggest that the EU ought to focus on a different approach because it is not likely to ever fulfil these highly demanding prerequisites (see Solana 2004). From a conceptual view, this means the often taken-for-granted cause-effect relationship between military power and outcomes has to be replaced by a more differentiated perspective. After all, the effectiveness of military capabilities is dependent on the specifics of the security problem an actor faces: not always '*fits one size all*'.

Secondly, these findings certainly do not imply that the EU's approach towards the four explored policies does not encounter any problems. Indeed, the article has also pointed to deficiencies. With respect to the enforcement of smart sanctions, for example, the EU – like every other institution – has definitely difficulties in pressurising sanction busters to comply. In particular the EU's fragmented institutional structure seems to undermine the

²⁶ Kreutz (2005: 40) points out: 'On some occasions, such as in Iraq and Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, the EU imposed sanctions just days or months before the UN did, but generally it can be argued that EU sanctions have been imposed when UN action had been prevented or limited'. For an account arguing that NATO misses such civilian instruments see, Hunter (2002: 86, n.35); Dobbins (2006: 26).

effectiveness of its sanctions policy (Kreutz 2005: 6). Besides, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, whose development was strongly supported by the EU, did not entirely stop illicit trade in rough diamonds but rather entailed a decrease in prices for illicit diamonds (Collier *et al.* 2004: 264). Moreover, neither with regard to penal action reform nor with regard to the promotion of socio-economic well-being in conflict regions has the EU completely reached the ambitious goals it had set itself. Thus, one has to acknowledge that both the EU's often insufficient institutional capacities and a lack of political will among the member states certainly weaken European attempts of responding to the trends associated with PEC. Nonetheless, the EU's approach has resulted into some positive outcome and the EU definitely has the potential to develop more effective strategies.

Despite these caveats, the strategies and instruments devised by the EU constitute an important component of international efforts to deal with the challenges posed by the 'Political Economy of Conflicts'. Indeed, the PEC actually appear to represent a *window of opportunity* for the EU to gain greater influence in international security politics: On the one hand, the empirical exploration suggests that the EU can *directly affect* a mitigation of the trends associated with the PEC. Its efforts contribute – at least to some degree – to the security of the people in conflict-torn regions and also increase the EU's reputation in the global arena. Secondly, the conceptual analysis points to an *indirect effect* of these policies and so broadens the scope of our argument. In fact, the EU indirectly also contributes to a more comprehensive 'pre-emptive defence' against the threats and risks posed by, for instance, transnational terrorism. In doing so, it indirectly provides security also for the European *demos* (and states) since 'pre-emptive defence' cannot primarily be achieved by military interventions, but is rather linked to non-military instruments in fragile states.²⁷ Thus, it is precisely with respect to those domains that commonly acting through the CFSP seems more effective and thus more suitable than unilaterally conducted policies.

To sum it up, this article differentiates itself from large parts of the literature in that it was less concerned with the alleged weaknesses of the European Union. Instead, its point of departure was, firstly, the security problems the EU is expected to mitigate and, secondly, the EU's potential to actually meet such expectations. We have pointed out that the transformation of the security environment and the resulting new demands suggest a certain 'evolutionary fit' of the EU to respond effectively to the posed challenges. In this way, we have presented a distinct perspective towards a vivid but so far biased debate. In terms of 'policy recommendations', this suggests that the EU should not predominantly focus on strengthening its military capabilities and refrain from trying to emulate states in areas in which it is not likely to succeed. Just as a good tennis trainer directs her player not to focus exclusively on her weaknesses but rather to steadily improve her strengths, the EU should take up to improve the non-military strategies and instruments it already disposes of – supplemented by a small, but capable Rapid Reaction Force.

²⁷ A related development can also be observed in the U.S., even though military measures enjoy priority: 'Postconflict reconstruction' has become the foreign policy issue *du jour* in Washington. Multiple think-tank studies, a new State Department office, and no fewer than ten proposed congressional bills all tackle the subject.[...] The foreign policy architecture of the United States was created for the threats of the twentieth century – enemies whose danger lay in their strength. Today, however, the gravest danger to the nation lies in the weakness of other countries – the kind of weakness that has allowed opium production to skyrocket in Afghanistan, the small arms trade to flourish throughout Central Asia, and al Qaeda to exploit Somalia and Pakistan as staging grounds for attacks' (Eizenstat *et al.* 2005: 134). Compared to the U.S. and other states, the EU's main advantage in this context seems that it does not have to initiate major institutional changes. It can build 'foreign policy architecture' more or less from scratch, which is normally a much easier endeavour than to change resilient institutions.

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'Communicating Europe': The Role of Organised Civil Society

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Abstract

The European Commission's new 'communication strategy' has been presented as a radically new way of bridging the gap between the citizens of the member states and the European Union (EU) institutions. However it should also be seen as the latest in a long line of attempts to solve the problems of democratic legitimacy from which the EU is said to suffer. The rhetoric of the strategy is infused with highly commendable objectives and desirable principles stating how effective communication can help the EU connect more closely with citizens, and calling upon all relevant stakeholders – specifically civil society – to contribute to this project. Democratic theories of civil society provide support for the idea that civil society can play a linkage role between citizens and political structures. But empirical research on processes of interest representation in the EU casts doubt on whether organisations purporting to represent various strands within European civil society are able and willing to help bring citizens and the EU closer together. Turning the empirical focus to the organisations themselves it becomes apparent that simply invoking civil society involvement in 'communicating Europe' is not a sufficient guarantee of success. Instead, the nature of the communication activities, the characteristics of the organisations in question, and the issue of funding all have implications for the role of civil society in communicating Europe.

SINCE 2005, A DISTINCT AND OSTENSIBLY NEW STRATEGY FOR 'COMMUNICATING EUROPE' has emerged from the European Commission, under the guidance of the Vice President and Commissioner for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy, Margot Wallström. The key components of the strategy are the 2006 White Paper on a European Communication Policy which proposed an agenda for better communication in Europe; the Commission's contribution to the period of reflection - prompted by the rejection of the constitutional treaty by voters in France and The Netherlands in 2005 – the so-called 'Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate', published in 2005; and 'Communicating Europe in Partnership', the report presented to the European Parliament and Council by the Commission in October 2007. The Commission has been at pains to emphasise that the communication strategy is a genuinely new endeavour which involves connecting with the citizens in a radically different way than has been the case in the past. Yet this strategy can also be seen as the latest in a long line of attempts dating from the aftermath of the Maastricht Treaty to address the divergence between the political institutions of the European Union (EU) and the ordinary citizens living in the member states.

At the core of the communication strategy is an attempt to strengthen the democratic legitimacy of EU governance by bringing EU institutions and governance structures closer to citizens. Since Maastricht, there has been recognition in both academic and political circles, that a 'gap' has emerged between political elites and ordinary citizens – a gap which seems to be problematic for the continuation and consolidation of EU politics and integration. An increased capacity and willingness on the part of citizens to stall the integration process (Andersen & Kaltenhaler 1996; Niedermayer & Sinnott 1995; Hooghe 2003), has undermined the presumption of a 'permissive consensus' (Lindberg & Scheingold 1971) of European publics and prompted suggestions that the EU suffers from a 'legitimacy deficit' (see Scharpf 1997; Abromeit 1998; Beetham & Lord 1998; Eriksen & Fossum 2000; Føllesdal 2004). The

Commission recognises the emergence of this gap between the European Union and its citizens, pointing out in the Communication White Paper that as integration has been driven forward, communication with citizens has been left behind (Commission 2006a: 2). The aim of the communication strategy therefore, has been to work towards closing this gap.

A key component of the communication strategy has been the attempt to enlist the help of 'civil society' in the process of communicating Europe. Ideas found within democratic theory confirm that civil society can play a linkage role between citizens and the state, helping to bring the two closer together, and in doing so, enhancing the democratic legitimacy of governance structures. In practice, the proposals of the communication strategy have been directed at certain organisations which purport to represent sections within civil society. Although organisations representing various sections of civil society have for a long time been important actors in the EU system, their contribution has generally been seen in terms of policy outcomes and how they allow the development of effective and implementable policies – in the words of Scharpf, the EU's 'output legitimacy' (1998). In contrast, their contribution to improving the 'input legitimacy' of the EU, in other words the extent to which the genuine preferences of citizens are brought into the political process, is increasingly recognised but largely under-researched and under-theorised. The communication strategy is one example of the growing propensity on the part of the institutions to identify civil society as a means for strengthening the input legitimacy of the EU which is matched by an emerging theoretical and empirical literature (see De Schutter 2002; Smismans 2003 and contributions to Smismans 2006).

In seizing upon civil society as a crucial actor in the process of communicating Europe, the Commission relies upon an additional set of actors to guarantee the success of the communication strategy. Taking a closer look at the kind of organisations involved it becomes apparent that they do not always have the capacity, let alone the willingness, to engage in communication activities that would help to bridge the gap between citizens and EU institutions. In the following analysis I draw upon interviews conducted with a range of organisations that were involved in a previous legitimacy-enhancing strategy: the debate on the future of the EU.¹ The responses of these organisations point towards three issues that are likely to govern the role of organised civil society in communicating Europe, and are therefore potentially fundamental to the success (or otherwise) of the communication strategy.

First, there are issues surrounding the exact nature of the communication that is proposed by the strategy, or in other words, the substantive activity of communication. I suggest that there is a need for the exact nature and purpose of the communication activities to be specified, and to be matched to the capacities of the organisations involved. Second, the characteristics of the organisations are crucial. The term 'civil society' hides a great deal of diversity found among the organisations, which include trade unions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), think-tanks and regional organisations, each of which may be suited to the task of communicating Europe in different ways. Third, the issue of funding is prominent in discussions with civil society organisations and has significant implications for their capacity, and their willingness to engage in communication activities. Before assessing these factors I outline in greater detail some of the key components of the communication strategy, and then take a closer look at the contribution of EU civil society to bridging the gap between citizens and EU institutions, or in other words, strengthening the democratic legitimacy of EU governance.

¹ There are important similarities between the post-Laeken debate on the future of the EU initiative and the communication strategy. Both strategies have had at their core, an attempt to strengthen the legitimacy, particularly the 'input' legitimacy of the EU, based on the premise of a gap that had emerged, and emphasising the need to overcome this by 'bringing the EU institutions and its citizens closer together'. A further similarity between the debate initiative and the communication strategy is that they both turn towards civil society in their attempts to find the solution to the legitimacy problem. These similarities mean that in practical terms, lessons can be drawn from the experiences of civil society organisations involved in the debate initiative for the communication strategy.

The Commission's 'communication strategy'

Communication was established as one of the Barroso Commission's strategic objectives when it began its term of office in 2004, and as a policy in its own right, exemplified by the appointment of the first ever Commissioner for Communication Strategy. The communication strategy which has since emerged has been constructed around several important documents: the 'Action Plan' to improve communicating Europe by the Commission (European Commission 2005a); the Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: 'Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate' (European Commission 2005b); and the 'White Paper on a European Communication Policy' (European Commission 2006a); known hereafter as the 2005 Action Plan, Plan D; and the Communication White Paper respectively. In October 2007 the Commission followed up these initiatives with the publication of the report 'Communicating Europe in Partnership' (European Commission 2007).

The Action Plan to Improve Communicating Europe by the Commission (European Commission 2005a) was presented by Margot Wallström in July 2005, shortly after the referendums on the Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands. The objective of the Action Plan was to encourage the Commission to 'put its own house in order' so as to allow more effective communication about Europe (European Commission 2005a: 2), based on the recognition that, even within the Commission, there were multiple, and not always complementary approaches to communicating with citizens and the outside world more generally. In doing so it pointed towards the publication of the White Paper on Communication which would set out the policy vision and initiatives to be undertaken in co-operation with the other stakeholders. The Action Plan defined three strategic principles which aimed to put citizens at the heart of communication: Listening, Communicating and Connecting with Citizens by 'going local'. The principle of listening established that communication is 'not a one-way street'; that it is not just about informing citizens, but also about citizens expressing their opinions so the Commission can understand. The intention was that the voice of citizens could have a direct bearing on EU policy formulation and output. Communication, the second strategic principle, stated that EU policies and their impact on people's everyday lives must be communicated and advocated in a way that people can understand. Finally, 'going local' meant that communication activities should be related to particular national and local concerns; delivered in a language that people can understand; and via the medium they preferred.

These strategic principles informed the Communication White Paper which was published on 1st February 2006. The commitment to listening was expressed in terms of the intention to 'move away from one-way communication to reinforced dialogue, from an institution-centred to a citizen-centred communication, from a Brussels-based to a more decentralised approach' (European Commission 2006a: 4). The Commission presented this as a break with the past, a fundamentally different way of communicating than had previously characterised communication processes. Some tentative suggestions for how this might be achieved were offered in the White Paper, for instance by 'defining common principles', and 'empowering citizens', thereby addressing the ways in which EU policies were advocated and communicated. Furthermore, in order to achieve the communication objectives the White Paper spelt out the importance of partnerships with all the key players, namely other EU institutions, national, regional and local authorities, political parties and civil society; and the use of the media and new technologies.

In between the adoption of the Action Plan and the publication of the White Paper the Commission had launched 'Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate' in October 2005. Plan D was in part a contribution to the 'period of reflection' called by the Heads of State and government following the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in France and The Netherlands. The Commission argued that the period of reflection should be used for a broad and intensive debate on European policies which would allow the development of a clear view of citizens' needs and expectations vis-à-vis the European Union. Plan D, it argued, would not be limited to the period of reflection (which in the end ran up until the European

Council meeting of June 2007 at which the decision was taken to draw up a new 'reform' treaty), but rather would run for the lifetime of the Barroso Commission and beyond. Plan D dovetailed with the Action Plan and White Paper and together with them, aimed to help set out a long-term plan to reinvigorate European democracy and help the emergence of a 'European public sphere' (European Commission 2005b: 2). This in turn would, it hoped, seek to 'clarify, deepen and legitimise a new consensus on Europe and address criticisms and find solutions where expectations have not been met' (European Commission 2005b: 11). In its initial phase, Plan D launched six transnational projects aimed at providing opportunities for citizens to engage in debates about Europe hosted by civil society organisations, culminating in a meeting of 250 citizens in Brussels in December 2007.

The Action Plan, the Communication White Paper, and Plan D informed the subsequent proposal, made by the Commission in 'Communicating Europe in Partnership', for an Inter-Institutional Agreement (IIA) on communication (European Commission 2007: 4). This report, addressed to the Council and the European Parliament, was presented by the Commission as a first step in translating the ideas that had already been discussed into concrete proposals. It argued that the public required a more integrated approach to communication from the various institutions of the EU – and the absence of this made the EU seem disorganised, dispersed and difficult to understand. As such it identified concrete examples of where the institutions could work together, for instance through better co-ordination of the Representations of the Commission in the member states, and the European Parliament's Information Offices (2007: 8).

Together, these documents, and the various speeches and reports that have accompanied them, have contributed to the construction of a discourse on the centrality of citizens to discussions about EU policy and the future direction of European integration. As such, they have operated largely at the level of rhetoric, and have been vague on the details of how exactly effective communication could bridge the gap between citizens and the EU. Although 'Communicating Europe in Partnership' has gone further in making more concrete proposals regarding the role of the EU institutions and member state governments, it does not contain a clear statement on the role of civil society. In addition, much of the responsibility for implementing the proposal discussed in this report, much like Plan D and the Communication White Paper, has been placed with actors other than the Commission: regional and local authorities, other EU institutions, political parties, and member state governments (as well as civil society organisations).

The Commission, and particularly Margot Wallström, has emphasised that this strategy is a new approach to European communication, but it should be seen as the continuation of a longer-term strategy to connect more closely with European citizens through communication. The difficulties surrounding the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty highlighted that there was a gap between the political elites who were driving forward the process of integration, and the feelings of many ordinary citizens: feelings characterised by high levels of public ignorance about and even hostility towards the EU. With this realisation came an acceptance in principle that informing the public about, and involving them in the process of integration was necessary. Following the report of a 'reflection group' set up to assess the information and communication policies of the EU, the Commission decided that its lack of public support was largely due to inadequate information and understanding and so endeavoured to increase the transparency of its policy making. Further integration was to be 'based on information, which means giving the facts and explaining, communication which means listening and dialogue, and transparency, which means priority to total openness in pursuing the first two objectives' (European Commission 1994).

More recently, the Commission adopted a communication in June 2001 for a new framework on activities concerning the information and communication policy of the EU (European Commission 2001b) which called upon the other EU institutions and the member state governments to contribute to this approach. This was followed by the publication of an information and communication strategy for the EU in October 2002 (European Commission 2002). Neither of these could be said to have solved the communication challenges faced by

the EU, despite the fact that, like the more recent communication strategy, they also emphasised 'the need for a fresh approach' (European Commission 2002: 8) and 'genuine dialogue' (European Commission 2002: 10).

The current communication strategy elaborated in the 2005 Action Plan, Plan D, the Communication White Paper and 'Communicating Europe in Partnership', also bears a striking resemblance in terms of the rhetoric used, with the Governance debate surrounding the Commission's 2001 White Paper, and the debate on the future of the EU, surrounding the Constitutional Treaty. Like the Governance debate and the debate on the future of the EU, the current communication strategy is motivated by the need for stronger democratic legitimacy. A further significant similarity is the emphasis on the role played by various stakeholders in implementing the strategy and in particular organised civil society. These similarities suggest that the experience of civil society organisations can provide lessons for the communication strategy as I argue later, but first the treatment of 'civil society' in the rhetoric of the communication strategy is considered.

Civil society, communication and legitimate governance

The new communication strategy outlines an important role for civil society in helping to 'communicate Europe'. Once again, there are elements of continuity with previous reform strategies, rather than the break with the past that the rhetoric of the Communication White Paper suggests. This interest in civil society should be seen in the context of a broader tendency among politicians to look for solutions to democratic problems, and one which is not confined to the EU setting. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the idea of civil society was seized upon as a means of strengthening democracy² (for an overview of this academic literature see Foley & Edwards 1997; Young 2000; Diamond 1996). Civil society is seen as able to provide something, or play a role which formal political authorities cannot. In the EU context, the role of civil society has often been expressed in terms of closing the gap between EU politics and ordinary citizens, and has been invoked to indicate that the EU institutions acting alone cannot solve the EU's legitimacy problems. The Commission acknowledged this in the 2001 Governance White Paper which stated that 'the Commission alone cannot improve European governance...change requires concerted action by all the European institutions, present and future member states, regional and local authorities and civil society' (European Commission 2001a: 9).

The 2005 Action Plan said little about the role of civil society, its focus being to address communication structures within the Commission. However in outlining the strategic principles of listening, communicating and going local it paved the way for the White Paper which had a much broader focus and which addressed a wider audience. Civil society featured prominently in the Communication White Paper and was identified early on as crucial to ensuring the success of the strategy. Civil society is viewed in terms of a series of organisations that have a 'very important role to play in raising public awareness of European issues and policy debates, and in encouraging people to take an active part in those debates' (European Commission 2006a: 12). The Communication White Paper did not define civil society explicitly, beyond stating that it includes 'professional and sectoral organisations (2006a: 12).³ Furthermore, it gave no concrete examples of how this role might be operationalised beyond suggesting 'targeted co-operation projects in the field of public communication'.

² Of course, the notion of civil society did not originate in the 1980s. Diamond (1996: 227) traces the theoretical origins of the concept to Alexis de Tocqueville and argues that it is 'emotionally and spiritually indebted to Jean-Jacques Rousseau for its romanticization of "the people" as a force for collective good'.

³ But we can assume that the definition specified in the 2001 Governance White Paper is applicable here: 'civil society includes the following: trade unions and employers' associations ("social partners"); non-governmental organisations; professional associations; charities; grass-roots organisations; organisations that involve citizens in local and municipal life with a particular contribution from churches and religious communities' (European Commission 2001a: 14).

Plan D took the issue of civil society involvement in 'communicating Europe' further. The initial Plan D document, which was presented by the Commission to the Council, the Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, said very little about the role of organised civil society. However, a subsequent call for proposals relating to the implementation of Plan D went into greater detail. The call offered 'financial support for initiatives emanating from European organisations to promote public participation in debates on topics of European interest' (2006b: 1), the role of these being to stimulate discussion and seek recognition for the added value that the European Union can provide. This call resulted in six transnational projects which aimed to get citizens involved in discussions about the EU (or in the words of the Commission's 'communicating Europe' website, to 'experiment active citizenship').

In 'Communicating Europe in Partnership', the Commission discussed the interactions between the EU institutions at greater length than the role of civil society. It did, however, outline the need to establish partnerships with NGOs in order to communicate on subjects of general interest such as climate change (European Commission 2007: 6). It is not obvious how these partnerships would be formed or what they would look like, but no further discussion of this particular proposal was included. Elsewhere in the report it is unclear whether the proposals referred to the Commission communicating to civil society and the public, or whether civil society organisations would assist the Commission in communicating to the public – or both (European Commission 2007: 7-8). So whilst this component of the communication strategy goes further than the others in translating rhetoric into concrete actions, it does not go as far as making a clear statement on the role of civil society in communicating Europe.

In these various components of the communication strategy, the term 'civil society' actually refers to the organisations that populate the space between citizens and the state – what can be described more specifically as 'organised civil society'. The EU institutions have a history of working with organisations of civil society, though in the past they were not called 'civil society' actors. Instead they were referred to as 'organised interests' and the purpose of their involvement in EU politics was to provide expertise in the policy-making process. An extensive research literature documented processes of EU interest representation and the role played by these organisations in helping to make and implement effective, efficient policies (key contributions include Greenwood 2003b, 2007b; Mazey & Richardson 1993, 1999; Warleigh & Fairbrass 2002). The extent to which these processes helped to bridge the gap between citizens and EU politics, or more generally helped to strengthen legitimate EU governance, tended not to be addressed, at least not explicitly. In focusing on the making of effective, efficient policies it is possible to infer that these organisations could help strengthen the output legitimacy of the EU. However, doubts have been cast on whether guaranteeing effective outcomes is enough to bridge the EU's legitimacy gap (Schmitt & Thomassen 1999).

The communication strategy focuses on the role of civil society in bringing citizens *in* to discussions about EU policies and the future direction of integration, and therefore speaks to the strengthening of input legitimacy. There is an emerging research literature which has investigated the contribution of civil society to legitimate EU governance – specifically input legitimacy (Curtin 2003; Magnette 2003; Smismans 2003) yet on the whole much less is known in this regard than is the case for the contribution of civil society to effective policies. Questions can be raised about the exact ways in which the involvement of (on the whole) EU-level organisations purporting to represent elements within civil society in processes of communicating Europe might help to bridge the gap between citizens and EU institutions, and thus strengthen the democratic legitimacy of EU governance. The rhetoric of the communication strategy (and indeed other, earlier reform discourses) assumes a high degree of mutual inclusivity between citizens and civil society, which is consistent with Nentwich's observation (1998) that most of the 'opportunity structures' for the participation of citizens in EU politics in fact favour highly organised and transnational interests; and the claim that 'citizens Europe is very much about associations rather than individual citizens' (Venables 1990: 22). Turning our empirical attention towards the organisations themselves can help

shed more light on these issues, as the following section outlines. It becomes apparent that simply calling for the involvement of civil society in communicating Europe will not automatically provide the desired democratic outcomes.

Factors affecting the communication role of organised civil society

The role played by civil society in 'communicating Europe' that has been outlined by the Commission in the new communication strategy means that the effectiveness of this strategy will ultimately depend in part on whether civil society organisations at the EU level have the capacity and willingness to engage in communication activities.⁴ The rhetoric of the communication strategy is based on an assumption that civil society can help bridge the gap between citizens and EU institutions, and democratic theory supports this contention. However, empirical research on organised civil society (or organised interests) in the EU prompts speculation on the extent to which it can actually perform this bridging role and thereby enhance legitimate governance.

In order to understand more fully the possible contribution made by civil society to communicating Europe I turn empirical attention towards the organisations themselves alongside the rhetoric of the communication strategy. Discussions with EU civil society organisations which have been involved in similar legitimacy-strengthening initiatives⁵ highlight that their capacity and willingness to engage in these activities are affected by a range of factors, both endogenous and exogenous to them. In the following analysis I identify three factors that intervene in the relationship between the communication role played by organised civil society, and the bridging of the gap between EU governance structures and the citizens of the member states: the exact nature of the communication activities; the characteristics of civil society organisations involved; and the issue of funding.

The nature of communication activities

According to the Commission, bridging the gap between citizens and EU institutions relies on effective communication. In turn, the involvement of civil society in this 'effective communication' arguably relies on clear and focused guidelines which specify the nature and purpose of their involvement in order to enable their legitimacy-enhancing contribution. However, discussions with organisations that were involved in the debate on the future of the EU initiative revealed that organisations did not believe that the EU institutions always provided such clear statements on the exact nature of the communication activities that were envisaged, and this had problematic implications for the extent to which the objectives of the initiative were realised.

One of the problems with the debate on the future of the EU was that statements on the role of civil society generally took the form of rhetoric which was largely vague and imprecise. The Laeken declaration (made by the Heads of State and government following their meeting in December 2001) which convened the Convention on the future of the EU called for a Forum for civil society to run alongside the Convention (European Council 2001). This Forum, it suggested, would receive regular updates from the Convention, and would serve as input into the debates. However the drafters of this document (namely Belgian civil servants working during the country's presidency of the Council) had no obligation to assist with the implementation of this idea. The Secretariat of the Convention whose responsibility this became decided to delegate responsibility for the running of the Forum to the Commission (Milton & Keller-Noëllet 2005), and the Commission developed the Forum along the same

⁴ In turn there is the additional question of whether these activities can help to bridge the gap between citizens and EU institutions, the answer to which is beyond the scope of this paper.

⁵ I draw upon interview data produced by fieldwork which took place between January and April 2005. The data is drawn from research on the involvement of 25 organisations that were involved in the debate on the future of the EU – specifically the Convention on the Future of the EU and the Commission's Futurum initiative.

lines as its earlier 'Dialogue on Europe' initiative, a website for online discussions developed around the 2000 Intergovernmental Conference. Organisations that were following the Convention debates reported their disappointment with the way in which the promising, yet vague rhetoric on a Forum for civil society was actually implemented. As one NGO umbrella group explained: "When the Laeken conclusions came out and they said there was going to be a forum for civil society we got quite excited about that and then we got pretty dispirited when we found out it would amount to a website".

Another initiative that was designed by the Commission to encourage the participation in debates about the EU's future of a wide range of organisations and individuals from society was Futurum. Like the Convention Forum, Futurum was an online initiative which acted as a repository for material (speeches, documents and so on) relating to the broad debate on the EU's future, and provided a space for debate to take place by hosting both online and offline discussions. It invited civil society organisations to work in partnership with the EU institutions, by devoting a page on their websites to the debate, and linking these to Futurum, as a means of encouraging wider participation. Several organisations that had developed partnerships with the Futurum website admitted that they were unclear about what exactly the purpose or objectives of Futurum was, and admitted that their 'partnership' had actually involved very little tangible activity. One of the organisations that developed such a partnership, a virtual 'citizens' network' described their limited engagement with Futurum: "Back in 2001 we sent the constitution we had written to the Futurum website and that was actually our only contribution. [We] sent some documents, some analysis, what we did. To my knowledge these are the only things that have been sent to the Futurum". In this and other cases, the lack of focus meant that the outcomes of the Futurum initiative were limited.

The communication strategy demonstrates an absence of focus in terms of the intended role of civil society organisations in communication, and what it is they should be communicating. In terms of the role played by organisations, the Commission denies that its intention was to encourage civil society organisations to 'promote' the EU. Yet the Communication White Paper implies that part of the solution is in better communication of the good points of European integration: 'prosperity, solidarity and security', in other words a more effective 'selling' of the EU project. Furthermore, Plan D specifies that the content of debates should involve 'informing people about Europe's role through concrete achievements and projects' (European Commission 2005b: 5) and a call for proposals from civil society organisations issued by the Commission under Plan D outlined that the objective of the initiative was to 'seek recognition for the added value that the European Union can provide' (European Commission 2006b: 1). Nevertheless there is a certain squeamishness about explicitly saying that the objective is to inform the citizens of the benefits of the Union. Even Margot Wallström has expressly denied issuing EU 'propaganda'. Yet skirting around the issue is construed as too vague at best, and having something to hide at worst, with the end result being misunderstanding and even mistrust of the initiative.

In terms of the subject of the communication the European Commission (2006a: 2) recognises that 'Communication can never be divorced from what is being communicated', yet it says little more than what is being communicated is 'European issues' (2006a: 12). It seems naïve and unrealistic to assume that ordinary citizens would want to tell the Commission their thoughts on 'European issues', even if they could get to grips with a subject that is rather nebulous to say the least. A similar problem surrounded the debates envisaged by Plan D. Though intended to be the Commission's contribution to the 'period of reflection' called by the European Council following the referendums in France and the Netherlands, it was unclear what exactly citizens should be reflecting on (Sain ley Berry 2006) given the uncertainty that surrounded the future of the Constitutional Treaty at the time.

The characteristics of civil society organisations

The conceptualisation of civil society by the Commission is at once both broad and narrow,

and both have potentially problematic consequences. On the one hand, as we have seen, the Commission understands civil society in terms of the organisations that populate it – in other words, as organised civil society. Democratic theorists such as Iris Marion Young (2000) see this as just one of several ways of understanding civil society. In addition to looking at the organisations or associations involved, Young combined a spatial definition with a process-oriented element so that civil society could be conceptualised as a space or arena in which activities of self-organisation occurred across a range of networks or associations (Young 2000: 160). An understanding of civil society as an arena of voluntary association neither mandated nor controlled by the state is problematic in the EU context because of the high degree of institutionalisation evident in the role played by EU institutions in the formation and funding of many organisations (Greenwood 2007a: 342). In this sense, the narrow focus on civil society in terms of organisations or associations diverts attention away from the ways in which civil society at the EU level does not resemble civil society as conceptualised in democratic theory, and the consequent limitations to its legitimacy-enhancing role.

On the other hand, the definition of civil society adopted by the Commission is too broad, encompassing social partners, think-tanks and academia, professional organisations, and charities alongside non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Several civil society organisations that were involved in the debate on the future of the EU called into question this broad sectoral definition of civil society. Trade Unions questioned their status as organisations of civil society whilst one NGO federation argued that trade unions had a specific role within civil society: “I think the issue of how civil society represents or the public or certain constituencies in the public is a very important issue that we need to pay attention to in general. The trade unions and the employers have a hugely central and privileged role within the process, and I would argue again, as I’ve just argued with governments and media, [they] fail to translate the message or the process of the EU developments to the public; so too do the social partners abysmally fail in my view”.

There was a sense that the inclusion of such a wide range of organisations under the heading of civil society, and the use of this term as though it referred to a homogenous set of actors meant that the EU institutions were not able to understand the differing capacities of organisations vis-à-vis bridging the gap between citizens and the EU. The NGOs, for example, tended to see themselves as better able to bring the voice of citizens into discussions than some of the other organisations because of their role in representing groups of citizens or their interests. More generally however, discussions with organisations posed the question of whether civil society organisations active at the EU level as a whole were suited to the task of trying to connect with citizens in the way that grass-roots organisations might. For the vast majority of them, the primary aim was to influence the policy-making process as one think-tank explained: “Mass education is not our vocation, its not our role. We try to be part of the process of explaining to people but in different ways, whether we publish papers that are readable by people other than experts or organising small events with potential multiplier effects, that sort of thing. We don’t have the capacity to go and mobilise huge audiences. But other organisations can”. This tended to make the organisations involved more elite-focused, than society-focused.

The experiences of organisations involved in the debate on the future of the EU demonstrates that proposals for the involvement of civil society need to be informed by an understanding of the capacities and willingness of the organisations targeted. However, it does not seem that this has been fully taken on board in the communication strategy. In addition to the task of communicating messages about the EU outwards to ordinary citizens, two further strategic principles are defined which are said to distinguish this from previous communication strategies (European Commission 2005a: 3): ‘listening’ and ‘going local’. However, these are not necessarily complementary, and the kind of organisation that might be suited to the communication role may find it difficult to listen effectively. The EU-level umbrella organisations that the Commission has tended to favour in the past (Greenwood 2003a: 53) are by their very nature unsuited to connecting with citizens by ‘going local’. A more systematic study of the role of NGOs in ‘connecting’ with citizens was conducted by Warleigh (2001) who found that most NGOs operating at the EU level lacked sufficiently

democratic governance structures that would enable them to connect with citizens. This underlines the point that approaching 'civil society' wholesale hides the variations that exist between organisations and risks targeting organisations for roles to which they are unsuited.

The issue of funding

The issue of funding dominates the relationship between EU institutions and civil society organisations, and for the organisations themselves, it is often the key factor governing their interactions with the EU. It is, therefore, also crucial to understanding the role these organisations might play in bridging the gap between citizens and EU institutions. According to Greenwood (2003b: 10-22), the Commission spends 1% of the Union budget – around €1 billion annually, funding interest group activities. Many civil society organisations operating at the EU level are dependent on the Union budget for funding – and often this can be their primary source of funding.

Several organisations that were involved in the debate on the future of the EU initiative made the observation that the EU institutions wanted to draw upon the skills, expertise and contacts of civil society in trying to connect more closely with citizens – evident in both the future EU debate and the communication strategy. As such they felt that they ought to be funded for doing what amounted to the Commission's work in 'selling' the EU. Organisations were supportive of the aims of reforms which tried to bridge the gap between citizens and EU institutions, and supportive of the idea that civil society could play a role here – but as one EU-level youth organisation argued, unless they were given financial support, they simply would not have the means to contribute: "In order for the EU to say we want civil society to be involved, the main question, for [us] is that they need to be funded...that is directly in relation to communication". In contrast, a minority of voices from within civil society argued that the funding of civil society activities by the Commission compromised, if not undermined, the independence of civil society more broadly. A citizens' network (based outside Brussels) commented on "[NGOs] working in the five hundred metres around the Rond Pont Schuman [which] are just there for that reason, to get money. Any active dynamic NGO cannot accept to get into that process, and that's why they are stuck with some NGOs which are called NGOs but in fact are just trying to get cash from the EU."

The issue of funding is equally if not more relevant in the context of the new communication strategy. The Communication White Paper states that the success of the strategy will depend in part on the involvement of civil society (amongst other actors), again implying a degree of 'responsibility' for the strategy's successful implementation. Yet there remain questions about the extent to which organisations receiving funds to help 'communicate' the EU to citizens is compatible with their independence from state institutions, and their role as a counterweight to state power which is a component of their claims to legitimacy.

There are also more practical financial problems highlighted by the communication strategy. The vast majority of Union-funded projects operate under the principle of 'co-financing' which states that the Union does not finance projects up to 100% (only projects taking place outside the EU have the possibility to be financed in full). The call for proposals related to Plan D stipulated that Union funds must account for no more than 70% of the total project costs. The remaining 30% must be secured from elsewhere (this can include working hours devoted to the project) because 'community contributions are meant to facilitate the implementation of a project which could not otherwise be implemented easily without the support of the European Union' (European Commission 2006b: 2). The ensuing need to find additional funding is a problem acutely felt by many organisations. At a Plan D consultation event hosted by the Commission Representation in the UK (Speak out Louder on Europe Conference, London, 12 June 2006) UK-based NGOs reported the difficulties they had encountered trying to get co-financing for what are essentially Commission projects. A clearer understanding of civil society on the part of the institutions might reveal that those organisations which are able to effectively 'listen' to citizens and connect with them by 'going local' are often the ones who face the greatest challenges in meeting the eligibility

requirements to gain funding. This is also the case for the requirement in the Plan D proposals that organisations must conduct their activities in multiple member states, which seems particularly at odds with the need to 'go local'.

Conclusion

How might civil society organisations contribute to strengthening the input legitimacy of the EU through communication? Light has been shed on this issue by research on the role of civil society organisations in the debate on the future of the EU initiative. This, just like the more recent communication strategy, was motivated by the perceived need to bridge the gap between citizens and the EU institutions, or in analytical terms to improve the EU's (input) legitimacy. The empirical investigation of civil society organisations involved in the Futurum and Convention debates highlights several issues relevant to the communication strategy. These issues may have implications for its prospects for success in terms of the extent to which the strategy actually ends up improving the input legitimacy of the EU.

The need for clear and focused guidelines outlining the exact role of civil society organisations relates to the way in which the objectives of the strategy are defined, and the proposals made for meeting these objectives. The experiences of organisations involved in the debate on the future of the EU demonstrated how a lack of focus could result in confusion, mismatched expectations, lack of consistency between different actors, problems with implementation, problems with evaluation and could even undermine the original objectives. Organisations felt that they were marginalised in the formal discussions of the Convention, and that their contributions were restricted to posting documents on a website. There was a sense that the rhetoric on the importance of civil society to discussions about the EU's future did not resemble the provisions that were actually made for their involvement in the debates. The failure to ratify the Constitutional Treaty following the debate on the future of the EU makes it difficult to argue that the debate was successful in bridging the gap between citizens and EU institutions. Organised civil society was supportive of the aims of the EU institutions but they acknowledged that the debate which took place was not one which involved citizens as the Laeken declaration intended, but instead the 'usual suspects': Brussels-based organisations. Without suggesting that there is a causal relationship between the overuse of rhetoric and the eventual demise of the constitution, what this does emphasise is the importance of being able to match the discourse with achievable results so as not to be left with only 'empty rhetoric'.

Similar problems of clarity overshadow the communication strategy. Paradoxically for an initiative which is all about the importance of clear and effective communication, it is not always entirely clear what the new strategy is trying to say (Sain ley Berry 2006). 'Civil society involvement' can entail many different things with varying implications for the extent to which the gap between citizens and EU institutions is bridged. For the involvement of civil society to successfully contribute to bridging this gap, the Commission needs to make a decisive comment on how exactly it should do this. If the objective is for civil society to inform people of the 'value-added' of the European Union, as the call for proposals under Plan D suggested (European Commission 2006b), this needs to be consistently acknowledged throughout other communications. This in turn will require the Commission to address the issue of funding and the case for funding in full any activities undertaken to that end.

A clear focus for a programme of reform depends upon, and in turn facilitates an understanding of civil society and the characteristics of the organisations that comprise it in the European Union. Organisations involved in the debate on the future of the EU initiative felt that the wholesale treatment of 'civil society' meant that the reform programme left no room for recognising the many differences that exist between organisations, differences which have implications for the extent to which civil society can play an effective bridging role. The empirical data presented above suggests that organisations such as think-tanks were less interested and able to engage in communication activities than, for example

regional organisations or NGOs which were representatives of a particular sector of society. The debate initiative was problematic to the extent that it gave no scope for different organisations to use their capabilities in the way that suited them best.

The new communication strategy also deals with 'civil society' as a whole as though it was a homogenous entity, and therefore may suffer from similar limitations. On the positive side, the 2005 Action Plan acknowledged the relevance of 'going local', implying an understanding of the unique capacities of civil society organisations operating at a national or local, rather than a Brussels level, though this still does not address the functional differences between organisations. Having a clear understanding of the different types of organisation and their capacity would allow the Commission to develop more targeted proposals for engaging with civil society, which would in turn mean a clearer focus for the overall reform programme. Understanding civil society involves understanding the financial situation of the organisations that the Commission is targeting. This would allow the Union to develop a more realistic and informed approach to funding driven by the needs and requirements of the recipients as well as by the institutions' protocol.

The issue of funding is of central importance to the organisations themselves, it dominates the relationship between organisations and the EU institutions, and it is crucial to understanding the role that civil society could play in communicating Europe. Some sceptical voices from within civil society suggested that civil society organisations based in Brussels were motivated by the prospect of financial gain in the form of handouts from the Union budget for projects that amounted to 'selling' the EU's aims and objectives. Though this picture of a mercenary Brussels-based civil society is probably unjustified it does highlight the issue of whether benefiting from Union funding is compatible with bridging the gap between citizens and EU institutions. If civil society organisations are being enlisted precisely because they are independent from the institutions, their receipt of Union funds to engage in projects aimed at increasing awareness of the value-added of the EU might undermine this. On the other hand, a larger number of voices from the organisations that were involved in the debate on the future of the EU argued that if the Commission was placing part of the responsibility for bridging the gap upon civil society it ought to match this with resources.

Issues of funding are not fully resolved in the communication strategy. There is no suggestion that the Commission expects civil society organisations to promote the added value of the EU without any financial assistance. Rather, Plan D provided funding for organisations that organised debates with members of the public (European Commission 2006b). However, there is the issue of whether the requirements of the co-financing principle which govern funds preclude organisations with the potential to engage in communication activities from receiving funding. Ultimately co-financing means that larger organisations with alternate sources of funding, or staff time that can be devoted to the project, and organisations which are able to conduct their activities in multiple member states, will be the most likely to be successful in their applications. Whether these organisations are the ones that have the connection with 'ordinary citizens' necessary for facilitating their participation in debates, and whether this is compatible with the need to connect by 'going local' which is one of the 'strategic principles' outlined in the 2005 Action Plan (European Commission 2005a: 3-4) are other questions.

The rhetoric of the communication strategy calls for more effective communication between citizens and the institutions as a means of underpinning democratic governance – desirable objectives by most people's standards. But how does the rhetoric actually correspond to reality? One of the big problems with the communication strategy is that it lacks focus. For example, Plan D calls for a debate, but it is not entirely clear what exactly should be debated (EUobserver 2005). The Communication White Paper makes much of the need to listen to citizens, but it is unclear what citizens will actually be saying, or whether they will be saying anything at all. Furthermore, the communication strategy is based on the assumption that it is not the EU *per se* that people have a problem with, but rather the way it has been communicated (despite empirical evidence questioning whether increased knowledge and

understanding leads to greater public support).⁶ Having identified communication as a means of closing the gap between citizens and EU institutions the Commission needs to ensure that the plans actually result in strengthened legitimacy. But this is tricky because the reforms are based on assumptions about civil society which are often misguided, inaccurate, or inadequate.

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⁶ The 'cognitive mobilisation' thesis claims that public support for integration is positively correlated with knowledge about the EU and integration (Inglehart 1970). However, Gabel's (1998) research called into question the extent to which this still holds in the EU, citing factors such as lack of empirical evidence to support the thesis, potential intervening variables such as education or date of accession, and the superiority of other explanations.

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Through Thick and Thin: 'European Identification' for a Justified and Legitimate European Union

Anna C. Davidson

Abstract

Debates on the viability of European integration often rest on the need for some form of common European identity. This article looks at European integration through the framework of normative political theory to explore what form of European identity is needed for the EU to be considered both justified (having a good or just reason for existence) and legitimate (having consent from its citizens). It critiques arguments for a purely justified EU, which rule out the need for a common European identity, as well as those requiring a thick common identity for a legitimate EU. In contrast, this article argues for a European identification that is both desirable as an identity and works to sustain a justified and legitimate EU. The proposed conception of European identification takes into consideration national and sub-national identities and opens up the potential for Europeanised identities at multiple levels.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION HAS REACHED A STAGE WHERE EUROPE'S IDENTITY IS BEING questioned in more ways than one. Increased and deepened political integration, Union citizenship brought in by the Maastricht Treaty, and discussions on the Lisbon Treaty leave the European Union (EU) identified as a mix of intergovernmental and supranational levels of governance. Conceptions of a deepened and widened Europe raise the question of a different type of identity – that of the collective self-definition of its peoples. Discussions on the need for desirability and likelihood of a common European identity (EU identity) are at the centre of much debate within social science, as well as, normative political theory. While this paper draws selectively on social science literature, it is firmly based in normative theory. It explores whether the EU would require a collective identity to be both justified and legitimate. Much of the existing literature in political theory muddies the distinction between legitimacy and justification by simply conflating the two concepts. In this paper it is argued, following Simmons (1999), that these are distinct normative concepts, of which the EU needs to achieve both. The argument follows that a justified and legitimate EU requires a holistic concept of European identification that takes into account various levels of identity.

A recent conversation with a friend brought these questions from the lofty realm of political theory into the daily deliberations of euroscepticism. She asked: 'So tell me – what has the European Union ever done for us Scots? Why should we be part of it?' My answer, and the main argument of this paper, examines this very question as well as the feelings of identity implied within it.

I argue that an evaluation of the EU requires a revision of conceptions of justification and legitimacy. As judgements that in some respects presuppose 'nationhood' and 'statehood' they are often inadequate to normatively assess the EU. Instead, it is necessary to redefine

justification in terms of giving good or just reason for the existence and outputs of a polity and democratic legitimacy in terms of the consensual relationship between the governed and governing (see Simmons (1999)). To achieve these criteria, it is possible to argue that the EU requires a form of European identification. Rather than focusing principally on a single European identity, I suggest European identification needs to be considered holistically, incorporating national and local levels of identity. In this way political identity is conceived of as fluid and multi-focused rather than monolithic. This identity needs to be 'thick' enough to bound the EU in a way that allows for its legitimation and justification *as a coherent polity*, yet not so thick as to become a form of 'ethnic' or undesirably exclusive identity, evoking images of a 'fortress Europe'.

This argument is presented in four sections. Section 1 outlines the importance of justifying and legitimating a polity and the role of political identity. Section 2 looks specifically at justifying the EU and explores what kind of European identity this necessitates. It is argued that both contractarian and universal approaches to justification presume a 'thin' European or cosmopolitan identity. This section concludes with two main propositions; firstly, that neither particular nor universal justification are sufficient alone, and secondly, that justification in general is not sufficient as a normative evaluation of the EU because it does not provide an underlying moral reasoning as to what should bind citizens to the EU. Section 3 looks at the role of legitimacy in explaining what morally ties EU citizens specifically to its institutions. Traditional nation-state definitions of legitimacy imply the necessity of a European identity and community that is too 'thick' and exclusive, while post-national conceptions favour an identity that is too 'thin' and purely civic. Section 4 seeks a two-part solution to the problems of how best to normatively assess the EU and what identity is required. Legitimacy and justification are redefined to allow for a fairer assessment of the EU and a shift of focus is proposed - away from a singular European identity and towards European identification conceived more holistically.

Justification, legitimacy and political identity

As Schmitter (2001: 79) has argued, legitimacy becomes the focus of attention particularly where it is considered lacking. In this way, the debate on the EU's 'democratic deficit' often finds itself centring on the perception of a lack of legitimacy (Nentwich and Weale 1998: 3), with the finger pointed at a lack of a cohesive European 'we-feeling' as the root of the problem. The importance vested in legitimacy is a reflection of the entrenchment of enlightenment ideals and democratic values in contemporary political theory and practice. The power of political elites cannot be arbitrary, or merely justified by appeals to higher powers or expertise. An assumption of 'rule by the people' brings with it the need to justify power to them. There is a perception that the rights and obligations of citizenship need to be held up by democratic processes of consent-formation, hence the call for referenda on the Constitutional Treaty in several member states.

However the concepts of justifying and legitimating a polity are particularly nebulous. This is further complicated by the way in which the two terms are used interchangeably, with both referring to the rightfulness or 'justness' of a polity or government. The definitions and usages differ widely on how, by what criteria, and by whom these judgements are supposed to be made. For some, such as Rawls (1971), a justified polity is one that adheres to the just principles that would be decided on by its citizens in a thought experiment. For some, justification needs to be objective and universal (see Simmons 1999), and yet others consider justification - through the 'performance' of a polity - as just one of the requisites, along with common identity or legality, of state legitimacy (Beetham and Lord 1998: 32; Føllesdal 2006: 157).

There are two main difficulties in applying some of these criteria to the evaluation of the EU. Firstly, as Simmons (2001) argues, the interchangeable usage of legitimacy and justification means the loss of an important tool of evaluation. He offers a definition of these as separate concepts to normatively evaluate aspects of a polity. For him, justification aims to find the

just or good reason for a polity's very existence, while legitimacy refers to the particular moral relationship between a polity and the people under its jurisdiction. This conceptual distinction allows for clarity of meaning and for the possibility of discussing how a polity can be either of these separately. For discussions of the EU this distinction is particularly pertinent as it allows for a separation of the cacophony of voices in the debate on the EU's 'democracy deficit' or legitimacy crisis. Some of these debates can be distilled down to whether the EU needs to show direct legitimacy - a moral connection to the people of Europe - or can rely on only being justified by means of its favourable outputs alone.

The second problem faced by many definitions and criteria of legitimacy and justifiability is that they are based on assumptions of nation-states and their histories, democratic systems and collective identities. Beetham and Lord (2001: 443), for example, argue the same broad criteria of state legitimacy - performance, identity and democracy - should be applied to an evaluation of the EU. However if these criteria are too closely based on nation-state formats it becomes difficult for the EU to ever fulfil them. Some theorists have attempted to avert this problem by claiming the EU does not require the same normative evaluation. An EU envisioned as a super-state, a federation or an intergovernmental organisation, for example, implies different reaches and mechanisms of power and entails different requirements of justification and legitimacy. Moravcsik (2002), for example, argues that the EU may not need democratic control in all areas of its competence. Instead he suggests that EU decision-making may be more justified, effective, representative, and impartial, and may protect minorities from the 'tyranny of the majority' (Moravcsik 2002: 614) with some competences under the control of technocrats or semi-autonomous judges. Any type of direct legitimacy required of the EU would be fulfilled by the requirement of transparency of decision-making procedures and institutions (Beetham and Lord 2001: 450). Similarly, conceived of as an intergovernmental organisation, it could be argued, indirect legitimation, through its constituent member states, is enough for the EU; however, as a majoritarian super-state direct legitimacy would be required. It is possible to argue that a simplified 'barebones' conception of legitimacy and justification, in line with Simmons' concepts, provide a framework that can be applied more readily to a range of polities.

Thus it is important to firstly clarify what empirical assumptions are made about the EU and what values, as argued for in this article, it should aspire to. The basic assumption is of the EU as a complex system of governance with different legislation-making foci (Weale 2005: 11). Its key characteristics are a form of democratic governance based on a system of subsidiarity and sharing of competences at different levels. Rather than allowing them to emerge implicitly throughout my argument I will highlight the values I consider central in a desirable EU: namely; democracy, respect for diverse cultural identities, human rights, and a conception of social justice. Along with definitions of legitimacy and justification that are appropriate, this will lead to the argument for a type of European identity that is, it is claimed, necessary to sustain these values.

Political identity often enters into the debate around legitimacy without explanation, simply as an assumed requisite of a justified or legitimate polity. Without satisfying the 'congruence criterion', where a community sees its political institutions as 'theirs' (Dobson and Weale 2004: 161), political systems are assessed as lacking legitimacy. Political identity is related to, but separate from, citizenship - the *formal* relationship between an individual and political community (Wiener and Della Sala 1997: 601). Political identity, rather, refers to individuals sharing and recognising a common sense of belonging to political communities and structures (Bruter 2005: 1). This sense of identity should not be conceived of as static, but rather is constantly recreated socially, and filled with meaning by each individual.

Controversies on European identity centre both on what role it should play in fostering a public sphere or effective democratic governance, as highlighted above, and on what form it should take. Debates on the form of a European identity often mirror discussions of the civic versus ethnic forms of national identity. From this discussion it is important to note that in

contrast to the 'civic-ethnic divide' depicted by some as an essential difference¹ - between an 'ethnic', violent, emotive phenomenon - and a 'civic', rational and patriotic one, a sense of national identity should be seen as a single phenomenon. In this way I assume that a sense of collective political identity always serves to delineate one grouping from another (Jenkins 1996: 114), although its form may show different emphasis on common ethnicity, history, social or political culture and different 'thickness' or 'thinness' in terms of its ability to produce social solidarity. A political association such as the EU needs a common identification that is both normatively desirable in its form and 'works' to give the EU a justification and legitimacy.

Justifying the European Union

Public justification – the recognition of a polity as reasonable, just or good from 'every individual's point of view' – is at the heart of liberal-democratic thought (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy 2007). However, the project of seeking the conditions for a justified EU requires a few prior clarifications. Firstly there is the question of who should be justifying the EU - whose values and norms should count. Secondly, it needs to be asked whether the very existence of a polity such as the EU is to be justified or whether its particular form, outputs, laws and organisation are to be judged. The question at the heart of the following discussion is not so much what the actual sphere and focus of justification is but what it ideally *should* be when evaluating the EU. It considers different realms of justification and what kind of common identity they presume to be necessary of EU citizens. While some (e.g. Rawls) consider justification to be centred on giving good reasons for the form of a polity to those living within its bounds, in a 'closed system' (Benhabib 2002: 102), others (Simmons 1999; Dobson 2006) have critiqued this, suggesting that under liberal assumptions of universal rights and rationality the correct community of justification should be universal.

Simmons' (1999) Lockean conception of justification can be seen as assuming such a universal sphere, where a true appeal to justification should involve principles that all rational humans would be able to accept. He stakes out this view in opposition to a more particularistic Kantian one, which he criticises for being 'doubly relativised' (1999: 759). He strips away this relativity by assuming two basic premises. Firstly, he argues, the very existence of a polity should be justified. As Dobson (2006: 517) has suggested, a scheme of particularistic justification rests on the assumption of an existing community. Thus its very existence cannot be justified within the same framework. In contrast the concept of a universal justification should show how the existence of a polity is preferable to a situation in which it would not exist at all (Simmons 1999: 758). Secondly, Simmons assumes that a justification should show how a polity is 'morally acceptable and a good bargain *simpliciter*' (1999: 758). This implies that the standards by which the EU is deemed justified are assumed to be objective and not culturally specified.

While this framework of justification could apply to the normative assessment of all political systems it is particularly appropriate when applied to the EU. Seeking to justify the EU's very existence is both more easily imagined and arguably more necessary than it would be for an established nation state. As an 'emergent polity', its alternative – a world with no EU – is not only more plausible, but its actual existence and the justifications for its continuation are far from entrenched in the popular consciousness. Furthermore, it is questionable whether there can be said to be a pre-existing community for justification at the EU level. Universal justification serves to more realistically capture the fact that social co-operation and the outputs of political systems are not strictly bounded in 'sealed' communities (Dobson 2006: 521). Not only is universal justification thus desirable, but as Dobson (2006: 522) has argued, it may also be necessary, if European liberal values of universal equal moral worth and freedom are to be consistently applied.

¹ See Kohn (1945) for an example of a protagonist of the civic versus ethnic debate.

If a justification of the EU needs to be acceptable universally this presumes a certain set of basic characteristics or 'thin cosmopolitan identity' of those involved in the justificatory process. They would need to share the ability to be moral and rational, recognise each other as such, and share a basic set of common values sufficient to agree on relevant justificatory procedures (Morgan 2005: 32). These would be the universal 'public values' needed as the essential basis of a presupposed level of social cooperation (Morgan 2005: 34). Given the vast cultural and individual disparity in values and morality within the EU today, such universal public values would need to be very basic and culturally unspecified. 'Freedom' and 'well-being' may be examples of such values (Gewirth in Dobson 2006: 11). Supposedly universally shared values would also determine a set of universally valued 'goods' necessary for human well-being, such as those laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The EU would then need to be evaluated according to its deliverance of these 'goods'.

While this universalistic account of justification of the EU is necessary for favourable normative assessment, the exercise of justification itself and the identity presumed by it are not sufficient. Firstly, the justificatory process determines whether the EU's existence is justified based on the values and interests of all humanity. This unbounded justification does not reflect the actual bounded nature of the primary functions of a EU, no matter what its particular form. EU legislation, policies, rights and obligations, although they may have far-reaching affects outside the EU, are primarily binding on those within its limits. A universal justification – by treating all those involved in the justificatory project as the same – does not distinguish the interests of those most directly affected by EU outputs. If value were placed on individual autonomy, it presumably would follow that the views of those affected most directly should have more weight, wherever they are. In this way, a universal justification does not adequately reflect the European Union's function of legislating for and representing primarily those within its jurisdiction.

Furthermore, the thin cosmopolitan identity presumed necessary by this justificatory process requires of fellow Europeans no stronger (imagined or real) ties than would be shared with any other human. It does not presume that values of Europeans may be distinct, simply by virtue of their being in a bounded territory and polity and sharing a 'common fate'. With only such an identity requirement it is difficult to envisage why individual Europeans would feel a sustained commitment or moral tie to Europe beyond one that was purely rational, expressed in interest-based decisions.² This would perhaps be a sufficient identity in a world where individuals could choose commitment and attachment to a polity based on rational decisions, but less so in a world where thick local and national identities abound.

It thus may be necessary to return to a bounded form of justification that assumes the existence of a polity and justifies its particular outputs or organisation, within a given community and relative to that community's particular ethos. Evaluating the EU in this way would require that all citizens could consider its outputs reasonable and consistent with their values. Such a justification of the EU might be formulated in the following way: Europeans have good reason to accept the EU as it is vital in providing outputs or goods that benefit their welfare, understood as, for instance, the 'necessaries and conveniences of life' (Morgan 2005: 88). As Morgan outlines, this would not mean all Europeans need to actually accept this justification, but simply that, an imagined *bare citizen* who holds certain values (equality, liberty...etc), would have good reason to accept it (Morgan 2005: 86).

In this way the EU's justifiability could be seen to rest on its problem-solving capacity, and its successes in achieving objectives such as welfare, a single market or maintaining peace and stability, which could not be gained without European integration (Føllesdal 2006: 158). There are different arguments put forth to suggest that the EU can rely purely on being justified in this way. Scharpf (1999: 11-12), for example, has argued that the lack of a thick common identity at the EU level means it cannot attain 'input-legitimacy' and must instead rely on 'output legitimacy', derived from EU outputs that are in the common interest.

² An exception would be if individuals in a hypothetical situation justified the EU on the basis of it being an expression of an already existing feeling of European identity.

Intergovernmentalists also deny the need for direct legitimacy linking individuals and the EU. They argue the EU is primarily a forum of states and as such is legitimate by virtue of being the sum of legitimate Member States. These arguments and the assumptions made, however, serve to illustrate precisely why justification alone is not sufficient as a normative judgement of the EU.

The supposition of indirect legitimacy assumes that Member States can somehow embody and act on the will of their citizens and be responsible for decisions made at the EU level (Obradovic 1996: 201). Whereas, European integration could actually be said to have weakened Member States' direct authority as many economic controls are now beyond any individual state's direct rule. The increasingly far-reaching role of EU legislation on citizens' lives further undermines arguments posited by intergovernmentalists. As Beetham and Lord point out, the EU has final law-making authority, makes choices on behalf of citizens and influences state provision of goods and services (2001: 445). As the EU has taken on such a powerful role in policy-making, it raises the question of whether a purely 'justified' technocratic and indirectly legitimate system of governance should continue without having institutionalised modes of consent giving. Especially if further political and social integration is sought, a mere appeal to justification may not be enough to sustain the personal or economic sacrifices and level of cooperation required (Hersom 2004: 38).

The European identity presumed by a justificatory exercise is one that is too 'thin' and unstable. Using Easton's (1975) distinction between 'specific' and 'diffuse' support of a political system, such an identity could arguably give rise to 'specific' support based on political outputs fulfilling citizen's specific demands, rather than a more sustainable, diffuse support. This sense of identity may be fatally influenced by 'cycles of enthusiasm and disenchantment' and dependent on short-term cost-benefit calculations (Kostakopoulou 2001: 34). It may ultimately give way to what is considered to be in the national interest.

Normatively, then, justification is not sufficient as an evaluative tool in a number of ways. Firstly, some form of common sphere and internal legitimacy is needed in order to define by what standards the EU's outputs are to be judged (Bellamy and Castiglione 2004: 12). Secondly, justification alone does not illuminate the moral character of EU power over its citizens. Justification may tell us why the EU should exist or why it is 'good' or 'effective' but, as Simmons (1999) has argued, this does little to tell us why (EU) citizens should be morally obliged to follow its laws rather than those of any other similarly 'good' or 'just' arrangement. In this way justification alone simply does not do the work required in 'bounding' those in the EU. Both a universal and particular justification assumes only a thin cosmopolitan 'identity' of EU citizens. While particular justification aligns the values in the justificatory process with those values in the specific 'ethos' of EU citizens, as outlined above, this identity is still too thin. Furthermore, a hypothetical justificatory thought experiment might result in the assumption that a value such as security (see Morgan 2005: 19) or welfare enhancement would be a value acceptable to all Europeans for justifying the EU's existence. But, however watertight the argumentation may be, it could not establish whether such a justification is actually acceptable to all Europeans; surely direct democratic procedures of accountability, representation and participation would be necessary to ascertain this? In summary, a merely justified EU alone does not take into account the intrinsic value of such democratic processes at the EU level (Nicolaidis 2001: 462).

Legitimizing the European Union

A justification of the EU thus falls short, in our quest for normative affirmation. It is therefore useful to turn to legitimacy as an evaluation of the specific moral relationship between EU citizens and institutions. As outlined above, there is much debate about the definition of legitimacy and criteria for its attainment. However, the underlying consensus is that if power is legitimate it is seen as a 'rightful authority'. The disagreements lie in the conditions necessary for making a democratic authority rightful. Some arguments centre on social conditions, consent, support and the perception of legitimacy by citizens. Others argue for

certain qualities of the polity, such as political, legal or institutional conditions that create legitimacy.

All the accounts in question focus on democratic legitimacy and thus make inherent assumptions about the value of democratic procedures. However, there are stronger and weaker views on the need for consent. While for some a tacit consent, merely suggested by a perceived support or loyalty is sufficient, others, such as Simmons (1999), call for actual consent giving. The difference between these two accounts may not initially seem stark, but their relations to common identity differ in important ways. As Simmons (1999: 748) outlines, an attitudinal (Weberian) account of legitimacy rests on the assumption that a state is legitimate if its citizens believe it to be lawful, rightful or morally acceptable. In this way a sense of common identity or attachment to a regime could directly be said to increase legitimacy. This account however suffers from vital oversights. As Simmons argues, with attitudinal legitimacy the moral judgement becomes more about the citizens and their beliefs than the moral quality of the state (Simmons 1999: 749). Furthermore, he argues, in this framework a state could be considered legitimate if it brainwashed or otherwise manipulated its citizens (Simmons 1999: 750). In contrast, a Lockean conception of legitimacy requires citizens to give actual, free and informed consent to be governed, collated through democratic processes. In this framework then, a sense of identity or attachment does not directly imply legitimacy; rather, it can be one of the many motivations for consent giving as well as an element in effective democracy.

When specifically applied to the EU, the assumption of a common identity as a prerequisite or necessary element of democratic legitimacy is prevalent. There are however different rationales for this and varying ways in which such an identity is envisioned. A somewhat crude distinction can be made between theories presuming a pre-defined, thick, 'national' kind of identity to be necessary and those proposing a more post-national and abstract legally mediated identity.

The national conceptions of legitimacy arise from the notion of a democratic state mapped onto a homogenous national community or 'demos'. In this way an assumption of common identity is imbedded in the concept of democracy. Ultimate authority rests in 'a people' seen as a pre-existing community. Their collective fate is determined in a unified public sphere by a process of will formation. Those in power, in turn, are required to act in the common good of the people. Their 'rightfulness' as rulers rests on this, and the fact that they are considered 'one of us'. Within this lies an assumption of self-determination and common identity, where it is not rule by just any people but rule by 'our people' that counts.

Not only is a common identity tacitly assumed in definitions of democratic legitimacy, a demos is seen as a prerequisite for a working democracy. Theorists such as David Miller (1997) consider a certain level of common trust necessary to sustain democracy. This trust is fostered in the 'imagined community' of modern nationalism and its cultural practices of common language, beliefs and affective identity. Others argue that working democracies need to have an identity strong enough to withstand constructive conflicts of interest. Effective majority rule, where a minority is able to accept the outcome of elections and of redistribution policies is seen to require a level of societal cohesion. However, Obradovic (1996) considers a 'thicker' identity grounded in a common history and traditions to be necessary. This identity is then based on 'deeply embedded myths' of common origin and originality. Whilst for some the myth of common origin and history is intertwined with ethnicity or religion, for those who describe themselves as 'civic nationalists' an identity would instead be expressed linguistically, culturally and in political traditions (Nicolaidis 2003: 141).

Applied to the political integration of Europe, the assumption of a demos as a prerequisite for democracy and legitimacy can lead to two opposing considerations or the 'two sides of one coin' (Nicolaidis 2003: 143). The first is the belief that the EU can and must instil a European quasi-national identity in order to be legitimate. De Beus (2001) argues a democratic Europe needs a supranational European identity that goes further than a mere

feeling of shared citizenship and the 'common belief about the sources and principles of legitimate authority' (2001: 305). This identity would rest on a shared social and political culture. De Beus comments that European democracy and identity are deeply linked. A thick common identity reinforces the democratic value of equal citizenship and engenders support and participation in democratic processes. Constructivists further argue that such a demos could be fostered through the very processes of political, cultural and economic integration. For Schmitter (2003: 31) it is the 'daily practice of open, free and competitive politics' itself that could create such a European demos.

On the opposite side of the coin lies the 'no-demos' thesis. This posits that the EU should not and cannot attempt to create such an identity as the linguistic and cultural diversity inherent in Europe mean its citizens cannot make up a coherent demos, nor the common political sphere of communication needed for democratic will formation. A circular problem is identified, where functions of a state³ would not work at the EU level without a common European identity, but such an identity may not emerge unless these functions are in place. Moravcsik (2002: 616), for example, considers there might be no prospect of a common identity unless citizens feel they 'have a stake in it' in terms of a common system of redistribution. The proponents of the 'no demos' thesis tend to conclude that the nation-state is the most efficient and natural sphere of legitimate political association. With no prospect or desire for a European identity or demos, they turn to the ideas outlined above, of an EU that is purely justified. On the face of it these arguments answer the dilemma of the moral relationship between the EU and its citizens put forth in Section 1. In these accounts a common identity is the 'tie that binds' and fosters the consensual relationship between the governed and governing, facilitated by democratic processes.

There are however several problems with the premises underlying both sides of the quasi-national European identity debate. Firstly, the assumption that the EU's legitimacy can be derived from a sense of 'us' ruling 'us', is based on a Weberian assumption of legitimacy. As outlined above, by resting only on the attitudes of EU citizens, such an account does not take seriously the need for their actual free and informed consent.⁴ Furthermore, the very assumption that the EU requires a thick or a unified identity to be truly legitimate rests on a definition of legitimacy that is based on a national framework. Thus any attempt to show how the EU, which is not a nation-state and currently without a thick identity or demos, could or should be legitimate, is stillborn. The assumption of a necessary thick identity is not just problematic for the EU but is perhaps questionable at a national level too. It would presume that a political identity is mapped seamlessly onto a fixed, cultural, 'original' or exclusive single identity that does not take into account the actual plurality of overlapping identities (Gillespie and Laffan 2006: 139). Elements of this kind of thick identity are inherently undesirable, as they assume that there is such a thing as a truly unified will or 'national interest'. In some respects they are exclusionary as membership is based ultimately on immutable notions of common history, descent or ethnicity.

It is therefore worth turning to post-national conceptions of European identity to explore whether these are more desirable and appropriate. These conceptions take what Kuper (2000: 164) calls a 'double conceptual disengagement', where both political identity and democracy are no longer based on assumptions of the nation-state. While there are different strands of post-national thought on European identity – one of the most prominent being Habermas's notion of constitutional patriotism (Habermas 1996: 465) – there is general consensus that EU citizens would not require a thick identity based on a cultural or historical unity. Instead they argue for an identity that is reflective and an 'abstract and legally mediated solidarity amongst strangers' (Habermas 1995: 305). Such an identity would be

³ Such as redistribution, protection and representation.

⁴ Consent is commonly seen as a prerequisite for the constitution of a political authority. Both Hobbes and Locke for example, consider consent as central in turning power into rightful authority. "The Right of all Sovereigns," says Hobbes in *Leviathan* (chap. 42) "is derived originally from the consent of everyone of those that are to be governed." (Hobbes, *Leviathan* Chap. 42). And Locke (Second Treatise § 95): "Men being ... by nature all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate and subjected to the political power of another without his own consent." See <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/legal-obligation/#5>.

centred on the common aims and institutions of integration. Europeans would hold shared liberal values and ideals of democracy, equality, liberty or the more specific endeavour of maintaining a particular form of 'social Europe'. EU legitimacy would be derived from the consent given by European peoples to their common democratic institutions. This view of identity comes closer to the purely 'cosmopolitan' identity deemed necessary for universal justification. However, it differs in one important way, in that it describes a population bound to the EU by specific attachment and consent giving to its institutions.

While in many ways the rational, reflective, post-national conceptions of European identity are more desirable than the thick, overarching national versions, there remain several criticisms. In some respects such an identity overshoots the quasi-national type of identity and becomes too thin. In doing so, it goes back to the problems associated with a purely justified EU and lacks an account of why citizens would choose to consent to the EU. The conception of rational consent giving conjures up an image of a world where people freely choose which polity they wish to belong to based on a match between their rational or ideological preferences and the offerings of a political arrangement. It is a notion better suited to a world without nations or the existence of emotive political identities. It fails to show why there would be a stable consent that is not entirely based on changing preferences and policies.

Furthermore, the interplay between a sense of political affect and effective democratic processes is not emphasised in such post-national accounts of identity. It would, for instance, be difficult to see how such a rationalistic identity could sustain stable common action and redistributive policies, particularly where strong emotive identities are present at the local and national level. Beetham and Lord (1998) focus on this dilemma when they ask which level of authority would be considered more legitimate in the case of a conflict between levels of identification. It could be easily imagined how perceived 'national interests' induced by a thicker national identity could subsume the interests evoked by a thin post-national European identity.

In contrast, Kraus (2003: 670) criticises the post-national form of identity as he feels it is neither desirable nor viable. He is concerned that the promotion of a thin 'civic' European identity may ignore or override national or local cultural differences rather than supporting or fostering them. However, he is sceptical that such a concept of identity even holds. He claims identity cannot entirely be only either cultural or civic as; 'civic commitments are not developed in a cultural vacuum'.

In this way, both post-national and quasi-national conceptions of European identity still centre too much on the production of a singular overarching European identity at the cost of alienating or conflicting with national ones. Theorists such as Nicolaidis (2003) for example, have therefore questioned the need for a singular overarching common identity at the European level. She has argued European identification should be a process of sharing multiple identities and focusing on European projects- not so much 'who Europeans are but what they do in common' (Nicolaidis 2003: 144). Similarly, Kraus calls for a pluralistic European identity, which would have cultural diversity institutionally protected through the principle of subsidiarity (Nicolaidis 2003: 679).

It is questionable to what extent a sustained attachment to Europe could be maintained simply by the process of 'what they do in common' rather than 'who they are', as Nicolaidis professes. Just as Kraus argues that civic commitments and cultural attachments cannot necessarily be separated, it could be considered that 'doing in common' would need to go hand-in-hand with a sense of common identity. The next section will, however, explore further Nicolaidis' suggested need to focus also on sub-European identities, rather than merely seeking a single over-arching European identity.

Synthesis: Through Thick and Thin

The question of what kind of European identity the EU requires to be justified and legitimate has been approached from two sides: (1) that of a thin cosmopolitan and (2) that of a thick quasi-national identity. Neither, it is argued, 'work' to create a healthy democratic EU with central values of social justice, human rights and respect for cultural diversity. This calls for a proposal of a form of EU identification that does not require an overarching European identity and deals with the potential problem of conflicting identities at different levels. The proposed framework involves two elements. The first is a structure of normative evaluation that does not create the foregone conclusion that the EU must be like a nation in order to be justified and legitimate. The second element is a European identification that takes into account local and national levels of identity, 'works' empirically and is normatively acceptable.

In section 1, neither 'universal justification' nor 'particular justification' alone, were shown to be sufficient as normative evaluations of the EU and a two-levelled justification was proposed. There is no reason why normative theory should not follow the practice of multiple sites or layers of authority and accountability split at different levels or sites of jurisdiction. Both a universal justification of the EU and a more particular justification need to be sought for the EU to be truly justified. A basic universal or 'objective' justification is necessary if one is to stay true to liberal assumptions of universal rationality and equality and if the reality of the EU's widespread influence is to be captured. The identity compatible with this is a thin universal common identification of individuals as equals, respecting requirements of basic human rights, we might think of this as a form of 'universal morality'. However, as I argued in section I, this thin identity alone is not sufficient to justify particular laws that are binding only to those within the EU, and begs the need for more particular justification, based on a more particularistic 'ethos'. Just as Habermas (2001: 117) argues that the universal principles of a democratic constitution are compatible with the culturally and historically specific interpretations of these, there is no reason a 'universal' and a 'particular' layer of justification could not be compatible.⁵

In the same way as justification needs to be taken away from the idea of a single unified political sphere such as the state, the concept of legitimacy, needs to evaluate the relationship between EU citizens and their institutions by taking into account the complex interaction of levels and forms of decision-making. The model of a majority in a unified nation electing its representatives in a parliamentary or presidential democracy is not directly transferable to the EU. Therefore the direct requirement of a unified 'thick' or even unified 'thin' identity for legitimacy appears redundant. An evaluation of the EU's legitimacy requires a more appropriate concept if it is not to remain forever in a 'crisis of legitimacy'. In line with Simmons' (2001) Lockean conception, legitimacy should be seen to rest in the first instance on freely given consent, aggregated by democratic institutions.⁶ Identity or a system of identification is then a secondary requirement of legitimacy that feeds into the need for bounding and differentiating the polity, producing stable consent and democratic institutions that 'work'.⁷ This concept of legitimacy is flexible enough to incorporate changing sites and types of identity in changing political orders.

Similarly, in Habermas's concept of constitutional patriotism, 'freely given consent' is a requisite of a legitimate EU. However the level of identity assumed necessary in constitutional patriotism does not go beyond an 'abstract, legally mediated solidarity', and as argued before, it is unclear how this is to produce the consent and the cohesion in the

⁵ For further discussion on the compatibility of a particularistic 'ethos' and universalistic 'morality', see Dobson (2006a: 144).

⁶ There is much debate on how, empirically, consent is to be sought. Particularly in the case of the EU, this is an interesting question for further consideration elsewhere.

⁷ This is not to say that identity is necessarily of secondary importance, but rather, that legitimacy should in the first instance rest on consent giving by citizens. In this view of the concept, a common identity is thus not a *direct* requirement of legitimacy, though an identity may play a very significant role in securing consent and thus legitimacy.

common public sphere deemed necessary. A stronger concept of European identity is needed to sustain this consent. Also rather than view a European identity as a single entity, I argue the concept of European identification needs to be approached holistically, incorporating other sites of political identity such as the nation, region or locality. Nicolaidis (2004: 103), for example, describes the identity, in what she calls a 'European democracy', as resting on the 'mutual recognition of many European identities, not on their merger'.

However, European identities themselves are not immutable. Identities change over time and with context and within any individual they are not placed as sealed layers over one another, but are constantly renegotiated and intermingling. With this view of political identities it becomes easier to conceive of the problem of conflicting identities as not inevitable, but rather, dependent on the kind of identities involved. Certain forms of national identity could hinder the EU from gaining consent and, by extension, legitimacy. National political spheres and identities might be exclusive, inward-looking and thick with a myth of a unified 'national interest' as a firm central value. In such a case a European identity that is too thin or rests too much on outputs evaluated from the point of view of national interests, would easily become unstable or overridden.

It is equally possible, however, that national identities become compatible with, and even constitutive of, a European-level identification. There has been a growth in recent debate and empirical research on the Europeanization of national identities (de Beus 2001: 294; Soysal 2003; Seidendorf 2003). Hoppe (2005: 20) has, for example, shown how some sub-state nationalist parties such as the Scottish National Party have promoted a European angle to their national identity by adopting firmly pro-European stances. Europeanised national identities need not imply that all member state identities would become merged into one identity, but rather that 'Europeanness' becomes an inherent aspect of a national identity. Distinct identities, cultural and linguistic differences remain unique while the exclusive or aggressive elements and the myth of the primacy of 'national interests' are eroded. The 'otherness' of different national identities become less 'other' in recognition of their common Europeanness. In this constructivist view, the conflict between national and European interests is no longer significant if European interests and national interests converge. Similarly, being European becomes an intrinsic aspect of being Dutch or Latvian, and through mutual recognition a Spaniard can also identify somewhat with being Italian or British when travelling outside the Union (Nicolaidis 2004: 102).

An institutional expression of this system of identification could be seen in the concept of subsidiarity. According to Kraus (2003: 683), the focus on decision-making at different levels recognises the importance of different foci of identity in a heterogeneous EU. On this reading, there is no over-ruling level of authority and consequently no need for a unitary, overarching European-level identity. It could be considered that subsidiarity goes against the very grain of European integration defined as a shift of power from the nations to European central decision-making. However, Wyatt (2003: 93) argues, subsidiarity may be necessary to retain legitimacy if interest groups, parties and regions are considered the legislative level that is most efficient and closest to the citizens.

An entrenchment of the idea of subsidiarity might not just reflect an individual's identification with different realms of decision-making; it may also further a form of political process that is highly desirable. Political representation and governance can occur across the concentric circles of the local, national and European in cross-boundary sectoral or interest-based representation. In this respect different identities and attachments would not be viewed as hierarchical and national interests would be given their equal space in line with European, sectoral or local interests. Conflicts between these seats of identification would not constitute a legitimacy crisis but would be an inherent aspect of a 'deliberative' model of democracy. In a system where individuals simultaneously held various identities and participated in several avenues of representation it would be harder for one seat of identity (i.e. the nation) to always trump the other (i.e. Europe). Furthermore, the perception of efficiency and decision-making 'close to its citizens' may further participation, effective citizenship and legitimacy on all levels. The democracies of Member States may also be

enhanced by giving an added 'check' on power that arises with additional layers of representation (Kostakopoulou 2001: 21).

The concomitant form of identification is one that not only 'works' but also is desirable of its own accord. Having a political vehicle for the overlapping spheres of belonging and multiple identities held by each individual would make it more difficult for a single identity to become exclusionary or aggressive (Holmes and Murray 1999: 14). Furthermore, the concept of identification proposed is one that does not require the artificial splitting of cultural and civic forms of identification, does not over-ride cultural identities, and allows for an attachment to Europe that is not too abstract and thin. The identification's substance is the diverse sum of its parts, where diverse cultural practices and artefacts may all be considered European. Equally, 'being European' would entail unique symbols, artefacts and culture that were inherently European and thus would become part of the national.

Unavoidably being European would, in some respects, be set in contrast to being 'other', or non-European. This is where an element of risk might appear in the possible development of a sense of exclusivity or xenophobia in being European. Such an undesirable form of identification would, however, not work to create a 'universally' justified EU. Under the requirement of universal justification the EU's existence and outputs would need to be justifiable to all rational individuals in the world. This sphere of justification would be unlikely to accept an EU which fostered or maintained a xenophobic European identity.

Conceivably however, such a form of identification could 'work' in providing the basis for consent required for a legitimate EU. Xenophobic Europeans, it could be argued, may just as readily consent to EU authority. However, such an identity would not fulfil the criteria laid out previously – of an identity that is normatively desirable in its form. Neither would it sit well with the values I assumed to be desirable for the EU, in particular – respect for diverse cultural identities and human rights. Furthermore, a xenophobic EU citizen would not be likely to consent to an EU in which concepts of respect for diversity and human rights are embedded. Arguably too, such an identity would be less likely to emerge in a context of Europeanised national identities and multiple overlapping identities.

A critique that could be made of the Europeanization of national identities, however, is that it places no value on retaining national identities as they are. Nevertheless, I would tend to agree with Morgan (2005:19) when he argues that it is difficult to consider ethno-cultural diversity as such a public value. While respect for diversity and non-discrimination are public values, it is difficult to place a value on any given identity itself, as it is not fixed in form, over time or space. It would be hard to define what substantially makes a national identity valuable. Thus it is more appropriate to place value on the fact of having and being able to express diverse identities.

There is, however, a final cause for prudence. Empirically it is not known whether a Europeanised identification of this sort could exist and have strong enough ties to maintain EU stability, trust and legitimacy. Furthermore as Marcussen *et al.* (2000: 103) found in research on the Europeanization of French, German and British identities, identities are 'sticky' and not prone to constant change. They argue change is possible at the right time – a 'critical juncture' – where an aspect of national identity shows a weakness. Thus for example 'elites [could] promote new ideas about identity when old ones are failing or becoming irrelevant' (Marcussen *et al.* 2000: 103). Increased integration and the growth of a common public sphere could be the catalyst for this kind of change. The funding of initiatives like European exchange programmes are an example of a way in which European elites could give this process a helping hand.

However, whether or not such a form of identification is considered desirable in theory or workable in practice it must be asked whether it is right for the promotion of such an identity to be undertaken without the consent of the people of Europe. In the past decades there have been more and less explicit attempts at fostering European-wide identities from above through the implementation of European citizenship and initiatives such as 'a People's

Europe' (Hersom 2004: 40). As Hersom (2004: 71) argues the Danish 'no vote' in the referendum of the Maastricht Treaty shows that European citizenship does not necessarily 'constitute the will of the people' nor did it arise at their request. It could be imagined too that an elite-led transformation of identities may backfire and arouse discontent (Abromeit and Wolf 2005: 3). However, the Europeanization of national identities need not be elite-led. It could imaginably - as Seidendorf (2003: 2) has argued - arise almost 'naturally' from the influence of deepened integration on discourse in public spheres.

Conclusion

The deepening and widening of European integration has reached a point beyond 'permissive consensus'. The people of Europe want and need to hear a convincing argument for a more politically integrated European Union. As my friend did, they are asking; 'what does the EU ever do for us?' In a sense I have evaded this task by not providing a direct answer to this question, but rather the questions that rest behind it. I have attempted to give an elucidation of the process of normative evaluation appropriate to the EU and the role of a European identification.

This article has questioned the very framework in which my friend asked her question. I have argued that the EU requires more than a justification in terms of its just or good outputs evaluated by the peoples of Europe ('what has it done for us?'). Rather, a truly liberal view of humanity and a realistic take on the worldwide influence of the EU requires a universal realm of justification. The EU's very existence and its outputs need to be justified to all rational humans, requiring of them a thin cosmopolitan identity and a shared conception of basic principles such as universal human rights. However this type of justification, while necessary, does not match the aims of a bounded polity such as the EU. The identity it presumes is only an 'identity' in the loosest sense of the word. As it is too thin to match the requirements of maintaining the EU as a bounded polity, an additional particularistic layer must be added to the justificatory debate, where the outputs and aims of the EU are justified primarily to those within its jurisdiction.

A justification of the EU does not answer the question implicit in my friend's scepticism: why should we be a part of the EU? I have argued that the additional and separate concept of legitimacy is needed to evaluate the specific moral tie between the EU and its citizens. Nation-based concepts of legitimacy, however, lead to the proposition that the EU requires a unified 'demos' in order to be democratically legitimate, and in turn must foster a common identity that is quasi-national. I have argued this type of identity risks becoming too 'thick', exclusive and undesirable. Instead of a direct requirement of identity for legitimacy, I argue for a model of legitimacy that primarily requires freely given consent and democratic institutions, with common identity as a secondary condition facilitating such stable consent and participation.

Accounts of a 'civic' post-national identity based on a shared future and shared democratic procedures still focus on a single over-arching European identity at the risk of overriding cultural aspects of national identity and arousing possibilities for conflicting legitimacy. A view of European identification that works and is desirable needs to take into account sub-European identities. I have proposed that Europeanised national and local identities and the ensuing converging of European and national interests could solve this problem. The concomitant recognition of different levels of decision-making through the principle of subsidiarity promotes and recognises these different seats of identity. Regardless of the desirability of such Europeanised national identities in theory, however, continued empirical research is needed to evaluate how these could develop over time.

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Legal Research Methodologies in European Union & International Law: Research Notes (Part 2)

Tamara Hervey, Rob Cryer & Bal Sokhi-Bulley

Project:	Collaborative Doctoral Training Project (ID 06/160/S)
Dates:	1 October 2006 - 30 September 2008
Project Leaders:	Tammy Hervey (Professor of Law, University of Sheffield) Rob Cryer (Professor of Law, University of Birmingham) Bal Sokhi-Bulley (PhD Candidate, University of Nottingham)
Funding:	Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

Introduction

This interim report reflects on this AHRC funded project at its half way point. We have developed the training materials, as discussed in our first research notes article.¹ We have also held one of the two workshops.

The Training Materials

As we explained in our previous research notes article, the materials are designed to provide an accessible introduction to some of the main methodological or theoretical approaches to legal research in EU and international law. They are structured around a list of different approaches developed from our understandings of the state of the art in those two inter-related disciplines. The materials contain a brief introduction to each approach and two sample readings which either explain it or demonstrate its use – one in EU law and one in international law. We already noted some of the problems with this type of ‘labelling’ approach. However, we hoped that the materials would form a useful heuristic device to enhance communication between the workshop participants.

Students and staff attending the workshop were asked to read the materials in advance, and reflect on the following questions:

¹ See Hervey T., Cryer, R. & Sokhi-Bulley, B. (2007) ‘Legal Research Methodologies in European Union & International Law: Research Notes (Part 1)’, *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 161-165.

- What is/are the research question(s) the author asks in this piece?
- Why should a reader or publisher be interested?
- What sources/data were used? How were they used?
- What assumptions does the author make about law and legal research?
- What type of research questions can this approach answer?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of applying this approach?
- What would the approach and method look like, if applied to the substantive area of your PhD?

Feedback from the workshop suggests that the participants valued the materials highly, not simply as preparation for the workshop, but as useful in their later careers. While some students were somewhat daunted by the materials (we predicted this, given our experience that many law students are almost fearful of theory, because they have so little exposure to it during their undergraduate and even LLM/MA level education), most found them well-written and easy to follow.

The Workshop

The two-day workshop consisted of three different types of sessions: whole-group sessions; small group activities; and paper presentation panels. There were two whole group sessions: an introductory talk from the project leaders and an exercise based on Edward de Bono's 'Thinking Hats' (De Bono: 1992). This latter was the least successful part of the workshop, perhaps because it is more useful at the very beginning of a new project. The paper presentation panels – like conference panels – were the most 'traditional' part of the workshop. For the next workshop, we intend to ask students to focus more on the themes of the workshop when they prepare their presentations, and to be clear that the discussants will not be able to give feedback on the *substance* of the research projects.

The most innovative part of the workshop was the small group activities. These were facilitated by members of academic staff, but were very much focused on learning through a particular activity. The staff facilitators were highly praised in the workshop feedback. We used three such activities: two more serious and one more fun. The 'fun' activity was a picture quiz, involving twenty pictures, posted around the room. Teams had to identify which theory, method or approach each should be identified with, and justify their answer. There were 'prizes' for the most inventive entry and the one that made us laugh the most. We also used a 'statements debate', designed to reveal methodological tendencies (where individuals are coming from, when they choose their research projects). Participants considered twenty statements about legal research, choosing the five most important and three least important to them. In pairs, they then asked each other questions designed to encourage reflection on what the choices reveal about the methodological bases of their research projects. A 'Venn Diagram' activity involved groups taking two or three of the approaches outlined in the notes, and first jotting down any ideas, concepts, people, quotations, questions and so on associated with a particular method. They then drew a Venn Diagram representing the two approaches, and placed each idea and so on somewhere onto the Venn Diagram. This exercise was highly successful in terms of observable learning and exchange of expertise. It allowed PhD students to clarify and get feedback from the group facilitators on the main themes, ideas, and strengths or weaknesses of the various approaches to (EU and international) legal research. The exercise also demonstrated graphically the permeability of boundaries between the different approaches and the difficulties with labelling highlighted in the training materials.

The feedback from the workshop demonstrated that the participants felt that they had increased their understandings of legal research methodologies in their discipline.

"This workshop has turned me into a theorist".

"My assumptions about theories/methodologies have changed".

"[The workshop] has made me focus on methods and theory".

Students also felt able to relate the more general methodology/theory element of the workshop to their own work. In some cases, the usefulness of this element of the workshop was unexpected.

"[The] workshop helped me refine my research questions".

"Theory is practical".

"I learned how to use theories in legal research".

"I benefited greatly from having my theoretical perspectives discussed by others".

"The theoretical discussion was more useful than I expected".

"The group exercises were more useful than I expected".

"[The workshop] was good. I started thinking about some issues which I never considered would be relevant in my thesis before".

"The discussions on methodology helped me to think more about the methodology I am using in my research".

"I would say that the workshop exceeded my expectations. I expected to gain a better overview of various approaches. I did this...and I reached some conclusions about my own approach".

"The workshop exceeded my expectations. It has been a highly didactic experience which gave me insights on my own work as well as the work of others."

"The workshop surpassed my expectations. I feel I understand myself and my thesis better".

This view was also reflected in feedback from academic staff members.

"I was hoping that this would be a relaxed forum in which students would be given a chance to chat freely about theory – including potentially why they were commonly put off by it – and in which we could all get new ideas about approaches others are using. I think the workshop was great in achieving this – I think it is easy for students to decide they want to be "doctrinal" just by fear of getting lost in theory, and this type of information forum where the idea is not to all claim that we are "theorists", but to explain if and how we try to use theory, is particularly helpful".

"I started with the impression that the project was about making a link between theory and method, and helping us to think about 'method in practice'...the workshop was very practical, introductory, innovative...".

One of the biggest challenges for the project is how to make the workshop useful for researchers at different stages of their careers. We were only partially successful in this aim. At the next workshop, we intend to be more explicit about the different constituencies present: first year PhD students who may still be clarifying their research questions; second/third year PhD students who are interested in how their chosen approach is working in the context of their particular project; early stage career scholars who may be considering their next big project; supervisors who may wish to develop their own research in new directions, or support students whose approaches differ from their own. But our insistence that everyone – whatever stage in their research career – can learn through reflection on theory and methodology and its practical application in real research projects was also a key

to the workshop's successes. We worked very hard to create an atmosphere that was friendly, non-threatening and informal (as well as hard working, energetic and fun). Many of the comments on the student feedback suggested that this paid off:

"friendly";

"excellent people, the organisers";

"I ... was really pleased to find a relaxed and supportive environment";

"great – friendly, informal, energetic";

"very unusual and needed forum";

"a truly enjoyable workshop".

Practical information

The project has ten formal partner institutions (Belfast, Birmingham, Durham, Glasgow, Keele, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham and Sheffield), but the project materials are freely available on the project's website² and the workshops are open to participants from any institution. The next workshop will be held at the School of Law, University of Sheffield, on 27 and 28 June 2008. Although the project is aimed at law students, it welcomes students from all disciplines who are interested in legal research methodologies.

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De Bono, E. (1992). *Teach Your Child to How Think*. London: Viking.

² The project website is available at:
http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/law/research/clrc/research/projects/res_methodology

The European Union and Global Multilateral Governance - an interdisciplinary research project: Research Notes (Part 1)

Jan Wouters, Hans Bruyninckx, Stephan Keukeleire, Tim Corthaut, Sudeshna Basu & Simon Schunz

Project:	Collaborative Interdisciplinary Research Project
Dates:	15 November 2006 - 14 November 2010
Project Leaders:	Jan Wouters (Director of the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, Professor of International Law, University of Leuven) Hans Bruyninckx (Professor of International Relations and Global Environmental Governance, University of Leuven) Stephan Keukeleire (Jean Monnet Professor of European Politics, University of Leuven, College of Europe) Tim Corthaut (Assistant, Institute of European Law, University of Leuven)
Researchers:	Sudeshna Basu (PhD Candidate, Faculty of Law, University of Leuven) Simon Schunz (PhD Candidate, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Leuven)
Funding:	Research Fund of the University of Leuven

Imagine...a newly appointed Canadian delegate to the United Nations (UN) has been requested at the 62nd UN General Assembly to speak to the European Union (EU) representative about the following agenda items: 'Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS', 'The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict' and 'The promotion of new and renewable sources of energy'. Prior to doing so, the Canadian delegate felt it would be best to first sit in on a plenary meeting to see who indeed to approach. Following the plenary the delegate is seemingly perplexed: three different individuals spoke on three different issue areas "on behalf of the EU". The question that arose in the delegate's head naturally was "who is the EU and who can I discuss these agenda items with?"

The Rationale of the Project

It is against this background that the research project "The EU and Global Multilateral

Governance” has been set up. It seeks to tackle not only the crucial question posed by our imagined “delegate” (‘who is the EU in international affairs?’), but also the questions that surround the EU’s capacities and its actual role performance (‘what *can* and *does* the EU *do*?’) in an ever more complex global political arena.

These questions have become especially pertinent in light of the EU’s increasing willingness to take on more responsibility and a leadership role in various global governance arrangements within and beyond the UN system (Wouters *et al.* 2006). While its declared commitment to “effective multilateralism” as a means to tackle the world’s problems may at first sight seem extremely viable, the constraints the EU faces in the global governance architecture generate obstacles beyond the human eye, as seen in the scenario above.

It came to the attention of the project coordinators from the social sciences and law faculties at the University of Leuven that the concept of multilateralism in the context of global governance and the EU’s role therein was of interest to both disciplines but predominantly kept analytically apart. Further, they realised that the constraints the EU is currently facing in multilateral fora are as much of a legal as they are of an institutional and political nature. To rectify the analytical divide, this interdisciplinary project was conceived.

Normative (“we have multilateral genes”) and instrumental (“we are institutionally well-prepared for effective participation in multilateral governance”) claims frequently made by EU representatives in support of a stronger leadership role in multilateral arrangements provided the project coordinators with even more food for thought: the numerous fundamental political and legal challenges that arise in the EU’s quest to assume a leadership role in such arrangements have yet to be addressed in a collective interdisciplinary manner.

The planned analysis of the EU’s capacity and actual performance in global governance has thus been designed to focus on issues surrounding the relevant legal, institutional and political frameworks at both the EU and the global level of analysis. At the EU level, issues like the dispersion of legal competences, the variety of internal decision-making procedures and forms of representation arise. At the global level, the task is to get a grip on the external environment the EU faces in its attempt to be a global player.

In view of that, the project coordinators developed a wide and long-term research agenda incorporating an extensive list of issue areas in order to identify its affiliated multilateral bodies and how the EU fares in these organizations in light of the constraints it faces. As initial test cases, the coordinators selected the issue areas of climate change and human rights, two fields which the EU is “seen” to actively participate in, in addition to commonly being labelled as a “leader”. To execute this, the project coordinators took two doctoral researchers (one with a social sciences background and the other with a legal background) on board.

Objectives

The aims of the project are two-fold and can be distinguished with regard to varying time horizons.

The immediate academic output expected of the project is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of EU participation in global multilateral governance. Concretely, this approach will be based on a critical assessment of core concepts such as (EU) legal status, actorness and role on the one hand and global governance and multilateralism on the other hand, from the perspectives of both disciplines. This will serve as the basis for future joint research on topics that fall within the wider scope of the project consortium’s shared research agenda. Substantively, the project intends to produce new empirical insights into the EU’s contribution to the governance of two crucial issue areas (human rights and climate change).

Seen from a broader and more long-term perspective, the project aims at fostering close and enduring working relationships across disciplinary borders within and especially also beyond the University of Leuven. A declared aim of the project is to draw on existing and to establish new contacts with academics from both universities and think tanks (in Belgium and) abroad as well as with practitioners working in fields covered by the research. The project is thus also conceived as an important building block for a future cross-border and cross-disciplinary network on this emergent research programme.

Research Process and Methodology

If one important piece to the original puzzle behind this project was the observation that the EU's participation in global multilateral governance fora has predominantly been approached theoretically and methodologically from *either* a legal (Brückner 1990) or a political science perspective (Smith and Laatikainen 2006), the first questions that had to be asked was 'why is that so?' and 'how is it possible to close this divide?'.

Closing this interdisciplinary divide, it was concluded, necessitates, in a first step, a sustained dialogue on theory-related and methodological issues. To foster such a dialogue, regular meetings are held with the entire research team. Cooperation is permanent at the level of the junior researchers and very intensive between them and the senior researchers as well as between the senior researchers *inter se*.

A perpetual clashing of ideas is but a first, indispensable step to come to a common scientific language. For legal scholars, the main challenge is giving empirical research methods a chance, whereas political scientists specialized in international relations need, above all, to overcome their treatment of international and EU law as merely an outcome of political processes and to engage more thoroughly in its interpretation. The projected research embraces these challenges in allowing for developing a common frame of mind to tackle the topic before going into the substantive empirical analysis of the chosen cases. Consequently, the project is designed as a four-step process.

A first step has been reserved for an inductive analysis of primary sources (EU, UN and other bodies' legal and political documents etc.), combined with a literature review of both legal and political science approaches to this topic. This phase is meant to lay the legal and empirical foundations for the creation of an interdisciplinary conceptual framework. Fundamental questions like 'which fora is the EU involved in?', 'what forms does its participation take?', 'what are recurrent issues or problems arising in the course of its participation?', 'what concepts exist to account for this?', 'what do we know and what don't we?' will be addressed.

On this background, the subsequent phase is dedicated to the development of an interdisciplinary analytical framework for the study of the selected cases. A comparative analysis of the definitions and use of key concepts such as EU actorness, global governance and multilateralism in both literatures will pave the way for interdisciplinary concept (re)formation. Based on these newly constituted concepts, the research design(s) for the respective case studies will be drawn up. For the detailed, interdisciplinary analysis of the EU's engagement in specific issue areas, the choice for the case study method, defined as "intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is (...) to shed light on a larger class of cases" (Gerring 2007: 20), suggests itself, particularly because it allows for the integration of both legal and political science considerations and methods.

Phase three is designed to enable the researchers to carry out empirical research methods on the chosen two cases. On the basis of the interdisciplinary framework, adapted to the respective cases, the two PhD researchers will engage in in-depth analyses of the EU's participation in global human rights institutions on the one hand, and in the UN climate change regime on the other hand. In this endeavour, they will be using a combination of

legal and empirical research techniques such as document analysis, semi-structured interviews and participatory observation.

In a final phase, the outcomes of the case studies will be compared in order to come to cross-case substantive insights on the EU's performance in the two studied areas of global multilateral governance. Furthermore, an evaluation of the conceptual framework should allow for statements about the advantages and limits of interdisciplinary research on this topic.

Practical information

The project is conducted jointly - under the umbrella of the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies (LCGGS) - by senior scholars from four research units of the University of Leuven: the Institute of International Law, the Institute of European Law, the Research Group on Global Environmental Governance and Sustainable Development and the Research Group on EU Politics and Multi-Level Governance. Two PhD researchers are involved, one attached to the Faculty of Law, the other one to the Faculty of Social Sciences. The project is headed by the Director of the LCGGS, Prof. Jan Wouters.

Conclusion

While interdisciplinary research may at times meet scepticism in some quarters of both academic disciplines, we feel that there is a strong case to be made for approaching the topic from an interdisciplinary perspective: studying a fairly new and complex issue such as the position of a hybrid actor, like the EU, in an environment characterized by a proliferation of formal and informal global governance fora demands for both sound legal and empirical analysis. The project takes this logic all the way to test out the utility of a joint approach to this subject matter. Results of this endeavour will be discussed in future editions of the *Journal of Contemporary European Research*.

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Book Review

Gunther Hauser & Franz Kernic (eds)

European Security in Transition

Aldershot: Ashgate (2006)

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The topic of European security has proven to be popular in European studies literature, especially after the European Security and Defence Policy project was launched in 1998. Nevertheless, the redefinition of the security paradigms of the Transatlantic Alliance, the post-9/11 security environment, as well as the enlargement of the Union to include twelve and potentially fourteen new members dictate the transformation of the security agenda of the European Union. This transformation has not been an easy task: coordination and cooperation has failed or even collapsed in many occasions, whereas some of the proposed peacekeeping and enforcement actions have only remained at the rhetoric level. This edited volume by Hauser and Kernic examines exactly this aspect of European security; in other words, its transformation through time and the impact that this may have upon its future deployment.

This very carefully selected compilation of essays examines sensitive issues and elaborates on the contemporary debates on European security. The first chapter provides a general overview of European security starting at the end of the Second World War and the embryonic and quite unsuccessful efforts for creating a collective security environment in Europe, such as the European Defence Community in the 1950s. It continues to the foundation of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Cold-War security setting and moves on to the new order that appeared after the collapse of Communism and the plans for a Common Foreign and Security Policy/ESDP. The second chapter picks up the so called 'problematical relationship between Europe's key security institutions' (p.23), providing a quite thorough examination of the security arrangements between NATO and the EU, the EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and NATO and the OSCE, concluding that after the recent enlargement more flexible security arrangements should be the dominant paradigm. The third chapter outlines a more legal perspective of the implications of ESDP regarding crisis management and civilian/military cooperation. The fourth chapter critically assesses the implications of the Constitutional Treaty for non-aligned and neutral EU member states in the context of ESDP and public international law. The fifth chapter discusses Justice and Home Affairs within this new security environment providing extensive analysis on issues of cooperation and coordination in the areas of terrorism, trafficking and other illegal activities. Chapter six focuses on the implementation of the European Security Strategy arguing that this integrated approach to European security constitutes probably the most ambitious security agenda ever brought forward in the Union, though its implementation, operationalization and institutionalization has proven quite difficult.

The second half of the book illuminates the debates on European security from a more bilateral and regional perspective. Chapter seven describes the restructuring of the United States defence policy and the Transatlantic Alliance and the relevance that NATO presents in contemporary post-Cold War times. The author comes to three conclusions arguing that the EU should welcome the transformation of the US defence policy; that the EU should not necessarily replicate this transformation in its entirety as a model for a security strategy but should take under consideration the needs of individual member states; and, finally, stresses

the need for a redefinition of the EU-NATO security structure within this new global context. Chapter eight argues that today, defence agencies and military forces are obliged to transform to reflect the current technological needs in terms of information provision and conduct of operations. The author correctly points out that the core element of this transformation is a shift to a network rather than a nation-state approach to better respond to the threats of terrorism—a phenomenon that recurrently crosses national boundaries. Chapter nine is a textbook approach towards the regional initiatives to European security detailing examples of bilateral or multilateral security cooperation and bringing the newly created European Neighbourhood Policy into the broader European security strategy framework. Chapter 10 outlines the security issues present in the Caucasus involving not only regional actors like Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, but also Russia, Turkey and Iran as well as the United States and NATO. These issues mainly evolve around 'ethno-territorial' conflicts (p.149) that have a deep impact on the economic security of the important energy depots of the region. Chapter 11 presents the role of Turkey in the European security and the significance the country has acquired post-9/11 in the fight against terrorism arguing for a positive impact on European security should Turkey become an EU member-state. The last chapter describes the involvement of the EU in the Middle East arguing that the EU should be more deeply engaged in the region providing an alternative to US-led attempts to bring peace and prosperity in the region and critically assesses its involvement thus far, highlighting that the main problem of the EU is its impotence to act as a single actor in the wider Middle-Eastern context. The book finally comes to the conclusion that despite the fact that the EU has numerous security arrangements, these institutions will face serious challenges in the near future, especially when it comes to the flexibility of these provisions after the recent EU enlargement, the stabilization of Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan, and the effectiveness of the transatlantic partnerships.

Overall, the book brings together a thorough analysis of the contemporary security dilemmas and debates in Europe. The structure of this edited volume covers all areas of concern and follows a coherent flow from theoretical and institutional matters to actual empirical evidence of the transition process of European security. In my opinion, the choice of topics and of course, the choice of authors for the chapters of the book was well-balanced and carefully scrutinized. Each author brought his or her particular expertise to present a collection of essays that do not only provide a thorough presentation of the European security agenda developments but also an extensive and meticulous analysis over the wider implications of the new security order for Europe and for the world. It is a book that can be read and understood not only by experts in the area but by all of us broadly interested in the future of European security.

Kyriakos Kouveliotis

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This book attempts to analyse and explore the institutional development and progress of European security in the aftermath of recent international events. As it is highlighted in the introduction the general aim of this attempt is to provide an interdisciplinary reference or handbook focusing on the development and current status of the European security system as well as on selected key issues of today's security agenda. In this framework, all the researchers have presented a rigorous and analytical approach towards the issues they tackle having in mind that any scientific discussion regarding European security is in any case restricted by the current developments in international affairs which often constitute such a discussion unpredictable.

The first four chapters provide an analysis of the historical and institutional evolution of security issues in Europe highlighting European security organizations such as the EU, NATO,

OSCE and the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Chapter five is a significant addition to the volume since it focuses on the third pillar of the European Union, Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), in an effort to investigate its correlation and impact on security developments. Chapters six to nine refer to the main factors that play crucial roles within the evolution of European high politics. Chapter six, for instance, prescribes the adoption of the European Security Strategy (ESS) and its interrelationship with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the ESDP. Following this reference, chapter seven analyses the impact of US foreign policy towards the European security agenda from a European perspective whereas, chapter eight tackles the issue of command and coordination of armed forces in Europe in a very realistic and objective way. Chapter nine could be seen to serve as a link towards the remaining chapters that refer to regional security issues and it provides a discussion on why regional security issues are equally as important as European / US relations. Finally, chapters ten to twelve explore the regional attitudes and national perspectives towards current European security questions through the use of a number of case studies (south Caucasus, Turkey and the Middle East). These are indeed very interesting chapters that provides the reader with an alternative angle of analysis of how different countries behave towards foreign policy developments. In addition, they also provide a brief overview of the necessary historical background.

In general, this is a very good attempt to provide some explanations on current European security issues and any researcher that explores this domain will find the information that is provided very fruitful. In any case, there is always the concern when future events and developments overturn the existing status quo.

Book Review

Liana Giorgi, Ingmar von Homeyer & Wayne Parsons (eds)

Democracy in the European Union: Towards the Emergence of a Public Sphere

Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge (2006)

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There is little doubt that national referenda on European Union (EU) treaties have had a decisive impact not only on the process of European integration, but on the development of EU studies as well. The outcome of the Maastricht treaty referenda in France and Denmark in 1992 brought the question of EU legitimacy and democracy at the forefront of scholarly attention. Thirteen years later the stumbling of the European constitutional treaty on the French and Dutch referenda ensured that debates on the democratic credentials of the EU remain as important and as relevant as ever.

In this light, the publication of the collective work of Liana Giorgi and her colleagues is an important and welcomed contribution. This edited volume is the outcome of a three-year EU-funded research project abundant in empirical work. The book's actual scope is both broader and narrower than what its title suggests. On the one hand, it examines democracy from a multi-level perspective and makes sure it does not equate Europe with the EU. On the other hand, it approaches the concept of democracy from the perspective of an emerging public sphere. While this offers the reader new insights on the actual and potential links between democracy and the EU, it underplays more traditional themes such as the role of collective identities, the need for accountability, transparency and representation.

The introductory chapter sets the theoretical background of the research project, but the arguments are not always straightforward. Crowley and Giorgi define a public sphere as "a place in which citizens come together to discuss and debate issues of common or public concern" (p.5). Furthermore, they argue that the European public sphere's existence is a matter of degree, and it is measured in terms of the EU institutional opportunities for public participation and of "forces and actors that are shaping mobilization...at the European level" (pp.18-9).

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on democratic audit. In particular, Giorgi argues that key conditions for democratisation are the operation of subsidiarity and the reduction of socio-economic inequalities. Unsurprisingly, none of these conditions are met at the European level. The chapter concludes with the challenges involved when monitoring democracy at the EU level, and with a limited presentation of the importance of a European identity in a democratic EU.

Ingmar von Homeyer (chapter 3) analyses three case studies (the Directive on the Deliberate Release of Genetically Modified Organisms; the 1999 sanctions against the Austrian government; the European Employment Strategy) to examine under what conditions Europeanisation of public debate is more likely to take place. He finds that "common affectedness" and non-state actors' "embeddedness" at the national or European level are

particularly important. On the contrary, formal competences or the decision-making rules on a policy area are much weaker predictors.

Chapter 4 reports the results of a survey on the existence of a European political class. Feron *et al.* deployed a web-based questionnaire and personal interviews to determine if officials working at the EU level share enough common characteristics and attitudes to qualify as a European political class supportive of European integration. Amongst the rich and diverse array of findings I note here the authors' claim that the European Parliament is not a second class professional choice for most MEPs. In addition, the data does not suggest the existence of a homogeneous European political class. Nevertheless, Feron *et al.* prefer to close the chapter in a more optimistic note arguing such a class could emerge in the future.

In chapter 5 Elise Feron examines the emergence of a European public sphere from below. In particular, she studies the role of the anti-globalisation movement in relation to mobilisation at a trans-national level. As she explains the anti-globalisation movement is neither exclusively European nor coherent and homogeneous. Nevertheless, the anti-globalisation movement managed to attract media attention on trans-national and European issues and helped to "reassemble the fragmented image of the European political space" (p.128).

Unfortunately, chapter 6 appears to suffer from the lack of a clear research purpose and context. Giorgi *et al.* argue that there are three distinct narratives regarding the EU as a community of values. The first one links European values to democratic principles and human rights, the second one refers to a 'social' Europe and the third one to Europe as a cultural community. However, a systematic examination of the different narratives about the EU as a community of values would have required the analysis of a greater number of documents covering a longer time-span and more policy areas. This is not the case here where the selection of cases is both limited and largely drawn from the past two decades.

Chapter 7 is dedicated to the national public sphere rather than the European one. Using the Czech Republic as a case study Illner *et al.* illuminate the ambivalent relationship between the new EU member states and the EU. The authors argue that the need to integrate the Czech Republic back into Europe led the Czech people to vote in favour of the accession. A large abstention rate, though, implied that a considerable segment of voters were rather sceptical towards the EU – a finding confirmed by opinion polls and the national election results.

It is regrettable that the first extensive references to Habermas' views on the European public sphere come late in the book in the concluding chapter. Similarly, the impact of the European constitution ratification process on the European public sphere ought to have been examined much earlier. Nevertheless, Parsons' critical arguments are a valuable addition and highlight the need to understand the EU within the context of multi-level governance.

Overall, this book is particularly useful for its rich and innovative empirical work, but unfortunately less so for its theoretical clarity on the notion of a European public sphere. Consequently, it is more suitable for postgraduate students and scholars who would like to draw from the empirical findings on the existence of a European political class, on participatory governance and on euroscepticism in Eastern Europe.

Book Review

David Michael Green

The Europeans: Political Identity in an Emerging Polity

Boulder, COL: Lynne Rienner (2007)

Anne Sophie Krossa

University of Lancaster

This book by David Michael Green is an empirically very solid book on the widely discussed question of an – emerging – European identity. Although written from the declared perspective of political science, this text is far more attractive than a lot of other publications in this field – which may reflect Green’s seemingly anthropological research interests as well as his ‘outsider’ status as an American.

Green approaches his topic in a very broad way. In his introduction he discusses the general idea and potential role of identity. Although he neither defines this concept nor differentiates between individual and collective forms, he relates it to a range of important terms and discussions, such as nationalism, political identities beyond Europe’s borders, or integration (what comes first: identity or polity?). Conceptually, he mainly refers to political identification within a normative frame. Chapter 2 gives a summarizing overview of the historical development of the very idea of European identity, with the central discussion revolving around the question ‘Is a European identity possible at all?’, particularly as it does not fit the classical nation-society-state nexus. In the following chapters, the author elucidates his empirical approach to this topic. Doing so admirably without any fear of possibly contradictory results, he includes an impressive amount of both quantitative and qualitative data. His main questions are “Are there any ‘Europeans’ in Europe?”, “Who are the ‘Europeans’?”, “What does it mean to be ‘European’?”, and “How ‘European’ are the Europeans?”. In other words, he is interested in (1) declarations of being ‘European’ (there are some, but it is a minority phenomenon), (2) the variance in levels of declared European identity (there are certain characteristics – nationality, political efficacy and instrumentalism being the most important ones), (3) ‘nature and content’ of European identity (bringing very different aspects to the foreground), and finally (4) in the depth of European identification (finding substantial amounts of willingness to risk and to sacrifice for Europe).

The main points he develops throughout his book are the processual character of any identity or identification, and the derived expectation that any possibly developing European identity is not likely to take the form of an – ideal typical and politically idealized – national identity. He assumes, for instance, that results of his research on European identity display a trend away from a rather emotional attachment towards forms of identity “built on cognitive calculations dispassionately assessing that which best serves the welfare of Europeans, based on the universalism of their shared interests” (p.150).

Logically, this type of identity presents itself as one that is able to coexist with other identities and even to ‘celebrate diversity’. Green emphasizes the role of diversity, not only as a fact of European life, but also as a normative approach; for example, among certain groups of persons he interviewed, the theme of “diversity, multiculturalism, and tolerance (...) trumps every other notion of the meaning of European identity” (p.128).

Relating the early development stage of a European identity to the length of time national identities need to stabilize, Green is rather optimistic about the future consolidation of such a form of identity, taking into consideration the possibility that it seems highly “unlikely (...) that political identities will emerge from this period possessing quite the same characteristics with which they entered it” (p.153). The reason, he assumes, is the changing role of the state under the impact of globalization, leading to a more and more diversified landscape of units potentially relevant for political activity and identity: regions, nations, or large-scale regions like Europe. On this basis, he pledges for seeing “Europe today neither as an anomaly among identities nor as an example of typical identity development in its early evolutionary stages” (p.156). Rather, he supposes, we should think of identity as conceptually differently – as a ‘post-modern’ form of identification. Therefore, his aim is to go beyond the European horizon, looking at current and possible future forms of ‘post-modern’ large-scale identities in general. Although he does not give a thorough theoretical explication (according to the whole approach of this book), he summarizes a few aspects which he considers being key points or ‘contemporary metacultural factors’ to the question of how identities – or one type of them at least – could develop in the foreseeable future. Firstly, he mentions that this type of identity is compatible with diversity and multiplicity; secondly, quantitatively and qualitatively changing forms of communication lead to differentiations of group membership; thirdly, these identities “need to be built and maintained on a set of normative civic values, rather than on essentializing or ‘primordial’ characteristics, or as contradistinctions against an ‘Other’ of some sort” (p.158); fourthly, Green underlines the significance of diversity again; and finally, he states that “identities are increasingly likely to be the product of instrumental quid pro quo relationships (...), as opposed to socialized emotional responses to specified tribes and tropes” (p.159).

As much as this book is enjoyable – its theoretic deficits unfortunately lead to some oversimplifications, which in combination with normative assumptions result in a rather disappointing summary that neglects a critical discussion of identity concepts in general and the idea of a European identity in particular.

Nevertheless, despite its shortcomings, this book is an ideal start for anyone who wants to know more or to do their own research on the topic of European identity. There are two reasons for this: firstly, it is very easily accessible thanks to its coherent and often entertaining style, complemented by a large number of tables, and secondly, it represents a dense collection of well structured information which summarizes the most central questions about European identity in general.

Book Review

Paul Henman & Menno Fenger (eds) *Administering Welfare Reform: International Transformations in Welfare Governance* Bristol: The Policy Press (2006)

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The literature on comparative social policy and welfare reform is very extensive. Many aspects of contemporary reform processes have been examined: the exogenous and endogenous causes of reforms, the actors and institutions promoting or hindering their course, the changing ideas and discourses, the various directions of reform, as well as the policy outputs and their effects on welfare policy recipients. By presenting a critical analysis of 'welfare reform as governance reform', this book addresses issues that have received considerably less research attention. The declared goal of this book 'is to give greater prominence to the administration of welfare reform as a way in which to understand and assess the range of effects of welfare reform on welfare claimants, staff and agencies' (p.2). It therefore examines the transformations of the welfare administration that have accompanied welfare reforms and focuses on the effects of this transformed welfare governance. It does so by analysing changing governance practices in welfare administration in a comparative, or at least international (several chapters are single-country case studies), perspective.

The chapters of the books are inspired by 'the focus and observations of both the governance and the New Public Management (NPM) perspectives' (p.9). The key trends in the examined transformations show the effects of the implementation of 'governance' and NPM principles: a growing use of ICTs and 'e-government' practices; a concomitant shift to more conditional and targeted policies; the development of contracting, outsourcing or partnerships, blurring the boundaries between the public, private and non-profit sectors; the appearance of new participants and the changing state-citizen relationship; and the use of new managerial techniques (performance indicators, customer charters, framework agreements).

The book also aims to go beyond the classical delineation between policy making and policy implementation. Policy is seen as the intertwining of the formal substance of policy, the discourses of policy reform, reforms to public administration and governance, and the practices and technologies of policy reforms. In this perspective, policy is produced by 'the confluence and confrontation of changes in both the substance of formal welfare policy and public sector organisational structure and practice' (p.21).

'Street-level research' is presented as the most promising methodology for studying 'welfare reform as governance reform' and an original conceptual framework is developed by P. Henman (chapter two). He advances a 'Foucault-inspired governmentality perspective as a critical analytical approach to examining welfare reform as governance reform' (p.35). Although one of the issue discussed in the chapter is the operationality of this approach based on the study of 'political rationalities' and 'technologies of government', the empirical chapters of the book do not adopt this framework. Yet, the conclusion, by P. Henman and M. Fenger, is largely devoted to showing how the empirical observations can be incorporated into a governmentality analytic.

The empirical section of the book is divided in three parts, respectively focusing on the shifts in the participants, the practices and the processes of welfare administration. *Part One: Participants: reforming the agents of welfare delivery* examines how the identities and nature of the participants of welfare are redefined by welfare reform. In chapter three, D. White discusses the partnership frameworks between the state and the third sector in England, Canada, France and Québec. M. Fenger analyses the governance shifts between state, private and non-profit sectors in the delivery of employment services in The Netherlands, Germany, the UK and Sweden (chapter four). Next, J. Barnes examines the enrolment of voluntary social service agencies by government in welfare delivery in the UK, New Zealand and the US (chapter five).

Part Two: Practices: the welfare governance of street-level practices focuses on the production of workfare at the local level and its implications for welfare workers and recipients. J. Handler examines experiences of welfare-to-work programmes implementation in the US (chapter six), C. Howard analyses the transformations of Australian welfare (chapter seven) and S. Wright discusses the implementation of workfare reforms in the UK (chapter eight).

Part Three: Processes: the changing spaces of welfare governance examines processes that are more internationalised, regionalised and localised thus shifting the focus formerly put on the nation state. In chapter nine, G. Ramia discusses the growing role of NPM principles and of international non-governmental organisations in global social policy. C. Valadas analyses the implication of new local-level approaches in European social policies and focuses on the Territorial Employment Pacts (chapter ten). Y. Kazepov and A. Genova examine the impact of increasingly localised welfare governance in Italy that brings about higher regional inequalities (chapter eleven).

This book provides interesting international comparative data and stresses very convincingly the need to study the transformations in welfare governance and administration in order to understand its role in the nature, practices and effects of the welfare state. It presents a promising research agenda. And further research is indeed needed. Three ideal-typical welfare administration models are outlined (bureaucratic, NPM and governance models) but the issue of specific paths of reform in different countries and the link of these administration models with welfare policy regimes is only briefly touched upon. This point would have deserved more treatment notably because, on the other hand, the issue of convergence appears as an underlying and implicit theme throughout the book. It would be interesting to address the divergence/convergence hypothesis in a systematic and explicit fashion. This raises the issue of the selected case studies. They are drawn from liberal (UK, US, Australia, Canada, New Zealand), corporatist-conservative (France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands) and social democratic (only one, Sweden) regime countries. Yet, in Part Two, the chapters examine shifts in practices in liberal regime countries only, and point unsurprisingly to similar developments regarding the production of workfare at the local level. Further research is necessary to provide more comparative data on social democratic and conservative countries.

This book will be of particular interest to scholars and students who want to understand the interactions of welfare policy reforms and administration reforms. Beyond welfare state and social policy experts, public administration students as well as welfare policy practitioners will benefit from reading a book that advocates for the integration of the traditional focus of public and social policy and public and social administration.
