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OF TURKU

THE CAUSAL BELIEFS OF EUROPEAN UNION FOREIGN POLICY

An Operational Code Analysis of the High
Representatives in 2000 – 2018

Teemu Rantanen



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ABSTRACT

It has been argued that the establishment of a strategic culture for foreign policy is one of the key requirements for the European Union to become an effective international actor. The present study investigates whether the foundations for this kind of strategic culture, understood here as a shared, institutionalised belief system, already exist in the Union's foreign policy practices. Furthermore, the following research seeks to further develop the methods for analysing foreign policy beliefs with an investigation of the method of operational code analysis.

This study examines the belief systems that shape and direct foreign policy as they are reproduced in foreign policy discourses, reviewing the key elements of EU foreign policy beliefs and tracking their continuity and change during the years 2000–2018. The framework of operational code analysis is used to identify these foreign policy beliefs from the speeches of three High Representatives of the Union: Javier Solana, Catherine Ashton, and Federica Mogherini. The study identifies the beliefs in the operational code framework as representative of a particular class of beliefs: causal beliefs. These causal beliefs concern the nature of the political universe and the best means to achieve political goals therein.

The work contributes to academic discussion from two important perspectives: one methodological and one substantial. Regarding methodology, it tests and compares two different forms of operational code analysis: quantitative and qualitative. The study shows how they operate as methods for analysing foreign policy beliefs, identifying what types of elements affect their particular use: both conjointly and separately. They are shown to serve different purposes and produce different kinds of knowledge about the strategic beliefs of the subject. The study argues that quantitative operational code analysis typically focuses on certain forms of power while neglecting others, because of the conceptualisation of power as interpreted within the analytical framework. The utilisation of qualitative operational code analysis allows one to move beyond this narrower perspective and include indirect and more nuanced means of power in the analysis. The study suggests that both forms can be used effectively for foreign policy analysis, separately or in combination. However, understanding the differences in the points of view of these methods is vitally important for their successful application.

Substantially, the study evaluates the level of institutionalisation of the key causal beliefs in EU foreign policy and offers a detailed observation of the main elements of these beliefs. Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses portray the EU's operational code beliefs as highly stable. The results indicate that the core operational code beliefs have been institutionalised into the Union's foreign policy thinking as a strategic culture that guides its external action. This shared belief system is built on a strong identity of the EU as a cooperative power. A belief in cooperation as an effective means of influencing others and pursuing political goals characterises the Union as an international actor. However, the prominent role of both the use of conditionality and the use of combined means, including coercive means such as economic sanctions, indicates a more complex approach to the use of power in the Union's operational code. Other major elements in the part of the operational code concerning the Union's means to pursue its foreign policy goals include the notable use of indirect power through the utilisation of multilateral institutions and normative structures, and a tendency towards risk aversion. The political universe in the EU's operational code is perceived as predominantly friendly, but increasingly unpredictable and displaying a growing opposition to the values promoted by the Union. However, this negative development is balanced by optimism regarding the Union's own development. Through its institutional development, the Union is seen to strengthen itself as an international actor and to increase its own control over its political environment.

KEYWORDS: European Union, foreign policy, Common Foreign and Security Policy, High Representative, operational code analysis, beliefs

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Yhteisen, ulkopoliittikkaa ohjaavan strategisen kulttuurin on nähty olevan yksi keskeisistä elementeistä, jotka mahdollistaisivat Euroopan unionin kehittymisen tehokkaaksi kansainväliseksi toimijaksi. Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan sitä, onko unionin ulkopoliitikassa jo havaittavissa tällaisen strategisen kulttuurin, joka tässä ymmärretään jaetuksi, institutionalisoituneeksi uskomusjärjestelmäksi, perustukset. Samalla tutkimus myös pyrkii kehittämään eteenpäin ulkopoliittisten uskomusten analysoinnin menetelmiä tarkastelemalla lähemmin operationaalisen koodin analyysin metodia.

Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee niitä uskomusjärjestelmiä, jotka muokkaavat ja ohjaavat ulkopoliittikkaa, sellaisina kuin ne toisinnetaan ulkopoliitiikan diskursseissa. Tutkimus kartoittaa unionin ulkopoliittisten uskomusten keskeisiä elementtejä ja seuraa niiden jatkuvuutta sekä muutosta vuosien 2000–2018 aikana. Tutkimuksessa käytetään operationaalisen koodin analyysin kehystä tunnistamaan ulkopoliittikkaa ohjaavia uskomuksia kolmen EU:n ulkopoliittisen edustajan, Javier Solanan, Catherine Ashtonin ja Federica Mogherinin, puheista. Tutkimuksessa operationaalisen koodin kehukseen sisältyvät uskomustyyppit sijoitetaan kausaalisten uskomusten luokkaan. Nämä kausaaliset uskomukset käsittelevät poliittisen todellisuuden luonnetta ja parhaita tapoja edistää poliittisia tavoitteita siinä.

Työ osallistuu akateemiseen keskusteluun kahdella tärkeällä kontribuutiolla: metodologisella ja sisällöllisellä. Metodologisesti työ soveltaa ja vertaa kahta eri operationaalisen koodin analyysin muotoa: määrällistä ja laadullista. Työ näyttää miten eri tavoin nämä kaksi metodia toimivat ulkopoliitiikan uskomusten analysoinnissa, ja millaiset tekijät vaikuttavat niiden käyttöön yhdessä ja erikseen. Työ väittää, että määrällinen operationaalisen koodin analyysi keskittyy tyypillisesti tiettyihin vallankäytön muotoihin ja jättää huomiotta toisia. Tämä johtuu analyttisen kehuksen taustalla vaikuttavasta vallan käsitteestä. Laadullisen operationaalisen koodin analyysin käyttö mahdollistaa laajemman näkökulman vallankäyttöön, ja epäsuorien sekä hienovaraisempien vallankäytön muotojen sisällyttämisen analyysiin. Tutkimus esittää, että molemmat analyysimuodot ovat käyttökelpoisia ulkopoliitiikan analysointiin sekä erillään että yhdistelmänä. Kuitenkin on välttämätöntä ymmärtää näiden analyysimuotojen edustamien eri näkökulmien ero, jotta niitä voidaan käyttää menetelminä onnistuneesti.

Sisällöllisesti työ arvio EU:n ulkopoliitikalle keskeisten kausaalisten uskomusten institutionalisaation astetta ja tarjoaa yksityiskohtaisen katsauksen näiden uskomusten ydinsisällöstä. Sekä määrällinen että laadullinen analyysi kuvaavat EU:n operationaalisen koodin uskomukset erittäin vakaina. Tulokset viittaavat siihen, että operationaalisen koodin ydinuskomukset ovat institutionalisoituneet unionin ulkopoliittiseen ajatteluun, strategiseksi kulttuuriksi joka ohjaa unionin ulkosuhteita. Tämä jaettu uskomusjärjestelmä rakentuu vahvalle käsitykselle unionista luonteeltaan kooperatiivisena toimijana. Käsitys yhteistyöstä tehokkaana keinona vaikuttaa muihin ja edistää omia poliittisia tavoitteitaan määrittää unionia kansainvälisenä toimijana. Kuitenkin keskeinen rooli, joka puheissa annetaan sekä ehdollisuuden käytölle että eri keinojen, mukaan luettuna luonteeltaan pakottavammat keinot kuten taloudelliset sanktiot, yhdistelmille, viittaa monimutkaisempaan lähestymiseen vallankäytön suhteen. Muihin keskeisiin elementteihin operationaalisen koodin siinä osassa, joka käsittelee parhaita tapoja edistää unionin ulkopoliittisia tavoitteita kuuluvat epäsuora vallankäyttö monenkeskisiä instituutioita ja normatiivisia rakenteita hyödyntäen sekä taipumus riskien välttämiseen. Poliittinen todellisuus nähdään unionin operationaalisisessa koodissa pääosin ystävällismielisenä, mutta lisääntyvässä määrin epävarmana. Myös unionin edistämiin arvoihin nähdään kohdistuvan kasvavaa vastustusta. Kuitenkin tätä negatiivista kehitystä tasapainottaa optimistisempi usko unionin omaan kehitykseen. Institutionalisen kehityksen kautta unionin nähdään vahvistavan itseään kansainvälisenä toimijana, ja näin myös lisäävän omaa kontrolliaan poliittisessa ympäristössään.

ASIASANAT: Euroopan unioni, ulkopoliittikka, yhteinen ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka, korkea edustaja, operationaalisen koodin analyysi, uskomukset

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1 Introduction

1.1 On the Importance of Beliefs

“The right belief is like a good cloak, I think. If it fits you well, it keeps you warm and safe. The wrong fit, however, can suffocate.”

Brandon Sanderson, *The Final Empire* (2006, 164)

In Sanderson’s novel *The Final Empire* (2006), one of the main protagonist’s mentors in a revolutionary cell asks the protagonist what it is that she believes. Puzzled by the question, the protagonist wonders aloud what kind of a question that is, only to receive the answer: “The most important kind”.

In this study, I set out to examine, in a manner of speaking, what the European Union as a collective actor believes. My aims with this work are twofold: To describe the shared beliefs that guide the Union’s foreign policy and investigate how we can best analyse these kinds of foreign policy beliefs.

My analysis of the Union’s foreign policy beliefs, as they are reproduced in foreign policy discourses, focuses on a particular set of beliefs known as the ‘operational code’.¹ These beliefs are specifically concerned with the exercise of power in international relations, often seen as the defining trait of the EU as an international actor, for example in terms of ‘civilian’, ‘normative’, or ‘structural’ power. The analysis of these beliefs helps us to understand what kind of an actor the Union is, how it sees the world of international relations and what kind of strategic thinking guides its foreign policy.

The study pays particular attention to the stability of these beliefs. It tracks down how consistently different beliefs have been institutionalised into a stable, shared belief system able to offer long-term guidelines for strategic action. Josep Borell, a former High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, has stated that the main long-term answer to the EU’s struggle to make decisions on foreign policy, due to divisions among Member States, lies in the creation of a

¹ See below.

common strategic culture: on Europeans agreeing on how they see the world and its problems (Borrell 2020). This work investigates the European Union's foreign policy discourses, in order to see if some form of a strategic culture already exists in the common foreign policy approach that the Union has practised for the last two decades.

I share the conviction that what one believes is a paramount question, especially if we are talking about international politics. Not because I do not consider the material world and facts concerning it important, but because we all see this world from our own, diverse perspectives, decoding what we see through the prism of our own varying preconceptions, interpretations, and valuations. Thus when we try to understand how decisions concerning international politics are made, and analyse the patterns of foreign policy practiced by states and other actors in the international system, it is more important to understand what the decision-makers **believe** the world to be like than what it actually is.² After all, following the well-known 'Thomas theorem'³ of sociology, people do not only respond to the objective features of a situation but also to the meaning this situation conveys to them (Merton 1968, 475–76). Or as Avi Shlaim put it, "[t]he need to explore the belief systems at all when analysing foreign policy stems from the simple fact that decision-makers act in response to their perception of reality, not in response to reality itself" (Shlaim 1988, 229). This is also in line with the seminal work of Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, who have shown that human decision-making frequently does not follow the expected utility theory and decision-makers assess utility from their own reference point (see Tversky & Kahneman 1974; Kahneman & Tversky 1979). Limiting the perception and the beliefs of actors from the analysis of international relations, assuming that their interests are objectively rational and constituted only by material forces, would only give us an incomplete picture of the shaping of foreign policies. Yet this limitation has not always been recognised in the academic field of International Relations (IR).

Nonetheless, examples of the importance of including the subjective perception of decision-makers in IR studies are many. Robert Jervis has famously illustrated the importance that the state's image, and how its actions are perceived by other actors, has for shaping foreign policy as well as how international actors misunderstand the behaviour of other actors (Jervis 1970; 1976). Philip Tetlock has demonstrated how the analysis of experts is affected by their beliefs (Tetlock 2005). In his classic study

² Or to be more specific, it is more important to understand what decision-makers believe, than what we ourselves believe the truth to be as it is highly debatable whether we can determine how much we can actually know about objective reality.

³ "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." (Thomas & Thomas 1928, 572)

of the foreign policy system of Israel, Michael Brecher demonstrates how decision-makers' perception of reality, filtered through a psychological environment consisting of elite images and an attitudinal prism, substantially affects the decision-making process (Brecher 1972). From a constructivist point of view, Jutta Weldes' study on the Cuban missile crisis highlights how national interests are social constructions (Weldes 1999), while Christopher Browning's research shows that the reappraisal of Finnish foreign policy after the Second World War was not about a rationalist appraisal of the conditions of international politics as often described, but rational only in the context of particular understandings of Finnishness and the balance of power at the time (Browning 2008, 170–71). Even in the field of economic policies, which are commonly assumed to be based on rational calculations, the impact of differences of perceptions and the power of ideas in policy making is shown⁴, for example, in the way in which ideological inclinations and historically specific perceptions of relevant actors affected the adoption of Keynesian politics in different countries (Hall 1989).

Beliefs are important for the analysis of these perceptions because 'reality', our perception of it, is symbolically constructed through beliefs. People organise and process information about the world surrounding them through mental constructions of reality comprised of psychological constructs such as beliefs, images, attitudes etc. (Schafer 2000, 517). Social psychology recognises that people engage in 'motivated reasoning', where their pre-existing beliefs about their preferred goals affect their reasoning and the way they process new information (see Kunda 1990). As O. Holsti highlights, individuals' perceptions are filtered through clusters of simplified, structured beliefs about the nature of their environment, beliefs that they need to form in order to experience and cope with an otherwise confusing and complex reality (O. R. Holsti 1976, 19–20). Understanding these **belief systems**, meaning the cognitive maps that guide decision-makers, is necessary to understand how foreign policies are ultimately formed.

However, we must be systematic in our analysis of these kinds of beliefs. Just as decision-makers see the world through the prism of their own beliefs, our perception of the actors in international politics is affected by our individual beliefs. To analyse the manifestation of these beliefs in any kind of source material, we need a systematic methodological tool to control our subjective interpretation. The operational code analysis (OCA), originally introduced by Nathan Leites (1951) and refined by Alexander George (1969), offers a systematic approach to the analysis of the beliefs essential to foreign policy analysis. Through it, a specific belief system of an actor designated the 'operational code', is identified. This operational code is

⁴ About the study of influence of economic ideas on economic policy making, see (Hall 1989; Sikkink 1991; Blyth 1997; Jacobsen 1995).

composed of core political beliefs pertaining to the inevitability of conflict in the world, the actors' estimation of their own power to change events and an exploration of the preferred means and style of pursuing goals (Hudson 2016, 24). While I argue that the theoretical framework of OCA focuses specifically on a particular type of beliefs, this set of beliefs nevertheless offers a valuable insight into the ideational factors shaping the behaviour of the actors in international politics. With this study, I seek to demonstrate the possibilities that the OCA framework offers as a way of systematically interpreting foreign policy beliefs.

Indeed, perhaps even more than a study of the European Union as an international actor, this work is essentially a study of how the beliefs affecting international relations can be analysed; also demonstrating how the choice of the methodological approach to this analysis has significant consequences vis-à-vis the interpretation of the analysis. By applying both qualitative and quantitative OCA, I highlight the differences between these approaches and demonstrate what kind of information they can unveil. With my example of studying the European Union foreign policy beliefs, I hope to offer a model that can be used to map operational code beliefs, paying attention to the strengths and weaknesses of these two approaches, applying them in a combination that best serves the research purposes of the analysis in question.

Two issues have been at the centre of my work. First, the notion that beliefs are important in shaping how international relations work, for the reasons discussed above. And second, the idea that we mould these beliefs together, that everything important we do we do with other people, as part of society. The latter point, the social construction of shared beliefs, has led me to focus on an analysis of the **discourses** – systems of meanings realised through language – that shape and carry the beliefs to others. These discourses serve as channels through which **shared beliefs** are constructed, stored, communicated, and reproduced. If these beliefs remain coherent and new decision-makers are socialised to them, these shared beliefs can institutionalise into a more permanent form of **strategic culture**, a distinctive mode of strategic thinking that guides any international actor. The possibility of the development of this kind of strategic culture and description of its defining characteristics are some of the key questions of this study.

Empirically, this work is a study of the belief systems that shape and direct foreign policy, as they are reproduced in foreign policy discourses. More specifically, this is a study of the foreign policy beliefs of the European Union, as they are reproduced in the discourses of three former EU High Representatives: Javier Solana in the years 2000 – 2009, Catherine Ashton in the years 2009 – 2014,

and Federica Mogherini from 2015 – 2018.⁵ The study reviews the main elements of foreign policy beliefs in the analysed material, but most importantly, it tracks the continuity or change of foreign policy beliefs over this relatively long period. Continuity and the stability of beliefs would indicate that there is an institutionalised strategic culture guiding foreign policy decisions, calling into question criticism that the EU has so far failed to develop a ‘grand strategy’ for its foreign policy (see Youngs 2017, 24).

While the European Union foreign policy has been subject of numerous studies, long-term analyses of EU foreign policy are still rare in academic literature. This study presents an analysis that adopts a longer temporal perspective, examining the Union’s foreign policy during nearly two decades. With its systematic analytical framework, the study tracks continuity and changes in the EU foreign policy, another aspect that has as yet been insufficiently studied in the field of EU studies. Furthermore, the systematic methodological framework applied in the study can help to shift the perception from typical themes covered in the EU foreign policy literature and assist in highlighting new aspects of the EU foreign policy.

1.2 Foreign Policy Analysis and the EU

This work is a study of foreign policy, wherein foreign policy is understood as “the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually but not exclusively a state) in international relations” (Hill 2016, 4). In this sense, it shares many aspects of the foreign policy analysis (FPA) tradition inside the wider academic field of International Relations studies. As a research approach and a sub-field of International Relations, FPA “enquires into the motives and other sources of the behaviour of international actors, particularly states” (Hill 2016, 12). Similarly, this study investigates the factors framing and guiding the behaviour of the European Union in its relations with others.

FPA has in the past been characterised by a state-centric focus or even “state-centric realism” (J. Nye 1975). While research conducted in the field of FPA is often focused on states and governmental power, it has also been shown that its methods can be successfully used to study other types of actors in global politics, including actors such as the European Union (see e.g., White 2001). IR studies have increasingly recognised the impact of non-state actors such as international and regional organisations, multinational companies, and non-governmental

⁵ Mogherini’s term in office ended in November 2019. However, the speech material for her last year was not yet available when the material for this study was acquired, with major elements of analytical coding having already been conducted during 2019. Because of this, the year 2019 is left outside the outline of this study.

organisations in global politics. A similar opening up to non-state actors can be seen to have happened inside the field of FPA during the 21st century. Despite this, scholars studying European foreign policy have “rarely used FPA explicitly as the backbone of their analysis”, the main exceptions being Henrik Larsen (2009) and Brian White (1999; 2001) (Keukeleire & Lecocq 2021, 307–8). This has been at least partially a result of differences between American and European IR scholars concerning theoretical and methodological approaches, with the latter having generally considered FPA as too narrow an approach to analyse European foreign policy (Keukeleire & Lecocq 2021, 307). Still, many scholars of European foreign policy who do not explicitly refer to FPA still implicitly apply dimensions of FPA in their analysis (Keukeleire & Lecocq 2021, 308). As Smith, Hadfield and Dunne note, reducing the study of foreign policy to FPA would be inaccurate and much of the literature corresponds with significant FPA themes while remaining outside the subfield of FPA (S. Smith, Hadfield & Dunne 2016, 4). This study takes a similar approach to its analysis of EU foreign policy,⁶ sharing some themes and focusing on certain aspects of FPA, while not following the methodological frames of FPA.

Despite foreign policy being traditionally seen as the prerogative of nation states, the European Union agreed to the establishment of a common foreign policy already in the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 and significantly strengthened it in the Lisbon Treaty of 2009. While the national foreign policies of the Member States do persist, they display considerable convergence and commitment to common coordination at the European level (Wong & Hill 2011). Furthermore, the vast literature on the EU’s international actions has shown that the EU has developed into an increasingly consequential player in world politics, the aspects of its external activities covering such areas as involvement in the global marketplace and its regulation, conflict prevention and crisis management, and the promotion of both its interests and normative views onto the world (M. H. Smith 2015, 18). As Kleistra and van Willigen point out, the EU does not only serve as a collective voice of states but also “acts on the international stage as a group of states with shared experiences that are committed to several common foreign policy goals” (Kleistra & van Willigen 2015, 53). However, as a non-state entity, the EU differs in some ways from states that have been traditionally considered to be the main actors in international relations.

Despite its centrality, the concept of actorness and what can be considered an actor in international relations has remained somewhat vague in IR and FPA. In the academic field, there is no consensus on what constitutes ‘an actor’ and different criteria and *ad hoc* practices on defining actorness mark the existing research

⁶ To avoid any misunderstanding, it should be noted that ‘European foreign policy’ is a wider concept than ‘EU foreign policy’. For its part, this work is strictly a study of EU foreign policy.

(Drieskens 2022, 30–31). Writers such as Sjöstedt (1977), Hill (1993), Allen and Smith (1990), Jupille and Caporaso (1998), and Bretherton and Vogler (2006) have all emphasised different aspects of actorness in their studies.⁷ For example, Hill defines, following Sjöstedt, an actor as an entity that is delimited from others, autonomous, and possesses the structural prerequisites for action on the international level such as legal personality and a set of diplomatic agents (Hill 1993, 309). Bretherton and Vogler for their part, define an actor as an entity that is capable of formulating and acting upon decisions, while also noting that the capacity to act reflects the interaction between internal capabilities and external opportunities (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, 35). Furthermore, as Drieskens (2022) demonstrates, different criteria can result in diverging evaluations of actorness in the same case.

This study treats the EU as a ‘normal’ actor of world politics. To quote Mai’a K. Davis Cross and Ireneusz Pawel Karolewski, “[t]his does not mean that the EU is necessarily successful overall or state-like in the traditional sense, but that just like other states and non-state actors, it uses different forms of power in different situations” (Cross & Karolewski 2017, 4). Indeed, as we will see, the use of different forms of power is at the heart of this study. It is irrelevant whether the EU as an actor is like a traditional nation-state or not. Merely the fact that it seeks to use power to achieve goals in the international arena means that its foreign policy is a relevant object of study.

Hill (2016) describes foreign policy of a state as:

“a complex balance between: (i) concerns for the overall welfare of national society, as interpreted by governments in dialogue with various stakeholders, and at times with parliamentarians; (ii) concerns for general principles of international order and justice; and (iii) concerns for selected groups of foreigners designated as friends and/or as especially deserving for help.” (Hill 2016, 36)

The European Union is usually considered to be a non-state independent actor in international politics, but even as a non-state entity, all three aspects of a state’s foreign policy mentioned by Hill can be observed in the foreign policy practices of the EU. The concerns for the overall welfare of European societies as a whole are interpreted by foreign policy executives in dialogue with stakeholders as well as with the European Parliament. The Member States play a double role, as part of the Council making the interpretation and as stakeholders in dialogue with the Council and other executives. In this, the European Union might be seen to differ from

⁷ For literature review on the concept of actorness, see Drieskens (2022), Bretherton and Vogler (2006, 15–23), and Özoğuz-Bolgi (2013, 5–8).

traditional foreign policy state actors to the highest degree. However, when it comes to concerns of principles of international order and concerns for selected groups designated as deserving of help, EU foreign policy clearly demonstrates ambitions to include these in its global political actions.

Even if we accept that non-state entities can be accepted as actors in IR, there remains the question of whose foreign policy we are actually talking about when we discuss EU foreign policy. The Member States, political parties that form the governments of said Member States, the institutions of the EU and even individual politicians, commissioners and other governmental officers, all have important roles in shaping the foreign policy guidelines of the Union. Nonetheless, it is the European Union itself that is treated here as an actor. This choice is simply based on methodological collectivism, recognising that much of social life is understandable only when collective entities like the EU are treated as social realities, as they are recognised as such by other actors (see Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998, 40–41). Thus, treating the entire EU, instead of its subunits, as an actor is merely a choice of the level of analysis.

It can be justifiably argued that for the analysis of foreign policy, the actor's perspective, rather than a specific actor or actors, is most important (White 2001, 35). Foreign policy as a concept is more closely linked to the existence of a distinguishable set of domestic interests than formal sovereignty (Hill 2016, 37). This is also apparent in the Union's ambition to project a particular set of concerns that are so similar to traditional state actors that it is meaningful to talk about foreign policy of the EU. While the EU's nature as a collective actor expressing a pluralistic identity can be seen as challenging, it is not that dissimilar from nation-states (Carta & Morin 2013, 10). The Member States as well as the institutions of the EU can be seen as seeking to act together as an actor in global politics, and since "actors usually seek some degree of coherence towards the outside world – and are assumed by others to be following a reasonably coherent and predictable line" (Hill 2016, 5), it follows that there should be some degree of coherence, policy lines guiding and framing the European Union's common actions and collective interests. This makes analysing foreign policy of the Union both possible and relevant.

This combination of policies and widely-agreed beliefs is understood as the European Union's foreign policy in this study. It is a somewhat broader concept than the narrow understanding of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in terms of institutional decision-making rules, and closer to how Keukeleire and Delreux treat EU foreign policy as multifaceted foreign policy. Keukeleire and Delreux understand EU foreign policy to consist of not only CFSP established in the Treaty of Maastricht but also of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), EU external actions like trade policy and development cooperation, and the external dimensions of internal policies such as energy, environmental and

migration policies (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 11–14). This is in line with the wording, if not always the implementation, of the Lisbon Treaty that defines the Union’s competence in matters of common foreign and security policy to “cover all areas of foreign policy” (European Union 2007, Article 11). Furthermore, the institutional framework of the Union is also constructed to cultivate the coherency between different faces of the Union’s foreign policy, with the Council and the High Representative obliged “to ensure the unity, consistency and effectiveness of action by the Union” (European Union 2007, Article 13). This wider concept of EU foreign policy is also more suitable to examination of the first post-Lisbon Treaty High Representatives, Catherine Ashton and Federica Mogherini. Their official portfolio was not confined to CFSP, but also included presiding over supranational external relations and the coordination of other aspects of the Union’s external action (Thym 2011, 458).

Identities as shapers of the definition of an actor’s interests and behaviour have been seen as a major influence on foreign policy, especially inside the IR traditions of constructivism and poststructuralism (see e.g., Wendt 1999; and Hansen 2006, respectively). In particular, studies of the EU’s foreign policy have paid considerable attention to the question of identity,⁸ arguing that collective identity significantly defines EU foreign policy. However, Kai Hebel and Tobias Lenz have justifiably criticised this extensive literature for falling into essentialism and under-specifying how identities translate into foreign policy, calling for more attention to how identities are operationalised in particular policy choices (Hebel & Lenz 2016). Noting this criticism, this work, in its own way, presents an analysis of such operationalisation, by delving into the construction of beliefs about the means of power and their continuity as they shape the Union’s foreign policy approach. For this, the study applies the operational code analysis approach to FPA.

1.3 Operational Code Analysis in Context: The Development of the Approach

Operational code analysis is an approach to the study of the belief systems guiding political decision-making. The term ‘operational code’ originally⁹ referred to the values, worldview, and response repertoire which an individual acquires and shares with other members of an organisation (Walker 1990, 403). While operational code was originally a concept for the sociology of organisational decision-making, it was

⁸ See Chapter 4.2.

⁹ The coining of the phrase ‘operational code’ is usually credited to R. Merton’s (1940) article *Bureaucratic Structure and Personality*, even though Merton himself originally refers to “bureaucratic code”.

later extended into the fields of social psychology and psychoanalysis (Walker 1990, 404) and through these disciplines, applied to FPA. Similar to the general discussion on content analysis, the development of OCA has been characterised by a debate over taking either a quantitative or qualitative approach to the analytical framework. As we will see, this debate and its progression towards the domination of the quantitative analysis has affected the essence of the OCA significantly. In this study, I pay special attention to the often-overlooked differences of these approaches and argue for the recognition of their specific strengths.

Nathan Leites (1951; 1953) first introduced the concept of operational code into the fields of political psychology and FPA, seeking to “discover the rules which Bolsheviks **believe** to be necessary for effective political conduct” (Leites 1951, bolding added) in his study on the leadership of the Soviet Union. Leites referred to operational code as the conceptions of political strategy in Bolshevik doctrine (Leites 1953, 15). Following classical psychoanalytical theory, he identified operational code as the cognitive dimension of Bolshevism, the conscious beliefs about political strategy that nevertheless rely on subconscious motivations driven by the affective dimension of unconscious fears (Walker & Schafer 2018).

It should be noted that Leites’ original work was situated deep in the trenches of Cold War thinking. Conducted as a part of a research program undertaken by the RAND Corporation for the United States Air Force, the study sought not only “to contribute to our knowledge of the varieties of man” but also specifically “to enhance the skill of Western policy-makers in dealing with the Politburos of the Soviet and the other Communist parties” (Leites 1953, 15). Furthermore, the influence of the dualist power struggle of the Cold War superpower is evident not only in the belief system of the Soviet leadership as reported by Leites but also in his conceptualisation of the key issues in foreign policy decision-making. Some of this influence has persisted in the elements of the operational code framework, especially in the quantitative VICS model. Foreign policy is regarded as a dualistic power struggle and the means of influencing world politics are conceptualised in the form of the cooperation-conflict dichotomy.

Leites’ complex study of Bolshevik strategic thinking did not, however, provide an easily reproducible research model. It was Alexander George (1969) who later, building on Leites’ work, conceptualised operational code as a belief system that filtered incoming information from the environment and influenced the actors’ preferences for different means and ends, reflecting unspecified personality biases and societal influences (Schafer & Walker 2006a, 7). Importantly, George transformed Leites’ operational code from conceptions of political strategy into systematic constructs of belief systems that could be “inferred or postulated by the investigator on the basis of the kinds of data, observational opportunities, and methods generally available to political scientists” (George 1969, 195). He sought to

factor out the psychoanalytically based, characterological aspect of OCA and focus on the principles of political strategy as cognitive beliefs (Walker 1990, 404–5). In doing so, while significantly narrowing down the original approach of Leites, George operationalised a framework more suitable for general foreign policy analysis.

George’s operational code framework, sometimes also referred to as ‘the George construct’ (Anderson 1973b), conceptualised the cognitive-strategic elements of the operational code reported by Leites as answers to a set of questions (see Table 1) about the nature of the political universe and the optimum means to achieve political goals therein (Walker 2021, 69). Extracting the operational code portion from Leites’ (1953) larger study of elite belief systems by focusing only on cognitive beliefs about political strategy and factoring out the characterological aspects of the analysis (Walker 1990, 404), George sought to create a research framework more suitable for analysis by political scientists. Unlike Leites’ broader view of operational code analysis that incorporated cognition, character, and culture (Walker, Schafer & Young 2003, 216), George’s operational code consisted of beliefs about the rules that are necessary for effective action and selecting attainable goals but not about the beliefs that would formulate the end-goals. Because of this focus, it to a large extent left specification of values out from the analysis, instead focusing on beliefs about causality and the nature of the surrounding world. The evolution of OCA has followed this path set by George with later studies utilising his framework of operational code beliefs as a rule.

Table 1. Questions that define beliefs in Operational Code Analysis (George, 1969)

The Philosophical Beliefs in an Operational Code
P-1 What is the “essential” nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or of conflict? What is the fundamental character of one’s political opponents?
P-2 What are the prospects for the eventual realization of one’s fundamental values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other?
P-3 Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent?
P-4 How much “control” or “mastery” can one have over historical development? What is one’s role in “moving” and “shaping” history in the desired direction?
P-5 What is the role of “change” in human affairs and in historical development?
The Instrumental Beliefs in an Operational Code
I-1 What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?
I-2 How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?
I-3 How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled, and accepted?
I-4 What is the best “timing” of action to advance one’s interests?
I-5 What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one’s interests?

The George construct divides the cognitive-strategic beliefs of Leites' analysis into categories of *philosophical* and *instrumental* beliefs, where philosophical beliefs guide the diagnosis of the context for action and instrumental beliefs prescribe the most effective strategy and tactics for achieving goals (Schafer & Walker 2006a, 4). This division between diagnostic and prescriptive beliefs, as well as the categorisation of the operational code belief system to the ten questions, listed in Table 1, have effectively become the foundation of all the subsequent OCA.

Leites' (1951; 1953) classical analysis of Soviet elite belief systems was founded on qualitative content analysis. In his re-examination of Leites' model, George (1969) continued to build on this qualitative approach and, for a while at least, operational code analysis was primarily conducted by employing qualitative content analysis (see Anderson 1973a; 1973b; Caldwell 1976; O. R. Holsti 1970; Johnson 1977; McLellan 1971; Walker 1977). When developing his typology of operational code belief systems based on the George construct framework, Ole Holsti (1977) also explored the use of quantitative content (Walker 1990, 409) but otherwise this first generation of operational code studies predominantly used qualitative methods to analyse textual material (Pesu 2019, 55). The studies followed a general format of providing answers to questions in George's model via an extensive reading of the books, articles and public speeches of political leaders and citing passages from these texts (Walker & Schafer 2018). The aforementioned authors took a hermeneutic approach to content analysis, seeking to interpret the content by asking what the author meant with their statements (Walker & Schafer 2018).

In addition to George, another important early developer of OCA who influenced significantly the study program was Ole Holsti, who identified six operational code belief systems in the form of different sets of alternative answers to the questions in the George construct framework (see O. R. Holsti 1977). This typology identified the types of belief systems that are internally consistent, interdependent, and organised hierarchically as a belief system derived from belief (P-1)¹⁰ as a master belief about the nature of the political universe (Schafer & Walker 2021, 70). Subsequent research by others qualified this assumption and elevated two other beliefs (I-1 and P-4)¹¹ to the status of master beliefs (Schafer & Walker 2021, 70). This assumption of master beliefs significantly shaped the later quantitative VICS methodology.¹²

Holsti's typology could be understood to correspond to strategic preference orders, enabling the application of Game Theory models to portray international relations (see Schafer & Walker 2006a, 12–17). However, the development of

¹⁰ See Table 1 above.

¹¹ See Table 1 above.

¹² See below, see also Chapter 3.2.

schema theory and receding of cognitive consistency theory in the field of psychology, as well as further development of cognitive neuroscience, has raised some questions about the assumption of master beliefs and the internally consistent belief systems as featured in Holsti's typology (see Walker & Schafer 2018 for detailed account). Still, Holsti's initial typology of operational code belief systems provides the groundwork for much of the subsequent applications of the OCA to identify types of leaders and their operational codes.

Despite George's and Holsti's efforts, the number of studies using Leites' concept of operational code remained limited, and the approach began to fade towards obscurity. After two decades of waning interest in operational code studies, Stephen G. Walker, Mark Schafer and Michael D. Young (1998) sought to reinvigorate the interest in this analytical approach by introducing the quantitative Verbs In Context System (VICS) method. They blamed the languishing of operational code studies on the impression that "the qualitative content analysis techniques used to retrieve and evaluate a leader's operational code have remained relatively subjective and unsystematic" (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998, 176) and sought to remedy the situation by introducing systematic procedures for the reproducible, quantitative analysis of operational code beliefs. This launched a renaissance of the OCA, while at the same time rendering the quantitative approach as the primary method for analysing operational codes.

The VICS methodology was built on a specific interpretation of the George construct. Operational code beliefs were understood as propensities in the exercise of social power between the Self and Other in the form of positive or negative sanctions (stating support or opposition, making promises or threats, implementing rewards or punishments) (Walker & Schafer 2006; 2018; Schafer & Walker 2021). Schafer and Walker sum up this approach:

"The operational code approach to the study of belief systems asks what the individual knows, feels, and wants regarding the exercise of power in human affairs. What are his or her beliefs about the distribution of power between self and other? The likely exercise of power by others? The most effective exercise of power by self?" (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 29)

VICS is thus a content analysis coding procedure that identifies attributions of the exercise of different types of power from texts or speech material on the subject. With these attributions, the ten propensities in the OCA framework of the George construct are each given a numerical value. This way, VICS analyses and scores expressions used by the subject as manifestations of beliefs about power in relationships to others. It does this by diagnosing the subject's own propensities for exercising political power and their perception of the use of power by others in the

political universe, including the positive sanctions of authority, influence and reward versus the negative sanctions of resistance, threat and punishment (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998, 177).

The use of explicit, systematic coding rules to retrieve beliefs from texts and presenting them in a quantitative, comparable form of indices on numerical scales did arguably increase the appeal of OCA to wider academia. After its inauguration for quantitatively measuring the operational codes of leaders, the VICS method has been applied to over 150 leaders (Walker & Schafer 2018), making it the dominant form of operational code analysis practised today. Because explicit coding rules also enabled the use of automated coding based on previously collated dictionaries of verbs, the approach made analysis of large amounts of material much more accessible, further increasing the applicability of the operational code framework.

The quantitative approach to OCA has enabled the systematic measurement and comparison of the belief systems of leaders as well as allowed for statistical analysis of the development of operational codes through learning. Furthermore, it has enabled the use of operational codes in modelling studies of world politics. However, hermeneutic-interpretive, qualitative operational code studies have continued to provide descriptive profiles of foreign policy belief systems, despite their modest number after the first wave of the operational code studies. This study, while continuing the qualitative tradition of OCA, also seeks to demonstrate not only the added value that the qualitative approach can still offer to OCA but also examine how the qualitative and quantitative operational code analyses supplement each other.

1.4 Outline of Theoretical Approaches and Structure of this Study

I am reluctant to position my approach to the study of beliefs very strongly in any specific theoretic school of International Relations studies. As will be seen in Chapter 2, my thinking makes use of different elements of several theoretical approaches while still striving to maintain a coherent approach to the study of foreign policy. However, a certain inclination towards the constructivist understanding of politics, emphasising ideational factors and the construction of meanings, as well as the general influence of discourse theory (Foucault 1982), frame my work. With its application of operational code theory, this study presents a framework that combines cognitive, psychological approaches to analysing beliefs with constructivist, discursive understanding of shared beliefs as socially constructed in discourses. It can thus be positioned, although loosely, inside the ‘ideational alliance’ proposed by Vaughn P. Shannon and Paul A. Kowert (2012), complementing the

analysis of ideas as social constructs with cognitive frameworks of operational code belief systems.

As an analysis of beliefs and belief systems, this study focuses more on the *ideational* side of international relations and foreign policy, and less on the *material* factors shaping global politics. The role of ideational factors has long been the subject of a debate in the field of International Relations studies. I offer a more detailed account of this element of this debate concerning the concept of beliefs, a key focus of this study, in Chapter 2; a brief outline of my position on wider ontological and epistemological questions related to ideational/material factors, as well as the role of discourse in shaping our social reality, is in order here.

Ontologically speaking, I do not deny the existence of a material reality independent of our consciousness, but, like those in the field of IR who often identify themselves as constructivists, I hold that systems of meaning define how actors interpret their material environment (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, 266) and because of this “material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded” (Wendt 1995, 73). I argue that both ideational and material factors only acquire their meaning through language. In this regard, my study also shares some aspects from the tradition of poststructuralism, similar, for example, to Lene Hansen (2006) who outlines the approach similarly incorporating both material and ideational factors instead of privileging one over the other. This is especially clear if one considers how the meanings given to material factors affect what I classify as the *causal* beliefs¹³ guiding foreign policy. Often the studies of the ideational side of international relations have focused on what I define as *normative* beliefs:¹⁴ ideologies, values, and their effect on policies. Causal beliefs, however, also incorporate subjective interpretations of material factors, for example how one believes material resources affect their options and chances to pursue their goals. By focusing on causal beliefs, one could say that this study includes ideational manifestations of material factors in its analysis of the ideational sphere.

This study conceptualises foreign policy as a discursive practice in the vein of David Campbell (1998), Lene Hansen (2006), and Maria Mälksoo (2010). Regarding policy and discursive representation of policy as mutually constitutive, I neither seek to prove a causal effect of one on the other nor to trace the material or ideational factors behind either one (see Hansen 2006, 23–28). Instead, I examine how the meaning of these factors is produced and reproduced in the discourse. Especially later applications of operational code analysis have approached the subject of belief systems from a positivist point of view, treating beliefs as ‘intervening variables’, or

¹³ See Chapter 2.2.

¹⁴ See Chapter 2.2.

causal mechanisms that explain the behaviour of foreign policy actors. While I build on the theoretical work of these cognitivist operational code studies, like critical theorists (see Price & Reus-Smit 1998, 261), I question such a positivist approach to knowledge, and in my work do not attempt to formulate objective, empirically verifiable truth statements about the studied subject. Instead, I treat the signals of operational code beliefs in the texts as shared beliefs, as “necessary, meaningful references for the actors by which they make sense of the world” (Larsen 1997, 110) and, like discourse analysis, depict “patterns in which ideational and material elements in a given actor’s discourse are framed, structured and organised to pursue various functions” (Carta 2013, 2). In this sense, this work is a study of discourses, even if it does not adopt the form of a typical discourse analysis.

This same influence of critical theory holds true regarding my reflections on the methodology of the operational code analysis. My approach to examining the quantitative and qualitative OCA as different points of view on belief systems studied regards scientific knowledge as interpretative, like any other truth claim. I take an epistemological position of the plurality of knowledge, insisting that OCA is not an objective description of belief systems in the subjects’ minds, or even an objective description of how such a belief system is communicated in the official speeches, but rather a subjective interpretation of the discourse that constructs the shared belief system guiding foreign policy. I thus draw attention to this interpretative nature of the operational code analytical frameworks by dissecting the differences between qualitative and quantitative OCA. Perhaps the most prominent example of the interpretative characteristics of methods I raise in this study is the specific conceptualisation of power serving as a basis of the quantitative VICS operational code analysis method as well as how qualitative OCA can be built on different conceptualisations of power (Chapter 3.5.).

This epistemological position has also influenced my approach to both analytical methods. During the early phase of my research, I performed some initial testing on automated coding with the quantitative VICS analysis software Profiler Plus. These initial tests indicated that the automated coding rules interpreted the material in ways that lost some of the central nuances of the discourses, with the coding rules not recognising some cases of the use of power and interpreting others in debatable ways. Many of these nuances concerned themes that have been seen as important for the EU as an actor in previous research literature. This raised my interest in conducting a closer examination of how the interpretation process in VICS coding happens and what kind of choices are made therein by applying the hand-coding approach to VICS analysis instead of automated coding.¹⁵ Another reason for turning

¹⁵ See Chapter 5 for more detailed discussion of automated and hand-coding approaches to VICS.

to hand-coding was the need for closer control of these interpretations, which also lead to the more interpretative approach I have taken to applying the VICS analysis framework.¹⁶ In my qualitative, as well as in my quantitative VICS analysis, I deliberately apply a more interpretative approach to these methods. While this makes my work more descriptive than typical quantitative OCA, and consequently also makes its results incomparable with them, this decision has allowed me to better reflect upon the nature of interpretation unavoidably occurring in operational code analysis.

The above statements do not mean that the knowledge produced by OCA, or indeed any scientific knowledge, is similar to ‘common sense’ knowledge. The production of scientific knowledge is reflective and systematic, and it is exposed to critical assessment by explicitly presenting the steps that lead to the conclusions presented. Even while we acknowledge the interpretive nature of all scientific knowledge and note the particularly emphasised interpretative nature of qualitative research, the validity of scientific knowledge can and should still be evaluated. As Johan Galtung highlights, “[w]hat makes the procedure scientific is the *explicitness*” (Galtung 1977, Volume 1:92). In this study, I have sought to present the building blocks of my analysis for critical assessment in order to make clear how my interpretation of the European Union foreign policy operational code belief system is formed. I suggest that a similar level of transparency should be required when these kinds of ultimately interpretative methods, such as the different variants of the OCA, are applied.

* * *

With this information in mind, this study progresses first by discussing the theoretical background of my work and then moving on to the empirical analysis. **Chapter 2** discusses the theoretical frameworks for analysing beliefs in International Relations and places OCA inside this tradition. In this chapter, I also present, based on previous literature, how I have conceptualised different approaches to classifying beliefs in the social sciences, and I introduce my argument that OCA focuses specifically on a particular class of beliefs: causal beliefs. This, as I argue, is an important but often unrecognised characteristic of the OCA.

In **Chapter 3**, I present the two main approaches to OCA and discuss what consequences the choice between them has for analysis. In particular, I argue that the typical quantitative approaches to the OCA take a particular approach to the conceptualisation of power that eventually affects the analysis. This conceptualisation of power is seldom discussed in studies using quantitative OCA, yet I argue that it significantly focuses the analysis on certain forms of power while

¹⁶ Again, see Chapter 5 for more detailed explanation of these interpretative differences.

neglecting others. In my own analysis, I seek to demonstrate this effect in practice, too.

Chapter 4 summarises the evolution of the institutional framework of the European Union's Foreign Policy and highlights the role that the High Representatives have played in this development. In this same chapter, I also discuss how beliefs and belief systems can institutionalise into the Union's foreign policies, forming a strategic culture that can steer the Union as an international actor. **Chapter 5** presents the applied methodology and the research material of this study.

In the empirical section, both quantitative and qualitative operational code analyses of the speeches of the three High Representatives are presented. This presentation is divided into four parts: First, **Chapter 6** goes through the construction of different means of power and their utility (I-5) for the Union's foreign policy. In **Chapter 7**, the beliefs concerning the best strategic and tactical approach (I-1 and I-2) for the Union's foreign policy are then discussed. The following part, **Chapter 8**, covers the beliefs related to control in international politics (P-3, P-4, P-5, I-3 and I-4). Lastly, the beliefs concerning the nature of others and the political universe (P-1 and P-2) are discussed in **Chapter 9**. This division differs somewhat from the classical presentations of the OCA but still better supports the examination of the main themes, especially in the qualitative analysis.

Finally, **Chapter 10** presents both the methodological and substantial conclusions of this study, as well as discusses their relevancy to present-day Europe and the application of operational code framework to further studies.

PART 1: THEORY

2 Beliefs, Belief Systems and Operational Code Theory

2.1 Theoretic Approaches to Beliefs

2.1.1 Development in the field of International Relations

The debate about the role of ideas and beliefs in politics and society is probably as old as the social sciences themselves. Stephen G. Walker describes the issue of the importance of beliefs as “[a] main axis of intellectual tension in the area of foreign policy analysis over the past forty years [...] in the explanation and prediction of foreign policy decision and outcomes” (Walker 2002, 502). The debate long boiled down to the question of whether rational interests or ideas and ideological beliefs governed political decision-making. In the field of International Relations, this debate can be seen, to an extent, as a reaction to the emphasis on external circumstances in decision-making, especially within the (neo) realist tradition.

The theoretical assumption that not only rational interests, but also the ideas and beliefs that actors hold, do matter when explaining their decisions and actions can be traced to Max Weber and his essay *Social Psychology of the World Religions*. Weber argues that, while instead of ideas, material and ideal interests directly govern men’s conduct, “[y]et very frequently ‘the world images’, that have been created by ‘ideas’, have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest” (Weber 1948, 280). Although Weber originally allows a very limited role to such ‘world images’, insisting that various interests directly govern decision-making, with this comparison he nevertheless demonstrates that the process of decision-making should not be reduced to a simple matter of rational interests. The decision-making process is also affected by decision-makers’ ‘world images’, their beliefs about the world surrounding them, which shape their understanding of these interests.

While the argument is venerable, it was later called into question by what Goldstein and Keohane (1993b) define as ‘rationalist’ explanations of behaviour in modern studies of political economy and international relations. According to Richard Herrmann, it was already evident in the 1950s that there was a division of

approaches in International Relations theory, forming two schools of thought. One sought to explain state behaviour from the outside, focusing on the distribution of power in the international system and the external constraints and incentives it represented, while the other sought to explain state behaviour by examining the various motives and perceptions prevailing in a state. (Herrmann 2013, 334) The first school would come to include *realist*, *neorealist* and *neoliberal institutionalist* traditions, while the varying yet still often overlapping approaches identified, for example, as *critical*, *reflective*, *cognitivist*, and *decision-making* approaches, tended to fall into the second category.

The approaches bundled up to the first school adopted structural rationalist models as their starting point. In rationalist models, Goldstein and Keohane criticise, the interests of the actors are given and logically held prior to any beliefs they hold, and it is assumed that self-interested actors maximise their utility, subject to constraints. Therefore, it only follows that in these models, the actors' preferences and beliefs are assumed to be given and attention focuses on the variation in external constraints. (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 4) However, as Alexander Wendt highlights, the explanatory logic of rational choice theory and rationalism does not necessarily exclude beliefs, if the interests or desires of an actor are seen as *cognitive*, as constituted by beliefs (Wendt 1999, 116–22). However, rationalist theories often employ a *materialist* approach to interests, where interests are exogenously given and separate from beliefs. Structural rationalist explanations of international politics assume that the behaviour of actors is dictated by a particular structure of the international system and their interests are deducible from the distribution of material resources across this system (Browning 2008, 24).

The **realist** traditions in particular take external circumstances as a key explanation for foreign policy decisions, often disregarding beliefs (Walker 2002, 502; see also MacLean 1988, 64–69). In realist theory, international relations follow the logic of *Realpolitik*: interests are assumed to be based on success in the unregulated competition of states, defined as preserving and strengthening the state, and the structural constraints, meaning the anarchic system of world politics, which leads actors to behave this way regardless of the differences in the persons and states (Waltz 1979). While the realists do not neglect motivational aspects of foreign policy altogether, one can make the argument that they operate based on simplified assumptions about them (R. W. Cottam 1977, 15–21).

Classical realism, notably the theories of Hans Morgenthau, regard international politics as a struggle for power, where power is also an end in itself and not only a means to attain other goals, relying on the concepts of objective national interests, rationality and balance of power (Keohane 1986, 10–11). Morgenthau regarded individual motivations as essentially unknowable and hence a subject best avoided (R. W. Cottam 1977, 15). While the approach of classical realism can be seen to

allow some room for subjective perceptions (See Ashley 1981; Wendt 1999, 116–22), the assumptions of power as a key interest and the nature of international politics as a determinant of actors' actions constrain the role of beliefs in the realist theories to a minimum.

Neorealism (e.g., Waltz 1979) combined a micro-economic approach to the international system (individualism) with the emphasis on power and interest (materialism) of classical realism (Wendt 1999, 2). In the neorealist approach, it is the features of the international system that determine how states interact (see Waltz 1979). As neorealism as a systemic theory explains international relations through the material structure of the international system, “the internal attributes of actors are given by assumption rather than treated as variables” (Keohane 1989, 40). And because the theory assumes that preserving and enhancing security is always in the actors' primary interests, all actors are treated as units with the same exogenously given interests, and the distribution of capabilities and the actor's relative power position in this structure will determine what policies the actor will pursue (Browning 2008, 24–31). Therefore, this position assumes that actors' beliefs have no role at all in international relations.

More recently, neoclassical realists (e.g., Christensen 1996; Schweller 1998; Wohlforth 1993; Zakaria 1998) have again moved closer to classical realism's approach, including strengthening the role of actors' perception in their approach. Positioned in the middle ground between pure structural theorists and constructivists¹⁷ (Rose 1998, 152), they argue that the relative amount of material power resources does shape foreign policies but that actors do not necessarily perceive the objective reality of relative power accurately. Neoclassical realism argues that foreign policy analysis should include both systemic incentives as interdependent variables, as well as unit-level intervening variables such as decision-makers' perceptions and domestic state structures (Rose 1998). Neoclassical realism also broadens the assumption of the interests of the states from purely seeking security to responding to the uncertainties of international anarchy by seeking to control the state's external environment (Rose 1998, 152). While the approach does include the role of beliefs in their analysis, their role is nonetheless limited to perceptions of the objective power structures.

While challenging the neorealist view in many respects, **neoliberal institutionalists** (e.g., Keohane & Nye 1977; Keohane 1989) shared their rationalist approach; actors calculate the costs and benefits of contemplated courses of action (Keohane 1989, 11). Concentrating on how institutions affect incentives facing the actors, neoliberal institutionalists regard interests as essentially constituted by

¹⁷ See below.

material forces. If neorealists saw the structure of the international system as a distribution of material capabilities, neoliberals simply added to this material base an institutional superstructure (Wendt 1999, 5).

Thus, the neoliberal approach originally allocated little to the role of beliefs, although they have been incorporated into some later neoliberal analyses (e.g., Goldstein & Keohane 1993b) in the form of an additional intervening variable between interests and outcomes (Wendt 1999, 19). However, when including beliefs in analysis, neoliberalists focus on the ways in which ideas can have effects independent of other causes such as power and interests, disregarding how interests could be constituted by ideas (Wendt 1999, 114). Similar to those realist approaches that took the subjective perceptions of actors into account, the neoliberals mostly ceded a limited role regarding the influence of beliefs, maintaining that institutional structures are the main factor shaping the behaviour of actors.

Both neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism as structurally-oriented approaches moved the mainstream of International Relations studies towards rationalist assumptions and further away from perspectives that included the subjective perceptions of actors and their beliefs in the analysis. However, the neglect of the subjectivity of decision-makers in explaining foreign policy produced counter-reactions in a behavioural form of cognitivist (e. g., George 1969; M. G. Hermann 1978; 1980) and decision-making (e.g., R. C. Snyder, Bruck & Sapin 1954; O. R. Holsti, Brody & North 1969) approaches.¹⁸ These approaches insist that the subjective views of an actor have a causal effect on international politics. However, unlike for example constructivists, who later emphasised norms and institutions as shapers of preferences, these two approaches focus on how the beliefs that affect actors are generated cognitively. In doing so, they drew on psychology and decision-making heuristics, informed by theories of cognitive and social psychology, as well as rational-actor models originating from the field of economics. Especially the earlier studies adopting these approaches focused on the role of misperception in foreign policy, most notably Jervis (1976) and Cottam (1977).

Focusing on the decision-makers and decision-making process of foreign policy, the **decision-making** approach emphasises the perception that these decision-makers hold of the operating environment, highlighting that “information is selectively perceived and evaluated in terms of the decision-maker’s frame of reference” (R. C. Snyder, Bruck & Sapin 1954). The approach argues that in order to understand the behaviour of states, it is necessary to re-create the views of those who make the decisions (Hollis & Smith 1990, 30). Similar to realist and other approaches built on the rationalist-materialist assumption, the decision-making approach still treats

¹⁸ For review of the behavioural revolution in IR, that both cognitivist and decision-making approaches are part of, see (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017).

decision-makers as rational utility maximisers with exogenously framed interests (Browning 2008, 31–40) but grants beliefs a role of transmitter, and sometimes distorter, of information about reality. For example, in decision-making theory beliefs can act as an “explanation for ‘flawed’ decisions, ones guided by misperceptions that make seemingly irrational choices to outside observers more ‘rational’ once the flawed information on which they were based is taken into account” (Walker 2002, 504). This way, the decision-making approach was still, to a considerable extent, built on structural rationalist theories.

Cognitive theories differentiate from structural theories by allowing beliefs an endogenous as well as exogenous role. The approach claims that beliefs as “subjective representations of reality” matter in the explanation of world politics (Tetlock 1998, p. 876, cited in Schafer & Walker 2006a, 4). The central proposition of the cognitive paradigm is that decision-makers’ cognitive predispositions or mindsets play a disproportionate role in shaping their perceptions (Levy 2013, 308). Here, their work was informed by the work of scholars in other fields, such as Heuer (1999) on cognitive bias, Kahneman et al. (1982) on heuristic error, and Herbert Simon (1985) on bounded rationality (Hudson 2016, 24).

According to the cognitive approach, beliefs can operate as causal mechanisms independently of the realities that they are assumed to mirror in for example rational choice models and structural theories and steer the decisions of actors by shaping their perceptions of reality (Schafer & Walker 2006a, 5). This difference is derived from a different conception of rationality: Structural theories assume a model of *substantive* rationality, whereby actors’ choices are based on preferences and knowledge of the external environment as *mirrored* by their beliefs; while cognitive theories assume a model of *bounded* rationality, where actors are also *steered* by their system of beliefs in the identification of options, end/means calculations and choice of action (Schafer & Walker 2006a, 5–6; see also Simon 1985).¹⁹ This is the main reason why in the approaches built on structural theories beliefs have such a limited role if they are included: beliefs are typically approached as effects of misperceptions of the external environment and institutional structures.

For example, in the cognitivist operational code analysis, beliefs are assumed to “reflect mirroring effects in diagnosing the decision making situation, exercise steering effects in responding to this definition of the situation, and display the learning effects as the definition of the decision making situation evolves over timer

¹⁹ See also Tannenwald (2005, 17–20), who highlights a similar distinction between an instrumentally rational approach, where actors are motivated by a logic of consequences, and a value rational approach, where actors are motivated by a logic of appropriateness, as a key difference between realists and rationalists on one hand and cognitivists and constructivists on the other.

or across different contexts” (Walker & Schafer 2018). While structural theories assuming substantive rationality treat constraints and preferences affecting the decision-making as derived from the macrofoundations of the international system, cognitive theories assuming bounded rationality focus on the ways in which the microfoundations of the system, including beliefs of the decision-makers, affect decision-making (Walker, Malici & Schafer 2011). According to cognitivists, when the level of analysis is shifted from the macro-level of structures to the micro-level of actors, their words and deeds, the theory of rationality needs to be thickened and “[t]he principles of substantive rationality that focus on the external context (domestic and international conditions) of state behavior need to be supplemented with the principles of bounded rationality that focus on the internal source (beliefs, emotions, and motivations) of individual behavior” (Walker 2011c, 70). Thus, the motives of actions are no longer generated externally but also internally constructed.

Besides these two ultimately behavioural approaches, the rationalist explanation assumed by both neorealists and neoliberal institutionalists was also challenged by what Keohane (1988) names a **reflective** approach. Reflectivism is a broad umbrella category that has been used to include approaches from critical theory and poststructuralism (e.g., Der Derian 1987; Shapiro 1988; D. Campbell 1998; Hansen 2006) to constructivism (e.g., Wendt 1995; 1999),²⁰ sharing a common focus on the intersubjective meaning of international politics. According to Keohane, the reflectivists emphasise the importance of understanding how people think about institutional norms and rules (Keohane 1988, 381). In their view, institutions²¹ in international politics do not merely reflect the preferences and power of the units constituting them but those institutions themselves shape preferences, and thus it is insufficient to treat preferences as something given exogenously (Keohane 1988, 382). According to reflectivists, rationalistic theories are incomplete as they ignore the changes taking place in people’s consciousness, and thus do not enable an understanding of how interests change as a result of changes in belief systems (Keohane 1988, 391). While limiting their theory to a systemic analysis of the international system, the realist approaches left out variations in the perceptions of the actors about their own interests and the surrounding world. In the same vein, Keohane himself has criticised the realist tradition for disregarding the way in which the flow of information affects the behaviour of actors as well as their ability for cooperation (Keohane 1984; 1986). This is not far from the criticism offered by

²⁰ See Adler (1997) for criticism of treating these approaches as varieties of the same reflective approach.

²¹ ‘Institution’ is used here in a very broad sense, referring to “a *general pattern or categorization* of activity or to a *particular* human-constructed arrangement, formally or informally organized” (Keohane 1988, 383).

cognitivists. More importantly, and setting them apart from cognitive and decision-making approaches, the reflectivists also emphasise the importance of historical and textual interpretations and the limitations of scientific models in studying world politics (Keohane 1988, 382).

Critical international theory formed the core of this challenge to the rationalist theories of neorealism and neoliberalism. Ontologically, it challenged the rationalist conceptions of human nature and action, stressing instead the social construction of actors' identities, and the importance of identity in the constitution of interests and action (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, 261). Early critical IR theorists, like Robert Cox and Richard Ashley, focused on the ways in which the structure of the international system was shaped by the ideas and thoughts of its actors, paying attention to the social determinants of states', as subjective agents instead of objective entities, interests and motives for interaction (Roach 2021, 150–51). While presenting a critique of rationalist approaches to ontology, critical IR theory raised the ideational elements of international politics and their interpretation to the focus of reflectivist research. These assumptions, as well as conceptual frameworks and methodological approaches of the critical theory, serve as a basis for more specifically constructivist approaches (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, 260).

As with behaviouralist approaches, **constructivists** also questioned the rationalist approach and looked towards prevailing ideas, norms, heuristics and logics of appropriateness as determinants of individual and social choice processes (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017, S3; see also Price & Reus-Smit 1998). In social constructivist theory, the meaning and effect of power and interests depends on the social structures of the international system, and that system is seen as a social rather than material phenomenon. (Wendt 1999, 20). Constructivists claim that ideational factors are always in play, shaping how other, supposedly non-ideational, factors operate. The interests of an actor are not separated from beliefs but rather constituted by them, thus the question is not if beliefs compete with interests as causal variables but about their constitutive effect (Wendt 1999). Ideational elements, such as beliefs, give material elements their meanings.

Constructivism has sometimes been placed in the middle ground between rationalist approaches, that subscribe to a materialist and positivist stand, and more radical interpretive reflectivist²² approaches such as postmodernism or poststructuralism (Adler 1997). The constructivist approach criticises the idea that

²² Constructivism is sometimes associated under the wider umbrella of reflectivist theories because of its postpositivist approach (see Kurki 2008, 124-44, see also Price & Reus-Smit 1998). However, the conception of constructivism, poststructuralism and postmodernism all as varieties of reflective approach has also been criticised, emphasising differences in ontological and epistemological approach (see Adler 1997).

actors pursue decontextualised goals like power, instead highlighting actors' alternative perceptions of reality, while also emphasising that these alternative visions are social constructions and not simply consequences of individual differences in perceptive faculties (Kowert 2012, 216–17; see also Weldes 1999). The actor's situation, the threats they face, and their interests are not self-evident but always matters of interpretation (Weldes 1999). Constructivists believe that the identities, interests and behaviour of actors are socially constructed by collective meanings, interpretations and assumptions about the external world (Adler 1997, 324). This way, constructivists embrace a somewhat more complicated approach to the question of the significance of external circumstances in decision-making, seeking to “advance a sociological perspective on world politics, emphasizing the importance of normative as well as material structures, the role of identity in the constitution of interests and action, and the mutual constitution of agents and structures” (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, 259).

In its approach to analysing international relations, constructivism places particular importance on the identities of actors. An actor “understands others according to the identity it attributes to them, while simultaneously reproducing its own identity through daily social practices” (Hopf 1998, 175). By conceptualising actors in international politics as influenced by their identity, constructivists also acknowledge the importance of the historical, cultural, political and social context of these actors (Flockhart 2016, 87). Instead of assuming that all actors in international politics have “one meaningful identity, that of self-interested states” (Hopf 1998, 175), constructivism assumes that actors' identities, which imply a particular set of interests and preferences, vary based on a number of factors, including ideational factors. Furthermore, their actions are not only driven by a logic of consequences but also a logic of appropriateness, thus taking action that is appropriate for their identity (Flockhart 2016, 87).

According to Alexander Wendt, the two basic tenets of constructivism are that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces; and that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than generated by nature (Wendt 1999, 1). This concentrates the criticism towards the realist approaches towards their materialist foundations. The fundament of constructivism as a way of studying social relations is that social relations and people construct each other in a continuous, two-way process (Onuf 1998). Adapting the structuration theory²³ of sociology, Wendt offers a solution to the agent-structure problem by conceptualising agents and structures as mutually constituted, and social structures as dependent of human self-

²³ Originally introduced by Giddens (1979; 1984), see also (Bhaskar 1979).

understanding, only acquiring their causal efficacy through the medium of consciousness (Wendt 1987). While Wendt acknowledges that material conditions can play a role in society independent of the perception of the actors, he claims that such cases are rare and thus material conditions per se typically explain relatively little (Wendt 1999, 157). What is important is how the actors interpret the material conditions and structures constraining them, how they perceive them and the meaning that they endow them with.

One of the key differences between the reflectivist, including constructivism, and behaviouralist approaches is their perspective on the nature of language. Both cognitivist and decision-making approaches treat language as *referential*, meaning that the employed language is merely a reflection of the perceptions, motivations and belief systems already possessed by actors and not itself constitutive of meaning (Doty 1993, 301). Because of this, the cognitivist approaches have been preoccupied with the concern to move beyond language and identify what people really think and how misperceptions can be corrected (Browning 2008, 41). Constructivists, on the other hand, see language as *productive*, as partly constituting the ideas and beliefs expressed through it. The discourses referring to the beliefs of the actors are not only reflections of those beliefs but also where these beliefs are constructed.

However, constructivist approaches in the study of International Relations have not been unproblematic in their approach to the role of beliefs. Constructivists have been criticised for being too structural and state-centric, neglecting the beliefs of individuals (see Shannon 2012). While taking the position that state identities shape perception of their interests and appropriate behaviour, constructivists have drawn ire for treating these identities as exogenously given, explaining identity formation solely in terms of interactions between states (Larson 2012) while placing a premium on structure in the mutually-constitutive relationship between agent and structure (Flockhart 2016, 88–89). Social psychology would suggest more complex mechanisms for identity formation and management strategies than constructivists in the field of IR have typically adopted. As Larson (2012) illustrates, the change in the identity of a state can emerge from endogenous causes. This suggests that identity and the beliefs that form its building blocks, like interests, should be regarded as a product of both endogenous and exogenous incentives. Otherwise, one risks explaining foreign policy beliefs as solely caused by the structure of the international system.

Indeed, these issues have led to calls for a combination of constructivism and approaches informed by social and cognitive psychology, including cognitive approaches to international relations studies (see Flockhart 2016, 88–90; Shannon & Kowert 2012; Pesu 2019). Both cognitive and constructivist approaches hold that “the way people interpret the world and define their interests is based on ideas”, as Tannenwald (2005, 18) maintains. While these approaches have their differences,

they are seen as not only compatible but also supportive of each other's weaknesses (Pesu 2019, 42), with the possibility of what Vaughn P. Shannon and Paul A. Kowert have termed an 'ideational alliance' (Shannon & Kowert 2012) between cognitive psychology and constructivism. In this kind of alliance, constructivism can inform applications of psychology in foreign policy analysis by highlighting how cultural and societal values and norms affect individual's preferences, while psychology can provide insight into the agency of individual decision-makers, avoiding their reduction to structural components (Pesu 2019, 42–43). Social psychology can provide similar insights into shared beliefs and the motives behind them. However, while these calls have generated fruitful dialogue, to date, the progress of the initiatives of bringing psychology and constructivism together has remained modest.

As mentioned above, constructivists regard language as productive and constitutive of ideas and beliefs. **Poststructuralists**, for their part, take this argument even further. Like constructivists, poststructuralists offer ideational factors such as beliefs an important role in the formation of international relations and foreign policies. Following the theories developed by poststructuralist philosophers such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, the approach draws attention to the power of language (Hansen 2016, 95) and, similarly to constructivism, regards language as productive, constituting the ideas and beliefs expressed through it. For poststructuralists, the language itself is ontologically significant, and only through the construction in language are all things given meaning and endowed with a particular identity (Hansen 2006, 18). Poststructuralism, according to Lene Hansen, insists that neither ideas nor materiality have a meaningful presence separate from each other, and material facts are viewed as a discourse that provides materiality with meaning by drawing upon a particular set of identity constructions (Hansen 2006, 21–23). In this way, poststructuralists focus even more on language and discourses.

Poststructuralists also disagree with the assumption of rationalist theories that actors' prior exogenous interests and intentions guide foreign policy decision-making. Instead, poststructuralists hold that interests and intentions are discursive, constituted in discourse and articulated in language by foreign policy actors (Hansen 2016, 99). David Campbell argues that "[n]o state possesses a prediscursive, stable identity, and no state is free from the tension between the various domains that need to be aligned for a political community to come into being, an alignment that is a response to, rather than constitutive of, a prior and stable identity" (D. Campbell 1998, 91). In this way, foreign policy is understood as a political practice central to the constitution, production and maintenance of an actor's political identity (D. Campbell 1998, 8), and interests and intentions of states and other international actors are constituted in their foreign policy discourses. In poststructural theory, identity is performative, meaning that it is real only to the extent that it is performed, and the performance constitutes the identity rather than expresses or reveals it (see

Butler 1990). Similarly, beliefs are socially constructed, shaped and established in the language, in the discourses of the actors. Thus, while sharing several assumptions with constructivism, poststructuralism focuses more on the role of discourses in the construction of beliefs. Indeed, poststructuralists have criticised constructivists for still seeking to investigate the explanatory power of ideational factors as opposed to material factors (see Hansen 2006, 21–23), placing more emphasis on how the meaning of both ideational and material factors are constructed in discourses.

As we can see, there is a large variety of approaches to the impact of beliefs among the theoretical traditions of IR. The approaches built on structural theories of IR typically offer beliefs no more than an exogenous role of possible misperception, if they give them any role at all. All approaches identified as ‘reflectivist’ on the other hand can incorporate beliefs in their analytical framework as endogenous, as well as exogenous, factors unproblematically. Cognitivist approaches, despite some criticism of their limitations in this regard, are similarly capable of providing beliefs at least a limited endogenous role. However, their approach to beliefs has typically focused on the individual psychology of leaders and decision-makers. On the other hand, despite the differences in their approaches, both constructivist and poststructuralist theoretical approaches recognise the social character of shared beliefs and their importance in shaping foreign policy actions. They move the focus of the study of beliefs from trying to establish what is going on in the minds of individuals, necessarily based on assumptions about psychology, into the shared ideas existing and visible in the language, being constituted and shaped through it.

2.1.2 The theoretical approach to beliefs of this study

In many ways, my approach to the study of beliefs in international politics is similar to the ‘ideational alliance’ of Shannon and Kowert (2012). I too seek to complement the constructivist approach to understanding foreign policy with a theoretical framework heavily influenced by cognitive psychology. However, even more than the theories derived from constructivism, my conceptualisation of beliefs and foreign policy owes heavily to discourse theories. Emphasising how the beliefs are socially constructed and shaped in the language, this focuses my analysis on the foreign policy discourses.

In this study, both my methodological approach and my theoretical framework of beliefs come from the operational code research programme. OCA as a methodology has usually in the literature been located among the cognitive approaches (see e.g., Walker 2003), especially after the research program had moved past the first generation of more hermeneutic operational code studies. However, while applying OCA as both methodology and a theoretical framework of beliefs, I diverge from the cognitive approaches on a number of key assumptions. Like

constructivists and poststructuralists, I regard language as productive, and thus the meaning of beliefs as constructed in the discourses instead of language functioning merely as a medium demonstrating the beliefs of an actor to us. Because of this, I talk about the representation and construction of beliefs in discourses, instead of deduction of beliefs based on speech material produced by the subjects of analysis. The operational code that I analyse is constructed in the speeches, just as all objects are given meaning and endowed with a particular identity in the poststructural understanding of the ontology of language (Hansen 2006, 18).

Another significant aspect where the approach I take in this study differs from the position typically adopted in the cognitivist research is my focus on the shared beliefs of a group instead of beliefs beheld by individual decision-makers. Cognitivist approaches provides beliefs a significant, endogenous role in their analysing framework, which I also see as necessary in order to understand the decision-making process of international actors. However, if we focus only on an individual's, for example a leader's, private interpretations and perceptions, we are still missing an important aspect of the nature of their beliefs. Beliefs do not exist in an isolated bubble but are internalised and shared in the social system. Nor is it unproblematic to assume that the beliefs framing the decision-making of a state or other actor in world politics should be disaggregated into the cognitive psychology of individuals, noting that "to disaggregate everything into individuals is not very helpful, because much of social life is understandable only when collectivities are seen as more than the sum of their 'members' and are treated as social realities" (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998, 40).

According to Robert Powell (2017), there are two analytical choices that the behavioural approach to IR studies can take. One is to "continue to assume that groups can be adequately treated as unitary actors but that these unitary actors deviate from the standard rational-actor assumptions in the same ways that behavioural research has shown individual deviate" (Powell 2017, S265-266). The second approach is to focus the analysis on individual key actors. Whereas cognitivist research in foreign policy analysis and political psychology has generally focused on individuals' beliefs and the psychological mechanisms that generate them, in this study I take the former approach and examine beliefs as general guidelines that have been established to steer the European Union as a state-like actor in the international system. Deep down, these beliefs do originate from the psychology of individual humans but the form in which they affect foreign policy guidelines is an outcome of negotiations between individual decision-makers, which in turn have been affected by similar processes in domestic policy arenas.

Instead of studying the psychological mindmap of an individual leader and assuming that it explains the actions of a state in the international system, I study belief systems in the form in which they (possibly) inform a state-like actor. This

shares certain aspects with some of the latest operational code research studying the state's operational code as a system of roles defined by beliefs, drawing a distinction between the *cognitive* operational code of an individual and the *social* operational code of a state (see Walker 2021). While I talk about beliefs and belief systems, this study focuses on shared beliefs as a *collective* operational code of an actor, in this case the European Union's foreign policy institution. If sufficiently institutionalised, one could also describe such a collective belief system as a strategic culture.²⁴

I do not seek to empirically examine the extent to which beliefs in comparison to material interests affect policy-making in international relations.²⁵ Like many reflectivists (Goldstein & Keohane 1993b, 26), I treat beliefs and interests as phenomenologically inseparable, since all interests involve beliefs. Like Wendt (1999), I claim that interests are constituted by the beliefs of the actor, noting that these beliefs in turn can be formed by the actor's perception of material forces. The way in which actors form their conception of interests is substantially influenced by their beliefs, and while we accept that these beliefs have an effect on policy-making, their analytical separation from interests, which can be affected by them, can prove difficult. Furthermore, it is sufficient for my purposes to analyse the beliefs of the actors regardless of the 'realness' of these beliefs. As Raymond Boudon highlights in his restricted theory of ideology (1989), while the classical philosophy of truth and falsehood often tends to reduce knowledge to a process of contemplation of the real world by an external subject, social knowledge is acquired by actors who are characterised by a position and dispositions, which lead subjects to interpret the same reality in different ways.

My aim is to analyse how an actor in the international system perceives the reality surrounding them, regardless of how truthful that perception is compared to an objective reality (if such a thing exists). In this, my interest lies in how shared beliefs are constituted, with ideational and material factors gaining meaning through language, and not whether these represent misperceptions or not. Similarly, I focus on the construction of foreign policy beliefs, and refrain from assessing their influence on actions actually taken in international relations. In these choices, I follow in the footsteps of Leites who originally framed his own study of operational code similarly:

"I shall not try to assess the degree of realism of the beliefs about politics which make up the code. (I believe that such a study would, not surprisingly, show that in most instances the code is neither entirely realistic nor utterly fantastic.) And

²⁴ See Chapter 2.2.

²⁵ For empirical research about the extent of influence that beliefs, in comparison to interests, have on policy making, see (Goldstein & Keohane 1993b)

I shall not strive to assess the exact influence of the code on [...] policy-making, its successes and failures.” (Leites 1953, 16)

2.2 Beliefs and Belief Systems

2.2.1 What is a belief?

According to the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, a belief is “any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase ‘I believe that...’” (Rokeach 1968a, 450). Beliefs are products or properties of thinking; how we understand the world in our minds. From a constructivist perspective, beliefs are not regarded as “mental stand-ins (models, symbols, icons, images, etc.) of the facts” but representations of the world, involving the “interpretation and understanding of that world in terms of socially acquired conceptual categories” (Dijk 1998, 31–32). Beliefs are not merely neutral perceptions of the world but involve evaluation and interpretation. These kinds of beliefs can be described at different levels of abstraction, where more general beliefs are built on the summarisation of more specific beliefs (see Dijk 1998, 31). Simple beliefs can also be understood to evolve into compound beliefs and cluster with other beliefs into complex belief clusters (Dijk 1998, 31–32). When forming a network of interconnected beliefs that influence one another, we can talk about a belief system.

Belief systems are networks or clusters of beliefs related to one another, forming a system where individual beliefs influence one another (see Schafer & Walker 2006c, 28–29). Walker and Schafer describe operational code belief systems as “networks of stored knowledge activated by stimuli” (Walker & Schafer 2007, 754). Belief systems act as a set of lenses through which information about the world is received, orienting the individual to their environment, defining it for them, and identifying its salient characteristics for them (O. R. Holsti 1967, 29). They act as a filter, determining what kind of information about the world is selected for examination and how this information is interpreted (Little 1988, 47–48). Furthermore, these belief systems tend to change only gradually. According to the theories of cognitive consistency, people tend to first change the least central parts of a belief system and render the smallest possible changes to them when faced with the situation that demands changing of beliefs (Stein 2016, 135). There is a tendency towards coherency, that clusters beliefs together into belief systems, thus making these belief systems persistent to change.

Beliefs are, neurologically speaking, information stored in human brains.²⁶ More specifically, they can be defined as units of information and information processing that result from, and are involved in, the processes of information processing in the human mind (Dijk 1998). They are conceptions of a person about themselves and about the world surrounding them. While in principle beliefs can be reduced to complex systems of experience of having knowledge and feelings inside the neural networks of brains of an individual, like Schafer and Walker (2006c) also emphasise, we cannot yet in practice trace them to this level of existence. Instead, we can access the contents and relationships of a belief system through its effect as manifested in language (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 29). This renders language a primary research subject even for those approaches that regard language as only referential, as previously discussed.

Approaches that adopt social constructivism as their premise also consider beliefs to be constructed through language, in the discourses used. Searle (1995) talks of “collective intentionality” in addition to “singular intentionality”, referring to the human capacity to share intentional states such as beliefs, desires and intentions (Searle 1995, 25). According to him, many institutional facts, meaning facts that exist only within human institutions, for example the function of money, are created by performative speech acts establishing them through constitutive rules. While beliefs are mental constructs held by individuals, they can also have a strong social component and are not simply reducible to matters of individual psychology (Tannenwald 2005, 15). In this perspective, beliefs are constructed, shaped, and reproduced in social communication with others, making the social dimension of beliefs at least as important as their manifestation in an individual mind.

Even more importantly, decision-making in foreign policy is seldom individual in nature but a matter of decision-making in groups of various kinds. While international actors might appear as individual agents, as Onuf highlights, they actually consist of a large number of people who appoint others as their agents for particular purposes (Onuf 1998, 64–65). Their mandate thus demands some shared beliefs that are already agreed upon. In addition, foreign policy decision-makers do not come to understand their interests so much by weighting competing interests or aggregate the exogenously given preferences, as they collectively deliberate about them to form their position (Wendt 1999, 125–30). All this leads to a conclusion that the beliefs guiding actors in international relations should be best observed through discourse, as they are constructed, reproduced, and shared in the discourses used.

²⁶ Or at least experiences of having beliefs are. It is not entirely unproblematic to equate mental states with physical states of the brain. See (Searle 1992, 35–40) about the criticism of type identity theories of the philosophy of mind.

While psychology has often tended to focus more on individual cognition, the social sciences have more often approached beliefs as something held by communities and cultures. The field of sociology contains an especially rich tradition of the research of beliefs, in the context of such central concepts of human social behaviour as ideologies, values, and even identity. Classical sociologists such as Emile Durkheim, Karl Mannheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber all use concepts related to beliefs in their theories. For the examination of actors' perceptions in world politics, what is especially useful in sociological theories is that they treat actors' perceptions, or even their knowledge, as a *social* phenomenon.

Beliefs can be shared by a group or society as a cultural phenomenon transmitted by agents of socialisation such as educational, religious, or political institutions (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 30). For example, societies can be seen to be characterised by societal beliefs (see Bar-Tal 2002), a specific type of enduring shared beliefs. These societal beliefs provide members of society with knowledge about it, contribute to the formation and maintenance of their social identity, preserve structures of the societal system, and motivate and guide societal action. (Bar-Tal 2002, 39–53) Individuals belonging to a society reproduce these shared beliefs in their individual beliefs, thus guiding their decision-making as individuals. For example, ideology can be understood as a set of socially shared beliefs, where personal versions are used individually by members of the group in which this set of beliefs is shared by (Dijk 1998). Shared beliefs can define a society or culture.

In addition to norms, institutions and identities of a society, shared beliefs also have an impact on policy-making in the form of the political culture affecting decision-making bodies. Culture can be viewed as a system of shared meanings, as shared value preferences, or as templates of human strategies (Hudson 2014, 117–39). This third conceptualisation, culture as prefabricated templates of action in foreign policy, comes perhaps closest to how shared beliefs are understood in operational code theory (Hudson 2014, 132). Culture understood this way “consists of shared assumptions and decision rules that impose a degree of order on individual and group conceptions of their relationship to their social, organizational or political environment” (Johnston 1995b, 45). It can be understood as an institutionalised form of beliefs, shared by a certain group of people and passed on among the members of the group through mechanisms of socialisation.

Jack Snyder (1977) first introduced the narrower concept of ‘strategic culture’ to IR in order to describe the effects of this kind of cultural influence on strategic decision-making. He examined the Soviet approach to strategic thinking as a unique form of strategic culture, a semi-permanent set of general beliefs, attitudes and behavioural patterns resulting from socialisation processes (J. L. Snyder 1977, v). Much like the cognitivists, Snyder set out to examine “the body of attitudes and beliefs that guides and circumscribes thought on strategic questions, influences the

way strategic issues are formulated, and sets the vocabulary and conceptual parameters of strategic debate” (J. L. Snyder 1977, 9). Noting that the leaders and strategists were not “culture-free, preconception-free game theorists” (J. L. Snyder 1977, 4), instead of individual psychology Snyder focused on the attitudes and beliefs shared by the decision-makers, acquired through instruction or imitation.

Later strategic culture studies, often referred to as a ‘third generation’ of research, have been more influenced by constructivism (Lantis & Howlett 2007, 89–92). For example, Alastair Johnston conceptualised strategic culture as an ideational milieu which limits behavioural choices (Johnston 1995b, 46). His study of Chinese strategic thought (Johnston 1995a) sought to show the effect of the strategic culture on the strategic preferences on the use of military force by historical Chinese decision-makers. Later studies of strategic culture have defined strategic culture for example as a “set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and patterns of behaviour that define the identity of a country’s national strategic community” consisting of “identity, prevalent national assumptions about the way the international system works, interests of the state in the international system and how they should be achieved, and patterns of national behavior in the international system” (Tashev 2020, 27). A similar approach has been applied to study of foreign policy more generally (see e. g., Hudson 1997). Understood this way, strategic culture as an institutionalised, shared belief system provides a contextual framework for foreign policy decision-making.

2.2.2 Effects of beliefs on decision-making

Beliefs affect behaviour and decision-making in a number of ways. Beliefs organise perceptions into a meaningful guide for behaviour and serve to establish goals and order preferences (O. R. Holsti 1967, 30). Goldstein and Keohane (1993b) present three causal pathways through which ideas (or beliefs) hold the potential of influencing policy outcomes. According to them, beliefs can *serve as road maps*, *contribute to outcomes in the absence of a unique equilibrium*, or *when embedded in institutions, specify policy in absence of innovation* (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 12–13). This conceptualisation has been highly influential to studies adopting an ideational approach to foreign policy and international relations.

Beliefs can serve as a road map when actors need to determine their own preferences or to understand the causal relationship between their goals and alternative political strategies by which to reach these goals (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 12). Actors’ beliefs about the nature of the universe and about right and wrong affect the formation of their preferences for a certain kind of outcome, while when actors do not know with certainty the consequences of their actions, their causal beliefs affect the formation of their views about the expected effects of actions

(Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 13–14). These causal beliefs can be based on past experiences about similar situations or they can be completely abstract presumptions about the factors affecting the outcomes.

This use of beliefs in decision-making should not be interpreted as a last resort or something that a rational actor seeks to avoid whenever possible. Cognitive psychology has demonstrated that foreign policy decision-makers need to prefer simplicity and analogical reasoning in order to manage complex information about the world surrounding them (see Stein 2016). Beliefs as road maps serve this kind of analogical reasoning, offering models and decision-making rules usable in similar situations.

With the second pathway of influence for beliefs, the actors rely on beliefs as they select from a range of viable outcomes. In other words, shared cultural, normative, religious, ethnic or causal beliefs can all serve as a basis for the choice when actors need to choose between sets of outcomes that would represent Pareto improvements for all, and there are no ‘objective’ criteria on which to base the choice. (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 17–18). Hereby, Goldstein and Keohane show that beliefs affect the decision-making of even the most rational players in game-like situations: Since the folk theorem of repeated games indicates that “almost all games with repeated play have multiple equilibria, the ideas held by players are often the key to a game’s outcome” (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 17)

In the third pathway, beliefs can influence policy outcomes because they have been institutionalised into the structures of decision-making and incorporated into the terms of political debate. In this way, beliefs can have an impact even when no one genuinely believes in them as principled or causal statements, generalising rules and linking issue areas. (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 20–24; see also Bar-Tal 2002, 51–52; Berger & Luckmann 1984, 70–88, 134–36) For example, the economic beliefs of the dominant state or a dominant group within that state can become part of the external, assumed to be objective structure of international relations, hereby maintaining systems of domination through the reproduction of particular systems of meaning that support them (Tooze 1988). For example, the societal beliefs are maintained by societal institutions and transmitted by societal channels of communication in this manner, thus becoming enduring beliefs shared by members of society (Bar-Tal 2002, 39). Institutions as fundamental as state sovereignty (Krasner 1993) can also be seen as beliefs that have been institutionalised into the international political system over time, affecting and limiting how actors see their possible options in formulating their policies (and indeed have also been contested time and again).

This pathway is also especially relevant when considering complex institutional actors such as the European Union. It becomes possible for a collective actor to establish a set of shared beliefs that remain consistent irrespective of the individual

beliefs of those who compose the actor. The model of identity/policy nexus presented by Kai Hebel and Tobias Lenz (2016) illuminates this process well. They suggest that the collective foreign policy identity of the EU is constructed with the shared constitutive norms emerging from the Member States' national identities and is then operationalised in the regulative norms through the process of making foreign policy (see Hebel & Lenz 2016, 476–79).

Institutionalised beliefs enable the existence of more lasting alignments for the actor, less prone to changes depending on the specific individuals currently in charge. The concept of strategic culture is again useful here: When originally introducing the concept to the field of IR studies, Snyder (1977) claimed that among the Soviet strategists, as a result of a socialisation process, “a set of general beliefs, attitudes, and behavioural patterns with regard to nuclear strategy has achieved a state of semipermanence that places them on the level of ‘culture’ rather than mere ‘policy’” (J. L. Snyder 1977, v). This is precisely what we are discussing when we talk about the institutionalisation of beliefs: Through institutionalisation, beliefs achieve a semi-permanent state, beginning to better resemble culture than policy.

2.2.3 Types of beliefs: Normative and causal beliefs

The concept of beliefs has often been approached in theoretical literature by classifying different types of beliefs. There are, first of all, those beliefs that are in their essence *normative*: beliefs that tell us what is right or wrong, just or unjust, but also what should be valued and how things should be, producing assumptions about desirable goals. *Causal* beliefs, by contrast, tell us factual statements about the nature of things, serving our decision-making by producing assumptions about causality and how we can best reach our goals. The roots of this dual categorisation can be traced back to Émile Durkheim's (1915) writings on supernatural beliefs. Durkheim makes a distinction between religious beliefs, which are in essence about the classification of things into the sacred and the profane, and beliefs about magic, which are the “belief in a causal link which is confirmed neither by experience nor theory” (Boudon 1989, 59). Religious beliefs that identify sacred things, considered superior in dignity and power to profane things (Durkheim 1915, 37), are by nature normative, while magical beliefs are causal beliefs about what can be expected to happen in response to something. While certain theoretical frameworks extend this dual categorisation of normative and causal with additional specific categories, this duality can still be seen in them. More importantly for us, this conceptualisation offers some useful insights, specifically about the nature of the framework of operational code beliefs.

In the fields of sociology and International Relations studies, beliefs have been categorised, following a similar logic as Durkheim's, into *normative* and *cognitive*

beliefs (Saurugger 2014, 96; J. L. Campbell 1998, quoted in Tannenwald 2005)²⁷. Here cognitive beliefs or ideas “include ‘descriptions and theoretical analyses that specify cause-and effect relationships’ as well as scripts and schemas that define or frame categories, whereas normative ideas consist of values and attitudes” (J. L. Campbell 1998, quoted in Tannenwald 2005). This is a fairly common categorisation in IR, and for example Carstensen and Schmidt define ideational power as the capacity of actors to influence other actors’ “normative and cognitive beliefs through the use of ideational elements” (Carstensen & Schmidt 2016, 321). In the field of political discourse analysis, Teun A. van Dijk essentially draws the same distinction between *evaluative* and *factual beliefs* (Dijk 1998). A reminiscent dual category between factual statements and value judgements is also emblematic of sociological studies of beliefs, as a distinction between *descriptive* and *normative beliefs* (see Boudon 1989; Shills 1968).

In the field of psychology, Rokeach (1968b; 1973) follows this line of thought but adds a third type of beliefs. He proposes a categorisation between *descriptive* or *existential* beliefs that describe the object as true or false; *evaluative* beliefs that evaluate it as good or bad; and *prescriptive* beliefs, which advocate a certain course of action or a certain state of existence as desirable (Rokeach 1968b, 113). In the field of foreign policy analysis, belief systems have similarly been proposed to consist of *cognitive*, *affective* and *conative* concepts, whereas cognitive concepts are beliefs about reality, affective concepts are propositions with valences, while conative concepts refer to alternatives from which a decision-maker selects policy recommendations (Bonham & Shapiro 1977, cited in Hopple 1979, 213). While these models add a dimension that enables a more specific analytical perspective to certain kinds of beliefs, in essence, they are still founded on the distinction between normative beliefs about evaluation and causal or descriptive beliefs about the surrounding world, only supplementing the understanding with a more specific type of belief that combines elements from these basic belief types.

In their eminent work on beliefs in international relations, Goldstein and Keohane (1993b) distinguish between three types of beliefs: *world views*, *principled beliefs* and *causal beliefs*. In their model, world views are embedded in the symbolism of culture and deeply affect modes of thought and discourse, including views about cosmology and ontology as well as about ethics. Principled beliefs consist of normative beliefs about what is right and wrong or just and unjust, while causal beliefs consist of beliefs about cause-effect relationships, providing

²⁷ Tannenwald herself also discusses more narrowly-defined “cause-effect beliefs” that are included in the category of cognitive ideas and uses the categorisation of beliefs into normal and causal beliefs, and ideologies or shared belief systems, following the definitions of Goldstein and Keohane (see below) (see Tannenwald 2005, 14–16).

guidelines for actors on how to achieve their objectives. (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 8–11) The distinction between world views and the other two types of beliefs can be useful when there is a need to emphasise the difference between deeper layers of cultural beliefs and more straightforward conceptions that provide concrete solutions to decision-making situations, or when one wants to examine the processes that lead people to adopt certain kinds of beliefs. However, it can be argued that world views can always be categorised as either principled or causal beliefs or a combination of these two. Seen from this perspective, world views appear as more of a subcategory or special type of belief system than a primary type of beliefs. It could even be argued that world views are always belief systems, consisting of normative and causal beliefs.

In addition to the tripartition of Goldstein and Keohane, Neta Crawford (2002) proposes a fourth type of beliefs, *identity beliefs*. These beliefs consist of an actors' beliefs about who the actors themselves are, who belong to the same group as them, who do not, and what these 'others' are like (Crawford 2002, 39–43). However, this fourth category is somewhat superimposed on the categorisation of Goldstein and Keohane as identity is partly built on values and worldviews. It is therefore a useful distinction primarily when specifically analysing identity and identity-building.

I have collected the terminologies described above into a framework of the categorisation of beliefs (see Figure 1). First there are beliefs that are in essence normative: telling us what is right or wrong, just or unjust, but also what should be valued and how things should be. Secondly, there are beliefs that are fundamentally causal: beliefs that tell us factual statements about nature of things, and about causality and thus how we can achieve the goals we perceive as worthy. World views share elements from both categories and are seen in this framework not as individual beliefs but as a combination of linked causal and normative beliefs. Similarly, the prescriptive beliefs of Rokeach and conative beliefs referred to by Bonham and Shapiro are understood as combinations of normative (why the prescript action is desired) and causal (how one should act to promote the normative component of the belief) beliefs. Identity beliefs, in turn, are seen as sharing elements of both normative beliefs and world views.

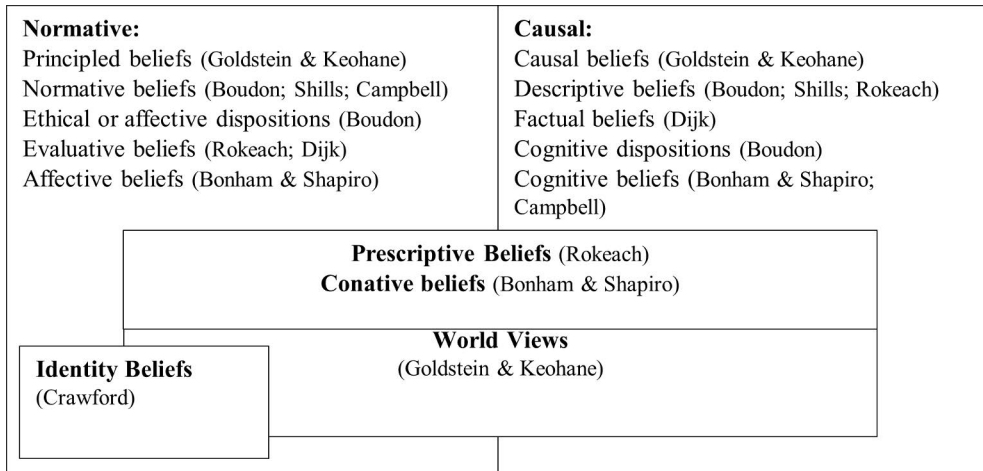


Figure 1. Categorisation of beliefs (Based on: Boudon, 1989; Crawford, 2002; Dijk, 1998; Goldstein & Keohane, 1993b; Hopple, 1979; Rokeach, 1968b; Saurugger, 2014; Tannenwald 2005)

Choosing causal beliefs, and not for example descriptive or factual beliefs, as one of the two main categories emphasises the context of decision-making in the application of these beliefs. It can be argued that not all factual beliefs incorporate cause-effect relationships but can instead be merely truth statements about the nature of things. However, if we focus on decision-making processes, the essential significance of such factual beliefs is that they provide information involved in understanding cause-effect relationships and how to best achieve chosen objectives. The conceptualisation of these beliefs as specifically causal beliefs, following the logic of Goldstein and Keohane (1993b), emphasises this role that they play for foreign policy.

While the classification above is comprehensive, it is not the only possible approach to classifying beliefs. For example, Milton Rokeach also classifies beliefs according to their centrality within a belief system into five (Rokeach 1968b, 3–13) or three (Rokeach 1960, 39–51) types, depending on how much connection they are assumed to have to other beliefs within a belief system. However, the conceptualisation of beliefs as either normative or causal, sometimes with the addition of a separate category for more complex constructs of belief systems that combine ensembles of normative and causal beliefs, has been particularly influential for the fields of International Relations and FPA. Because of this, it is important to note how the belief categories of the operational code framework are positioned in the wider categorisation of beliefs. Positioning operational code beliefs inside these categorisations will help to clarify what OCA can actually tell us about the beliefs guiding foreign policy actors.

2.3 Operational Code Beliefs as Causal Beliefs

According to Mark Schafer and Stephen G. Walker, the Operational Code approach studies political belief systems that demonstrate what the individual knows, feels, and wants regarding the exercise of power in human affairs (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 29). When conceptualising Nathan Leites' original operational code theory, Alexander George (1969) divided elements of Leites' analysis into *philosophical* and *instrumental* beliefs, where philosophical beliefs guide the diagnosis of the context for action and instrumental beliefs prescribe the most effective strategy and tactics for achieving goals (Schafer & Walker 2006a, 4). This model placed its emphasis on the study of how beliefs influence the actor's preferences for different ends and means by filtering incoming information (Schafer & Walker 2006a, 7). Unlike Leites' broader view of operational code analysis that incorporated cognition, character and culture (Walker, Schafer & Young 2003, 216), this model identified operational code as a more limited political belief system. George's operational code consists of beliefs about rules that are necessary for effective actions, and not about beliefs that would formulate the end-goals that the actions are aimed to achieve, except when regarding what the actor believes is possible. Because of this focus, it largely leaves the specification of values out of the analysis, focusing instead on beliefs about causality and the nature of surrounding world. These beliefs are formulated as answers to the ten questions listed below:

The Philosophical Beliefs in an Operational Code

P-1 What is the "essential" nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or of conflict? What is the fundamental character of one's political opponents?

P-2 What are the prospects for the eventual realization of one's fundamental values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other?

P-3 Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent?

P-4 How much "control" or "mastery" can one have over historical development? What is one's role in "moving" and "shaping" history in the desired direction?

P-5 What is the role of "change" in human affairs and in historical development?

The Instrumental Beliefs in an Operational Code

I-1 What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?

I-2 How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?

I-3 How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled, and accepted?

I-4 What is the best "timing" of action to advance one's interests?

I-5 What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?

Figure 2. Questions that define beliefs in operational code analysis (George, 1969)

The answers to the first question, P-1, describe beliefs about the nature of political life, how harmonious or conflictual it is as an environment as well as how the other actors that share this environment are in this regard. This is seen to be shaped by how one perceives the other political actors, especially one's opponents (George 1969, 201–2). With this question, the analyses have often focused primarily on the way the subject talks about other actors. Their tendency towards cooperation or conflict is typically paid most attention. While these beliefs are about the nature of the (international) system and other actors therein, they are nonetheless concerned about how one should act in this political universe, less so much about making normative or moral evaluations of this universe.

P-2 beliefs are about the actors' evaluation for their prospects of realising their fundamental values and aspirations, describing how optimistically or pessimistically the actors see their chances to operate in the political environment. P-3 beliefs offer insight into how the actors evaluate the predictability of the operational environment. In their nature, both P-2 and P-3 represent causal beliefs, describing what to expect regarding the outcomes of actions. P-4 beliefs denote how the actors see their own role in shaping historical development and how much they see themselves having control over events. These are primarily causal beliefs, which inform the choice of correct action in the environment by showing the extent of possible actions. For P-5, the beliefs about the role of change in the political universe, are similar to P-3 beliefs about what to expect regarding the outcomes of actions. Their main difference to P-3 beliefs is that P-3 beliefs are typically analysed as beliefs about the predictability of other actors, while P-5 beliefs are about the role of random coincidences and uncertainty in the political universe.

I-1 beliefs show how the actor believes is best to select objectives for actions. This is typically understood as beliefs about how to choose a strategy or shape a doctrine for foreign policy. The focus of analysis is on causal beliefs about the most effectual strategic approach and strategic optimisation, and seldom about normative aspects of choosing objectives, even though some qualitative analyses do take them into account, at least to some extent. In doing so, while the answer to the original question in the George construct could also include normative motivations for choosing a certain strategy, the OCA framework typically approaches these beliefs as causal beliefs.

I-2 beliefs, that describe what the actor believes to be the most effective ways of pursuing their objectives, are on the other hand unquestionably causal in their nature. They identify the most effective means to pursue goals, showing the causal expectations of the actor about the use of means of power. I-3 presents actors' beliefs about taking risks: it evaluates the risk aversiveness of the actor and describes how they seek to calculate and control risks. Beliefs in category I-4 describe how the actor approaches the question of timing for advancing their interests, for example whether

long-term or short-term reactions are preferred and how much flexibility the actor displays in this regard. Both I-3 and I-4 beliefs are clearly causal beliefs about what to expect from certain types of actions. Finally, I-5 beliefs portray how the actor sees the utility and role of different means, making them fundamentally causal in their essence as they directly describe how possible means of actions are seen.

Instrumental beliefs of the operational code theory are thus causal by nature.²⁸ The only exception to this is the I-1 category, which could also be interpreted as including some normative motives for selecting goals or strategies. However, OCA studies have typically focused on the strategic optimisation aspects of these beliefs, and the model in general can be seen to place this limitation in the first place (see George 1969, 205–11). Otherwise, the instrumental beliefs correspond quite clearly to the category of causal beliefs in Goldstein and Keohane's (1993b) model as well as to the similar categories of descriptive and cognitive beliefs in other models.

The category of philosophical beliefs is a little more difficult to place into the models used in wider belief theories. Philosophical beliefs primarily serve the need to understand the causality of actions, by describing the nature of the world surrounding the actor and what kinds of reactions can actions in it be expected to cause. However, there is also a principled or normative aspect embedded in some of these philosophical beliefs. The nature of the surrounding universe as either one of harmony or of conflict, or the prospects for realisation of one's value, are not simply questions of cause and effect but have a value-based judgement linked to them.

Philosophical beliefs seem to best correspond to how Goldstein and Keohane describe their category of world views. Like world views, the philosophical beliefs of the George construct can be understood as a "conception of possibility" that "define the universe of possibilities for action" (Goldstein & Keohane 1993a, 8). However, it should be noted that world views are generally much broader in their scope, for example the conception of sovereignty or the status of human rights, while the philosophical beliefs of OCA only focus on their causal side. Philosophical beliefs, on the other hand, are still directly focused on questions of causality: how the surrounding universe affects the actions potentially causing a desired outcome. However, if we regard world views as belief systems consisting of a number of causal and principled beliefs, as I have previously suggested, the philosophical beliefs of the George construct can be seen as causal beliefs linked to specific normative beliefs through world views.

²⁸ A more detailed look at differences between studies utilising OCA framework in how the belief categories of the model are interpreted is given later in Chapter 3.4., where the differences between quantitative VICS approach and qualitative approach to the framework are also discussed.

Nathan Leites' original conception of the operational code would seem to support this disposition. According to Leites (1953, 15), what he names the operational code is only one aspect of the existing (in his study Bolshevik) doctrine, the conceptions of political strategy, and there are other aspects of ideology left outside the analysis. According to Walker and Schafer (2018), Leites' analysis of Bolshevism identified three intellectual dimensions: a *cognitive* dimension, that is, the operational code; an *affective* dimension, in Bolshevism's case a fear of annihilation; and a *motivational* dimension, in Bolshevism's case, the pursuit of power. While the operational code theory links these three intellectual dimensions together within the context provided by psychoanalytical theory (Walker & Schafer 2018), the affective and motivational dimensions are only present through the cognitive beliefs about the political strategy in the ten questions forming the analytical framework of the approach. Quantitative VICS analysis is perhaps even more inclined towards the study of causal beliefs, because of its focus on the use of power.²⁹

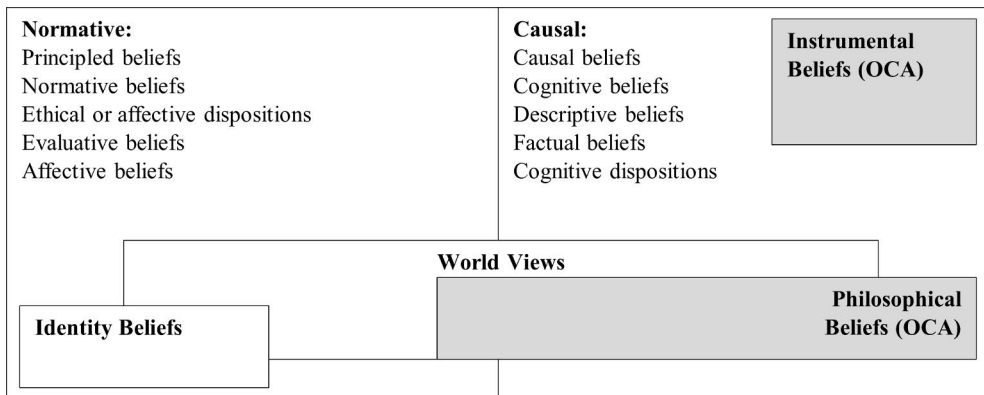


Figure 3. Categorization of beliefs with the operational code beliefs. (Based on: Boudon, 1989; Crawford, 2002; Dijk, 1998; George 1969; Goldstein & Keohane, 1993b; Hopple, 1979; Rokeach, 1968b; Saurugger, 2014; Tannenwald 2005)

The framework of OCA does not represent most of the aspects of normative beliefs. This leaves phenomena such as values, principles and normative judgements out of the analysis, at least when they do not concern choosing proper means. In this way, it is difficult to know, based only on OCA, why an actor chooses certain goals. However, with its focus on causal beliefs, the framework can provide a comprehensive and versatile analysis of how the actors believe those goals are best achieved and describe their perception of the nature of the world that affects their

²⁹ See Chapter 3.5. about notions of power and OCA.

prospects for achieving said aims. The framework also focuses and clarifies analysis that specifically concentrates on the strategic thinking of the subject, or the strategic culture of a communal actor, and is particularly well suited for analysis where the use of power is in focus. Recognising the causal nature of the beliefs in the operational code belief system helps to frame the analysis correctly and identify the research interests that are best served by the method.

A key question when studying beliefs is whether they are approached as part of an individual's psychology or as social constructs. As a cognitivist research program, especially the later applications of OCA have tended to regard beliefs as psychological characteristics and have predominantly focused on the study of individual leaders in politics. Despite this cognitivist approach to the concept of beliefs, OCA is not ultimately incompatible with the constructivist conception of ideas and beliefs. After all, beginning from Leites' (1951) original study on the operational code of the Politburo, OCA has also been concerned with elite belief systems and the beliefs shared by leadership groups.

The studies of individual leaders as decision-makers have featured predominantly among OCA studies. Many of these works have focused on analysing presidents in countries with a strong presidential system like the US (see e.g., Dille 2000; Schafer & Crichlow 2000; Walker, Schafer & Young 1998; 1999; B. G. Marfleet 2000), or individual leaders in authoritarian states (see e.g. Dyson 2001; Malici & Malici 2005; Malici 2011). However, the operational code has also been employed as a construct of shared beliefs or strategic culture attributed to an institution or state (Walker & Schafer 2018). In addition to the original studies of Merton (1940) and Leites (1951; 1953), both studies of shared operational codes of organisations or leadership groups, examples of studies of shared belief systems include (Walker & Schafer 2000; He & Feng 2015; Walker & Schafer 2007; Bakker & van Willigen 2021; Robison 2006; Yang, Keller & Molnar 2018; Serri 2021; Walker & Malici 2021). In addition, because leaders' formal speeches can also be seen as a product of the state's decision-making apparatus and representing the official views of the state, even studies analysing speeches of individual leaders often refer to their data as "the 'state's' operational code" (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 47). Besides individuals, states and other collectivities have operational codes, and the public beliefs and intentions articulated by the official leaders of the state can be viewed as constituent of the state's operational code (Walker & Schafer 2000, 530).

When conceptualised as shared beliefs, operational code belief systems can be understood as a form of strategic culture.³⁰ Even the wider concept of political culture, as used by political scientists, has evident interconnections to operational

³⁰ See Chapter 2.2.

code beliefs. Ultimately, political culture is seen to encompass, among other beliefs, assumptions about the orderliness of the political universe, the nature of causality, the principal goals of political life, and the relative value of risk-acceptant versus risk-averse strategies (Johnston 1995b, 45). The notion of strategic culture, like operational code, is more specifically focused on the application of these beliefs to strategic decision-making.

Indeed, Johnston (1995b, 47–48), for example, notes that his conceptualisation of strategic culture has similarities to Ole Holsti's definition of belief systems as well as Alexander George's concept of operational code. The main difference between strategic culture and these other conceptualisations is, according to Johnston, "strategic culture refers to collectively held preferences, and analysis focuses on collectively produced and shared cultural artifacts rather than on an individual's belief system or operational code" (Johnston 1995b, 48, footnote 31). However, when belief systems are understood not only as individual but also as shared ideational phenomena, strategic culture appears as a particular viewpoint on the institutionalised belief systems concerned with the 'strategic' behaviour of the actor. Strategic culture is transmitted through the socialisation process as shared beliefs to the values and assumptions held by individual decision-makers, and this way steers and limits their choices. Hereby, the individual decision-maker's operational code can also be seen as a reflection of their strategic culture (see Walker & Schafer 2007), providing signs of shared operational code belief systems.

3 Operational Code Analysis and Power

3.1 Two Approaches to Operational Code Analysis

As previously outlined, while the operational code analysis originally began as hermeneutic, qualitative analysis (see Leites 1951; 1953), its renaissance at the turn of the millennium rebranded it strongly as a quantitative content analysis method (see Walker, Schafer & Young 1998; Walker & Schafer 2006). Consequently, the later operational code studies, especially in the United States, have been predominantly quantitative (see Schafer & Walker 2021), although a number of studies have also returned to the original qualitative tradition (see e.g., Dyson 2001; Hakovirta 2015; 2019; Pesu 2019; Vennesson 2007).

These qualitative analyses have typically focused on descriptive analysis of the research subject, be it the belief system of an individual leader or the collective foreign policy doctrine of an institutional actor. Quantitative analysis on the other hand has often sought to build a systematic, reproducible framework that would allow for mapping the development of belief systems and comparing the belief systems of different actors (see Walker, Schafer & Young 1998). Quantitative analyses can be seen to have strong ties to the realist school of IR studies and often builds on an assumption of power politics as well as game-theory. Later qualitative OCA, at least, have often been for their part constructivist in spirit and focused more on ideational aspects in IR.

Ever since its introduction in 1969, both qualitative and quantitative OCA have used George's (1969) framework of operational code beliefs as the basis of their analytical framework. Sometimes also called 'the George construct' (Anderson 1973b), the model divides elements of operational code into *philosophical* and *instrumental* beliefs and forms ten questions to categorise these beliefs, as previously discussed in Chapter 2.3. While both approaches use this common framework for categorisation of beliefs, this framework is nevertheless utilised very differently in quantitative and qualitative approaches, as we will see below. We will first look at the principles of both approaches and the differences in the methodologies they apply. Then, we will discuss a fundamental difference in the theoretical foundations

of these two approaches: namely, the way in which they conceptualise the concept of power, a cardinal element of all the operational code belief systems.

3.2 Quantitative Operational Code Analysis

3.2.1 Verbs In Context System (VICS)

The Verbs In Context System (VICS) has perhaps become the most popular method for quantitative operational code analysis. Initially developed by Stephen G. Walker, Mark Schafer and Michael D. Young (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998) in order to build systematic procedures for the reproducible operational code analysis generating directly comparable studies (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998, 176), VICS is a content analysis coding procedure that identifies attributions from speech acts of the subject. The VICS analysis is built on the premise that the manner in which a subject talks about power relationships in the political universe reveals their beliefs regarding the exercise of power (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 30). The analysis separates beliefs about the subject's self and beliefs about others and weighs expressions of positive and negative power relationships based on their intensity. Through this framework, the analysis provides measurements about, for example, an actor's conception of how hostile or cooperative the political universe surrounding them is; do they themselves tend toward conflictual or cooperative strategies in their actions, how much control do they see themselves having over events; and how risk-oriented are they?

The recording unit for VICS is "the verb-based utterance, which requires at a minimum a verb or a verb phrase and a subject" (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 40). The analysis utilises only transitive verbs, which are first identified from the text. Intransitive verbs, as well as comments that are in their nature non-political, are excluded from the analysis. When a coded sentence appears in passive voice, for analytical purposes, the sentence can be reconstructed to form a sentence in the active voice specifying the properties of interest (subject – edited verb construction – target).

The verb-based utterance units are attributed either as (+) or (-) depending upon whether it is positive (cooperation) or negative (conflict). The utterance is further coded by specifying the subject as either **Self** or **Other** and specifying whether the action is a **Word** or a **Deed**. Here 'words' are understood as verbal intentions and expressions, whereas 'deeds' are specific actions that someone has taken or is suggested to take. Furthermore, utterances coded as 'words' represent the exercise of power in the form of making threats and promises or in the form of invoking authority, whereas 'deeds' indicate the exercise of power in the form of positive or negative sanctions of reward or punishment. This follows the logic of the *causal*

*notion of power*³¹ wherein forms of the exercise of power are categorised as positive forms of *Appeal/Support*, *Promise*, and *Reward*, and negative forms of *Oppose/Resist*, *Threaten*, and *Punish*.

The Word/Deed and (+) / (-) valences are then used to locate each transitive attribution in one of the six verb categories (see Figure 4). Finally, the target of the utterance as well as other contextual information about the subject area of the comment are coded for further analytical purposes. (Schafer & Walker 2006c; Walker, Schafer, & Young 1998; Walker 2007)

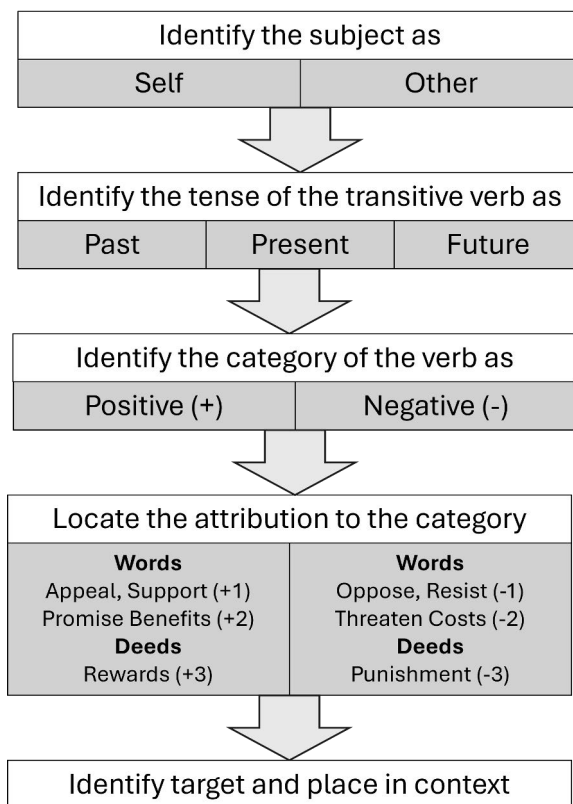


Figure 4. VICS steps (based on: Walker, Schafer & Young 1998, 183)

The VICS analysis produces index scores for the ten belief types in the operational code framework of George (1969), based on the relative frequency, dispersion, balance and intensity of the different categories of utterances that represent the exercise of power by Self and Other in the discourse of subject (Walker, Schafer, &

³¹ See Chapter 3.5.

Young 1998). The VICS analysis rests on the assumption that this indicates the subject's diagnosis of the use of power by others in the political universe and the speaker's own propensities to exercise power in that same universe (Walker, Schafer, & Young 1999, 614).

Table 2. VICS analysis scales of operational code beliefs (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998)

INDEX	RESULT (SCALE)
P-1 THE NATURE OF THE POLITICAL UNIVERSE	Friendly, Mixed, Hostile (-1.00 – +1.00)
P-2 PROSPECTS FOR REALISING FUNDAMENTAL VALUES	Optimism versus Pessimism (-1.00 – +1.00)
P-3 PREDICTABILITY OF THE POLITICAL UNIVERSE	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
P-4 CONTROL OVER HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
P-5 ROLE OF CHANCE	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-1 DIRECTION OF STRATEGY	Cooperative, Mixed, Conflictual (-1.00 – +1.00)
I-2 INTENSITY OF TACTICS	Cooperative, Mixed, Conflictual (-1.00 – +1.00)
I-3 RISK ORIENTATION	Averse to Acceptant (0.00 – 1.00)
I-4 IMPORTANCE OF TIMING OF ACTIONS	
I-4A DIVERSITY OF CHOICES: COOPERATION VS CONFLICT	Low to High Flexibility (0.00 – 1.00)
I-4B DIVERSITY OF CHOICES: WORDS VS DEEDS	Low to High Flexibility (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 UTILITY OF MEANS	
I-5 PUNISH	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 THREATEN	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 OPPOSE	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 SUPPORT	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 PROMISE	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 REWARD	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)

The first philosophical and instrumental beliefs are both conceptualised as “master beliefs”. According to this conceptualisation, based upon theories of cognitive consistency, the other beliefs within each category should flow from and be theoretically and empirically linked to these two “master beliefs” (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 33). Because the formulas for calculating the VICS index scores follow this

theoretical approach, all instrumental beliefs are consistent with I-1 and all philosophical beliefs are consistent with P-1, with the exception of P-4 (the control of historical development), which is based on the ratio of subject of the coded utterances (Self or Other).³² This both significantly narrows the conceptualisation of beliefs from the original George construct, and means that the other belief indices offer little additional information to these “master beliefs”. As a result, some of the later quantitative operational code studies have begun to use only I-1, P-1 and P4 indices in their analysis, disregarding the remainder (see e. g., Schafer, Nurmanova & Walker 2021).

The unit of analysis for VICS depends on the requirements of the research plan. While the index values for individual speech acts, such as a complete speech or an interview, can be calculated and used as a unit of analysis, the methodology allows the use of a larger unit, for example, all speech acts during a year, as a unit of analysis. Regardless of the size of the final unit of analysis, these can then be used to conduct statistical analyses, including making comparisons between different subjects or between different time periods using, for example, the mean scores of the values of chosen research units. (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 43) Making a comparison between different issue areas or different theatres of global politics is also possible.

The analysis of the operational code may be either general or targeted. General operational code analysis focuses on general patterns of beliefs (or behaviour), and targeted OCA focuses on beliefs concerning a specific domain or relations with just one other actor. VICS analysis of general operational code examines attitudes towards the generalised Other in texts, analysing Self and Other attributions aggregated across the entire political universe. The VICS analysis of targeted operational code on the other hand would examine Self and Other attributions disaggregated into different domains and targets, focusing on patterns of beliefs referring to the exercise of power between a particular Self and Other. (Schafer, Nurmanova & Walker 2021, 58; Schafer & Walker 2006b, 570)

3.2.2 Criticism of quantitative approach to operational code analysis

The VICS model offers a systematic way of assessing political actors' operational code beliefs from a distance. Its most apparent strength is its ability to generate comparable data in a numerical form about the operational code, especially for tracking changes in the belief system and comparing different operational codes. However, this also makes the approach vulnerable to general issues related to

³² The formulae for calculating VICS indices can be found in Appendix 1. In addition, their use is discussed in Chapter 3.4.

equating the coding frequency in the text with its importance, typical of quantitative content analysis.³³ Pesu notes how the quantitative methods reduce the belief system to mere attributions and omit the substance of beliefs that can be powerful indicators of the effects of the social environment on an individual's thinking (Pesu 2019, 56). Indeed, the VICS model does display a considerable level of reductionism and, as a result, is somewhat limited in its way of interpreting operational code beliefs and linking them to the use of power.

Perhaps the most obvious problem relates to the role of ambiguity. As Baldwin (1989, 53) highlights, “[t]he typical threat for day-to-day use in international politics is implicit rather than explicit”. Especially threats, but also promises, are often expressed in subtle, vague ways in political discourses. These expressions are not easily captured by the verb-centred approach of the VICS model. There are many subtle ways to express a threat or promise than clearly stating that one is going to do X to Z if Z does Y, and often it is preferable to avoid clarity in making threats or promises.³⁴ While especially apparent regarding the threats, similar needs for vagueness can be observed when speaking about punishment or rewarding. The message is there but it is not said so clearly that it would be codable in the VICS analysis.

Differentiating between positive and negative uses of power is also complicated, and approaching the issue mechanically by identifying verbs that are related to rewarding or punishing (or threatening/promising to do so) is not unproblematic. Distinguishing positive and negative uses of power is not only a matter of identifying the concrete action done or words used, it also requires the establishment of the subject's baseline of expectations at the moment the influencing attempt is made (Baldwin 1989, 64). Promising aid of 1 billion euros represents a positive use of power when no money is expected but a threat when 10 billion euros are expected. Conditional promises and threats further complicate the matters by introducing situations where, for example, the promise of reward is used to coerce the subject into doing something in a situation where withholding the reward would be regarded as a punishment. What matters is, in other words, the context.³⁵

Another issue related to the treatment of the means of power is that the VICS analysis is constructed on an assumption of a clear distinction between uses of power in general, both as a distinction between cooperative and conflictual as well

³³ On this issue, as well as issues of limiting content analysis on manifest content, see (Kracauer 1952). Interestingly, the kind of qualitative, non-frequency based content analysis that Kracauer suggested was later advocated by both George (1959) and O. Holsti (1969) (Schreier 2014, 171).

³⁴ For more detailed account of issues related to clarity and vagueness of threats and promises, see (Baldwin 1989, 52-55).

³⁵ For more detailed account, see (Baldwin 1989, 63-68).

as between soft (understood as authority-based) and hard power. But while the distinction between hard and soft power is useful for recognising the often previously overlooked importance of the latter, as Joseph Nye has demonstrated (see J. S. Nye 1990; 2004; 2008; 2011), it should not be taken as a clearly defined categorisation but more as a continuum without a clear borderline. Many instruments of power, such as economic sanctions, diplomacy, and even the military, can be used as both soft and hard power (see Hill 2016, 143–48, especially 147). Furthermore, hard and soft power are often combined as an effective strategy in what Nye (2008) has later conceptualised as smart power. Nor are instruments or resources of power automatically linked to certain types of means of causal power. Ultimately, military resources can be used not only as a means of physical punishment but also to back up threats of coercive diplomacy, to promise protection (or peacekeeping), and to provide many forms of assistance (J. S. Nye 2011, 41–48).

This assumption of clearly distinguishable means of power is problematic and the uses of power are perhaps better captured as continuums, with overlapping and concurrent instruments and ways of exercising power. In particular, the use of authority to affect the preferences of others, as coded in VICS as Appeal/Oppose, is often a multifaceted affair. One needs only to consider how the EU seeks to use its authority to promote democratic reforms in other countries to observe how the positive and negative uses of authority are often simultaneously present in the discursive practices of the Union.

Another problem of the VICS analysis lies in the multiple purposes of both the actions and sentences describing them. Cooperation with one actor can also mean conflictual action against another, making the coding process much more complicated than simply identifying the verb and its nature. In international politics, state representatives often prefer to discuss sending support to their allies rather than sending troops to fight against the enemies of said allies. But when a country sends troops to combat rebels in order to support a government locked in civil war, is the deed conflictual or cooperative? It depends on how the target of the action is interpreted. To provide a less dramatic but more concrete example, in his address to the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs on 3.10.2007, Javier Solana mentioned that:

“the members of ASEAN, [...], produced a statement condemning the situation in Myanmar”

On the surface, this would clearly be a conflictual action (coded as a word voicing opposition to something) from ASEAN against Myanmar, giving a statement that condemns their actions. However, earlier in the address, Solana states that the EU has asked ASEAN to produce this kind of statement. So, this can also be seen as

evidence of ASEAN taking cooperative action to support the EU's policies towards Myanmar. But how should it be coded? Bearing in mind that coding conflictual action of the other in VICS analysis results in both interpreting the nature of the political universe as conflictual (P-1) and interpreting prospects of realising one's own aspirations pessimistically (P-2). This is especially relevant if one considers, for example, the situation in which a verb-based utterance simultaneously indicates the EU's support to the UN system and willingness to use sanctions on another state. Not only are both tendencies important in describing the EU's attitude towards global politics, but even if both were to be coded on the same VICS-coding (making two codes on one verb-based utterance) they would actually negate one other as +1 and -1 codes.

These limitations mirror the classic criticism on quantitative content analysis. Operational code analysis seeks to examine the meaning behind communication. However, as Kracauer (1952) emphasises, meanings are often complex, holistic, context-dependent and not necessarily apparent at first sight (summarised in Schreier 2014). The VICS analysis can be shifted into a more qualitative analysis of the text, coding the meaning of the sentence by rewriting them in a Subject – Active Voice – Target Object format, based on the meaning of the original utterance, when it can be reasonably justified.³⁶ The more that the interpretive approach to coding is thus taken, basing the coding choices more on the interpreted meaning of the utterance instead of utilising pre-made verb lists, the less this issue affects the resulting analysis. But at the same time, the reliability and comparability of the coding decreases, while the analysis becomes even more dependent on the researcher's subjective interpretation. This approach also does not solve the issue of multiple purposes of the utterance. Obviously, this cannot also be done with automated coding, at least not with the present-day automatic text analysis software that primarily relies on verb lists.

Another way to balance these limitations is to use the qualitative text analysis focusing on the research questions of the operational code analysis. This approach is similar to how VICS-based operational code analysis has been enhanced and sharpened by combining it into a mixed-method approach. For example, Anne Nykänen (2016) uses a mixed method by combining quantitative OCA, qualitative longitudinal content analysis and process-tracing in order to establish a more credible link between beliefs and processes of policy framing as well as defining the nuances of change in actual behaviour and policy (Nykänen 2016, 41). Together the VICS-analysis and traditional qualitative operational code analysis can similarly offer a more comprehensive image of the operational code(s) of the research subject.

³⁶ See Chapter 5 about how this approach is utilised in this study.

3.3 Qualitative Operational Code Analysis

3.3.1 Classical qualitative operational code analysis

The roots of the operational code analysis can be said to lie firmly in the qualitative approach. Qualitative content analysis was a significant part of the hermeneutic approach that Leites (1951; 1953) used in his classical analysis of Soviet elite belief systems. In his re-examination of Leites' model, George (1969) continued to build on the qualitative content analysis aspects of Leites' studies. He suggested that the set of beliefs about politics that were associated with Leites' concept of 'operational code' could be inferred or postulated on the basis of the kinds of data, observational opportunities and methods available to political scientists (George 1969, 195). While George noted that data relevant to the operational code may be obtained via both qualitative text analysis and quantitative analysis (George 1969, 221), the ensuing first wave of the operational code analyses used primarily qualitative methods (see Anderson 1973a; 1973b; Caldwell 1976; O. R. Holsti 1970; Johnson 1977; McLellan 1971; Walker 1977). One notable exception was Ole Holsti (1977), who also explored the use of quantitative content analysis when developing his typology of operational code belief systems (Walker 1990, 409). Otherwise, the first generation of operational code studies used qualitative methods to analyse textual material (Pesu 2019, 55). The studies followed a general format of providing answers to questions in George's model via an extensive reading of the books, articles and public speeches of political leaders and citing passages from these texts (Walker & Schafer 2018).

These first 'idiographic-interpretive' operational code studies adopted a hermeneutic approach to content analysis, seeking to interpret the content by asking what the author means with their statements (Walker & Schafer 2018). They sought to infer the research-subject's operational code beliefs through the interpretation of the meanings of the studied text and speech material. This inference process takes two forms: direct, where the researcher identifies a sentence or paragraph containing general statements that answer a question asked in George's model; and indirect, whereby the researcher inferred the answer to a question from a statement (Walker & Schafer 2018). In a sense, through reading the materials the researcher 'interviews' the research subject to form answers to the ten questions in the George construct. This has provided the backbone for the later qualitative operational code analyses as well.

Qualitative operational code analyses were originally content to handle beliefs as descriptive attributes, or only as "variable[s] whose values were observed at the nominal level of measurement" (Walker & Schafer 2018; see Johnson 1977 for example). Johnson (1977) did introduce in his qualitative analysis, a conceptualisation of operational code beliefs as ranging along a continuum: for

example, the nature of the political universe as defined on a scale from friendly to mixed to hostile, with control over historical development ranging from strong to weak (Walker & Schafer 2018). Ole Holsti (1977) similarly conceptualised operational code beliefs as adopting a range of values in his typology of operational code belief systems, defining types of belief systems by particular combinations of values for each belief (Walker & Schafer 2018). This approach was later followed by quantitative operational code analyses. However, the qualitative OCA remained mainly descriptive in nature.

The qualitative OCA enables both descriptive profiles of the belief systems of individual leaders, as well as employing operational code as a construct of shared beliefs or strategic culture, attributed to an institution or a state (Walker & Schafer 2018). Indeed, qualitative OCA has later been used to profile individual leaders (see Dyson 2001; Hakovirta 2019; Verbeek 2003; Pesu 2016) as well as the shared operational code of the European Union's enlargement policy (see Hakovirta 2015). The qualitative OCA can also focus on either general or targeted operational code but offers more flexibility than for example VICS, holding the ability to combine both into an analysis that describes the general operational code yet pays attention to its targeted elements. Even though the qualitative approach has been somewhat sidelined by the popularity of VICS analysis, because of the depth and thoroughness associated with descriptive analysis, there still remain clear advantages to conducting qualitative OCA, as Schafer (2014, 300) points out.

3.3.2 Criticism of qualitative approach to operational code analysis

Qualitative operational code analysis has been criticised for methodological subjectivity and lack of systemacy (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998). While this criticism might be justified in the case of some of the operational code studies that have used a qualitative approach, it is difficult to see how the lack of a systematic approach could be defined as a general characteristic of the qualitative methodology. Qualitative content analysis can be conducted in a highly systematic manner (Schreier 2014). And while qualitative OCA is fundamentally interpretative, deep down, the same applies to the quantitative approach to OCA. Even those quantitative applications of the OCA that are based strictly on predetermined word lists nonetheless require subjective interpretation of the meaning of the words included in said lists. While there are differences in the level of methodological subjectivity and systematism between the approaches, they are not as fundamental in their nature as often claimed.

Still, the advantages of the quantitative OCA discussed in the previous chapter present justified criticism to the qualitative approach to OCA. While qualitative

OCA can be carried out in a systematic manner, it is still interpretative and, to a certain degree, subjective. Thus, it cannot provide similar comparability than systematic quantitative content analysis can. It is also a considerably slower endeavour, especially compared to quantitative analysis that use automated text analysis for coding the material. Furthermore, in order to fully benefit from the potential depth of the analysis, the qualitative analysis requires the researcher to be deeply familiar with both the studied material as well as the background information and the overall context of the studied subject. A significant part of qualitative analysis involves relating the researched material to its wider context. While the same can also be said about the interpretation of the results of the quantitative OCA, this deeper and wider familiarisation of the contextual background is nevertheless more accentuated in the qualitative approach.

The quantitative and qualitative approaches to operational code analysis each have their own methodological strengths and weaknesses, guiding the researcher to choose the approach best suited for the needs of their research. The qualitative and quantitative approaches can also be combined to further enhance, diversify, and deepen the analysis, but more often the researchers have settled on using either a quantitative or qualitative approach, disregarding the other and focusing their analysis accordingly. The choice between these two approaches, and the related discussion about the nature of the operational code analysis, has mainly revolved around these previously discussed methodological characteristics, which is in fact quite typical of any qualitative or quantitative content analysis methods. However, the differences between the approaches do not end with methodological issues.

3.4 Different Applications of the George Construct

Both qualitative and the quantitative OCA utilise the operational code belief system model of the George construct.³⁷ However the approaches interpret the questions in the George construct very differently and, as a result, the focus of analysis shifts considerably depending on which method the study employs.

George's first question, **P-1**, describes one's beliefs related to the harmonious or conflictual nature of political life. In the model, this is seen to be shaped by how one perceives the other political actors, especially one's opponents (George 1969, 201–2). Most operational code analyses approach this question by analysing the way the subject speaks of other actors: does one describe them as acting or speaking in a *conflictual* or *cooperative* way?

³⁷ See Chapter 2.3.

Qualitative analysis also often includes descriptions of the subject's own theorising of the *nature of the political world* in general. For example, in his study of the operational code of President Putin, Dyson (2001) describes Putin as someone who believes that political life is "harmonious to the degree that it is governed and regulated by norms, laws and rules" (Dyson 2001, 334) but sees his opponents acting outside the rules of political life (Dyson 2001, 336). Walker, in his study of the operational code of Henry Kissinger (Walker 1977), interprets Kissinger's belief about the essential nature of political life to be dependent on the fundamental character of the participants: environments where 'the statesman's approach' dominate are relative harmonious, while the nature of political life is one of intense conflict where 'revolutionary modes' are prominent (Walker 1977, 137). And Hakovirta, in her analysis of the operational code of Kalevi Sorsa (Hakovirta 2019), Finland's long-term Prime Minister in the 1970s and 1980s, notes how Sorsa sees the politics between great powers as governed by a logic of conflict despite the potential of growing harmony in international relations (Hakovirta 2019, 12).

The quantitative VICS analysis on the other hand focuses on the specific description of other actors and their behaviour. An index between -1 and +1 (Friendly, Mixed, Hostile) is calculated³⁸ to describe the subject's beliefs about the *harmonious* or *conflictual* nature of the political universe, based on a ratio of verb-based utterances coded as positive or negative that the subject makes when discussing others in the political universe. Thus, the analysis of the nature of the political universe is based solely on whether the subject describes others as using positive or negative means on the continuum of causal power: If the others are described as *appealing*, *promising* or *rewarding*, they are interpreted as being friendly, but if their actions fall more into the categories of *resisting*, *threatening* or *punishing*, they are interpreted as hostile.

P-2 describes actors' beliefs about their prospects for realising their fundamental values and aspirations. In a sense, it describes how *optimistic* or *pessimistic* an attitude one has on the political environment in question. Again, qualitative analyses usually take a more descriptive approach to the question. According to George, Leites' original interpretation of the Bolshevik position regarding these beliefs was in general optimistic because of the ideological-doctrinal premises of the eventual triumph of Communism on a worldwide scale, but nonetheless tinged with conditional pessimism that future catastrophe could not be excluded and was an ever-present danger (George 1969, 203). Dyson links Putin's beliefs about one's prospects of realising aspirations to the aforementioned P-1 beliefs: One can be optimistic with an enforced rule of law, but without it, corruption and anarchy will

³⁸ All formulae used in calculating VICS indices can be found in Appendix 1.

wreck prospects (Dyson 2001, 336). Hakovirta describes Sorsa as a ‘realistic optimist’, whose attitudes are dependent on the current situation between great power on one hand and the situation in the global north-south axis on the other (Hakovirta 2019, 12–13). It is telling that all three examples include *conditions* for their description of the subject’s attitude. A qualitative analysis would seem to avoid describing any actor simply as optimistic or pessimistic.

VICS draws conclusions about these beliefs from the manner in which the subjects described the intensity of actions by others, following the same logic as P-1 but weighting each coded verb according to the intensity value of its coding category (-3 to +3) following the continuum of causal power.³⁹ The reasoning behind this approach is that a subject who sees others as friendly is going to be more *optimistic* about realising one’s aspirations, while a subject who sees a hostile world of other actors trying to block the realisation of their objectives is going to be more *pessimistic* (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 33). The more drastic the means that others are described as using, the more they affect the index.

P-3 analyses one’s beliefs about the predictability of the political future. In the original framework of George, this is presented as a complicated category that combines both long-term as well as short-term *expectations* of the subjects. The example that George offers is the description of Bolshevik leaders combining a determinist Marxist⁴⁰ view of history with indeterminist conceptions, where ‘objective conditions’ from time to time create ‘opportunities’ for them, but this is not seen as predictable and it is not seen as certain that they would succeed in utilising these opportunities (George 1969, 203–4). Pesu (2016) bases his assessment of Koivisto’s beliefs in the unpredictable nature of international relations on Koivisto’s own comments about predicting the future in politics, while Dyson again connects Putin’s belief in the predictability of enforced rules: “The political future is predictable to the extent which one can rely on enforced rules and norms.” (Dyson 2001, 337). Dyson also discusses at length how, according to him, Putin sees the predictability of his own actions as connected to the predictability of the political world and vice versa. This is a good example of how some qualitative analyses⁴¹ note the subject’s beliefs about their own predictability and not only to the predictability of other actors or the international system in general.

³⁹ Coding categories are weighted as: *Punish* (-3), *Threaten* (-2), *Oppose/Resist* (-1), *Appeal/Support* (+1), *Promise* (+2), and *Reward* (+3).

⁴⁰ It is important to note that the interpretation of Marxism here and elsewhere in this chapter, when referencing the examples given by George, is based on how Leites (1951, 1953) interprets Marxist theories. How well these interpretations describe the content of Marxist theories or their interpretations inside Marxists school of political science is beyond the scope of this study.

⁴¹ See also for example (Hakovirta 2019).

VICS forms indexes for this belief from a dispersion measure that calculates the variation in the distribution of observations across the scale of six verb categories when the subject is discussing other actors (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 34). The assumption here is that the more varied the actions the subject attributes to others, the less predictable they see the other actors to be, thus the less predictable they consequently see the political future to be. This in turn is based on an interpretation of information theories that suggest that uncertainty corresponds to a distribution pattern of total variety for a set of observations across a set of categories, while certainty corresponds to a distribution pattern of total uniformity within one category in a set of categories (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 33–34). As a result, VICS interprets the subject's view on the predictability of the political future directly from how they describe the *variance of the use of power by other actors*.

P-4 treats one's perception of their own control over events as well as their beliefs related to their own role in shaping historical development. Again, the qualitative analyses here better emphasise the descriptions of the subject's own views of their *ability to control the events*, as Pesu (2016, 16) does, describing Mauno Koivisto's views of the limitations of the power of a leader of small democratic countries compared to dictators. Hakovirta (2019, 13–14) notes that Sorsa acknowledges the relatively meagre abilities of Finland to control global politics or even the country's own security, but at the same time, believes that there are situations where small countries like Finland can nonetheless still affect historical development, even if the scale of the effect is usually determined by great powers.

The VICS analysis infers this belief from *the ratio of who one describes as taking action* in the political universe: themselves or others. If one speaks more about their own actions, then they are deduced to believe more strongly in their own control of events, while if one describes others as more active, it is assumed that their belief in their own control of events is weaker. The index for this is calculated from coded verb-based utterances, with the formula of the number of self-utterances⁴² divided by the sum of self-utterances plus other-utterances (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 34).

P-5 describes the beliefs that one holds about general *the role of chance* in historical development. Like P-3, this is actually a rather complicated category in qualitative analyses. George (1969, 204–5) links it to the description of the laws of Marxism-Leninism in Leites' analysis and handles it as a question of one's beliefs about whether events in the political universe are accidental or a result of decisions by actors planning outcomes. Other qualitative analysts have treated this as more of a question of how one regards the possibility of random coincidences affecting the events and how to operate in situations of imperfect information (see Pesu 2016).

⁴² Meaning the coded utterances where the speaker speaks about themselves, as opposed to other-utterances where the speaker speaks about others. See above.

Based on this kind of analysis, Dyson comes to the conclusion that Putin responds poorly to ‘chance’ events but believes the role of chance can be precluded or at least substantially reduced (Dyson 2001, 338). Pesu, for his part, on the basis of biographical studies and Koivisto’s own writings after his presidency, interprets that Koivisto acknowledged the role of chance in international affairs, referring to his reflections on the alternative paths history could have taken (Pesu 2016, 16). Hakovirta discusses how Sorsa regards unforeseeability and uncertainty in international politics as risk factors that should be minimised, except in peace politics where Finland should seize the opportunities when they appear (Hakovirta 2019, 14).

The quantitative analyses again infer this index from other beliefs: VICS methodology calculates it from P-3 and P-4, based on the assumption that the more predictable the universe seems and the more one sees oneself as having control over events in that universe, the lower they see the role of chance (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 34–35). This interpretation is thus derived from the variance of the use of causal power by others and the relation of the use of causal power by self or the others in the political system.

I-1, the first instrumental belief type in George’s model describes what one considers to be *the best approach for selecting objectives* for political action. In qualitative analysis, this can be understood broadly. George constructs the Bolshevik answer to this in Leites’ analysis as a combination of philosophical beliefs of determinism and one’s control of historical development, as well as an approach to situations of incomplete information and predictability of consequences, formulating this belief type as very general guidelines for choosing an optimising strategy (George 1969, 205–9). Similarly, Walker constructs from Kissinger’s writings an intricate “conception of national purpose that is compatible, empirically and morally, with the particular configuration of constraints inherent in the historical situation” (Walker 1977, 138). Here, the best option is the relative-gain strategy attempting to settle a conflict on terms marginally better for both sides, whereby negotiation is favoured while the use of force is limited to the defence of legitimate principles of international order (Walker 1977). Pesu interprets the lack of references to instrumental beliefs in Koivisto’s writings and speeches as a sign of his view that small states cannot hold real doctrines and can mostly react to Great Power politics (Pesu 2016; 2019). Hakovirta raises the importance Sorsa places on how other actors, as well as the domestic audience, react to the design of foreign policy goals, while noting how neutrality and the treaty system with Russia form the basis for Finnish agenda setting (Hakovirta 2019, 15).

The quantitative VICS methodology on the other hand narrows the analysis down to the assessment of one’s perception of the best strategic direction for actions from how *cooperative* or *conflictual* their approach to others appears in one’s discourses (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 35). Here, the index for the belief type is

calculated from the percentage of cooperative coded utterances made when speaking about the Self, minus the percentage of conflictual utterances regarding the Self (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 35). It should be noted that this is a significantly narrower perspective on the question than what George originally proposed. The VICS framework focuses only on which one the speaker refers to more when discussing their interactions with others: the use of cooperative or conflictual means of causal power.

I-2 describes what one believes to be *the most effective ways* of pursuing their objectives in the political universe. Again, qualitative analysis tends to treat this as a complex question, whereas quantitative analyses focus on one scale of pursuing objectives and seek to measure it as such. For example, George sums Leites' findings up to three maxims of the Bolsheviks: "'push to the limit,' 'engage in pursuit' of an opponent who begins to retreat or make concessions, *but* 'know when to stop'" (George 1969, 211). Pesu raises coherency, honesty and trust as important factors for successful policy practices in the thinking of Koivisto (Pesu 2016, 17), while Dyson describes the most effective methodology for goal-attainment for Putin to be "[a]n incremental, backward-mapping approach, planned step-by-step to stay within the norms of expected behaviour" (Dyson 2001, 339–40).

Following its choice of treating strategic directions on the scale 'cooperative – conflictual', quantitative VICS analyses these as a matter of one's beliefs about *the intensity of pursuing cooperational or conflictual tactics*, similar to how the index for P-2 is calculated but using the utterances where the subject talks about the Self (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 35–36). In essence, I-2 serves only as a more detailed analysis of the conflictual-cooperative means continuum in the VICS analysis, already covered by the I-1 index.

I-3 presents one's beliefs related to risk-taking. Here, both qualitative and quantitative approaches are relatively close to each other in their fundamental premises, examining the level of *risk aversion* of the subject. Risk aversiveness in itself is an important factor in decision-making concerning the use of different means of power. Especially the negative use of power, almost always includes risks of escalation. For example, the use of economic sanctions can lead to a risk of war but this risk also makes these sanctions more effective as a means of coercion (Baldwin 2020, 114–17). The original formulation of the belief type can also be understood in a wider sense to include beliefs about how the taking of risks should be avoided or accepted as well as how risks should be controlled when they have to be accepted.

Qualitative analysis often widens the scope from risk aversiveness to a description of how one *calculates the risks* and especially how one seeks to *minimise* and *control* them. For example, Walker notes the important role of negotiations and establishment of a mutual sense of limits through communication as a means for controlling the risks of political actions for Kissinger (Walker 1977, 139–40). Dyson

interprets the maintenance of a low profile as a typical means of controlling risks for Putin (Dyson 2001, 341). Hakovirta notes the importance of active risk analysis in Sorsa's belief system, especially concerning the security interests of Russia, while also noting how Sorsa sees public support of foreign policy as important for controlling these risks (Hakovirta 2019, 16–17).

The VICS quantitative analysis focuses on the subjects' risk assessment and treats I-3 as a measurement of *risk aversiveness versus risk acceptance* of the subject of the study (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 36). Like P-3, the I-3 index is a dispersion measure that calculates the variation in the distribution of observations across the scale of six verb categories when the subject is talking about itself (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 36). Similar to P-3, this approach is based on information theories linking uncertainty and distribution patterns of varieties. A diverse use of means of causal power is interpreted as a sign of risk aversiveness. However, I-3 index is sometimes used for a more detailed analysis, where the score is interpreted in combination with I-1, I-2 and I-4 scores to evaluate the subjects' attitude towards different kinds of risks and their preferred methods for controlling them (see the I-4 description below).

I-4 is concerned with the question of timing in advancing one's interests. In the original George construct, this describes the subject's beliefs with respect to *the need for immediate action or biding one's time*. In qualitative analysis, this is usually interpreted straightforwardly. For example, Pesu notes Koivisto's tendency to prolong his response in order to see the consequences of the decision related to his risk-aversiveness (Pesu 2016, 18). Dyson describes Putin's beliefs as pre-emptive enough to avoid major difficulties but not so pre-emptive as to cause difficulties (Dyson 2001, 342). Similarly, Hakovirta discusses Sorsa's beliefs concerning the stability of Finnish foreign policy and the importance of reacting to events with steady, gradual changes rather than sudden turns (Hakovirta 2019, 17).

The VICS analysis divides this category into two indices, both founded on the diversity of the subject's descriptions of their own actions. The first index is based on the diversity of *cooperative* and *conflictual* self-utterances, and the second is the distribution of *word* and *deed* categories⁴³ of self-utterances. This is based on the assumption that the diversity of actions in the subject's rhetoric provides insight into the *flexibility of their actions* (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 36–37). Walker, Schafer and Young argue that the more important the timing of action in assessing the risks, the greater the propensity to shift between conflict and cooperation (I-4a); if the propensity to shift between conflictual and cooperative acts is low, then the strategic approach to goals is more likely to be the dominant strategy regardless of the actions of others (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998, 181). Similarly, the propensity to shift

⁴³ See above.

between word and deed categories of self-attributions (I-4b), which demonstrates the extent to which the actor diversifies its tactics across word and deed categories (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 37), is read as an index of the flexibility of reactions. The question of optimal timing is thus conceptualised as a question of flexibility of strategy and tactics.

Importantly, the I-4 categories in the VICS methodology are typically used to more specifically interpret the subject's risk orientation (I-3) by indicating how the subject manages two kinds of risks. The first score (I-4a) balances the risk of domination by others against the risk associated with deadlock as an outcome, while the second score (I-4b) balances the risk of doing too much against the risk of not doing enough (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 37) (for examples, see Walker, Schafer & Young 1998; 1999). Together with scores indicating the direction of the subject's strategic (I-1) and tactic (I-2) approaches and the risk aversiveness (I-3), the overall analysis can in this way indicate how acceptant or averse the subject is to either risks of exploitation or submission related to cooperative strategies and tactics; or risks of deadlock or escalation related to conflictual ones; and finally, what is their propensity to manage these risks by shifting between cooperative and conflictual approaches or between, for example, promises and rewards or threats and punishment (Walker, Schafer & Young 1999, 614–17; 1998, 181, 184).

I-5 describes one's beliefs regarding the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests. George refers to "a number of Bolshevik views about the utility of different means" (George 1969, 216) in Leites' original analyses but only raises one of these, concerning the usefulness of rude and even violent language to deter a powerful enemy (George 1969, 216). For qualitative orientation, the question of the utility of different means is related to the focus of the analysis. Here, Dyson introduces Putin's prime tools of interest advancement as incremental backward-mapping and flexibility, both in line with the rest of his analysis (Dyson 2001, 343). Walker discusses Kissinger's views on the use of negotiations and force as the most important means for advancing one's goals in the international arena, with their relative utility depending on the identity of the participants and the intensity of the conflict (Walker 1977, 142).

The quantitative VICS analysis naturally focuses on the continuum of causal power. Thus, it simplifies the question by calculating the ratio of verbs connected to the *six categories of power usage* (punish, threaten, oppose, support, promise, reward) that serve as the basis of the entire analytical framework, and deduces the subject's beliefs regarding the utility of different tactics from the amount they refer to using these means of power in their discourse.

As can be seen, there are significant differences in how operational code belief types are understood in different approaches to operational code analysis. To a

considerable extent, these differences come from different conceptualisations of what power is and how it is best understood.

3.5 Concepts of Power and Operational Code Analysis

3.5.1 Types of power

We have discussed how qualitative and quantitative OCA differ in their methodological approaches. However, the differences of these approaches go well beyond the technicalities of their methods. I argue that qualitative OCA and VICS-based quantitative OCA are based on fundamentally different conceptualisations of power. As the operational code approach specifically studies the beliefs about the exercise of power in human affairs (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 29), power is an essential concept for the framework and especially crucial for the VICS method.

In quantitative approaches to OCA built on the VICS methodology, politics as human behaviour is understood to be generated from social acts of communication in the form of the exercise of power between individuals (Walker 2011a, 45). Thus, it is specifically the beliefs related to the exercise of power that are at the centre of interest in the model. As can be seen from the previous description of the method, here, power is understood as a control relationship, where A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do (Dahl 1957). This concept of power is often called a causal notion of power in the literature. As John Scott (2008) formulates, power is seen as “the production of causal effects, and social power is an agent’s intentional use of causal powers to affect the conduct of other agents” (Scott 2008, 29). Operational code beliefs related to the nature of these control relationships are in essence beliefs about the production of causal effects: the cause-effect relationships of the use of power; what are the best ways to cause others to adopt the desired behaviour; and what others believe these ways to be and thus can be expected to use.

Control relationships manifest themselves in influence attempts, in the different means that A can use to get B to do X. These influence attempts are based on a continuum of positive and negative sanctions, whereby positive sanctions are actual or promised rewards, and negative sanctions are actual or threatened punishments. (Baldwin 1971a; 1971b; see also Singer 1963) This has led to models like the one Baldwin proposed in 1971, as a revised version of Singer’s (1963) model, that condenses the types of influence techniques or means of power as *Threats*, *Promises*, *Rewards*, and *Punishments* (Baldwin 1971a, 483).

These four categories of actual or promised/threatened sanctions however leave out actions that seek to affect the preferences of others instead of making them act

against their preferences. This is especially relevant if one considers the importance of what Joseph S. Nye (1990) coined as ‘soft power’, actors’ ability to shape the preferences of others without tangible threats or payoffs (J. S. Nye 2004, 5). Soft power is assumed to work by attraction, convincing others with the appeal of one’s ideas (J. S. Nye 1990; see also 2004; 2011; 2008). Nye’s soft power is indirect, long-term and works more through co-optation, persuasion and the power of attraction (Hill 2016, 143). As K. J. Holsti points out, “[w]e cannot assume that the exercise of influence is always *against* the wishes of others and that there are only two possible outcomes of the act, one favoring A, the other favoring B” (K. J. Holsti 1964, 189). He proposes instead a categorisation of six different tactics of the use of power in international relations: Persuasion, the offer of rewards, the granting of rewards, the threat of punishment, the infliction of non-violent punishment and force (K. J. Holsti 1964, 189–90). Holsti defines persuasion as “situations in which an actor simply initiates or discusses a proposal or situation with another and elicits a favorable response without explicitly holding out the possibility of rewards or punishments” (K. J. Holsti 1964, 189). Lukes (1974) makes a similar conclusion by including influence⁴⁴, manipulation and authority as exercises of power, and presenting shaping the preferences of others as his third dimension of power⁴⁵, even though his concept of power is tied to a conflict of interests⁴⁶ being present and dismisses the possibility for the consensual use of power.

These arguments have supported the inclusion of the tactics of persuasion into the models of power-use. In persuasion, A uses its influence to appeal to B without explicit promises or threats. For similar reasons, expressions of disapproval towards certain actions, again without explicit threats or promises of benefits, have been seen as a necessary addition to the continuum. Both types of actions can be seen to cause B to do X in a way that essentially fulfils the basic requirements of the causal

⁴⁴ Understood here narrowly as A causing B to change their course of action without resorting to tacit or overt threat (Lukes 1974).

⁴⁵ The other two being inducing others to do what they otherwise would not do (Dahl) and the framing and setting of agenda (Bachrach & Baratz) (Lukes 1974).

⁴⁶ Lukes defines the exercise of power as A affecting B in a manner contrary to B’s interests, while acknowledging that ‘interests’ are evaluative notions and recognising that people’s wants can be a product of a system that works against their interests. Thus, his concept of power includes, for example, the use of authority only where a conflict of interests is involved and disregards consensual authority (see Lukes 1974).

While useful for other kinds of analysis of power in international relations, narrow framing excluding the consensual use of power would not serve our purpose to examine an actor’s perception of the different means to achieve their goals. It would leave important aspects of causal beliefs outside the analytic framework. Because of this, in this work we use the terms ‘power’ and ‘influence’ interchangeably and also regard consensual authority as a form of the use of power.

conceptualisation of power. Indeed, according to Baldwin (2002), the causal concept of power can accommodate situations where A can cause B to do something that B would otherwise not do by affecting B's preferences, desires and thoughts. This widens the focus of the causal concept of power from merely observable behaviour to changes in, for example, beliefs, attitudes, and predispositions, by subsuming such matters under the general term the 'behaviour' that is affected (Baldwin 2020, 18, footnote 42; see also Nagel 1975, 12).

The studies of the use of power in international relations have often been criticised for focusing solely on a realist conception of power as the ability of the state to use material resources to overcome resistance, producing a "theoretical tunnel vision that causes scholars to overlook others [sic] forms and effects of power" (Barnett & Duvall 2005, 40). While this limitation certainly affects many IR studies, it is not an inevitable consequence of adopting a causal notion of power as the basis of analysis. Power understood as exercising influence in international relations can include appeals to normative symbols, the provision of information, as well as various diplomatic means including representation and negotiations, in addition to economic and military means based on the use of material resources (Baldwin 2002, 178–79; see also Carstensen & Schmidt 2016 about ideational power).

To a certain extent, the quantitative approaches to operational code analysis have taken all this into account by treating the exercise of power as a continuum that is extended to include the use of authority-based power, for example the VICS categories of *Appeal/Support* and *Oppose/Resist*. VICS methodology is built on an extended continuum of the exercise of power as positive sanctions of authority, influence, and reward versus the negative sanctions of resistance, threat, and punishment (Walker, Schafer & Young 1998; see also Walker 2011a, 14). These form the six categories of *Appeal/Support*, *Promise*, *Reward*, and *Oppose/Resist*, *Threaten*, *Punish* used in VICS Coding.⁴⁷ As is apparent, this approach regarding the conceptualisation of power connects VICS and most of the quantitative operational code studies firmly to the causal notion of power. Furthermore, how these categories are interpreted determines how closely the causal notion of power applied is tied to the realist, material conception of power. This is especially crucial to note regarding the construction of the verb lists used in automated VICS coding. The categorisation of the VICS system tends to further reduce the use of causal power to a limited selection of attributions, depending on how strictly their meaning is interpreted.

⁴⁷ See Chapter 3.2.

However, while the discipline of IR has traditionally favoured the causal notion of power (see Barnett & Duvall 2005, 39–42), it is hardly the only conception of power. In the 1980's Susan Strange (1987) already argued that structural power, the “power to choose and to shape the structures of global political economy” (Strange 1987, 565), had overtaken relational power as the key factor in the international system. In addition to economic dimensions, she also included the exercise of control over knowledge and information in these structures of power in world politics (Strange 1987, 565). Marxist-influenced scholars such as Gill and Law have also included forms of structural power in their analysis, noting how the structure of global capitalism determines the capacities and resources of actors, thus shaping their hegemonic ideology (Barnett & Duvall 2005, 54). Constructivist theories have often called for even wider conceptualisations of power, tending to understand power as both agential and intersubjective, including non-intentional as well as impersonal forms of power (Guzzini 2005, 507–8). All these theories call attention to the limits of the causal notion of power, especially when categorised as narrowly as in the VICS categories.

Drawing a distinction between the dimensions of interaction and constitution on the one hand, and direct and indirect relations on the other hand, Barnett and Duvall (2005) suggest a taxonomy of four types of power as a relation: *Compulsory Power* – relations of interaction of direct control by one actor over another; *Institutional Power* – the control actors exercise indirectly over others through diffuse relations of interaction; *Structural Power* – the constitution of subjects' capacities in direct structural relation to one another; and *Productive Power* – the socially diffuse production of subjectivity in systems of meaning and signification (Barnett & Duvall 2005, 43). Of these types, the causal notion of power can most accurately account for the use of compulsory power but only somewhat in the context of the use of institutional power, arguably omitting the constitutive dimension of power completely.

Thus, we can observe that the causal notion of power, adopted in the VICS framework, offers a significantly limited perspective on the use of power. This focus on the limited continuum of causal forms of power is justified when it serves the goals of the analysis. It can be argued that this limitation allows the analysis to focus properly on the different modes of interaction between the actors, tracing recurring interactions and relations between different actors. It allows a level of systematism that would be hard to accomplish with a wider conceptualisation of power. By using the systematic operational code metrics based on the six categories of causal power continuum, operational code studies have been able to not only produce comparable operational code profiles for actors but also to combine the analysis with game theory models (see G. B. Marfleet & Walker 2006; Walker, He & Feng 2021) and role theory models (see Schafer & Walker 2021).

However, the qualitative operational code analyses have often conceptualised answers to George's ten questions much more widely than how VICS does, showing how the framework includes questions related to a wider conceptualisation of power than the causal alone. While focusing the analysis on the limited continuum of causal forms of power is an understandable choice for quantitative operational code studies, it nevertheless delimits OCA considerably from the original framework of George construct as well as from the analytical goals typically adopted by the operational code studies.

3.5.2 Limitations of causal power concept for operational code analysis

The previous examination of the different treatment of beliefs in the George construct, regarding qualitative and quantitative OCA, clearly demonstrates the different power conceptualisations behind the approaches. The qualitative analysis utilising the framework of the original George construct is able to consider all four dimensions of power presented by Barnett and Duvall (2005). The VICS analysis, on the other hand, focuses only on attempts of compulsory, causal power.⁴⁸ Especially from the constructivist point of view, this causal notion of power is far too narrow a conceptualisation to capture the power mechanisms of global politics. When the construction of social reality is considered, power means not only the resources required to impose one's view on others but also the authority to determine the shared meanings that constitute the identities, interests and practices, as well as the conditions that confer, defer or deny access to benefits (Adler 1997, 336). Even when supplemented with the tactics of persuasion, the causal notion of power excludes much information about how actors can use power by affecting the shared understandings of phenomena.

The causal notion of power, as used in the framework of the VICS analysis, favours thinking about power in terms of agency at the expense of structure.⁴⁹ While this can be a necessary step to keep the research focused, it is still something that needs to be taken into account. Like Barnett and Duvall (2005), I would like to pay more rigorous attention to different forms of power, recognising the limitations emerging with the causal notion of power and the utilities of qualitative OCA that come from more flexible conceptualisations of power.

⁴⁸ And can further reduce the use of power to certain types of attributions, depending on the manner in which the researcher interprets the classification of transitive verbs indicating the use of forms of power.

⁴⁹ See (Barnett & Duvall 2005) for expanding the conceptual framework of power to include structural aspects and constitutive power.

The framing of power as causal power, as with the VICS framework, presents two important issues if we consider operational code to be a comprehensive map of the belief system of an actor regarding the exercise of power. First, while favouring power as interaction, it disregards the constitutive power, which nevertheless has effects on behavioural tendencies through the constitution of identities (see Barnett & Duvall 2005, 45–47). Second, it disregards the indirect exercise of power, the control exercised through diffuse relations of interaction that do not manifest as direct ‘A does X to B’ actions. However, the indirect control over the conditions of action of socially distant others (Barnett & Duvall 2005, 48) is as important part of exercising power in international relations as direct threatening or rewarding other. Nye’s soft power also materialises through the structures and institutions of world politics, as well as indirectly through the cultural representation of imaginaries and interpretations. Similarly, important forms of power use such as structural foreign policy (see Keukeleire 2003; Keukeleire & Delreux 2014) and normative power (see Manners 2002; 2006) are not reduced to direct use of causal power but manifest as constitutive power in the shaping of the norms and institutions of international politics.

Furthermore, more unconventional notions of power have been suggested as increasingly relevant in the increasingly connected world – and not only soft power. Anne-Marie Slaughter has proposed the concept of *collaborative power*, a form of non-relational power that is distinctively not the power over others but rather power with others (Slaughter 2011). This collaborative power, exercised through calls to action, connections and adaptation, is not held by an actor, but as a property of a complex set of interconnections that they can guide (Slaughter 2011). A similar conception is developed by Peter van Ham (2010), who suggests that *social power*, a form of power used through relationships and communication that has the capacity to establish norms and rules as its core (van Ham 2010, 4–8), is increasingly relevant for the study of international politics.

These wider conceptualisations of power are especially important in the context of the instrumental beliefs in Operation Code Analysis. The instrumental beliefs in the George construct are beliefs that the subjects have about their own exercise of power: how best to exercise power to pursue one’s goals most effectively and how the different means for advancing one’s interests work. If one considers, e. g., structural foreign policy (see Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 27–30) or soft power (see J. S. Nye 1990), it becomes apparent how VICS analysis misses much of the information about how the subject can frame its means to pursue goals. Yet both of these are relevant aspects of the foreign policies practised in current world politics, while actors demonstrably regard them as usable means for advancing one’s interests. The actors can and do project power through international institutions such as the UN or WTO, seeking to frame the possible actions for others as well as to

shape their preferences. Similarly, actors can use their capabilities to shape regulations and ensure that others adapt them to considerable effect (see Bradford 2020). These kinds of power rely mostly on the indirect and constitutive use of power, which are outside the framework of a causal notion of power.

But the limitations of the causal power concepts also affect the philosophical beliefs of the George construct. For example, the beliefs about the predictability of the political future (P-3), as well as beliefs about the amount of control one has over historical development (P-4), can be seen to be significantly affected by one's beliefs concerning the structures of the political universe and not only their perception of the usage of causal power by themselves and others. The role of change (P-5) as interpreted through the use of causal means of power by the Self and Others is perhaps even more problematic. In qualitative analysis these are described more freely, capturing the subject's perception of the framework and structures that they can use their power in and through.

The focus on the causal notion of power has also simplified the George construct considerably. Increasingly, the quantitative operational code analyses have begun to treat only the belief types of I-1, P-1 and P-4 as relevant and have focused solely on them (see e.g., Schafer, Nurmanova & Walker 2021). However, a reading of qualitative studies would indicate that the literal answers to the original questions of the George construct can differ considerably from this model. While they offer little additional value for the VICS analysis, the other categories of the George construct also can and do also offer some interesting insights when qualitatively analysed, for example in how the actors seek to control the risks and why they see the future as predictable or unpredictable.

Unlike the VICS methodology, the qualitative OCA is not tied to a specific conceptualisation of power. The qualitative approach allows more flexible interpretations of power and can more easily include viewpoints such as structural or soft power. The qualitative operational code studies have usually adopted a broader interpretation of power as their position and included phenomena that have been disregarded in VICS. Furthermore, the qualitative approach can also consider how the subjects of the analysis themselves conceptualise power in their political thinking. Since the concept of power itself is ineradicably value-dependent and operates within a particular moral and political perspective (Lukes 1974, 26), the subjective views of the actor about the nature of power are often highly relevant for any analysis.

The quantitative VICS operational code analysis has its unquestionable strengths. It is a systematic approach to content analysis and produces highly comparable results about the belief systems concerning relational and causal power. Another strength of the VICS approach is its relevance to models based on Role Theory and Game Theory, role-types and strategic preference orders. However,

presenting the VICS operational code indexes as strict answers to the ten questions of the George construct is problematic and potentially misleading. They offer very different, much narrower answers to the questions than the traditional qualitative analyses tend to give and should not be mixed up.

In this study, I seek to supplement the overall mapping of the quantitative VICS analysis of the operational code with more descriptive qualitative analysis, in order to form a more complete picture of the foreign policy belief system of the European Union. This chapter has highlighted how the VICS analysis is built on a specific conceptualisation of power, narrowing the analysis to use of direct causal power, and the limitations for the operational code analysis that come from this. These limitations are not the only potential issues in the VICS methodology. Subtleties of language in foreign policy discourses, for example, indirect expressions of threats and promises, or the multiple purposes of a single action, present challenges for VICS analysis. Other limitations, for example on how the VICS framework narrows down the interpretation of the operational code belief system, exist as well. However, as to what makes the limitations of the concept of power different from these other potential issues is the central role of power in the analytical framework. The use of power is a fundamental element of the operational code framework, and the VICS methodology in particular is chiefly focused on analysis of the beliefs concerning the use of power in international relations. Therefore, the conceptualisation of power utilised in the analytical framework needs to be recognised, and its effects on the analysis acknowledged.

The use of qualitative operational code analysis enables the study to take into account more diverse forms of power used in international relations. This is especially important when analysing an actor like the European Union, which has been argued to employ a different, for example, more normative (see Manners 2002; 2006) or structural (see Keukeleire 2003) approach, to the use of power. It is to this particular character of the EU as an international actor that we turn next.

4 The European Union Foreign Policy and the High Representative

4.1 Institutional Framework of EU Foreign Policy

4.1.1 The development of the EU foreign policy institutions

The institutional framework of EU foreign policy, as well as the role of the High Representative therein, have both undergone a long development. This historical development forms a context that is necessary for understanding the Union's operational code, especially as a significant part of this development occurred in the time period analysed in this study. This institutional development is deeply linked to the Union's international identity and its particular approach to the use of power.

It is now widely accepted that the EU has a thing that can be referred to as 'foreign policy', but this has not always been the case. Indeed, the meaningfulness of the whole concept of the EU's foreign policy was previously questioned in academic literature (e.g., Lister 1997; David Allen 1998; Bull 1982; Hill 1993) as well as in political discussions. The gradual acceptance of the existence of EU foreign policy is partially due to IR's and FPA's general shift from a state-centric perspective to include non-state actors (see Hill 2016; Özoğuz-Bolgi 2013, 5–8; Zielonka 2008, 472–73). However, the EU's foreign policy itself has also undergone a long evolution from barely a shared ambition to an actual foreign policy institution with established decision-making arenas, complete with rules covering much of the typical policy areas, a diplomatic service, and a representative similar to national foreign ministers.

The roots of common European foreign policy thinking can be traced back to the origin of the European integration project after the Second World War. The early European integration was deeply linked to the global politics of the Cold War. Solving the 'German problem' with integration instead of isolation was to a large extent a reaction to the security threat presented by the Soviet bloc, and heavily promoted by the US (K. E. Smith 2014, 23–24). The Schuman Plan and the Paris Treaty (1952) establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) were manifestations of this need to ensure peace through unity in Europe, including

against outside threats. This unity included ideas of common foreign policy, at the early stage visible in the proposed European Defence Community (EDC). The EDC would even have included a fully integrated European army linked to a politically united Europe (White 2001, 5), demonstrating quite far-reaching ambitions towards turning Europe into a strong, united international actor. This political aspect of integration, however, ran into stiff opposition, not least because it was seen as a curtailment of the national sovereignty of its members. By rejecting the ratification of the EDC treaty in 1954, the French National Assembly delayed this development for years.

After the failure of the EDC, the integration process was limited to the economic field, primarily in the form of the European Economic Community (EEC). The aspirations to create a common internal market required entrusting responsibility for the formulation and implementation of external trade policy to the Community, but traditional foreign and security policies were excluded from the formal policy agenda of the Community (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, 3–4). However, the external dimensions of economic policies led the EEC to gradually become a foreign policy actor without possessing clear foreign policy competencies (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 42). Together with the persistent demands for European countries to enhance their capabilities to affect global politics through one shared voice, this led to the proposal of establishing the European Political Cooperation (EPC) in 1970.

The EPC responded to aspirations of creating a stronger European voice with the establishment of foreign policy cooperation that consisted of regular consultation, the coordination of national positions as well as common action, with unanimous decision-making taking place in the meetings of the foreign ministers (K. E. Smith 2014, 24–25). Perhaps most importantly, the EPC institutionalised the principle of consultation on all major questions of foreign policy among the Member States (Bindi 2022a, 17). While initially very limited, the EPC slowly became more institutionalised, with informal rules and substantive policies gradually emerging during the 1970s (Peterson & Helwig 2017, 313). As the Commission had no right of initiative, a key role was played by the rotating Presidency (Vanhoonacker & Pomorska 2017, 109). Beginning as informal practices, political cooperation was later formalised with heads of state and government adopting the later Copenhagen Report and a Declaration on a European Identity in 1973 (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 43). The European Council, meeting within the framework of EPC three times a year and at any other time deemed necessary, composed of heads of state or government and their foreign ministers with the participation of the president of the European Commission, was established at the 1974 Paris Summit (Bindi 2022a, 19). Both the European Political Cooperation and the European Council were codified in the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986 into the EU Treaty legal framework,

formalising intergovernmental cooperation in foreign policy without changing its existing nature or methods of operation (Bindi 2022a, 23).

In many ways, the EPC can be seen as a precursor of the future Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that would replace it in 1993. While the EPC was “foreign policy-making at the European level in all but name” (White 2001, 71), the issue of conceding foreign policy powers to supranational or even intergovernmental institutions was highly sensitive to the Member States. This led not only to a high number of euphemisms, such as ‘Political Cooperation’ itself, but also to severe limitations of the activities of the EPC. While coordination and consulting were practised in order to harmonise national foreign policy positions, the Member States retained the right to disassociate themselves from collective positions and no votes were to be taken (White 2001, 75). Despite some development, the EPC also remained mainly reactive and its actions were mostly declaratory in nature (Edwards 2017, 47). Policy effectiveness was also plagued by the allocation of the external dimension of economic policies to the jurisdiction of the Commission as a part of the separate legal and institutional framework of the European Community (EC), in effect maintaining two systems of foreign policy. In practice, this division proved to be unsustainable, with the EPC relying on the EC to give substance to its declarations and initiatives, including the EC’s instruments for sanctions (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 44).

The Maastricht Treaty (1993) transformed EPC into the previously mentioned Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the Union. A unitary institutional framework that would have integrated the political, economic and security dimensions of foreign policy was proposed by the Dutch presidency during the preparatory work for the CFSP but was rejected by most other Member States (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 47–48). Instead, in the new system, the EU was legally composed of three separate pillars⁵⁰. And while the aim of the treaty remained to establish “a single institutional framework” (Council of the European Communities 1992, Article C) ensuring the consistency of external activities as a whole, the dimensions of foreign policy were separated between the first and the second pillar.

The pillar structure maintained the division between the foreign policy under the newly created CFSP and the foreign policy of the EC. The latter included arguably some of the EU’s strongest policy domains (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 48), e.g., trade policy, development cooperation and the external dimensions of internal policies. These were all located under the first pillar, which typically employed the Community method for policy making. The Community method, a system maintaining institutional equilibrium between different EU institutions, functions on

⁵⁰ The I Pillar of European Communities, the II Pillar of Common Foreign and Security Policy, and the III Pillar of Justice and Home Affairs.

the principle of common interest, with the supranational Commission holding a key role in defining and defending this common interest (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 62). Inside the first pillar, this meant that the Council could make decisions using qualified majority voting in most cases, with the Commission usually having the right of initiative.

The CFSP formed the second pillar, where an intergovernmental policy-making method was predominant. Through this, the national governments of the Member States retained primary control over policy-making inside the second pillar. This meant either intergovernmental cooperation, where the governments of the Member States only cooperated in the elaboration of foreign policy and coordinated their national foreign policies, or intergovernmental integration, where the Member States did transfer competencies to the EU, but within the Union's institutional framework still retained strict control over policy-making through the dominant position of the Council and the application of the unanimity rule in its decision-making (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 63). The European Council⁵¹ set the broad guidelines for the CFSP and the Council of Foreign Ministers implemented them, with the Political Committee⁵² preparing the Council's work and the Commission being associated in discussions (K. E. Smith 2014, 30). The Council Presidency, rotating between the Member States, was responsible for the managing of the CFSP and representing the Union in the CFSP matters. With this institutional framework, the CFSP remained intergovernmental and a matter of almost exclusively unanimous decision-making between the Member States (Peterson & Helwig 2017, 315).

Despite its initial failings, the establishment of the CFSP was an important step towards a functional EU foreign policy. The reasons for its creation have been ascribed to the need for the EU "to punch its weight in the world, to shoulder more of the transatlantic burden and to develop externally apace with internal developments" (Cameron 2007, 28–29). The CFSP was designed to strengthen European integration, particularly regarding the Member States' management of their interstate relations in an unstable geopolitical environment, and to serve as a tool to strengthen European identity and manage the Union's public relations. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 46–47) Significantly, questions related to the security of the Union were also included in the domain of CFSP, bringing security entirely into the sphere of EU foreign policy for the first time. But it was also meant to manage inter-institutional relations and the relations between Member States and the Commission, and ensure the Member States a full control of those foreign policy

⁵¹ Consisting of the Heads of State or of Government of the Member States and the President of the Commission.

⁵² Composed of directors of political affairs, senior diplomats from the national foreign ministries.

domains falling under the CFSP (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 46). This resulted in an institutional framework in which the CFSP was separated from the Commission-steered external policies, with decision-making in the domain of the CFSP remaining heavily intergovernmental.

The subsequent treaty reforms in Amsterdam (1999) and Nice (2003) sought to increase the efficiency and coherency of European foreign policy with a greater emphasis on the single decision-making framework (Edwards 2017, 48). They also provided the European Council an enhanced role with the new instruments for adopting guidelines and strategies to define the Union's foreign policies (White 2001, 159–60). Perhaps most importantly, the Amsterdam Treaty also introduced for the Secretary-General of the Council the function of the High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.⁵³ This was a significant change as it provided the CFSP with a permanent actor advancing it, as well as a 'face' (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 51).

The Amsterdam Treaty also sought to decrease the role of unanimous voting by introducing constructive abstention, where Member States could abstain from voting on a decision without blocking it, as well as the use of the qualified majority voting (QMV) when implementing a Common Strategy previously agreed upon by the European Council. The Nice Treaty later extended the use of QMV to decisions on appointing envoys. However, the QMV eventually remained unused, with some Member States insisting on seeking consensus in foreign policy matters as a principle. (K. E. Smith 2014, 32–33). In addition, despite the institutional changes intended to strengthen the EU's foreign policy, its outputs left much to hope for. Some of the main weaknesses observed in the CFSP were "the leadership conflicts inherent in a system in which the presidency changed every six months, the High Representative [that] was increasingly seen as the external face of EU foreign policy, but lacked real power, and the Commission [that] remained responsible for many of the instruments needed to make CFSP effective" (Peterson & Helwig 2017, 317).

While these institutional changes, together with the appointment of a heavyweight candidate like Javier Solana as High Representative instead of a lower-profile official, produced a distinct European foreign policy system (Peterson & Helwig 2017, 316), the effects of the CFSP reforms in the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties still remained somewhat modest. For its part, the continuing weakness of the CFSP led to the resurfacing of demands for further reform of the Union. The resulting Lisbon Treaty (2009) changed the institutional framework of the EU's foreign policy system substantially, setting in place the main elements of its current form.

⁵³ For a more detailed account of the role of the High Representative, see below.

The road to the Lisbon Treaty was infamously rocky. It already began in 2002-2003, with the Convention on the Future of Europe that eventually produced a draft for the ‘constitution’ of Europe that eventually became the ‘Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe’ in 2004. This Constitutional Treaty was signed by the Member States, however, its ratification process ended when it was rejected by the French and Dutch referenda in 2005. After three years, the Member States agreed to include most of the Constitutional Treaty’s provisions in a new treaty, signed in Lisbon in 2007 (K. E. Smith 2014, 38). Perhaps the main difference to the Constitutional Treaty was that instead of replacing the existing treaties, the Lisbon Treaty, once again, only amended them. Nor did the new treaty establish a single codified constitution for the Union and, for example the planned office of ‘Minister of Foreign Affairs’ was renamed to less provocative ‘High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy’. The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty suffered yet another setback when the Irish referendum initially rejected its ratification in 2008; however, Ireland was pressed to hold another referendum, where it approved the accord, which then entered into force on 1 December 2009 (K. E. Smith 2014, 38).

Some of the key ambitions of the Lisbon Treaty were to bring more coherency to the EU’s external action and to enable the Union to become an effective global actor. The Treaty established a legal personality for the EU. This meant that the EU was capable of making treaties with other actors, joining international organisations, and conducting diplomatic relations on its own, thus increasing the international political legitimacy of the Union (Özoğuz-Bolgi 2013, 9). Previously the legal personality had only been granted to the EC. The European Council was identified as the EU institution responsible for adopting decisions on the strategic interests and objectives of the Union in all areas of EU external action, giving the Union strategic orientation in the entirety of its foreign policy (Ramopoulos & Odermatt 2013, 21). This formalised and acknowledged the key role that the Council had already been playing in the formulation and implementation of EU external action for multiple years (Gebhard 2017, 136). The Lisbon Treaty also sought to improve the coherence of EU foreign policy with the creation of a common list of principles and objectives governing the external relations of the EU (Ramopoulos & Odermatt 2013, 22). While blurring the boundary between CFSP and the rest of the Union’s external action by making it more difficult to determine the exact scope of the CFSP based on its objectives (Ramopoulos & Odermatt 2013, 22), this move nonetheless specified the overall principles and objectives of the Union’s approach to external action.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ See Chapter 4.2., and more specifically its subchapter *Institutionalised beliefs in the treaties and strategies of the Union*, below.

Two important, interlinked reforms in the Lisbon Treaty concerned the ‘voice’ of the Union, meaning the EU’s external representation, its coherency and effectiveness. The first was the creation of the function of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, expanding the role of the previous High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy significantly and extending the post to include a double role as the Vice-President of the Commission. European External Action Service (EEAS) was also created to provide support for the High Representative and to serve as a joint diplomatic service for the EU. The duties of the High Representative are discussed in detail in the next subchapter, but essentially the reformed High Representative was meant to represent the EU in all foreign policy issues as well as to ensure the consistency of the Union’s external action.

The second important reform was the creation of a permanent President of the European Council to supplant the rotating Presidency. While the previous rotating presidency system continues, it now operates on issues outside the remit of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), and below the level of the heads of state or government (K. E. Smith 2014, 39). The new President of the European Council is elected for a term of two and a half years, which is renewable once. The President’s duties include, besides chairing the European Council, ensuring the preparation and continuity of the work of the European Council, facilitating cohesion and consensus within the European Council and presenting a report to the European Parliament after each of the Council’s meetings. This more permanent position, combined with the enhanced role of the High Representative, was meant to provide much-needed continuity for EU foreign policy decision-making.

Despite the ambitions to defragment the legal basis of the Union’s foreign policies, the decision-making processes in the post-Lisbon framework still diverge based on whether an issue falls under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) domain or under the domain of the so-called ‘external action’. In the issues falling under the CFSP domain, the European Council identifies the Union’s strategic interests, determines the objectives of, and defines the general guidelines for the Union’s foreign and security policy, while the Council of the EU, in its FAC format and chaired by the HR, frames EU common foreign and security policy, defining and implementing said policy on the basis of the guidelines and strategic interests defined by the European Council. The initiatives concerning CFSP are proposed by the High Representative (either with or without the Commission’s support) or a Member State. The common foreign and security policy is put into effect by the High Representative and the Member States, using national and Union resources.

Overall, the European Council and the Council of the EU make the decisions concerning CFSP unanimously but up to one-third of Member States are allowed to

abstain. This ‘constructive abstention’ means that a Member State abstaining from a vote is not obliged to apply the decision but will refrain from any action that conflicts with or impedes Union action on a decision in question (Vanhoonaeker & Pomorska 2017, 110). However, Member States have used this voting arrangement very rarely. The Council of the EU can make a decision using QMV when adopting a guideline previously agreed by the European Council, and the European Council can unanimously decide to extend the areas covered by QMV but in practice, the general rule has been that the Member States try to seek consensus and avoid resorting to a vote.

While the Union’s competence in CFSP, by definition, covers all areas of foreign policy and all questions relating to the EU’s security (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 24), important policy fields that belong to the wider realm of external relations do not fall under CFSP’s domain and procedural rules. These EU ‘external action’ and ‘external dimensions of internal policies’ “include policy fields and instruments that have important foreign policy dimensions; they provide the instruments and leverage (carrots and sticks) necessary for foreign policy action; and they can entail contractual and political frameworks (such as association agreements) that allow the EU to pursue foreign policy goals” (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 13). These policy fields include common commercial and trade policies, development cooperation, international agreements with third countries and international organisations as well as policies concerning issues such as migration, energy, and the environment. Most decision-making on the legislative framework of these non-CFSP issues follows the ordinary legislative procedure, where the European Parliament decides in concert with the Council of the EU acting by QMV on the basis of a proposal from the Commission (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 97). Notable differences to the CFSP procedure include the power of initiative often belonging solely to the Commission, and the European Parliament having a more significant role in the decision-making⁵⁵ in addition to the use of the QMV in the Council.

In the post-Lisbon institutional framework, the European Council generally assumes the responsibility for establishing the Union’s foreign policy priorities and setting its strategic course (see Devuyt 2012), while the Council of the European Union, as the Foreign Affairs Council, acts as the main foreign policy decision-making body, following the guidelines set by the European Council. The Commission still plays a major role in issues falling under the fields of the external actions and external dimensions of internal policies (see Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 72–77) but a much more limited one regarding the CFSP. The role of the European

⁵⁵ When CFSP is concerned, the European Parliament is only informed by the High Representative about the evolution of the CFSP.

Parliament is mainly consultative, but it nonetheless wields considerable power through the requirement of its consent for international agreements as well as its budgetary powers. In any event, the Parliament voices its position on foreign policy issues through reports, resolutions, and parliamentary questions and has managed to establish a regular formal and informal dialogue with the High Representative, the EEAS, and the Commission (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 86). For example, the High Representative is required to consult the Parliament regularly on the principal aspects and basic choices of the CFSP and inform the Parliament on how the CSFP evolves (Sultanova 2019, 542).

By eliminating the previous pillar system, the Lisbon Treaty was meant to create a single institutional framework applicable to the Union's external relations. However, despite the formal abolishment of the pillar system, the division between policy-making methods for the CFSP and for the other external policies of the Union persisted. The former remains predominantly intergovernmental, while the latter is still dominated by the Community approach to decision-making. This persisting split still affects the coherency of the EU's foreign policy (see Gebhard 2017; Ramopoulos & Odermatt 2013, 21–22); and the Member States' reluctance to relinquish their sovereignty in foreign and security policy matters is still apparent in the new institutional framework (Özoğuz-Bolgi 2013). The Member States hold the key role in formulation of the EU's foreign policy through their representation in both the European Council and the Foreign Affairs Council and most important decisions concerning the CFSP are still taken unanimously. In addition, while the Member States are bound by agreed-upon common positions and have an obligation to consult each other, they nonetheless retain freedom of action where there is no agreed-upon common policy (Peterson & Helwig 2017, 319).

The Lisbon Treaty sought to mitigate the effects of this institutional bifurcation in part by ensuring the coherency of different foreign policy dominions became a responsibility of the remodelled High Representative. The new High Representative assumed a far stronger position than any previous European official to broker agreements and then implement them, once agreed to (Peterson & Helwig 2017, 318). However, the functioning logic of the institutional framework allows the European Council and thus the Member States to exert control over the HR (Amadio Viceré 2020). This balancing of the control of the Member States over the Union's foreign policy on one hand, and the ability of the Union to formulate coherent foreign policy on the other, has always shaped the Union's foreign policy strategies. Here, the High Representatives have an important, although changing, role.

4.1.2 Role of the High Representative

The function of the High Representative was originally created in the Treaty of Amsterdam, although with a much more limited scope than the later reformed role of the HR/VP introduced in the Lisbon Treaty. When first introduced to the EU foreign policy framework as the High Representative of the CFSP, the function of the HR was to

“assist the Council in matters coming within the scope of the common foreign and security policy, in particular through contributing to the formulation, preparation and implementation of policy decisions, and, when appropriate and acting on behalf of the Council at the request of the Presidency, through conducting political dialogue with third parties” (Council of the European Communities 1997, Article J.16).

The HR was intended to help formulate, prepare, and implement CFSP decisions and to give more continuity in its international representation (K. E. Smith 2014, 31). More specifically, the High Representative was meant to assist the six-monthly rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU. According to the Treaty of Amsterdam, it was the rotating Presidency that primarily represented the Union within the scope of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. The HR was intended to enhance policy coordination by providing assistance to the Presidency in its external representation role (Duke 2011, 25). The duties of the HR included assisting the Presidency in representing the Union in CFSP matters and in the implementation of CFSP decisions (Council of the European Communities 1997, Article J.8), and heading the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit (PPEWU) that was meant to monitor and assess international developments and draft policy options to the Council (White 2001, 161).

Javier Solana, the former Secretary-General of NATO, was appointed the first European Union High Representative and the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union in 1999. While initially several Member States thought that a low-profile figure would be suitable for the position, the European Council chose instead Solana, a high-profile political figure (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 51). Solana served as the HR until 2009 when Catherine Ashton assumed the mantle of the then-reformed High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Despite the somewhat limited role originally delegated to the HR in the Amsterdam Treaty, Solana managed to use his experience, contacts, and strong personal position to carve a much more important role for himself than just assisting the rotating Presidency (Cameron 2007, 15; Duke 2011, 25–26). As Fraser Cameron (2007, 48) notes, the Amsterdam Treaty had been deliberately vague on the

responsibilities of the High Representative, inevitably leading to a situation where much of the Representative's authority depended on the personality of the officeholder. Solana proved to be able to make himself a key player, for example, when representing the EU in the Quartet of the Middle East Peace Process or playing important mediation roles in the Balkans and elsewhere (Cameron 2007, 48). This personal touch had a lasting effect on the role of the High Representative, encouraging its utilisation as the much-needed chief coordinator of the Union's foreign policies in institutional reforms culminating in the Lisbon Treaty.

The Lisbon Treaty changed the role of the High Representative considerably, placing it "at the heart of EU external action" (Helwig 2013, 236), entrusting the post with "extensive agenda-setting, decision-shaping and implementing powers" (Thym 2011, 456) and making the High Representative "the most pivotal player in the implementation and ensuring the unity, consistency and effectiveness of not only [...] common foreign and security policy, but also all other external European policies" (Sultanova 2019, 544). The post was renamed High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and combined with the position of the Vice-Presidency of the European Commission, a reason why the post-Lisbon full title is High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) to emphasise this double-hatted position. Despite having to abandon the title of 'Minister for Foreign Affairs' proposed in the Constitutional Treaty, the planned function of the office was essentially preserved in the Lisbon Treaty. However, it should be noted that unlike a typical nation-state foreign minister, the High Representative still lacks the power to autonomously decide the EU's standpoint and relies on the approval of the Council (Thym 2011, 456).

According to the Lisbon Treaty, it is the HR/VP who "shall conduct the Union's common foreign and security policy" (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 18). The HR/VP contributes to the development of CFSP, carries it out as mandated by the Council, presides over the Foreign Affairs Council, and ensures the consistency of the Union's external action (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 18). The HR/VP also represents the Union in matters relating to the CFSP, conducts political dialogue with third parties on the Union's behalf, and expresses the Union's position in international organisations and at international conferences (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 27). The President of the European Council also represents the Union externally on issues concerning its common foreign and security policy, but "without prejudice to the powers of the High Representative" (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 15). The division of external representation responsibilities suggested in the Treaty was understood to be that the President operates at the level of heads of state and government, while the HR would focus their efforts on the ministerial level

(Duke 2011, 31). Still, the more prominent and visible position meant that the High Representative could, at least potentially, perform considerable leadership tasks (see Aggestam & Hedling 2020).

The key responsibilities of the reformed HR ultimately boil down to coordinating and streamlining the full range of EU external action (Ramopoulos & Odermatt 2013, 23). In this, the HR can significantly influence EU foreign policy, promote the selection of specific policy means and ends, and foster the effectiveness of the Union's foreign policy's (Amadio Viceré 2020, 339). Chairing the Foreign Affairs Council, having the ability to contribute to the development of the policies by giving input to the European Council, as well as being able to propose and implement CFSP, the HR can take a considerable leadership role in the CFSP matters of the Union (Duke 2011, 31; Helwig 2013, 238). Even though in practice this leadership is exerted as a co-leadership with the Commission and the European Council (see Helwig 2013; Amadio Viceré 2020). The HR also organises the coordination of the actions of the Member States in international organisations and conferences (Duke 2011, 34).

Especially after the introduction of the HR as the permanent chair of the Foreign Affairs Council formation of the Council of the EU, the Lisbon Treaty sought to provide coherence through continuity of the planning of foreign policy. For example, regarding Kosovo-Serbia policy in the Foreign Affairs Council, Ashton "successfully acted as a *consensus*-seeker and as an agenda-setter by means of her authority as chair" (Viceré 2018, 150). The twin role of the HR as the Vice-President of the Commission, responsible for all of the Commission's activities in the external relations field either directly or in a coordinating role where other commissioners have the lead (for example in the fields of enlargement and development), has further enhanced this. The High Representative can use their different roles to promote coordination and coherence both among Member States when making decisions in the European Council and the Foreign Affairs Council as well as between the intergovernmental and supranational foreign policy regimes of the EU (see Amadio Viceré 2020, 341). While still limited by the Member State's rights to pursue their own national foreign policies, the new post of the HR/VP was understood to hold significant potential in terms of vertical coherence and the ability of the EU to speak with one voice (Gebhard 2017, 135–36).

Catherine Ashton was appointed as the first reformed HR/VP in 2009. Prior to her appointment, Ashton had served for a year as the European Commissioner for Trade, a position where she was "widely recognized as having performed competently" (Barber 2010, 56). However, unlike Solana, she was not seen as a high-profile candidate. She was not considered a foreign policy specialist and appeared significantly less well-qualified for the position than her predecessor (Barber 2010, 56). The choice of Ashton was a disappointment for those who had hoped for the

new High Representative that would provide leadership for the European Union's foreign policy as she was regarded as "markedly lacking in any experience of international leadership and indeed in political stature" (Howorth 2014, 5). Her appointment "was seen by some commentators as the deliberate selection of a low-profile candidate that would not contest Member State leaders on the world stage" (Helwig 2013, 241). Indeed, many analysts have regarded her choice as a result of the Member States' intention to weaken the ambitious role planned for the High Representative in the Lisbon Treaty (Calcara 2020, 380–81).

Regardless of her assumed lack of abilities to excel in the role, Ashton's term as the High Representative would have been challenging in any case. The five years of Ashton's term in office inevitably had to serve as a gestation period for the new institutional and operational framework of the post-Lisbon EU (M. H. Smith 2015, 24; see also Helwig & R uger 2014). The establishment of the new diplomatic service, the EEAS, demanded a considerable share of Ashton's focus during her first year in office in 2010 (Calcara 2020, 381; Howorth 2014, 8). The debt crisis in the Eurozone also marked the beginning of her term, limiting the will of the Member States, as well as the actual possibility, to pursue ambitious foreign policy objectives.

Unfortunately, the evaluation of the later years of Ashton's term have not been exactly flattering, either. Both her involvement in the Middle East Peace Process and her role during the Arab Spring made little, if any, difference (Howorth 2014, 14–15). Her performance during the Libyan crisis was chiefly described as ineffective, she only played a limited role in shaping the EU's initiatives towards Libya and demonstrated an inability to mediate among different Member State preferences (Calcara 2020, 381). However, she *has* received praise from analysts for her diplomatic actions in Balkans (Amadio Vicer  2020; Howorth 2014; Helwig & R uger 2014; Ribeiro & Kostas 2021; Norrevik 2022) as well as for her role in non-proliferation negotiations with Iran (Howorth 2014, 15–18; Bassiri Tabrizi & Kienzle 2020; Helwig & R uger 2014). Despite facing harsh criticism initially, her quiet diplomacy became more appreciated over time (see e.g., Helwig & R uger 2014), and her good work during the challenging first post-Lisbon years is now perhaps more recognised than during her term in office.

Federica Mogherini succeeded Ashton as the High Representative in 2014. At her nomination, Mogherini was in general considered a stronger and more high-profile candidate compared to how Ashton had been seen. Mogherini was "familiar with foreign policy circles" and had "far-reaching personal connections across the EU and NATO 'epistemic communities'" (Koops & Tercovich 2020, 291). Nevertheless, she too was also initially criticised for being too young, inexperienced, and little-known outside her native Italy (Bassiri Tabrizi & Kienzle 2020, 329). Unlike Ashton, Mogherini had served as Minister of Foreign Affairs in her home country but only for a couple of months and was portrayed as inexperienced at the

beginning of her term (Bremberg 2020, 367). Nonetheless, the initial general reactions towards her appointment were considerably less hostile than in the case of Ashton (Koops & Tercovich 2020, 284).

Mogherini began her term in office in November 2014, during a period of turmoil in Europe with Russia having annexed Crimea just half a year earlier. Besides the illegal annexation, the EU was facing several other foreign policy crises in its immediate vicinity, including state collapse in Libya and civil war in Syria as well as the ‘migration crisis’ that erupted in the summer of 2015 (Bremberg 2020, 367). Later, in 2016, the ‘Brexit’ referendum leading to the UK’s withdrawal from the EU and the election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States, both presented major challenges for the Union’s foreign policy. With the challenges in the trans-Atlantic relationship as well as the worsening relations with Russia in the east, the term of Mogherini as the HR was perhaps even more problematic than that of Ashton. Mogherini was generally seen as successful both as a diplomat and in bringing onboard the different perspectives of the Member States; however, her position towards Russia, for example, was at times seen as too lenient, which raised strong criticism especially from Baltic and Central European Member States (Helwig 2024, 83 – 112; see also Youngs 2017, 66, 72).

Mogherini’s term was marked by two important projects: the launch of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) on deepening EU cooperation in the field of defence, and the creation of the EU Global Strategy (EUGS) (Bremberg 2020, 368). The latter initiative in particular can be seen to raise more strategic, long-term foreign policy planning as one of the key themes of Mogherini’s term in office. While not perceived as a priority by Ashton (Helwig & Ruger 2014, 13), Mogherini clearly set the implementation of a more strategic EU foreign policy as a goal for her term in office. Arguably, she also had a better institutional position from which to prioritise the development of global strategy and foreign policy representation, while a large part of Ashton’s tenure was occupied by establishing the EEAS (Koops & Tercovich 2020, 283). Nevertheless, Mogherini’s term was marked by the building of a strategic approach for the Union’s foreign policy, culminating in the publication of the EUGS. We will return to the importance of the EUGS for the Union’s strategic culture in the next part of this chapter.

The High Representatives perform, through their leadership role, an important function in the institutionalisation of the beliefs framing EU foreign policy, especially after their public leadership role was strengthened in the Lisbon Treaty (see Aggestam & Hedling 2020).⁵⁶ While the Member States have always been reluctant to hand over formal competencies to the High Representative, they were

⁵⁶ About High Representatives’ leadership role, see also (Sus 2021; Tocci 2017; Thym 2011; Bassiri Tabrizi & Kienzle 2020)

willing to increase the symbolic power of the High Representative in order to increase the EU's global profile with the Lisbon Treaty (Aggestam & Hedling 2020, 308). It can also be argued that Solana managed to wield a substantial symbolic power even before this, through his personal abilities. Together with the powers and responsibilities to manage the coherence of the EU foreign policy, this symbolic power position makes the High Representative a key actor in the construction, institutionalisation, and communication of the common belief system for the European Union foreign policy. While the role of the High Representative as a policy-maker might be limited, their role as coordinator and interpreter of the Union's common foreign policy outlines is increasingly significant. This makes the analysis of their discourse important for gaining a perspective on the Union's foreign policy.

4.2 Institutionalising Beliefs to EU Foreign Policy

4.2.1 The EU's international identity and Union as an actor

The discussion about the actorness of the European Union⁵⁷ in global politics is almost as old as the history of European integration and has been the subject of a broad and branching academic discussion.⁵⁸ While during the earlier phase of the discussion, the entire idea of the EU as an international actor was frequently called into question (see e.g., Bull 1982), the institutional development and expansion of the Union's integration have been accompanied by the academic acceptance of the Union's international actorness. Indeed, after the Lisbon Treaty, the question has shifted into the question whether the EU is becoming, or has it already become, a *global power*, an actor capable of operating in various areas, including the political, military, economic, and social; to attract, transform, and deter other international actors (Özoğuz-Bolgi 2013, 3). More importantly, the discussion of the Union's actorness has increasingly focused on *what kind* of an actor the Union is and on the possible unique features that distinguish the EU from other world powers. Here, the identity of the EU as a distinct wielder of power is often in the focus of analysis.

Different, unique identities and types of actorness have been fitted on the EU in scholarly literature. These categorisations and theories regarding the identity of the EU have provided valuable tools for analysing the Union's foreign policies (see Manners & Whitman 1998). However, as foreign policy is, itself, also a performative construction of identity (D. Campbell 1998), these identities and actorness have also

⁵⁷ Or its predecessors.

⁵⁸ See Drieskens (2022) and Özoğuz-Bolgi (2013, 5–8) for literature review.

shaped the foreign policy discourse of the Union. For example, the conceptualisations of the EU as a civilian or normative power have become part of the official discourses, presenting the EU as a positive force in the world (see Diez 2005; Larsen 2002). Identities, like civilian or normative power, offer certain roles, models, and approaches that belong to an actor with this kind of identity, while defining what kind of position should be adopted regarding the various others in international politics. In this way, these kinds of identities both affect and are affected by the Union's foreign policy beliefs, including those beliefs we consider as causal beliefs. Identity as an institutionalised understanding of the nature of the Union can serve as more permanent social constructs that store the beliefs that are also relevant for the shaping of foreign policy. Indeed, the collective identity of the EU has been seen to exert a systematic yet contingent influence on its foreign policy (Hebel & Lenz 2016).

One of the first academic conceptualisations of a common European international identity was François Duchêne's (1972; 1973) concept of *civilian power Europe*. This concept dominated the debate on Europe's role in the world for several decades from the 1970s onwards and has experienced a renaissance since the turn of the millennium (Orbie 2006). Duchêne emphasised economic power in the increasingly interdependent world, describing the European Communities as a "civilian group of countries long on economic power and relatively short on armed force" (Duchêne 1973, 19). The economic power dimension was thus seen as an alternative to a military power-base, coupled with a normative aspect of promoting civilian and democratic values as European foreign policy identity (Orbie 2006, 124–25). Thereby, civilian power identity was also defined by the pursuit of *milieu goals* of improving the international context through universal benefits, instead of *possession goals* – typical for national states – consisting of national interests involving for example national territory and economic assets (Wolfers 1962).

Even though it received its fair share of criticism (see e. g., Bull 1982), the civilian power concept has both endured and substantially influenced later discussions and conceptualisations. One of these later conceptualisations was Ian Manners' (2002; 2006) *normative power Europe*. Participating in the discussion surrounding the dichotomy of civilian and military power, Manners suggested that the international role of the EU was primarily defined by the use of normative power. Whereas civilian power was based on the use of economic resources and military power on the use of force, Manners connected normative power to Galtung's ideological power, the power over ideas (Manners 2002, 239). The conceptualisation of the EU as a normative actor turned the analysis from the Union's civilian power, or fledgling military power, to its ability to shape the conceptions of 'normal' in international relations. According to Manners, because of its particular historical evolution, its hybrid polity, and its constitutional configuration, the EU had a

normatively different basis for its relations with the world, and not only was the EU constructed on a normative basis; it was also predisposed to act in a normative way in world politics (Manners 2002). In this way, the conceptualisation of the EU as a normative power was also strongly linked to the Union having an identity where certain values play a major part.

The conceptualisation of the EU as a normative power gained significant support in academic and public discussion, which also led to various derivative concepts, sharing similar emphasis of a normative basis. The EU has been viewed as a *liberal power* (Wagner 2017) with specifically liberal values serving as its normative basis, or as a *trade power* (Meunier & Nicolaidis 2005) that uses trade as the backbone of its normative power. Combining elements of normative power and the EU's structural foreign policy⁵⁹, Mark Leonard has characterised the EU as a *transformative power* (Leonard 2005). The EU's adopted role as the 'force of good' in global politics has also been critically examined using the concept of *ethical power Europe* (Aggestam 2008) testing how ethical the EU as an actor actually is. In addition to these derivations, the notion of normative power Europe alone has become at least as popular as the civilian power conceptualisation of the Union. However, the conceptualisation has also raised some relevant criticism. Critics have pointed out that, from an alternative point of view, the 'normative power' of the EU resembles a hegemonic power imposing its norms on other countries (Bicchi 2006; Hyde-Price 2006), or like a typical empire that engages in 'normative' policies primarily to pursue its security and economic interests in its vicinity (del Sarto 2015; Zielonka 2006; 2008).

Tuomas Forsberg (2011) has criticised the normative power Europe literature of conceptual ambiguity and imprecision, calling attention to the multiple meanings for the key concepts of 'normative' and 'power'. He calls for a clearer distinction between 'normative identity', 'normative interests', 'normative behaviour', 'normative means of power', and 'normative outcomes' as separate features of a normative power (Forsberg 2011, 1191–95). Helene Sjursen (2006b, 96–97) has highlighted similar conceptual ambiguity concerning differentiation between the EU's promotion of norms particular to itself and universally accepted norms. Forsberg also notes that normative power is exercised through four different mechanisms: by persuasion, by invoking norms, by shaping the discourse, and by leading through example (Forsberg 2011, 1196–98), which should all be distinguished from each other. He further argues that the concept of normative power would serve better as an ideal type, which the EU only approximates more closely than other great powers. Both the conceptual clarification and understanding of the

⁵⁹ See below.

normative power role as an ideal type are highly relevant for examination the Union's foreign policy discourses.

The whole notion of having a specific identity, especially the *sui generis* nature of the Union, has also been called into question. In this vein, for example, Ramon Pardo has argued that the EU is just a *normal power*, a self-interested security maximiser that mixes the use of military and non-military means when necessary (Pardo 2012). In a slightly more subdued way, different theories of identity have been seen as describing the Union's emphasis and approaches in foreign policy rather than defining it as a unique actor. Many researchers have, as the aforementioned Forsberg (2011), reached a conclusion that concepts like normative power better serve as ideal types, and focused more on examining to what extent the Union shares different characteristics of these ideal types. These kinds of ideal types can of course still have a relevant effect on the construction of the Union's identity.

While the conceptualisations discussed above have linked the identity of the EU to the values it represents, they too have argued that the specific means of power through which the Union seeks to promote these values define the specific actorness of the Union. With civilian power Europe, it is the lack of 'hard power' means, while with normative power Europe, it is the combination of the normative means of power and the tendency towards cooperative means of power. The descriptions of EU power as ethical, liberal, normative, and post-modern attest to the EU's widely supposed aversion to standard geopolitics (Youngs 2017, 16). According to Richard Youngs, most theorists have come to believe that the EU has developed a distinctive foreign policy identity and conceptualise the Union as an actor wedded to cooperative rather than adversarial approaches to security, intrinsically drawn to positive-sum and holistic security policies (Youngs 2017, 16). The EU espouses a strategic philosophy based on the principle of cooperative inclusion, and its policy documents and statements insist that European interests are served not by preventing other states from advancing their interests but by working with them to attain mutually beneficial advances in political and economic interests (Youngs 2017, 17).

Recent research has paid increasing attention to the particularities of the use of power in the EU's foreign policy and thus to what we have defined as causal beliefs as key aspects of the Union's identity and actorness. Perhaps most notable in this respect is Stephan Keukeleire with his concept of 'structural foreign policy' (Keukeleire 2003), a dimension of foreign policy that plays a significant role in how the EU's foreign policy is designed and operates (see Keukeleire & Delreux 2014). The structural foreign policy, conducted over the long-term, aims at sustainably influencing or shaping the political, legal, economic, social, security, or other structures, situated on various interrelated levels including state, interstate, international, and global (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 27–30). If structural foreign policy is seen as a defining characteristic of the EU's foreign policy, the identity of

the Union becomes a combination of structural foreign policy means and a role of shaper of the development of other actors. From this perspective, the distinctive characteristic, even the *sui generis* nature of the EU, is more apparent in the distinctive means that the Union uses to pursue its goals than in its normative character.

Other researchers have also begun to pay more attention to the particularities of the Union's approach to means of power in their analysis of EU foreign policy. Karen Smith, for her part, has argued that the Union as an actor is characterised not by its choice of foreign policy objectives but by distinctive policy instruments and relying on persuasion and positive incentives⁶⁰ (see K. E. Smith 2014, 202–6). Similar points are raised by Damro (2012), for example, who has portrayed the EU as a *market power*, exercising power through externalisation of economic and social market-related policies and regulatory measures. This use of regulatory power as a distinctive characteristic, as well as a venue through which the Union wields remarkable power in the global system, is also noted by Anu Bradford (2020), who coined the term 'Brussels Effect' to describe the Union's pervasive influence through regulatory power in the global marketplace. Irina Busygina has analysed Russia – EU relations, paying particular attention to how the use of authority instruments affects the building of the Union's relations (Busygina 2018), Tom Sauer has analysed the Union's use of coercive diplomacy in its negotiations with Iran (Sauer 2007; 2015), and Tyyne Karjalainen has examined how coercion features in the EU norm promotion as part of its connectivity policies (Karjalainen 2023), just to mention some examples from recent research. However, there still seems to be room for an inspection of how the use of power is constructed in the EU's foreign policy discourses. Instead of delving into a particular case study, this study hopefully offers some additional value to this growing literature by examining, on a wider scale, how causal beliefs about the use of power are institutionalised into a strategic culture of the Union.

4.2.2 Institutionalised beliefs in the treaties of the Union

The principles of the Union's foreign policy are laid down in the constitutive treaties of the Union. These official codifications can be seen as foundations for the construction of a certain identity and role for the EU as an international actor (see Tiilikainen 2011, 189), and as institutionalised beliefs in the form of guidelines to its foreign policy action. Accordingly, Daniel Fiott and Luis Simón, for example, suggest that the constitutive treaties are the place one should first turn to when trying

⁶⁰ Rather than coercion, although the EU still applies conditionality in accordance with legal rules (K. E. Smith 2014, 205).

to understand the overarching logic of the EU's grand strategy (Fiott & Simón 2019, 269). To contextualise our own analysis of the causal beliefs as they are reproduced in the discourses of the High Representatives, we will briefly examine how the foreign policy approach of the Union is constructed in the most relevant treaties and then briefly examine how this approach has been applied into the key strategy documents of the Union's foreign policy.

The Common Provisions of the Treaty on European Union very clearly defined the values and principles to which the EU and its Member States claim to be committed. In the post-Amsterdam consolidated version of the Treaty, the Common Provisions define these principles that the Union is founded on as liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union 1997*, Article 6). The objectives of the Union's common foreign and security policy, covering all areas of foreign and security policy, are later in the text defined as:

- to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- to strengthen the security of the Union in all ways;
- to preserve peace and strengthen international security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the objectives of the Paris Charter, including those of external borders;
- to promote international cooperation;
- to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

(*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union 1997*, Article 11)

Besides national interests and security – the traditional goals of the nation-states – also values feature prominently in this definition. Democracy, the rule of law, and human rights are, in the text, raised both as foundational common values of the Union, safeguarded alongside the Union's interests and independence and as goals of foreign policy. Another particular characteristic of this construction is the prominent status that the United Nations enjoys in the context of the Union's foreign policy. Relevant to the specific identity of the Union is how the promotion of

international cooperation is also raised as a main goal of the Union's foreign policy. With this, the Union is constructed as an actor particularly inclined to a cooperative approach in its relations as well as seeking to promote cooperation between other actors.

The Lisbon Treaty essentially maintains the same foundational principles, although clarifying them to some extent. According to the consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union after the Treaty of Lisbon, the Union is "founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities" (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 2). In addition, pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men are meant to prevail in the society of the Member States (*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 2).

The Union's approach to international politics is further defined in the Common Provisions:

"In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter."

(*Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union* 2008, Article 3)

Besides placing the promotion of values alongside interests and security as primary goals of the Union's foreign policy, this also elevates a number of more specific aims such as peace, sustainable development, free trade, eradication of poverty and human rights to a central position in foreign policy. International law and the United Nations maintain their central role.

Article 21 further lists the specific goals of the Union's external action:

- a) safeguard its values, fundamental interests, security, independence, and integrity;
- b) consolidate and support democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law;

- c) preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, with the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and with the aims of the Charter of Paris, including those relating to external borders;
- d) foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty;
- e) encourage the integration of all countries into the world economy, including through the progressive abolition of restrictions on international trade;
- f) help develop international measures to preserve and improve the quality of the environment and the sustainable management of global natural resources, in order to ensure sustainable development;
- g) assist populations, countries and regions confronting natural or man-made disasters; and
- h) promote an international system based on stronger multilateral cooperation and good global governance.

(Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union 2008, Article 21)

While giving more detailed guidelines for the Union's foreign policy approach, the Lisbon Treaty thus maintains the elements already present in the previous formulation. Based on the post-Lisbon text of the Treaty on European Union, Fiott and Simón sum up the principles of the Union as a liberal constitutive basis, consisting of the overarching strategic objectives of: supporting the principles of liberty and democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law; avoiding any future war or conflict on the European continent by creating a firm basis for European prosperity and security; and in international relations to seek to strictly observe and develop international law and multilateral institutions such as the UN (Fiott & Simón 2019, 269). These principles – the rules-based international order, a cooperative approach, and the importance of liberal values – form the core of the Union's shared foreign policy belief system.

4.2.3 Institutionalised beliefs in the strategies of the Union

The Union has purposefully sought to develop a more specific strategic culture to better guide its foreign policy. While the major strategic objectives outlined in the constitutive treaties can be seen to form the basis for the Union's approach to international relations, a grand strategy or strategic culture would also demand more specific objectives vis-à-vis regional and global challenges. The main foreign policy strategies appear as answers to this challenge. The most wide-ranging of these strategies, the European Security Strategy (ESS), adopted in 2003 and supplemented with an implementation report in 2008, and the Global Strategy (EUGS) of 2016, have been "something approaching a doctrine" (Peterson & Helwig 2017, 310) for the EU's foreign policy. They have displayed a significant movement towards a common ideational framework for foreign policy. European Security Strategy "marked a major step forward for the EU in agreeing for the first time a strategic concept" (Cameron 2007, 7) and has been seen potentially as an "important first step along the road to an EU strategic culture" (Quille 2004, 430). The Global Strategy continued this development, at the same time further broadening the scope of foreign policy. These strategies can also be seen as the EU narrating its conception of self-identity (Mälksoo 2016) and, in this regard, as an important medium for the institutionalisation of the Union's key foreign policy beliefs as well.

The ESS defines three strategic objectives for the EU: Addressing the threats (key threats being terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure, and organised crime), building security in the neighbourhood, and an international order based on effective multilateralism (European Union 2003). Hereby, a cooperative approach to international relations favouring the rules-based institutional structures continues as a key characteristic of the Union's foreign policy thinking, accompanying traditional security concerns. Besides the security of the Member States, *milieu goals*⁶¹ such as the promotion of peace, democracy, and prosperity are also raised here. The Union is not solely concerned about its own immediate security but also about instability, both regionally and globally. The ESS enshrined the notion that the security of the EU is best pursued by assisting other states to become stronger, more prosperous, and more effectively governed (Youngs 2017, 16–17). Structural foreign policy thinking is also strongly present, most prominently concerning the Union's neighbourhood where the task of promoting "a ring of well governed countries" is taken by the Union (European Union 2003, 8).

In the ESS, the new threats emerging are seen not purely militarily, and thus cannot be tackled solely by military means (European Union 2003, 7). Instead, a mixture of instruments, including political, diplomatic, economic, *and* military

⁶¹ See above description of Civilian Power Europe concept.

assets, are needed. Cooperation with others plays an important role as the strategy acknowledges that there are few if any problems that the Union can deal with on its own (European Union 2003, 13). Strengthening international institutions and international law and, for example, the achievement of universal adherence to multilateral treaty regimes, are also central for pursuing the Union's goals effectively. Indeed, an international order based on effective multilateralism is raised as a strategic objective by itself. The security and prosperity of the Union is seen as increasingly dependent on an effective multilateral system (European Union 2003, 9). Overall, the ESS is based on a comprehensive approach to security where security priorities are tackled within a framework that emphasises both multilateral institutions and the rule of law (Quille 2004, 422).

The ESS was created at a time when both the circulation of the euro as well as the progressing eastern enlargement demonstrated the success story of European prosperity through integration (Tocci 2017, 8). The opening words of the Strategy, declaring that "Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free" (European Union 2003, 1) echoed this sentiment. But a central political rationale for the ESS was also to rebuild the intra-European consensus that had been broken by the split within the Union over the attack on Iraq by the US-led coalition (Tocci 2017, 8–11). The Strategy sought to bridge the difference both among the Europeans and across the Atlantic on how to react to new security threats while maintaining the European approach to multilateralism and the other ideational building blocks of the Union with 'effective multilateralism'. It was a compromise between the European ideal of multilateralism and the more realist point of view of the US and its like-minded European allies.

On the one hand, Javier Solana acting as the High Representative played an essential role in the process that enabled the Union to produce a foreign policy strategy in the form of the ESS in 2003 (see Morillas 2019, 109–32; Tocci 2017, 8–11, 29–33). On the other hand, his successor Catherine Ashton has been specifically criticised for not providing leadership and strategic orientation to EU external action (Ramopoulos & Odermatt 2013, 29). During her term in office, EU foreign policy was also criticised for not being guided by a comprehensive strategy (see e.g., Bendiek & Kramer 2010). On 8 December 2011, 12 EU Member State's Foreign Ministers even presented the critique that the HR had not made use of all the tools at her disposal. They asked the HR to identify political priorities for the Foreign Affairs Council, to prepare a yearly agenda, and to task the EEAS with more regular preparatory policy and decision-making papers. (Ramopoulos & Odermatt 2013, 30) While Ashton's decision to focus on foreign policy aspects other than strategic orientation was related to the institutional turf wars engendered by the creation of the EEAS, as well as other challenges she was facing (see Tocci 2017, 24–25), the fact remains that strategic reflections on a larger scale returned to the Union's foreign

policy only after the 2014 European Parliament elections and the nomination of the new Commission and the new High Representative, Federica Mogherini.

The background context, which by late 2014 had created the political need for a new strategy, as well as the needed consensus among the Member States of the Union, was the dramatically worsening geostrategic environment (Tocci 2017, 11). The deteriorating relations with Russia in the neighbourhood of the Union, culminating in the Russian annexation of Crimea and intervention in eastern Ukraine, the worsening instability in the southern neighbourhood that included the flaring up of a number of conflicts in the Middle East, combined with the general escalation of security tensions and global challenges, demanded both unity and a more strategic approach to dealing with crises from the European states. The EUGS was drafted largely as a response to these developments. Similarly to the ESS, the EUGS sought to re-instil political unity among Europeans, who this time were divided over multiple cleavages (Tocci 2017, 17). The situational outlook was much bleaker than with the ESS. Instead of a description of a prosperous Europe, the EUGS begins with the statement that “[w]e need a stronger Europe” (European Union 2016, 13).

Recognising the Union’s global situation, the EUGS can be seen as presenting an active vision for the Union’s role in global politics. The Strategy “sought to make sense of and lay down strategic objectives for a more fragile geopolitical landscape in and around Europe” (Fiott & Simón 2019, 271). It was built around a narrative of the Union’s need for more active foreign policy, in contrast to the previous framing where foreign policy had often been presented as an outgrowth of the success of integration (Youngs 2021, 14). High Representative Mogherini had a key role in the drafting and implementation of the EUGS (see Tocci 2017; Sus 2021) and, according to Monika Sus, was able, during the drafting process, to successfully act as a policy entrepreneur and push for greater policy change for the Union (Sus 2021).

The Global Strategy establishes the EU’s core interests as promoting peace, guaranteeing the security of the Union’s citizens and territory, advancing the prosperity of its people, and promoting rules-based global order with multilateralism as its key principle with the United Nations at its core (European Union 2016, 7–8). According to the Strategy, the Union is guided by clear principles but in a form of principled pragmatism where these principles “stem as much from a realistic assessment of the current strategic environment as from an idealistic aspiration to advance a better world” (European Union 2016, 8). The principled pragmatism approach raised the Union’s interests to a more prominent position in the Union’s foreign policy, along with the values of the Union. With principled pragmatism, the EUGS sought to find a balance between interests and values by combining them. According to Tocci, here the strategy sought to escape the traditional values-interests dichotomy, that would otherwise in the environment of mounting security threats

have led to favouring of interests at the expense of values (Tocci 2017, 59). While the interests, including traditional security interests, were given a more prominent role in directing the Union's foreign policy, these interests were still embedded in the Union's core values.

The Global Strategy defines the priorities of the Union's external action as protecting the security of the Union, supporting the state and societal resilience in its neighbourhood, implementing an integrated approach to conflicts in its policies, and promoting cooperative regional order as well as global governance based on international law (European Union 2016, 18–43). Many of the key elements of these priorities remain essentially the same as the key elements of the ESS. Seeking to build stability in its neighbourhood through structural foreign policy, the promotion of rules-based multilateral institutions, as well as a multi-dimension approach (European Union 2016, 28) that uses multiple policies and instruments to answer crises, were all already present in the strategic thinking of the ESS but are further developed in the EUGS.

Another important theme in the Global Strategy is the ambition of strategic autonomy for the European Union. Strategic autonomy is seen as necessary to promote the interests, principles, and values of the Union (European Union 2016, 4). However, as Mogherini notes in her foreword to the Strategy, these priorities of the Union are best served in an international system based on rules and multilateralism (European Union 2016, 4). Despite the emphasis on strategic autonomy, the Union's foreign policy approach can nonetheless be seen as strongly founded on cooperation and international institutions.

Both the ESS and the EUGS define some key strategic principles, approaches, and priorities for the Union's foreign policy. They seek to build a distinctive strategic culture, as well as foreign policy identity for the Union, establishing some key guidelines for the Union's approach to influence global politics and practice foreign policy. I have elsewhere (Rantanen 2022) argued that analysis of the Union's security and foreign policy strategies from 2003 to 2022 suggests a development towards a strategic culture approaching a traditional 'normal' power identity. Caterina Carta makes a similar observation in her comparison of the discourses of the 2003 European Security Strategy and the 2016 Global Strategy, noting how "GS suggests a reappraisal of the rhetoric of 'normative power Europe'" (Carta 2021, 222) to cope with the changing international context (see Carta 2021). Whether this development also informs the discourses of the High Representatives is an important question that we will look at in our analysis. However, both the theories of the different identities of the EU as an international actor, and the identities and normative guidelines constructed in the treaties, offer an important point of comparison to the discursive construction of the causal beliefs in the discourses of the High Representatives.

5 Methodology and Material

5.1 Operational Code Analysis in this Study

5.1.1 Operational code framework

This work contributes to operational code research by examining how quantitative and qualitative approaches to operational code analysis work, identifying their main differences, and presenting one way in which these methods and their different perspectives can be combined to produce a comprehensive overview of a subject's operational code. It especially highlights the methods' differences in their conceptualisation of power and how this understanding can affect the analysis.

As previously mentioned, this study approaches the belief system guiding the EU as an international actor as a *collective* operational code, not as a *cognitive* operational code of any individual human. In other words, the operational code signifiers deduced from the speeches of the three High Representatives are considered to manifest the collective operational code of EU foreign policy – the shared beliefs that form the framework of the Union's foreign policy guidelines. After all, unlike the leaders typically analysed in operational code studies, the High Representatives are not executive decision-makers of foreign policy but rather representatives of collectively designated policies. Official documents, such as common strategies, could appear to offer more natural material for studying collective operational code than their speeches. However, according to the discursive understanding of shared beliefs adopted in this study, the speeches of the High Representatives offer evidentiary material for constructing and reproducing collective operational code. Furthermore, the VICS analysis is arguably more suitable for analysing speech material than official documents.

While the majority of contemporary operational code research has focused on the psychological operational codes of individual leaders, the study of collective operational code is not unheard of in the existing research on operational codes (see Bakker & van Willigen 2021; Walker & Schafer 2000; Robison 2006; Yang, Keller, & Molnar 2018; Serri 2021; Walker & Malici 2021). Somewhat related, Walker and Schafer (2007) have also examined the connection of strategic cultures (see J. L. Snyder 1977; Johnston 1995b) to operational codes of individual leaders, while Serri

(2021) has argued that operational code analysis can be used for extracting paradigms in strategic culture. Furthermore, the focus on collective operational code can be seen as a return to the roots of operational code theory: the original studies of Leites (1953; 1951) focused specifically on the operational code of the Soviet Politburo, strongly affected by ideology as well as shared political and cultural beliefs.

The approach taken in this study uses OCA as a way of uncovering specific aspects of a foreign policy discourse, rather than as a method for seeking to prove how decision-makers think. The focus here is on how the Union as a distinctive actor, and the political universe it operates within, are constructed through the discourses. This study combines the qualitative and quantitative approaches to the OCA, to demonstrate their differences and form a more comprehensive picture of the belief systems than what each approach could provide alone. With the comparison of these two approaches, the study also seeks to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the methods, indicating what kind of research objectives are suitable for each approach.

Regarding the choice between general and targeted operational code, this study leans towards the former (see Schafer, Nurmanova & Walker 2021, 58), treating the operational code as universal. However, especially with the qualitative analysis, some patterns of beliefs regarding individual others and the differences between them are examined, in order to demonstrate how the universal, generalised operational code is constructed from these individual parts and provide some preliminary understanding of the differences between the major targeted operational codes of the Union's foreign policy.

The analysis relies on a constructivist understanding of power. In the quantitative VICS analysis, a causal notion of power is applied, and the focus of the analysis is on the direct exercise of power. However, the means of power are understood to include symbolic, economic, and diplomatic means in addition to military power; material resources can also utilise ideational resources such as norms, ideas, and authority. For example, economic and personal sanctions, when applied as a punishment or a threat, are regarded as forms of causal, coercive power and references to them are coded accordingly, similar to how references to the use of military power are coded. In the qualitative analysis, a wider concept of power is applied, and exercises of power in constitutive and indirect forms (see Barnett and Duvall 2005) are also included in the analysis. Thus, the study seeks to demonstrate the ability of the qualitative operational code analysis to supplement the narrower analysis of power offered by the quantitative VICS method.

5.1.2 Quantitative VICS analysis

For the quantitative OCA, the index scores of the VICS analysis method were formed by hand-coding. The ability to utilise automated content analysis dictionaries and computer programs that can retrieve and code operational code beliefs by parsing texts and identifying matches for the words or phrases from the dictionaries in the texts, has been seen as one of the key advantages of the VICS methodology, therefore this decision to employ hand-coding requires some explanation.

While most of the early works that utilised VICS method were coded by hand, automated solutions for coding have become more and more popular as computer programs for automated text analysis have developed. The key issue with hand-coding is that it is very labour-intensive, time-consuming, and human error can act as a confounding factor in statistical models (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 38). Automated coding is fast and eliminates human errors that may bias the data: human coders may code VICS indices differently because of fatigue, personal political biases, learning effects, and other idiosyncratic stylistic differences (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 38–39). Even the coding of a single coder can vary during longer coding processes, which makes comparative analysis less reliable. The more systematic performance, increased comparability of coding, as well as ability to code large amounts of text in a reasonable time, have all made the automated coding approach increasingly appealing for VICS analysis. Furthermore, the results of automated VICS coding are comparable with studies using the same coding schemes and dictionaries, an advantage that should not be overlooked.

Modern automated content analysis software code material by parsing texts into parts and using dictionaries to identify matches for the words or phrases relevant to the analysis. In the automated VICS analysis, the dictionary and parsing system identify observations in the texts that are the basis for constructing indices of the speaker's operational code beliefs (Walker & Schafer 2018) according to the same rules used in hand-coding. For example, Profiler Plus by Social Science Automation, perhaps the most commonly-used software for automated OCA, searches a sentence for ordered sets of tokens (word and/or punctuation) that have been identified as indicators of a trait and then examines each token in turn and queries a database to determine if the token and its neighbours correspond to a particular pattern (Levine 2008). The key differences to hand-coding are that the software is limited to the dictionary used to identify different verb-based utterances as representing one of the six categories of the exercise of power and that the software understands the utterance structures according to the phrasing rules. These differences also explain why, despite the advantages of automated coding, hand-coding is still used in VICS-based analysis.

One self-evident issue with automated coding schemes is of course the question of language. Besides the fact that coding schemes are only available for a limited

number of languages, there is also a question of comparability between different languages.⁶² It is debatable how comparable the results of different coding schemes for different languages can be. Because of grammatical and linguistic differences, verb-based utterances are constructed very differently in different languages. Arguably, differences between genres and types of material, for example newspaper articles compared to speeches, or official statement documents compared to speeches in political rallies, can also influence the way verb-based utterances are constructed. This results in the loss of one major advantage of automated coding, the comparability of results between different studies.

In reality, all VICS coding requires a considerable amount of interpretation. This is true for automated coding as well, although this is often overlooked. The construction of the lists of verb categories, deciding what verb is seen as a signifier of authority, what demonstrates a cooperative approach, and what signals reward or punishment, is an act of interpretation. But where automatic coding differs from hand-coding is that the interpretation happens when dictionaries and the rules for identifying patterns in the texts are constructed. Once completed, the interpretation of a certain verb remains the same both throughout the coding process and in different research projects using the same coding scheme. This also means that when a computer makes an error in coding, it will make the same error every time across all texts where it encounters the same verbal construction. This can be either a benefit or a hazard, depending on how one approaches the analysis: while it increases the coherence of the interpretation, the fact that the same verb can have dramatically different meanings in different contexts makes the case-by-case interpretation of the verbs useful in some situations. Even the abilities of modern automated text analysis software to recognise patterns in the text, putting verbs into contexts usually based on other words near it, can only compensate for this to a limited extent.

As previously discussed in Chapter 3.2., the coding practices of the VICS analysis have limitations when confronted with the ambiguity of language indicating the use of power as well as the multiple meanings that verbs indicating the use of power can have. With automated coding, these issues are accentuated, while hand-coding offers some flexibility that can better recognise the meaning of the analysed text. Indeed, the choice between automated and hand-coding has been seen as a trade-off between the validity and reliability of coding, with properly executed hand-coding seen as more valid than the computer-based analysis (Özdamar 2017, 174). Besides noting the multiple meanings of verbs, hand-coding also offers other levels of flexibility when identifying indications of the VICS categories representing the exercise of power. For example, whether a sentence ‘we send peace-keeping troops

⁶² About development of non-English automated coding schemes for VICS, see (Brummer et al. 2020).

to country X' signals an act of punishment or cooperation can be highly context-dependent: Are they primarily supporting one party of a conflict, acting against another, or doing something else entirely? Automated coding schemes are significantly limited in making these kinds of interpretations and, as a result, miss much of the context that could be reasonably coded by hand.

VICS reduces data by gathering different expressions under overarching categories of a higher level of abstraction. When hand-coded, the researcher is aware of the reduction of data: both regarding what kinds of different expressions fall under the six general categories of VICS framework as well as what is left out from the analysis altogether. With automated coding, the researcher is unfamiliar with the aspects of data in this way and only sees the end-product of the automated analysis. In a sense, the researcher only interacts with the reduced data. A deeper understanding of the nuances of the operational code beliefs in the material, and why the VICS categories are represented in the material in certain quantities, would require the researcher to explore the material through vigorous qualitative analysis as well as to study, in detail, the individual coding choices of the automated coding system. Using only end-data of automatic coding for analysis without knowledge of the algorithm nor being able to check individual coding is highly questionable for scientific research yet is nonetheless still encountered in some recent operational code studies.

In this study, I have wanted to formulate a more interpretative approach to OCA, paying more attention to the details of the language used and more varied forms that indicate the use of power in the analysed material. I have also prioritised the validity of the coding of forms of power over the reliability of the coding, especially as the examined material differs from the records that has served as the basis of developing the automated coding procedures of VICS, material typically from individual leaders of traditional nation-states like the US Presidents. For these reasons, hand-coding is used as a method of coding the material in quantitative VICS analysis. An additional reason for use of the hand-coding approach in this study is my interest in examining how VICS and traditional qualitative OCA interact and could perhaps support one another. Using automated coding would inevitably focus the inspection on just the results of coding in the form of VICS indices. By using a hand-coding approach, where the reasons for each individual coding decision are known to the coder, the study can pay better attention to how VICS indices are actually formed.

Coding procedure in this study

For VICS analysis, the material was primarily coded following the coding procedures laid out in 'Beliefs and Leadership in World Politics', the modern OCA

textbook edited by Mark Schafer and Stephen G. Walker (Walker & Schafer 2006). This coding was initially started by marking all transitive verbs or verb-based phrases in the material. After this, the marked verb-based utterances were further analysed following the guidelines they set:

“Code the verb

A. Clearly identify the transitive verb or verb-based phrase.

B. Specify the positive or negative valence of the verb: is its direction cooperative (+) or conflictual (-)? If it is neutral, discard the verb and move onto the next one.

C. Specify whether the verb is a word or deed. Deeds are actions that have been done. Words are promises or threats of future action or symbolic declarations of support or opposition. Note that all future-tense constructions should be coded as words. For example, the phrase “we will attack...” is not an actual attack but an indication that an attack will take place in the future; therefore it is not a deed but a threat of future action.

D. Specify the appropriate final coding category for the verb from the six possibilities: Punish (-3), Threaten (-2), Oppose (-1), Support (+1), Promise (+2), and Reward (+3). Note that deeds are always -3 or +3, depending upon direction, and that words always go into the remaining four categories, -2, -1, +1, and +2. A helpful and short-hand way to specify this on a code sheet is by simply using the numeric value for each category. Although you should go through all four of these verb-coding stages and make shorthand notes along the way in the text of the document, the final data line requires only the numeric code for the verb category.”

(Schafer & Walker 2006c, 40)

When coding the utterance, relevant utterances originally in passive voice were reformed into an active voice, i. e. into the format of Subject – Active Voice – Target Object. In addition, verbs linked to other verbs, for example ‘intend’ and ‘to send’ in the sentence “We intend to send troops to the region”, are treated as one verb construct. In this phase, specific attention was given to the forms of power that the utterance is supposed to indicate, and the coding was thus done as much based on the scale of intensity of cooperativeness or conflictuality as the linguistic characteristics of the verb. Hence, for example, an actor meeting another actor could

be interpreted to signal ‘a deed’ of using power as giving reward or only a symbolic declaration of support through the use of authority power, based on the wider context.

In addition to this, in the first phase, utterances that were not based on transitive verbs but clearly communicated one of the six types of the use of power in VICS analysis were also coded, if the meaning of the utterance was reformable into the format Subject – Active Voice – Target Object. An example of this type of utterance would be a statement claiming that actions of state X “are unacceptable”, which is by itself a speech act of condemnation and thus could be reformed into the form of “We condemn the action of X”. This choice arguably moves the analysis towards a more interpretative form than what the more linguistically based VICS analysis does. The approach however captures material that is not registered in traditional VICS coding and such modifications to VICS coding practices are not unheard of in previous research (see e.g. Özdamar 2017). Here, the causal notion of power and the division into the six forms of the use of power (punish, threaten, oppose, support, promise, reward) still serve as the basis of the VICS coding.

At the same time, when coding the verb constructs based on their intensity, utterances are also given a coding value of ‘Self’ if the subject of the verb construct is the speaker or someone with whom the speaker identifies or the entity the speaker represents and ‘Other’ if the subject is someone with whom the speaker does not identify. Here, the target or direct object of the verb construct was also coded for further analytical purposes.

As a concrete example of how the coding procedures work, we can examine one example sentence from Ashton’s speech during the Parliament’s debate on the EU action plan for Afghanistan:

“The Commission is raising its development assistance by a third to 200 million Euros.” (AshtonSpeech091216)

Since it is the Commission, an institution of the EU, that is doing the referred action, the subject of the verb-based utterance is identified as **Self (S)**. The sentence refers to action that will be taken in the future and, as such, the verb is considered to fall into the **word** category. The direction of the verb-based utterance is cooperative (+), because raising the development assistance is clearly a cooperative action. A reference to offering increased assistance in the future is coded as a **promise (+2)** and based on the context of the sentence its target is identified as being Afghanistan. Thus, the coding data line for the sentence is **S (+2) (Afghanistan)**.

In a sentence where the subject is identified as Other (O), the more specific identity of this subject is also coded similarly to how the target of the utterance is coded. In addition, when evaluating the direction of the verb-based utterance, the

chosen point of view is the Union's policies: whether the referred action is considered to be cooperative or conflictual from the EU's perspective.

It is important to note that while the VICS index scores form a quantitative analysis of the operational code represented in the material, the act of coding verb-based utterances into the VICS framework is ultimately interpretative. Instead of trying to lessen this effect with checks of intercoder reliability (see below) or standardised verb lists, I have embraced this interpretativeness and relied on my own understanding of the meaning of the coded material. This means that the quantitative data of VICS index scores in this study serves as a descriptive overall analysis of the interpretations of the studied material and should not be taken as statistical data of comparable indices.

5.1.3 Qualitative analysis

The implementation of the qualitative OCA in this study is considered a form of qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is a relatively loose theoretical framework, where research material is organised into a condensed and lucid form, in an attempt to create a verbal, distinct description of the phenomena researched (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018). My methodological approach to qualitative content analysis is a form that is inspired by Margrit Schreier's (2012; 2014) approach to qualitative content analysis.⁶³

The qualitative analysis in this work adopts the questions of the George construct and seeks answers to them by examining the speech material. The operational code beliefs of the George construct are used as the main, concept-driven categories of the qualitative coding frame, where the parts of the text discussing matters relevant to these questions are marked as such. The different forms the manifestations of these beliefs take in the material were coded into data-driven subcategories of these main categories. The resulting qualitative content analysis code-trees for all ten operational code belief types are presented in Appendix 4.

⁶³ It should be noted that while the qualitative content analysis framework used in this study is built on the basic premises of Schreier's qualitative content analysis model, it does not completely follow all the requirements established in Schreier's framework. Most significantly, the material is coded into subclasses without the material first being segmented into analysis units as Schreier's original framework would require (see Schreier 2012, 126–45). The segmentation has been conducted according to the looser model of theory-based qualitative content analysis (see Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 94–98), as the phenomena fitting into the analytical framework have been picked up systematically from the material. Related to this, the coding framework has also not been tested against the coefficient of agreement as this would require the prior segmentation of the material.

These subcategories were then utilised in presenting the belief type in question, paying attention to the key elements defining the subcategories as well as connections and differences between them. Instead of simply describing the content of each category, the analysis examines how the essence of each belief type is constructed in EU foreign policy discourses. The focus of the analysis is thus on the answers to the George construct questions, and coding the material into subcategories serves as a tool for better condensing the different answers to these questions from the material. However, the subcategories themselves should not be confused with these answers: they merely serve as a means for identifying the defining elements that form the answers to the questions in the George construct.

The George construct categories in this analysis are treated as follows (cf. Chapter 3.4):

The **P-1** category answers the questions *'What is essential nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or of conflict? What is the fundamental character of one's political opponents?'* Here, the qualitative analysis focuses on the portrayal of other actors and how they are constructed as cooperative or conflictual towards the Union and its foreign policy pursuits. While originally the final part of the P-1 questions has been formulated as concerning one's opponents, this is instead broadened to cover the fundamental character of other actors. Because we are analysing the universal operational code, instead of a targeted operational code that would only focus on opponents, analysis of the image of only one's opponents would present an incomplete picture of the political universe. In addition, the perception of the nature of international politics and the operating environment of the Union is further discussed.

The **P-2** category answers the question *'What are the prospects for the eventual realisation of one's fundamental values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other?'* Here, the qualitative analysis examines the portrayal of the environment in which the Union operates, including other actors and how they enable or hinder the Union's prospects. Related to this, the construction of the Union's own capabilities to realise its aspirations in the material is also discussed.

The **P-3** category answers the questions *'Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent?'* The qualitative analysis discusses how predictability is generally viewed in the analysed material in general and how predictable the political environment in which the Union operates is understood. Specific attention is given to the predictability or unpredictability of other actors as well as the meaning given to predictability in the Union's foreign policy discourses.

The **P-4** category answers the questions *'How much control or mastery can one have over historical development? What is one's role in moving and shaping history in the desired direction?'* Here the qualitative analysis focuses on the construction

of the Union's own role in international politics, how much control it is believed to have in the analysed material, and what kind of factors affect this amount of control. Attention is also paid to the Union's power resources in relation to the control wielded by other actors as well as how the Union exercises the control it has.

In the **P-5** category, answering the question '*What is the role of "chance" in human affairs and in historical development?*', the focus is on the ability to forecast the future and predict political outcomes, thus somewhat overlapping with the P-3 category beliefs. More specifically, the main theme here is the role of uncertainty of events, instead of the unpredictable but strategic actions of other actors. Besides the discourses specifically discussing the role of chance and referring to elements of chance in strategic decision-making; here, this study focuses especially on the dichotomy of the actors' ability to control the outcome of situations and the events controlling the development of the political environment.

The original **I-1** category of the George construct answers the question '*What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?*' While keeping this as the premise of the category, the analysis focuses more specifically on the strategic dimension of beliefs about the use of power and the choice of cooperation or conflict as the defining aspect of the selection of objectives for foreign policy. Is cooperation or conflict preferable for international relations, how are cooperative or conflictual approaches towards others constructed in the discourses?

The **I-2** category answers the question '*How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?*' The qualitative analysis follows the original formulation and examines how the effective ways of pursuing the goals of the Union are established in the material.

The **I-3** category answers the question '*How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled, and accepted?*' Our analysis examines how taking risks is constructed in the speeches, how the Union approaches risk acceptance versus risk aversion in its foreign policies, and how the means of controlling the risks are constructed for the Union in the material.

The **I-4** category answers the question '*What is the best timing of action to advance one's interests?*' Here, the analysis focuses on the choice between long-term and short-term action, whether to react quickly and flexibly or commit oneself to a strategic approach, and how these elements are constructed and combined in the Union's foreign policy discourses.

The **I-5** category answers the question '*What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?*' In this study, the qualitative analysis discusses both the six categories of the causal notion of power used for VICS analysis, as well as how the use of power is more generally understood, and how the Union's use of power is constructed in the material. Some means of power appear more as descriptions of the use of power as, for example, rewarding and punishing others.

Other means of power, the use of power based on authority, for instance can also typically appear in speeches as actual actions, where the use of authority happens in the speech in question.

5.1.4 Coding and coding reliability

Both quantitative VICS coding and qualitative coding, as well as related analytical note-making on the material, were conducted in the NVivo program. This allowed for the consistent handling of the data, coding additional metadata like themes of speeches as well as for retrieving more specific data using search commands with different combined parameters in the analysing phase. While the coding work was done manually, this use of a computer program for handling material and coding data allowed for more consistent and deeper analysis than what traditional hand-coding methods would have allowed. The large amount of research material for this study made this consistency especially important.

It should be mentioned that both quantitative and qualitative coding were conducted inside a single NVivo project, allowing the combination of observations in the final analysis phase as well as making searches in the material with combined parameters of VICS and qualitative coding. In addition, coding various meta-data of the material, like thematic coding of regions and the policy-areas in question, was utilised in the analysis phase to garner a better understanding of the material. The practical coding frameworks for both quantitative VICS coding and qualitative coding were developed and refined through several coding runs.

In quantitative content analysis in particular, the inter-coder reliability of coding decisions is often seen as the crucial requirement for proper scientific analysis. However, because of the interpretative nature of the qualitative research, the entire appropriateness of measuring the inter-coder reliability has been called into question in the field (see Morse 1997; Seale 1999, 32–50; Steinke 2004), paying more attention to the reflexivity of the researcher as a means for helping the reader to assess the credibility of the research. Especially from the constructivist point of view, the inter-coder reliability criteria are problematic. They are rooted in a view of a single external reality, knowable through language, and assume that a single valid interpretation is the goal of research, with multiple differing interpretations being viewed as unacceptable (Seale 1999, 41). While useful, for example, in identifying the core themes noted by different researchers from the same material (see Seale 1999, 42), the use of inter-coder reliability tests runs into both epistemological and practical problems as the expectation of complete replication of interpretative coding is an unrealistic demand. Instead of simply documenting the degree of agreement regarding the assignment of coding categories, it is infinitely more useful for qualitative research to utilise team comparisons and discussions to develop more

nanced and useful coding categories (Barbour 2014, 501). Refining the coding framework through multiple coding runs, also applied in this study, can be seen to serve a similar purpose when the assistance of a research team is unavailable.

When the coding process is interpretative, the requirements of intercoder reliability checks can even be detrimental to the analysis. Janice Morse argues that relying on a simplified coding schedule, required for defining categories for an intercoder reliability check, will maintain the coding scheme at a superficial level and simplify the research to a point where the richness attained from the material is lost (Morse 1997, 446). The requirements of intercoder reliability can lead to a coding scheme that orientates the researcher to remove analysed pieces of data from their context. The purpose of my approach to analysing both signals of the use of power of the quantitative VICS construct, as well as of the belief types of the qualitative George construct, is directly oppositional. The coding decisions in both methodological approaches are made by me in the context of the wider discourse, considering the intended meaning of the coded piece as well as all the information gained from the familiarisation with both the research material and the literature of the subject.

This approach has two consequences. First, I cannot claim that my observations about the recurring themes in the qualitative analysis or the directions of the VICS indices are objectively proven or that these results are completely reproducible. According to the criteria for qualitative research (see Steinke 2004, 186–90; see also Schreier 2012, 27), I have sought to conduct my research in a systematic way and have tried to present my procedure and reasoning transparently, making note of negative cases and alternative interpretations. Both the qualitative content analysis framework based on operational code theory and VICS approach are codified procedures that provide at least some level of unification of the methodological process (see Steinke 2004, 188). I have offered a detailed account of all aspects of methods used, in order to make their function as transparent as possible. What my analysis perhaps loses in this on its reliability in the sense as used in quantitative research, it nonetheless gains more quality in the terms in which it is understood in qualitative research.

The second consequence of this approach is that the scores produced by the VICS analysis are not directly comparable to scores of other studies of VICS analysis. This, I argue, is a common feature of all VICS analyses that are hand-coded yet still relevant to note here. While following similar coding rules, the human coders still make individual interpretations that are relevant for VICS coding and their results may differ. However, even the use of computer-based analysis and shared lists of verbs and their categorisations may not produce directly comparable profiles of actors. The style of the texts, as well as the intended audience, also affect choices of wording in speech material and likely affect the use of certain verbs, i. e. their

repetition etc. However, the systematic nature of the VICS coding framework provides at least some level of consistency for the coding procedure so that the scores presented here can provide some sense of the direction of the operational code beliefs comparable to other results, if cautiously assessed.

While I have chosen to approach VICS analysis interpretatively, this does not mean that the combinative analysis approach I present with this study could not be conducted with a more quantitative approach to VICS, paying more attention to intercoder reliability and perhaps even using computer-assisted coding such as Profiler Plus. Indeed, using strictly quantitative VICS analysis, together with interpretative qualitative OCA, could provide similar supplementary advantages that I have sought with my research.

5.2 Material

For this study, a total of 150 speeches delivered by the three High Representatives were analysed. The speeches include 23 by Javier Solana, 70 by Catherine Ashton, and 57 by Federica Mogherini. The speeches were held in the European Parliament during the years 2000 – 2018. The length of the speeches varies from approximately 300 to 5 000 words, with most of the analysed speeches being 1 000 – 2 000 words long.

The speech material was acquired via the European External Action Service's website archives (<http://www.eeas.europa.eu>), except for Javier Solana's speeches that were requested from, and provided by, the Council of the European Union General Secretariat's Records Management and Central Archives Unit. For the selection of material, all speech material published by these High Representatives was examined, and those speeches given during the Parliament's plenary or committee sessions were finally selected for analysis. Furthermore, speeches that did not cover foreign policy issues were discarded. Only speech material in English was analysed. The detailed list of the analysed speeches can be found in Appendix 5.

The speeches held in the European Parliament were chosen so that the audience and the genre of the speeches would be similar enough to allow comparison between the three High Representatives. The High Representatives have been required to report on foreign policy of the Union regularly to the Parliament. The European Parliament can also be considered an important actor: although its power is limited in CFSP matters, it nonetheless commands considerable power regarding the other dimensions of EU external actions as well as budgetary authority. The Parliament forms a significant audience for the Union's foreign policy construction.

As discussed earlier, the High Representative is, despite the limits of their role both pre- and post-Lisbon, a key shaper of the common European foreign policy. But, more importantly, it is the duty of the High Representative to represent the

consensus of the Member States, still the ultimate decision-makers of the Union's foreign policy. In these speeches, the High Representatives present their take on current issues as well as the development of the Union's foreign policy to the Parliament for their evaluation and to keep the Parliament informed of foreign policy developments and the goals and practices typically set by the Council. These speeches thus offer an official representation of the EU's foreign policy, including the shared beliefs underlying it.

In this study, I have calculated VICS indices using two units of analysis: All speeches of a single High Representative as a unit (for Solana, Ashton, and Mogherini) and all speeches of a single year as a unit (for Ashton and Mogherini). There are two reasons for my selection.

First, all the speeches given by a single High Representative is chosen as a unit to avoid giving more weight to verbs in shorter speeches. As the analysed speeches vary in their style from very general speeches covering several areas of the Union's foreign policy to speeches about a specific event, calculating VICS indices for single speeches and then calculating means scores for each High Representative would give individual speeches connected to specific events, possibly anomalous in their nature, considerable weight. Similarly, since there is significant variation between the length of the speeches, calculating VICS indices for single speeches would give more weight to utterances in shorter speeches. Because I have chosen to examine the universal operational code instead of operational code specific to a certain relation or event, I have decided that summing up all the coded verbs for a single High Representative offers the best primary quantitative look at how the six forms of power are generally presented in the speeches.

The second reason is due to the number of coded verbs needed to produce meaningful values on the VICS indices. As previously mentioned, calculating meaningful values on the VICS indices requires a certain number of coded verbs in the unit of analysis. Schafer and Walker recommend 15 to 20 coded verbs as a minimally acceptable cutoff point (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 44) but even this can be rather complicated if the verbs are highly weighted towards either cooperation or conflict, or towards either self or other. As we will see, this is the actual case with the Union's foreign policy discourses. Using a single speech as a unit of analysis would require the omission of shorter speeches, considerably impoverishing the material's ability to display a wide-ranging perspective of the Union's foreign policy. Because of this, I have decided to follow the advice of Schafer and Walker (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 43–44) and aggregate the verbs together to form indices based on several speeches.

Still, I have also hoped to more closely examine the development and variation of the VICS scores. Therefore, the VICS indices are also calculated on a year-to-year basis for Ashton and Mogherini, aggregating the coded verbs of single speeches

similarly to how overall VICS indices have been computed but for every year. However, as the material on Solana's speeches to the Parliament is both briefer and more limited, some of his years in office would not provide enough coded verbs to pass the recommended minimally acceptable cutoff point of 15-20 coded verbs. Because of this, the yearly scores have not been calculated for Solana.

In the yearly examination of Ashton and Mogherini, it should be noted that for both High Representatives the first years analysed (2009 for Ashton and 2015 for Mogherini) produce somewhat anomalous scores in VICS analysis. This is a result of the low number of speeches they held in Parliament during these years, with only three available from Ashton and two from Mogherini. This affects the VICS scores of these years as these speeches focus on fewer issues than the issues covered during years during which more speeches were available. Especially Mogherini's yearly VICS scores for 2015 are problematic because the references to others are predominantly positive due to the issues discussed therein.⁶⁴

* * *

The next section of the study covers the quantitative and the qualitative operational code analysis of the speech material. In it, the ten belief types of the operational code framework are divided into four groups to ease discussing some overlapping themes between them.

With the qualitative analysis, in particular, I seek to offer a more detailed account of the broader picture of the EU foreign policy discourses than has been done in previous studies of the subject. Because of this, the text can become considerably detailed, even bordering on tedious. Therefore, a reader who just seeks to form a general understanding of the results of the analysis is advised to jump directly to the summary subchapters after reading the introductions of each belief groups. All the main findings and arguments are gathered into those summary subchapters, before moving to the Conclusions.

⁶⁴ As the speech material for the final year of Mogherini's term in office, 2019, was not yet available at the time the material was gathered and major elements of coding work were completed, it was left outside the outline of this study.

PART 2: AN OPERATIONAL CODE ANALYSIS OF EU FOREIGN POLICY

6 Utility of Means of Power (I-5)

This section of the analysis examines I-5 beliefs in EU foreign policy. These beliefs more specifically concern the different means of power and their role in the Union's foreign policy. In VICS analysis, I-5 scores are also used to calculate several other indices.⁶⁵ In qualitative analysis, the examination of the utility of specific means of power in the operational code serves somewhat similarly as foundation for the analysis of the more strategic dimensions of the use of power, dimensions that I-1 and I-2 beliefs are especially concerned with. This makes I-5 beliefs a logical, if somewhat unorthodox, starting point for the analysis. Discussing these more specific elements of the operational code first clarifies some key aspects that serve as the building blocks for the later analysis.

6.1 Utility and Role of Different Means

With I-5 beliefs, the focus is on the use of the different means of power as part of the actor's foreign policy, what means of power are seen as suitable for the actor, and how their use is understood. The analysis offers insights into the range of means that the EU uses to pursue its foreign policy goals and the ways in which their utility is constructed in the Union's foreign policy discourses.

Index I-5 in VICS analysis tracks the proportions of each six categories⁶⁶ of the means of causal power. These results show, in percentages, the frequencies of each category in the coded utterances where the subject is Self, meaning the utterances where the speaker is talking about their own use of power. This index thus shows the proportions of the use of these means by the EU in the analysed material.

The qualitative content analysis of the material pinpoints a wide range of themes concerned with the utility of different means of power. These sometime-overlapping codes have been further structured here into the key themes most useful for

⁶⁵ The indices calculated based on I-5 scores are I-1 (strategic approach to political action), I-2 (tactical approach to political action), I-3 (calculation of risks), and I-4 (timing of actions) as well as partially P-4 (control over historical development) and P-5 (role of chance). For formulae of these indices, see Appendix 1.

⁶⁶ Positive and negative authority, promises, rewards, threats, and punishment.

describing this part of the EU foreign policy operational code. We first discuss both positive and negative uses of **authority**. We then look into various forms of **diplomacy**, often connected to authority, before returning to the categories of the classical causal notion of power with **promises and rewards**, and **threats and punishments**. Following this, the **conditionality in promises and threats** is discussed, as it emerges as a significant theme in the material and has a particular effect on how the utility of means is constructed in the analysed discourses. The use of **pressure** also arises in the material independently as a distinct type of means for pursuing goals, and thus its particularities are discussed in a specific subchapter. A **comprehensive approach** to the use of different means also characterises the EU's operational code. Finally, **soft power and institutional power** are discussed as means typical for the EU.

6.1.1 I-5 Utility of means: Quantitative analysis

I-5 What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?			
Quantitative VICS analysis			
Low <-> High			
(0.00) – (1.00)			
	Solana	Ashton	Mogherini
Appeal/Support (+1)	0.54	0.56	0.54
Promise (+2)	0.13	0.10	0.08
Reward (+3)	0.11	0.10	0.14
Oppose/Resist (-1)	0.19	0.19	0.19
Threat (-2)	0.02	0.02	0.02
Punishment (-3)	0.01	0.03	0.03

The categories of authority power (Appeal/Support and Oppose/Resist) dominate the results of the quantitative analysis of the means of power used by the EU in the Union's foreign policy discourses, with more than half of the coded utterances belonging to these groups. Here, a tendency towards the cooperative approach is visible as well, and cooperative means are clearly more common than their conflictual counterparts in the analysed speeches. However, the presence of

conflictual authority power (Oppose/Resist) appears considerable, with 19 percent⁶⁷ of the coded utterances being forms of conflictual authority power for all three High Representatives. While still far behind the proportion of cooperative authority power, it nonetheless forms a significant part of the Union's foreign policy means. Together, the authority-based means of power thus cover over 70 percent of the utterances where the Union's own use of power is indicated.

The non-authority-based four categories of the use of power also demonstrate a tendency towards cooperative means. Both promises and rewards have a clear presence in the analysed speeches, their proportion being close to 10 percent for both categories. Negative Deed categories (Threat and Punishment) have a much lesser presence in the discourses, with their proportion varying between 1-3 percent. Quantitative analysis thus seems to present the Union's operational code as cooperation-inclined and, while having the readiness to use authority power conflictually, nevertheless displaying a great deal of suspicion towards coercive actions.

The general differences between the High Representatives are minor, and VICS analysis supports the notion that the beliefs about the utility of means have been institutionalised into a form of strategic culture. There is a little more variation in the yearly scores of Ashton and Mogherini, where, for example, in 2017, Mogherini's score for using rewards reaches 20 percent. However, the general tendencies of the overall VICS scores remain valid for the yearly scores and the positive authority power (Appeal/Support), which dominates the overall scores, can, for instance, even rise to 79 percent (Mogherini in 2016) in the yearly scores. But overall, the similarity of the operational code of High Representatives is striking and indicates the institutionalisation of a shared belief system into a strategic culture steering policy choices.

Because these same frequencies are used to calculate the other indices⁶⁸ of VICS analysis, taking a closer look at the material coded into these categories could be illustrative. As I-5 scores are based more directly on how the utterances are coded, inspection of the content of the six categories offers us insights into what the operational code concerning Self's own use of power is factually based on.

In the analysed material, typical utterances coded as Self's use of positive authority power include such expressions as 'support', 'work with', 'engage', 'help', 'discuss', and 'encourage'. Interestingly, the overall picture provided by these expressions does not mirror particularly asymmetric power relations, although there

⁶⁷ Of those utterances where the speaker refers to their own use of power.

⁶⁸ I-1, I-2, I-3 and I-4, as well as partially P-4 and P-5. For the formulas used to calculate these indices, see Appendix 1, for a discussion of how the indices are formulated see Chapter 3.4.

are also expressions that indicate this kind of relations. Many of the common expressions, such as ‘engage’ and ‘discuss’, in general indicate an approach to others as equals. The Union seeks to influence others but does not use strong authority to appeal to their decision-making. Another interesting detail is the recurring linkage to the expression ‘continue’. Many of the utterances where the Union’s use of positive authority power is emphasised also indicate that this is part of a longer chain of action: Union ‘continues to support’ and ‘continues to send a message’. Besides supporting the Union’s identity as a long-term actor,⁶⁹ it can be also seen to link to the understanding of positive authority power, especially as part of building *soft power* (see J. S. Nye 2004), requiring a long-term approach.

Typical utterances coded as Self’s use of negative authority power on the other hand include such expressions as ‘condemn’, ‘having concerns’, ‘call’, ‘raise’, ‘pressure’, and ‘expect’. The style is generally more fitting to asymmetric power relations, although, for example, the expression that the Union ‘has concerns’ about some policies of others shows a more equal attitude. Here, the characteristic of the use of authority power being a continuation of previous actions also appears, with the linked expression ‘continue’ holding a similarly prominent position in the discourse. The word ‘must’ is also very prominently present in these utterances, indicating a more coercive nature of the negative use of authority.

Words indicating a pledge to some kind of positive action, such as ‘committed’, ‘proposed’, and ‘agreed’, recur in the utterances coded as promises of the Union. These pledges are about actions such as ‘support’, ‘assistance’, and ‘help’. The language of these coded utterances does not offer surprises, and the expressions could be described as typical for promises of help to others. Perhaps interestingly, ‘continue’ features prominently here as well. Words featuring in the utterances coded as rewarding, already taking or having taken place, are also such as one would anticipate. Expressions such as ‘provide’, ‘support’, ‘work’, ‘help’, ‘invest’, and ‘assist’ characterise these utterances. ‘Training’ and ‘funding’ are among the terms used here as well, showing two major ways the Union is told to have given support to others: by providing monetary aid as well as the training given to military and police forces. These forms also appear in the qualitative analysis and are more closely discussed below.

The language of threats made by the Union in the analysed speeches is considerably discreet. While ‘sanctions’ are mentioned, expressions such as ‘adopt measures’ and ‘implement decision’ indicate the possibility that the Union can take negative action towards others if they do not consider the Union’s demands. For realised punishment, ‘sanctions’ feature most prominently, with words such as

⁶⁹ See discussion about I-4 beliefs in Chapter 8.5.

‘adopt’, ‘impose’, ‘measures’, ‘restricted’, and ‘suspended’ linked to the idea of sanctions dominating the discourse, too.

6.1.2 I-5 Utility of means: Qualitative analysis

In the qualitative analysis, the differences between the discourses of the three High Representatives do not appear remarkable either. Regarding the six categories of causal power, the use of negative authority is more prominently present in the speeches of Ashton and Mogherini, while Solana appears more reserved towards condemning other actors. Ashton and Mogherini, in particular, also emphasise the material support that the Union has given and its role as a leading development and humanitarian aid provider and backer of others. The utility and role of different means are also generally discussed with less detail in Solana’s speeches. However, these differences are relative and hardly demonstrate significant differences in the operational code belief systems.

Authority power

Authority-based influence appears to be a major element of the Union’s foreign policy in the qualitative analysis as well. While the positive–negative division, a defining feature of VICS, is often also useful in the qualitative analysis, there are cases where authority is also used without signs that would point clearly to a positive or negative approach towards the target of the use of power. It is perhaps useful to recall how K. J. Holsti (1964) proposed persuasion as one of the six tactics when conceptualising the use of power in international relations in line with the classical causal notion of power.⁷⁰ Holsti conceptualised persuasion as “situations in which an actor simply initiates or discusses a proposal or situation with another and elicits a favourable response without explicitly holding out the possibility of rewards or punishments” (K. J. Holsti 1964, 189). When his kind of persuasion utilises the authority of the persuader, it appears as a form of a causal use of authority power. However, unlike the conceptualisation of power that the VICS framework is based on, Holsti did not distinguish between positive and negative persuasion, instead treating it as a single category.

Indeed, in the analysed material, the use of authority is often clear but categorising it either as positive or negative is not useful. For example, with persuasion, the discourse used in the analysed speeches can suggest that the approach taken is, at least, applying the resources of authority in a chiefly positive way. But while this kind of positive persuasion has a prominent role in the analysed material,

⁷⁰ See discussion on the types of power in Chapter 3.5.

there are also cases where more negative undertones are used, even hinting at the possibility of moving to threats if persuasion based on the authority of the Union is unsuccessful. Further, persuasion can be made to appear neutral, such as raising of issues where the preferred response is already in the interest of the target of persuasion. There are also cases where the division between positive and negative authority is at best a line drawn on water. Because of this, we will discuss all forms of authority together, pointing out their positive and negative aspects when useful.

In their speeches, the High Representatives often report how they have issued statements over concerns and discussed these concerns directly with other actors. For example, Ashton tells that during 2012 and the first part of the year 2013, she had issued 54 statements on the death penalty as well as instructed the Union's delegations to carry out 30 demarches reiterating the EU's position and calling on authorities to refrain from executions (AshtonRemark130612). The High Representatives also often state that the Union has reacted to negative events, such as human rights violations and actions that limit the democratic freedom of people, with means typical for the use of authority power. Mogherini, for instance, reports that "[t]he EU and its Member States expressed their concerns about the imminent demolition through repeated statements, *démarches* and ministerial letters to the Israeli authorities" (MogheriniRemark180911) following Israel's decision to proceed with demolition of a Palestinian village. Ashton also declares that following Russia's decision to limit the scope for demonstrations, she has "reacted to these developments with a public statement" (AshtonStatement120911). The use of statements is a recurring element in the material, partially because of the role of High Representatives that relies heavily on the use of public statements, but it also underlines the importance of authority power for the Union's foreign policy practice.

The High Representatives also often mention how they have raised various issues during their visits and meetings with other governments. Human Rights Dialogues, in particular, serve this purpose, as Ashton demonstrates when stating that "[w]e also raise the issue of freedom of religion or belief during human rights dialogues and urge countries to eradicate discrimination and intolerance" (AshtonSpeech110119). Visits of the High Representatives serve also as a means of using authority power. They can be avenues of showing symbolic support, as Ashton indicates when she recalls that she "went to Georgia to continue to support the Georgian people" (AshtonRemark111213). Or they can serve as a means to persuade others, seen for example when Ashton tells that she has visited the Middle East region seven times in the year 2011 with a single purpose, "to promote a negotiated settlement of the conflict" (AshtonSpeech110927).

Indeed, the European Union tends to use multiple venues for its use of authority power. These include bilateral diplomacy, public messages as well as applying international institutional frameworks to further amplify said authority. Ashton

demonstrates this best when summing up the Union's approach to human rights issues in Iran:

“The EU has spared no opportunity to ask the Iranian government to respect those international obligations they freely and voluntarily adhered to. We issue public statements, and use other diplomatic means. We work through the UN: the General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning the situation only last month. We will make full use of the upcoming Iran review of Iran which will be held at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva in early February.”
(AshtonSpeech100119b)

Expressions of *symbolic support* clearly represent a type of positive use of authority, common in the speeches of the High Representatives. This support is symbolic in the sense that it does not include concrete promises of resources or actions but is merely a statement that the Union supports the policy decisions or pursuits of some other actor. Hereby, the Union seeks to use its authority to encourage the actor in question to continue on this route as well as encouraging other actors to support and also guide them towards the favoured policies. While this kind of symbolic support can eventually also include concrete actions, the statement itself serves as manner to influence others.

One example of a description of this kind of use of authority is Ashton declaring that the EU had affirmed its “support for the current efforts that are underway” (AshtonRemark130627) regarding the actions of the United States in the Middle East Peace Process. On a more general level, Mogherini describes similar symbolic support when she states that the Union has been “providing political support” (MogheriniSpeech170912) for UN agencies. Solana underlines the importance of using the Union's authority to support President Arafat in 2002 by stating that “[o]n the diplomatic front, we must restate that President Arafat is the legitimate Palestinian leader, for as long as another has not been democratically chosen by the Palestinians” (SolanaSpeech020409). In these examples, symbolic support denotes diplomatic activities where the Union publicly uses its authority for the sake of other actors and their policies.

Besides descriptions of support, symbolic support can also take on more indirect forms, for example, by offering positive recognition to the actions of other actors. The High Representatives express in their speeches the appreciation of the Union by for example ‘congratulating’, ‘commending’, ‘thanking’, ‘being pleased’, and ‘welcoming’ the behaviour and development of other actors. Namely, when Ashton praises Turkish policies, it can be seen as a use of authority power to encourage them to continue with similar policy choices:

“Turkey’s reforms over these past years have already been truly impressive. And let’s remember that it is this Turkish Government that has shown statesmanship, vision and bravery in embarking on a peace process to resolve the Kurdish question.” (AshtonRemark130612c)

These mentions serve as a common, low-effort way of indicating the preferred actions and policies for others that regard the EU as an authority. These statements’ importance and weight can vary considerably, depending on the wider context of the comment. Often, these comments are also linked to the normative values promoted by the Union, while others are praised for their actions adherence to values such as democracy, human rights, or peace. In this way, the authority backing these praises is not only the Union in itself but the Union as a representative and promotor of these shared norms and values. They are a common feature in the discourses used by all three High Representatives.

Persuasion forms a major part of the clearly positive use of authority power in the Union’s foreign policy discourses. Words such as ‘encourage’ and ‘appeal’ indicate a more positive approach to persuading others to take the preferred actions. Examples of this in the material abound: Ashton states that the “EU will encourage regional cooperation between Mali, Mauritania and Niger” (AshtonSpeech110119b) or, on a more personal level, how the “EU has been encouraging newly-elected President Putin to pursue the political and economic reforms started by President Medvedev” (AshtonStatement120911).

Primarily positive persuasion plays a major role when the Union seeks to build the international cooperation necessary for the effective use of sanctions.⁷¹ For example, Ashton recalls that she has “strongly encouraged China to exert pressure on the regime in Pyongyang” and that this persuasion of China to adopt the policy preferred by the EU will be high on her agenda when visiting China (AshtonRemark130313b). Similarly, Mogherini describes how the EU “will work to make sure that others implement the UN Security Council Resolution [concerning sanctions on North Korea]”, adding that the EU together with its partners in the international community have “a responsibility to work towards all third parties to make sure that the UN-based decisions, the UN Security Council sanctions are implemented by all in the international scene” (MogheriniSpeech170912b). Persuading other actors of the international system to participate in economic sanctions against some actors is a vital component of the effectiveness of sanctions. This is also true for actors’ isolation in a broader sense, as is a case, for example, with Assad’s regime in Syria. The High Representatives tend to underline the

⁷¹ See discussion about the best approach to using sanctions in Chapter 7.2.

importance for the Union to persuade others to contribute, and this persuasion often relies primarily on the authority of the Union.

Similarly to how symbolic support can be combined with more concrete forms of support, persuasion based on authority can also be combined with promises of concrete rewards. Solana, when talking about societal reforms of the Palestinian Authority, states:

“We can and we must encourage them along this path. We will have to do so politically and financially.” (SolanaSpeech020515b)

While financial encouragement refers to the economic support given by the EU, and thus promises of concrete rewards, political encouragement depends more on the use of authority. Similarly, Solana later emphasises how the “EU has been helping Palestine both politically and economically” (SolanaSpeech061004b), at that time referring with the political help to use of authority power to persuade others, including Israel, towards policies more favourable to Palestinians. While positive use of authority appears as a prominent element of the EU operational code on its own, it is also often combined into a multi-means, comprehensive approach to influencing others, which is typical for the EU. We will shortly return to this aspect of the Union’s operational code.

Perhaps the clearest manifestation of the negative use of authority power in the speeches of the High Representatives is when they *condemn* the actions or policies of others. Often this condemnation is straight-forward. Solana notes that the EU “strongly disagree[s] with Russia over the status of South Ossetia and Abkhazia” and has “strongly condemned Russia’s recognition” of these breakaway territories (SolanaSpeech080910). Ashton declares that she “condemn[s] absolutely the [Israeli] settlements that are of course illegal under international law” (AshtonRemark111213), and that “[w]e have condemned in strongest possible terms latest nuclear tests” (AshtonRemark130313b) of North Korea. Speaking on the same topic as Solana, Mogherini states that the EU “continue[s] to condemn Russia’s recognition of Georgia’s breakaway regions”, adding that when the Syrian Arab Republic announced that it would establish diplomatic relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, “[w]e immediately condemned this move” as well (MogheriniSpeech180612b).

Similar to positive uses of authority through expressions of support, the channel for condemnation can also be the analysed speech itself. Proclaiming that something is ‘unacceptable’, ‘wrong’, or ‘illegal’ can serve as a way of using authority power to condemn other actors, seeking to influence them or others in the international system by indicating actions and policies that they should not practice. Examples include Solana declaring that “Russia’s conduct in Chechnya is not acceptable”

(SolanaSpeech000301b) and Ashton stating that “[w]e are all agreed that the situation in Syria is appalling” (AshtonRemark1300313c). When Ashton notes, while speaking on the subject of human rights in Iran, that “[t]he continued and systematic oppression, arrests and harassment of lawyers, journalists and others who are exercising their rights is totally unacceptable” (AshtonSpeech110309b), she is clearly condemning Iran’s policies.

In the speech acts of the High Representatives, the justification of condemnation is typically based on normative values, presented as universal and shared by the international community. In particular, human rights violations are routinely condemned in the analysed material. The Union’s interests, on the other hand, are only seldom presented as the reason for condemning the actions of others. Typical condemnation in the speeches of the High Representatives is not based on the condemned action causing harm to the EU but rather on the fact that it is, normatively speaking, universally wrong. In this, the Union’s identity as a *‘normative power’* is prominently present.

The value of respecting international rules, systems, and commitments typically forms the justification of condemning the unwelcome actions of others in these discourses. For example, when stating that the Union “will not recognise the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula to the Russian Federation” (MogheriniSpeech181023b), Mogherini specifically underlines the illegal nature of the annexation, instead of, for example, its effects on the security of the region, even emphasising that “[i]t is first and foremost a matter of principles and values” (MogheriniSpeech181023b). Ashton also underlines, in a similar vein, the violation of international law as well as the commitments made by Russia in her condemnation:

“We’ve been clear about Russia’s violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is just unacceptable. Russia has contravened the international law, and its own international commitments.”
(AshtonRemark140403)

When condemning Syria for establishing diplomatic relations with the breakaway regions of Georgia, Mogherini justifies this condemnation by stating that “[i]t is a violation of international law, and it will only make the resolution of the conflict more difficult to achieve” (MogheriniSpeech180612b). Similarly, Ashton notes that “[Israel’s] [s]ettlement expansion must be condemned as they are illegal under international law and put current peace efforts at risk” (AshtonSpeech120612b). This is a rather characteristic combination of the normative bases that the Union tends to invoke: international law and pursuing peace and stability in the international

system. Both are also in accordance with the Union's support of a multilateral, rules-based international system and its structures.⁷²

Interestingly, Mogherini's condemnation of Russia's actions in Ukraine in 2018 departs from the previous discourse on the subject. Regarding Russia's actions in the Kerch Strait, she states that "Russia's behavior violates international law and is causing economic damage not just to Ukraine but also to ships sailing under EU flags" (MogheriniSpeech181211d). This is one of the few examples where the economic interests of the Union are brought up in condemnation. This can be seen as one sign of the entry of the 'principled pragmatism' approach presented in the 2016 Global Strategy to EU foreign policy (see Tocci 2017) or as an early sign of what has been referred to as the EU's turn towards more 'geopolitical' foreign policy in response to the crisis in Eastern Europe (see Raik et al. 2024; Youngs 2017).

The expression of *demands* in the speeches can also serve as a form of negative authority. Expressions of demand tell other actors that they should or should not do something. Demands often take the form of persuasion that relies on the negative use of authority. Their general tone tends to be conflictual, sometimes even including implied threats, and their context would usually identify them as a negative use of power. But here as well as elsewhere where authority power is discussed, the division into positive and negative use of power tends to be arbitrary and not necessarily the most useful point of view. Demands can also be made in a neutral tone.

Demands made by the High Representatives tend to be imperative in their tone and typically target those actors viewed as more or less uncooperative towards the Union. A typical demand would be Ashton telling that "[w]e say to the [Syrian] regime to change course and to change course now" (AshtonSpeech110511). A more descriptive example regarding Belarus would be Ashton stating, in the past tense that "[w]e have made it clear that we absolutely must see the release and the rehabilitation of the political prisoners" (AshtonRemark111213). In both examples, the EU is clearly not only asking the other actor to follow through a suggested path but is using its authority to pressure the other to act in a certain way. This is even clearer with direct orders, such as "Bashir Al Assad should leave power, the fighting must stop" (AshtonRemark130313c). These kinds of demands are fairly common in the analysed material.

A diplomatic approach might soften the expression in a way that it becomes unclear whether it represents a cooperative or conflictual approach to the target of the influencing attempt; Solana treads carefully when criticising Russia's policies, while nonetheless presenting comments that can be read as both demand and condemnation:

⁷² See analysis of I-1 and I-2 beliefs in Chapter 7.

“Frank speaking – we say – is made for friends: and as friends of Russia, we continue to call on Russia to meet all its commitments and obligations with regard to the conflicts in Chechnya. Those obligations, as you well know, include unimpeded humanitarian access to the victims, but also avoiding the excessive use of force. On both these issues, more efforts are needed from Moscow.” (SolanaSpeech000621)

Similarly, Ashton presents her criticism of China in a softened form:

“While taking note of the Chinese authorities commitment that the resettlement of nomads is intended to preserve the Tibetan grasslands, the EU questions whether the objective of environmental protection can only be reached by eliminating the traditional way of life of Tibetans who have lived in harmony with nature for centuries. The EU is concerned that compulsory resettlement of all nomads has the potential to destroy the distinctive Tibetan culture and identity.” (AshtonSpeech120612d)

Even when the expressions used include neither symbolic support and appreciation, nor judgement and conflictual demands, they can still be seen as attempts to use the authority of the speaker to convince others. Merely an expression of the preferred policy can be understood as a use of authority power to convince others. In these kinds of cases, we can talk about signalling the preferred policy or choice, backed up by the authority of the speaker. This includes raising issues without a clear cooperative or conflictual tone, as for example when Ashton states that the Union “want[s] to make sure that climate change is raised consistently in our discussions with third countries” (AshtonRemark130627). These acts of raising issues in meetings forms a relevant part of the Union’s foreign policy influencing activities that the High Representatives report in their speeches. Especially in discourses related to the *structural foreign policy* of the Union, we see a great number of examples where authority is used this way, to make other actors change their approach or to promote certain development in their societies.

Diplomacy

Overall, diplomacy forms a significant part of the Union’s assortment of means for advancing its interests. Much of the use of power described in the analysed speeches occurs through negotiating, facilitating negotiations, and other forms of diplomacy. The Union uses diplomacy versatilely and indeed, Ashton, for example, sees the great strength of the EU to be the great range of diplomatic tools at its disposal (AshtonSpeech120911). While some of these tools either utilise authority or serve

as channels through which to use authority, they also have aspects that are not reducible to authority power.

An important form of diplomacy is the bilaterally held dialogue with another actor. The importance of holding dialogues is often emphasised in the material, and these dialogues are clearly seen as an effective means of influencing others. Often, they serve as channels for using authority power, as previously mentioned. But these dialogues also serve as the means to influence others through argumentation and persuasion without reliance on the authority position. The way the High Representatives talk about dialogue draws an image of a versatile approach. This is demonstrated, for instance, in the way in which Mogherini describes the dialogue, held “on a daily basis”, with Turkey:

“We will keep all channels of communication open, working to overcome our differences, working to manage our differences when they remain, and working to find common solutions, when we manage to do so.”
(MogheriniSpeech180207b)

This kind of interaction does not appear as just causal influencing of others based on authority, but indicates a more negotiable, deliberative interaction. Especially with other actors like Turkey and China, the approach accepts that there are some differences that will remain, but that common solutions can be found through negotiation, argumentation, and dialogue.

Looking at how often the High Representatives mention meetings with the representatives of other actors, meetings also appear to play a major role in the Union’s means to influence international politics. In the Union’s foreign policy discourses, meetings serve as a way of engaging other actors, more often in a positive, cooperative manner. Recurring mentions of meetings underline the good relations the Union has with the other actor. One example is the numerous mentions of regular meetings with NATO. Ashton emphasises the strengthening of EU-NATO relations by stating that she meets “regularly” with Secretary General Rasmussen of NATO (AshtonRemark110322); often this kind of mention serves to underline the work to deepen the relationships or show that the relationship is already strong and functional. Indeed, Ashton herself notes how her “participation in several NATO high level meetings [...] has been instrumental” in reinforcing EU-NATO relations (AshtonSpeech101215c). In a similar vein, but in a completely different context, Ashton seeks to demonstrate how, in 2011, the EU maintains its relations with Russia, seen at the time as “a major partner for the EU”, by emphasising how “Sergey Lavrov [the foreign minister of Russia] and I meet regularly and try to build common approaches to the most pressing international issues” (AshtonSpeech111213d).

Meetings are told to serve those purposes such as “to talk about how we can work together on tackling the problems that we face together [with China]” (AshtonSpeech120201), “to strengthen the relationship that we have and to talk about issues of importance between us [with Brazil and Mexico]” (AshtonSpeech120201), and “trying to break new ground on how to develop the strength of our relationship [with India] (AshtonSpeech120201). Importantly, these interactions do not only represent opportunities for the EU to wield authority power but also to influence others through more complex persuasion and argumentation. For example, the Union’s shuttle diplomacy with Egypt after the Arab Spring is told to have been practised “in order to build confidence and to look for common ground on political and economic issues” (AshtonRemark130313).

The facilitation of dialogue between other actors is another important part of the Union’s diplomatic practices. Perhaps the most prominent example is the Middle East Peace Process, a process in which the EU has sought to participate in throughout the entire analysed period. In this process, the Union has taken the role of facilitator of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian parties of the conflict. In 2001, Solana already considered the Union as having played an important role as a facilitator and was able to “take legitimate pride in having shown the way ahead” to the parties of the conflict for dialogue (SolanaSpeech010131). Ashton sees the importance of the Union’s contribution to the facilitation of the Israel-Palestinian conflict as growing, noting in 2011 how the Union has “moved from payer to player” (AshtonRemark111213), referring to the growing role of the EU through the Quartet. All three High Representatives emphasise the role of the Union as a facilitator in the conflict.

While arguably one of the most prominent conflicts in the speech material, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not the only one where the Union seeks to facilitate dialogue. Other examples include, for example, disputes between Serbia and Kosovo, where according to Ashton the Union “showed the real possibilities of what EU diplomacy could do in helping to resolve the long standing issues” (AshtonRemark140403).

Mogherini similarly praises the Union’s influence in mediating the Georgian conflict:

“At the height of the war, the mediation of the European Union prevented further escalation and ultimately resulted in a cessation of hostilities. Since then, the European Union has been a central actor in the process to manage the consequences of the conflict, to improve the lives of all people in the region, and to find a lasting solution.” (MogheriniSpeech180612b)

Solana likewise gives the Union credit for having been “central to the efforts behind the cessation of violence” in Lebanon (SolanaSpeech061004b). The Union is portrayed in speeches of all the three High Representatives as a particularly effective facilitator, and this type of diplomatic action is clearly constructed as a strength of the Union.

Promises and Rewards

The promise and grant of rewards represent clearly positive forms of direct causal power. With promises, the actor offers others benefits in the future. Rewards on the other hand are benefits that are already granted to others. The causal notion of power assumes that both these actions serve as ways to influence the behaviour of other actors, serving as incentives to choose a particular course of action. However, these means can also serve as a way of directly affecting the world, for example, as a way of advancing *structural foreign policy* goals by giving other actors means to carry out reforms.

The benefits in the speeches of the High Representatives, either promised or reported as having already been offered, are typically economic aid, other forms of material support, or increased cooperation with the Union. The latter can include deeper integration with the Union, for example granting candidate status or taking other steps towards Membership in the EU, taking steps towards Association Agreements, or other forms of deepening cooperation such as providing access to the European market or granting increased mobility to Europe. When reported as rewards already granted, the increased cooperation in the material usually appears in the form of agreements concluded, or negotiations opened.

When the High Representatives discuss concluding agreements or opening negotiations about increased cooperation, it is often presented in the form of rewards to the other actor. This is evident as Ashton relates, having noted positive developments in Kosovo, that “[t]his step forward has allowed the EU to respond by opening accession negotiations with Serbia, and by launching Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations with Kosovo” (AshtonRemark140403). Both Serbia and Kosovo are granted the reward of cooperation with the Union.

Achieving partnership with the Union is framed as beneficial and important for others. When discussing the signing of a Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with Armenia, Mogherini states that she believes “that all Armenian parties understand very well that a partnership with the European Union is something vital for the country” (MogheriniSpeech180703); and Ashton notes, regarding a potential Association Agreement with Ukraine, that “we believe that this Agreement is the best way to address the short term economic challenges and pave the way for

the long term economic future of Ukraine” (AshtonRemark131218). Increasing cooperation with the Union is constructed as a privilege, yet often a conditional one.

Promises form a significant part of the means of power that the Union uses for *structural foreign policy*. After all, promising rewards to other actors if they complete structural reforms serves as a further incentive to pursue these reforms, in addition to the results of the reforms themselves. The membership of the European Union has sometimes been seen as the most effective incentive that the Union can offer to encourage reforms therein (see Haukkala 2008). Recognising this, Solana declares that “[t]he core of our policy [in Balkans] of course has to remain the prospect of membership of the European Union”, but then continues that “[a]part from those countries which are already candidates, most of the others benefit from the network of Stabilisation and Association Agreements” (SolanaSpeech000321). In the later material, the Association Agreements tend to replace the prospects of Membership as cooperation offered as a reward.

Barring the possibility of offering a route to Membership, the main concrete incentives the Union can promise to its partners boil down to what Ashton calls ‘the three Ms’ of support in the Union’s neighbourhood policy: Mobility, Market Access, and Money (AshtonRemark110322, AshtonSpeech110511). Money here is understood in a broad sense as any type of material resource. Both increased mobility and more open access to European markets are typically included in different partnership and association agreements, forming an important incentive for others to pursue cooperation with the Union. They are constructed in the speeches as rewards that can be given to other actors, often conditionally and less so as a part of balanced cooperation. For example, Mogherini states that “Cambodia has also been **granted** access to the European markets [...] which has served as an important driver of the country’s economic growth” (MogheriniSpeech170914c, bolding added).

Different types of development, humanitarian, and crisis aid form a large share of the rewards discussed in the analysed material. The High Representatives typically underline both the monetary value and importance of the aid given by the Union to underline its significance. Solana recalls in 2000 that the EU has “contributed to the Balkans as a whole since 1999 over Euro 9 billion, which makes us by far the biggest donor” (SolanaSpeech000321), later noting how the EU has invested “considerable human and material resources” in the Balkan region (SolanaSpeech070329). Ashton demonstrates the Union’s work on promoting human rights in the world by reminding that “over the last 18 months we have provided € 235 million in funding for 99 NGO projects in 100 countries” (AshtonSpeech100616b). Mogherini similarly speaks of how the Union, by bringing together other countries and international organisations, has raised “more than 9 billion euros until 2020, including 5.6 billion euros for 2017 alone” for Syria, adding that “[m]ore than two thirds of this amount comes from the European Union and the

Member States (MogheriniRemark170516). Both aid given directly by the EU and its Member States, as well as the resources mobilised and raised by influencing others, are often presented as achievements of the Union.

The fact that the EU provides development and humanitarian aid to others is an important part of the Union's role and is emphasised in the discourses of the High Representatives. Ashton notes that the Union is "the biggest provider of humanitarian aid and project funding" (AshtonStatement091202) and Mogherini maintains that "the European Union not only is but will stay the most relevant donor of humanitarian and development aid" (MogheriniSpeech170704). This role is perhaps best summarised by Mogherini's description of the UN Pledging Conference for humanitarian aid in 2017, co-hosted by the EU:

"As usual, the European Union has been the one pledging more money than anybody else. And if you look at the EU and Member States together, we pledged more than the rest of the world combined. And let me add that our pledges always turn into real money, into real projects that help real people, meaning that we always deliver on our pledges." (MogheriniSpeech171212c)

In the analysed material, the High Representatives often make promises of support specifically linked to the structural reforms promoted by the Union. Ashton for example discusses how the EU will "translate the promise of support into concrete practical action for urgently needed reforms after the signature of the political provisions of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement" (AshtonRemark140403). The promised support is outlined to support reforms that advance the Union's structural foreign policy goals. Similarly, Ashton states that the Union is prepared to support a domestic political process in Russia but specifically of the kind "that aims at the development of its democratic institutions and the rule of law, a modern economy and a vibrant civil society whose human rights are respected and whose aspirations for a more open and dynamic society are matched by the reforms undertaken by its government" (AshtonSpeech120201b).

The support, both promised and already granted, is often limited to policy areas and projects that advance the Union's structural foreign policy goals. In this way, Ashton outlines her renewed Neighbourhood Policy so that the Union "will support the development of democracy, the development of human rights, support for civil society, support for the growth of economic life" (AshtonRemark111213), according to the Union's structural reform expectations.

The Union's role as a supporter of specific reforms in the supported countries is emphasised, for example, when Ashton underlines the targeting of funding for Egypt, noting that "[w]e don't provide budget support" and continuing that the "[w]e do support socio economic projects for the people, especially the most vulnerable,

in health, school feeding programmes, poor neighbourhoods and programmes for women” (AshtonSpeech130911b). Especially when discussing countries in the neighbourhood of the Union where the structural foreign policy aspect is accentuated, it is clear in the analysed speeches that the Union wants to control the support it gives to other actors. This way, the support does not serve as a *carte blanche* reward, an incentive to others to act in line with the Union’s preferences but is meant to specifically further the Union’s goals and preferences by itself.

While support for development features prominently in the Union’s foreign policy, it is hardly the only form of support that the Union gives. Perhaps contrary to the popular image, providing support for security and military purposes appears in the material as a significant aspect of the support given by the Union to other countries. This kind of support typically falls under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions. In 2013, Ashton describes CSDP as “an important and integral part of the EU’s policy options”, adding that the Union has “got considerable operational expertise: 30 missions on three continents over the last 15 years, changing the fortunes of people and countries, protecting and promoting our values” (AshtonSpeech131023). This includes offering training, including military training, and enhancing the capabilities of the security sectors of a specific country. While not as common as development and humanitarian aid, operations such as developing maritime capacities and training soldiers in Somalia (see e.g., AshtonSpeech100310, AshtonRemark111213, AshtonRemark121107), as well as the training and capacity building of the coast guard in Libya (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech170912), still feature prominently in the speeches of the High Representatives.

Typically, the military support provided by the Union is described as assistance to building and enhancing the security forces of another country: For example, considering how Ashton describes that the Union “need[s] to assist the Sahel countries in enhancing the capabilities of their security sectors: the army, the police, the justice and border control systems at the level of each country” (AshtonSpeech110119b). However, naval operations such as Operation Atalanta and Operation Sophia are also described as being direct military support to others, with Operation Atalanta creating a safe corridor from piracy in the Aden Gulf (AshtonStatement091202) and Operation Sophia enforcing the UN Security Council Resolutions on the arms and oil embargo on the coast of Libya (MogheriniSpeech180911). These operations are also viewed as highly successful, with Ashton crediting Operation Atalanta for having “drastically reduced the problem of piracy off the Somali coast” (AshtonSpeech131023).

In general, promises of support are seen as effective ways of influencing other actors as well as the progression of events in the Union’s foreign policy belief

systems. Mogherini demonstrates this thinking while discussing future support for reconstruction in Syria if the conflict ends:

“But the European Union has already started to engage and to contribute to the post-agreement planning in close cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank. Also because this can be a very powerful tool, maybe one of the most powerful tools today, to support and accompany the political process, showing the peace dividend, being an incentive to the Syrian parties to find and implement an agreement.” (MogheriniRemark170516)

The promise of support is described in the comment as a powerful tool for advancing the political process and serving as an incentive to the parties to reach a peace agreement. This is in line with the way in which the causal notion of power promises are seen as incentives for others to adopt certain behaviour. Here, the Union would seem to use positive power in a very classical way. When discussing enhanced partnership and cooperation agreements with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, Mogherini states that “[t]hese agreements are also an incentive for domestic reforms, in line with international values, norms and standards” (MogheriniSpeech180314).

Threats and Punishment

According to the causal notion of power, the non-authority-based negative use of power is employed through threats and punishments. Similar to the division between promises and rewards, threats are messages that indicate to others that the actor will act against them if they do not behave as the actor wishes. Punishments on the other hand are actual actions of this type that have already taken place. Like promises and rewards, threats and punishments are seen in the causal notion of power primarily as incentives for others to behave in a certain way, influencing their decision-making.

Negative non-authority-based actions typical for the material include international sanctions, the withholding of rewards including cooperation and integration, and the cancelling of diplomatic communication. The *use of military force*, on the other hand, is very rarely referred to in the form of threat or punishment. When mentioned in this respect, the targets are non-state actors such as terrorists, pirates, and human traffickers. Rare exceptions to this are Solana’s mention that in the Balkans “[a]t all events, EUFOR is and will remain capable of responding immediately and robustly if required to intervene” (SolanaSpeech070329), and Mogherini noting the important role that operation Sophia plays in enforcing the UN arms and oil embargo in Libya (MogheriniSpeech180529). And even in the latter example, the target of the actual military action was to a lesser degree Libya than as

it was the smugglers breaking the embargo. In general, the discourses used by the High Representatives of the Union lack the use of military might as power in the sense that is traditional to nation-states.

However, this is not because the EU would not use military means: As we have already seen, the military means are mentioned in the analysed speeches in the form of support given to other actors. Furthermore, this support is in the discourses of the High Representatives linked to the need to increase the Union's capability for military action. A quote from Mogherini demonstrates this type of discourse:

“Our work on security and defence is part of this broader picture. There is nothing to do with a militarisation of our Union. We are not turning our Union into a military alliance. But if we want to help our African partners whose growth is hampered by insecurity; or if you want to make sure that instability abroad does not affect our own citizens – then we also need to be a credible military actor, using all our tools, including the military ones, and using them in the European way, which means for peace, development, the people's rights, wisely and in a cooperative manner.” (MogheriniSpeech171212b)

Ashton makes a similar case for strengthening the military capabilities of the Union, giving military support for humanitarian aid as one reason for the Union to build a stronger defence and security policy (see AshtonSpeech110511). Additionally, deepening and improving collaboration with NATO, to develop the Union's ability to use military means, is a recurring theme running through the speeches of the entire analysed period. It is clear that the Union's foreign policy operational code includes an understanding of the need for the Union to have military means within its reach.

However, the use of military power by the EU is, as a rule, framed in the High Representatives' discourses in a way that avoids the image of the EU as an actor using military power against other actors to achieve its goals in international politics. While developing military capabilities, primarily for crisis management missions, are discussed, references to the potential use of force against other states, even defensively, remain absent from the analysed speeches. Instead, the military power that the Union wields is constructed as something used *cooperatively* to help others, not to pressure or harm them. In this, we can see the influence of the EU's identity as a civilian power (see Duchêne 1972; 1973), an identity in which the use of military power is strongly constrained to acceptable forms such as international peacekeeping and police-like operations. But what in all likelihood also influences this discourse is the nature of military power as a core element of sovereign nation-states, making its use by the EU a sensitive issue for the Member States. Furthermore, the division of labour between the EU and NATO remains an important factor therein, and the Union's reluctance to challenge NATO's role in European defence is apparent when,

for example, Solana states that it is “absolutely clear that [...] NATO remains the foundation of the collective defence of its members” (SolanaSpeech000301b) despite the Union’s own common defence policies.

Of those negative power instruments clearly present in the speeches of the High Representatives, different forms of *sanctions* or restrictive measures are the most prominent non-authority-based way for the Union to influence others. Specifically discussing the EU’s policy on restrictive measures, Ashton refers to sanctions as “an important Foreign Policy tool that the EU uses” (AshtonSpeech120201d), and describes them thusly:

“The purpose of these measures is to bring about the change of policy or activity in a country, in a government, in entities or indeed in individuals. In that sense they are preventive instruments which should allow us to respond swiftly to political challenges and developments.” (AshtonSpeech120201d)

In the analysed material, sanctions are often mentioned as threats, indicating that the Union can apply sanctions if the other actor does not comply with the Union’s expectations. For example, Ashton states that the Union “fully support[s] the UNSC process on further restrictive measures if, as is the case today, Iran continues to ignore its obligations” (AshtonSpeech100310). Similarly, in the event that some actor would obstruct the democratic transition in Ivory Coast, Ashton declares that “EU is ready to take its responsibilities regarding targeted measures, and we have clearly said so” (AshtonSpeech101215b). Sanctions are not necessarily mentioned directly, but when, for example, Mogherini states that, if the negative trend regarding democracy continues in Cambodia, the Union is “ready [...] to take appropriate measures” (MogheriniSpeech180913) the threat of sanctions is clear.

Sanctions are also reported as having been applied in several cases. The EU has for example “systematically imposed sanctions” on North Korea following the UN Security Council Resolutions after the country’s nuclear tests in 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2013 (AshtonRemark130313b), and Mogherini later describes the Union’s sanction regime on North Korea as “the most restrictive towards any country in the world” (MogheriniSpeech180313d). Regarding Libya, the EU “started preparatory work on restrictive measures ahead of the UN Security Council” and adopted further restrictive measures in addition to the UN sanctions (AshtonSpeech110309). Sanctions set on Syria have included an arms embargo, asset freeze, a travel ban on key individuals in the ruling regime, and the freezing of cooperation in the form of the Association Agreement (AshtonSpeech110511). In addition to these broader sanctions, the High Representatives also mention placing sanctions in response to individual cases of human rights violations; for instance, Mogherini notes that the EU had placed restrictive measures against seven senior army and police officers

associated with serious human rights violations in Rakhine State as part of its pressure on Myanmar (MogheriniSpeech180913b).

Withholding cooperation or progress on the road to deeper integration with the Union serve as a particular form of sanctions. Mogherini offers a perfect example of this when she discusses human rights issues in Myanmar:

“We have also made clear to the Myanmar authorities that our trade preferences with Myanmar are linked to clear conditions on human rights and democracy, and that to preserve our current trade arrangements, we need to see decisive action to improve the situation.” (MogheriniSpeech180913b)

Trade preferences are also raised with Cambodia, where Mogherini similarly notes, after stating that the Foreign Affairs Council may consider targeted measures if the democracy situation in the country does not improve, that “[w]e also recalled that respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including labour rights, is essential for maintaining EU trade preferences” (MogheriniSpeech180913). As a part of its progressively increasing sanctions on Syria, the Union froze the Association Agreement with Syria (AshtonSpeech110511) and suspended cooperation with the regime (AshtonSpeech110927). Similarly, concerning Libya, Ashton reports that “after the outbreak of violence we immediately suspended the negotiations of the EU-Libya framework agreement together with all technical cooperation” (AshtonSpeech110309). And, after disappointing developments in the state of democracy in Moldova, Mogherini reports that the Union has decided to put on hold the macro-financial assistance programme to the country (MogheriniRemark180705), and Ashton states that following the repressive measures taken by Belarusian authorities, the Union has no option but to pause the process of Joint Interim Plan to develop EU-Belarus relations (AshtonSpeech110119c). Cooperation with the Union, and the benefits coming therefrom, can thus be turned into resources for negative use of power.

Cancelling diplomatic communications and meetings can also serve as a means of displaying the disappointment of the Union and punishing other actors. As the approach of the EU to the use of other negative means, for example the sanctions as discussed above, sees value in specifically maintaining communication with the other actor targeted, thus the cessation of communications tends to be limited. For example, Ashton reports that the Union has decided to postpone the EU-Argentina Joint Cooperation Committee as a response to the Argentinean Government’s actions (AshtonRemark120417), and Mogherini declares that the Union has decided to suspend invitations to senior military officers of Myanmar in response to the disproportionate use of force by its army (MogheriniSpeech171212c). However, this

form of punishment does not appear to play a particularly important role in the analysed material.

What is emphasised in discourses about the use of sanctions, is that the Union's use of sanctions is always purposeful, consistently limited to achieving a specific outcome. Ashton explains that the sanctions "are never done lightly and they are done with a specific objective in mind" (AshtonSpeech120201d), and Mogherini underlines that "we have always believed that sanctions are a tool, not a goal in themselves" (MogheriniSpeech180313). This is demonstrated, for example, in the way Mogherini emphasises that the sanctions set on Venezuela are "targeted, gradual and reversible restrictive measures" (MogheriniSpeech180208b). In the Union's operational code, the use of sanctions is seen as a means that should be used in a manner that is limited to their specific target and is adjustable to best serve their purpose if the targeted actor does change their behaviour. This adjustability works in both ways, in one instance, Ashton notes that the Union has responded to the Syrian regime's policy of repression by further reinforcing sanctions (AshtonSpeech111213c).

Another aspect of this purposefulness is the linkage to the goal of eventually resuming diplomatic negotiations and creating a more cooperative relationship with the other. For example with Iran "[t]he purpose of the sanctions on Iran is to persuade them to fulfil the obligations that they signed up to in signing a non proliferation treaty and to allow the inspectors to do their work and to convince us of their desire to have only a civil nuclear power programme" (AshtonSpeech120201d), and with North Korea, the objective of the sanctions "is, has always been and remains to help open the political path for a peaceful negotiated solution of the North Korean nuclear issue" (MogheriniSpeech180313d). Likewise, Solana explains that "[t]he objective of these resolutions is not to punish Iran but to persuade it to come to the negotiating table" (SolanaSpeech080130). Following this approach, the importance of maintaining negotiations, as well as also promising positive incentives for the other targeted with sanctions, typically accompanies the use of sanctions. For example, after imposing sanctions on Venezuela, Mogherini emphasises how the EU is keeping an open channel for dialogue with the authorities of Venezuela (MogheriniSpeech181023) and summarises this approach with North Korea:

"Of course, sanctions are not a goal in themselves, but an instrument to open the way for a political process to start – a way that today, unfortunately, is not working. Our objective is not the pressure alone; our objective is to open the political path for a solution of the crisis. And for us, for the Europeans, economic and diplomatic pressures are always aimed at opening channels for credible, meaningful and fruitful dialogue." (MogheriniSpeech170912b)

In particular, sanctions are thus understood in the Union's operational code as an instrument that is best used in combination with other means of power, including positive forms of causal power. We will shortly return to this particular characteristic of the Union's approach to the use of instruments of power as a specifically combined approach.

Conditionality in promises and threats

A major element in the way in which the use of direct causal power is constructed in the Union's foreign policy discourses is *conditionality*.⁷³ Support is often given only on the condition that there are some guarantees that the support will effectually advance the Union's goals, or conditionally, as a reward given only if certain reforms progress. Similarly, threats are typically made conditionally, and negative sanctions are applied following certain conditions that determine when and how they are lifted.

Concerning the more cooperative use of power, one very good example of how the Union imposes conditionality is the way that Ashton introduces the principle of mutual accountability to the renewed Neighbourhood Policy, where:

“a key element is that the EU will apply more conditionality in its actions, linking them more closely to the efforts made by our partners towards reform. This means more financial support, closer political cooperation and deeper economic integration for those partners who have embarked on deep reforms. It is what we call ‘more for more’.” (AshtonStatement110927)

Typically, the Union promises economic or technical support to other countries on the condition that they carry out reforms of democratic or economic systems. For example, Mogherini notes how the macro-financial assistance programme to Moldova is coupled with the “successful implementation of specific economic policy measures” and “fulfilment of political preconditions related to respect of democratic mechanisms, the rule of law and human rights” (MogheriniRemark180705). Similarly, Ashton notes that the Union's commitments to helping Afghanistan “require a corresponding commitment from the Government of Afghanistan to make progress on the issues which matter to us” (AshtonSpeech120612c), including electoral, public financial management, and human rights reforms.

This kind of conditionality arises recurrently when the High Representatives, especially Ashton, discuss the possibility of offering support or granting rewards to others. Gaining Membership of the Union is essentially based on conditionality, or

⁷³ On the role of conditionality, see also discussion about I-2 beliefs in Chapter 7.2.

as Mogherini describes it, “a merit-based process” (MogheriniSpeech180206), and conditionality is similarly intensified in relations with potential Association Agreement partners in the neighbourhood as discussed above. But conditionality also features in other types of the Union’s relations. For example, Ashton relates that the Union is committed to enhancing assistance to Afghanistan over a ten-year period “[p]rovided the Government of Afghanistan meets its obligations” (AshtonSpeech120612c), underlining that the “EU shall make it clear that our commitments require a corresponding commitment from the Government of Afghanistan to make progress on the issues which matter to us” (AshtonSpeech120612c). When addressing a multi-annual cooperation programme with Cambodia, Mogherini similarly states that:

“All our programmes are implemented, subject to close monitoring and on the basis of political and policy dialogue with the government. The respect of human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law are fundamental elements in our development policy and they are closely monitored in this context.” (MogheriniSpeech170914c)

This kind of outlining is also interestingly highlighted in the way in which Ashton brings up the promise of aid in the context of the newly elected government of the Democratic Republic of Congo:

“Initial impressions [on the new government] are positive. But this must be proven by action, not just commitments. We have at our disposal significant sums for development assistance which we are keen to use. Our commitment is to ensure these are used as productively as possible to meet the challenges of the future.” (AshtonSpeech120612)

This requirement of proof further emphasises the conditional nature of support offered by the Union. This is echoed in the way that Ashton talks about accountability as part of her renewed Neighbourhood Policy in 2011:

“In the renewed Neighbourhood Policy we developed the principle of mutual accountability, of holding each other accountable for what we did: that we will support the development of democracy, the development of human rights, support for civil society, support for the growth of economic life, and in return we would expect that accountability would show that the resources have been used in the right way.” (AshtonRemark111213)

In the analysed material, threats are typically made in a conditional form. For example, Ashton states that “[i]n the short-term, reintroducing a travel ban for President Lukashenko, and extending that ban to further named individuals, is certainly an option if detainees are not released” (AshtonSpeech110119c), and Mogherini, questioning the credibility of elections in Venezuela, reiterates that the Union “will re-assess the situation with Member States after the elections” and “will consider the possibility of further appropriate measures to react to actions that would undermine democracy, the rule of law and human rights in the country” (MogheriniSpeech180502b).

Unlike the conditional promises in the discourses of the High Representatives, these threats are often presented as uncertain, as the above examples demonstrate. The Union has ‘an option’ and ‘will consider’ negative actions, rather than guaranteeing that it will take action if the other actor does not follow the suggested route. Even though the optional nature of the threat is usually emphasised, this is not always the case. For example, with respect to North Korea, Ashton is much more firmer when she states that the Union “remain[s] determined to take action in response to new provocations” and describes the new measures prepared against North Korea (AshtonRemark130313b).

How the conditionality is used in the process of integration into the EU also displays aspects of negative use of power, as Mogherini demonstrates with Turkey:

“[i]t’s clear that moving from rhetoric to action on the issue of the death penalty would be a clear signal that Turkey does not want to be a member of the European family, neither a member of the Council of Europe, which it is now, nor of the EU. Membership means sharing the values Europe stands for – capital punishment is for sure not one of them.” (MogheriniRemark161122c)

In this example, Mogherini clearly indicates that certain policy choices would mean that the possibility of the Union membership is withheld from Turkey. This is already alluded to earlier by Ashton when she underlines how “[w]e know that Turkey, as a candidate country, needs to aspire to the highest possible democratic standards and practices” (AshtonRemark130612c). This kind of conditionality has the undertone of threat of withholding EU membership if certain conditions are not met. Regarding the Balkans, Ashton states this conditionality clearly:

“As I stressed everywhere: progress on the path to the EU depends on the commitment to reform at home. On human rights, the rule of law and regional co-operation.” (AshtonSpeech100310)

In this way, the line between threats and promises as means of foreign policy is often blurred in the Union's foreign policy discourses. The promises of opportunities for deepening cooperation are mixed with the conditional threats of withholding the cooperation. This is a typical feature, especially for the enlargement and the neighbourhood policies but also appears elsewhere in the Union's foreign policy spheres, including development policies.

Pressure

The High Representatives often discuss putting 'pressure' on other actors in order to influence their behaviour. Solana relates how "[t]he pressure on the Sudanese Government needs to be stepped up" (SolanaSpeech070329), Ashton describes how in Syria "we must continue pressure on the regime – bilaterally and internationally" (AshtonSpeech111012), and Mogherini states how in Myanmar "[t]he UN report confirms the need for pressure and engagement to make the situation change as soon as possible" (MogheriniSpeech180913b), adding that this has been exactly what the Union has been doing to date. While initially these references to pressure sound like forms of threats or perhaps punishment, what is referred to in the analysed discourses as 'pressure' is actually more nuanced. For example, when Solana states that the Union has to continue to pressure the Chinese authorities on human rights issues in Tibet (SolanaSpeech080408), he is primarily referring to the upcoming human rights dialogue meeting, indicating more of an approach that relies on authority power than actual threats or punishment. However, when Ashton declares that the Union is "committed to maintaining the pressure on Iranian authorities to comply with their international obligations" (AshtonSpeech120201c), she clearly refers to the sanctions applied by the Union.

Furthermore, what it actually means when the High Representatives refer to having used 'pressure' is not always exactly clear. For example, when Mogherini relates that she "would like to stress the fact that the bilateral agreement was reached after our pressure and our meetings together with both the Bangladesh and the Myanmar sides" (MogheriniSpeech171212c), it is unclear whether she refers to some forms of non-authority based use of power, or simply to the use of authority in the political dialogue with the two parties. What is clear is that pressure is seen as an effectual part of the Union's foreign policy approach, as the above quote from Mogherini about the agreement between Bangladesh and Myanmar demonstrates. When Mogherini describes the Union's convening power as "quite remarkable" (MogheriniSpeech180313d), she also refers to the Union's ability to effectively pressure other actors when needed.

There tends to be a negative undertone in the use of pressure with connotations of coercion, although this is not absolute, as the last example also demonstrates: the

facilitation of the political dialogue between Bangladesh and Myanmar can be seen to rely just as easily on positive authority than a negative form. In the Union's foreign policy discourses, pressure is used to refer to a host of ways to influence others, including both authority-based condemnation and persuasion, efforts to isolate other actors by influencing third parties to cooperate against them, sanctions, and other punishments, including the withholding of rewards, threats of using these means, or any combination of the aforementioned. Most typically, pressure utilises a mixture of the means of power, applied in concert. For example, when Mogherini states that the Union "will maintain in this way the direct and indirect pressure on DPRK" (MogheriniSpeech180313d), she is referring to the implementation of sanctions, outreach to third countries to also implement sanctions, and to the 'critical engagement' policy that all include the possible continuance of dialogue to the sanctions. Hereby, the Union's approach to applying pressure on others represents one key characteristic in the Union's foreign policy operational code belief system: the mixing of different means for effective outcome.

Comprehensive approach and mixing of means

The mixing of different means forms one of the key themes of the Union's foreign policy discourses on the use of power. This is in line with how Fiott and Simón have noted the EU's unique 'comprehensive' or 'integrated' approach to international crises: using diplomatic channels and deployment/humanitarian aid together with the deployment of civilian and military missions (Fiott & Simón 2019, 274–75). For example, Tiilikainen (2011) has argued that, in the Union's self-understanding, the main asset of the EU's power is seen to be the comprehensive establishment of its available instruments. This belief also appears prominently in the High Representative's speeches. It is further connected to what is referred to, and often emphasised as, the *comprehensive approach* needed to address issues. In this approach, different means are specifically used together in a combination. This comprehensive approach grows into a significant component of the Union's foreign policy operational code during Ashton's term in office and maintains its prominence in Mogherini's discourse.⁷⁴ In addition to wider beliefs about the most effective ways to pursue the Union's goals, this belief also affects how the utility and role of different means are constructed, underlining the importance of mixing different means in practice.

⁷⁴ See discussion on the development of comprehensive approach as I-2 belief in Chapter 7.2.

The comprehensive approach is presented as necessary, especially because of the multifaced nature of the issues faced by the Union. For example, Ashton explains the need for a comprehensive approach regarding terrorism issues thusly:

“The establishment of Al Qaeda in Yemen is a symptom of deeper problems. The linkages between economic, political and security challenges are crucial. This is why we need a comprehensive approach.” (AshtonSpeech100119d)

This thinking is prominent when Ashton and Mogherini discuss crises, and the comprehensive approach as a linked use of different means is typically underlined in connection to the Union’s crisis management. But similar thinking, where different means of power are seen as best functioning in combination and used together, is a wider theme in the Union’s foreign policy discourses. The ‘twin track’ or ‘double-track’ approach to negotiations with problematic actors such as Iran and North Korea, where sanctions are combined with diplomatic engagement and even promises of rewards, is another face of this same strategic thinking.

With Iran, the EU has applied what is referred to in speeches as a ‘dual track’ (AshtonSpeech100119b), ‘double-track’ (AshtonSpeech110309b), or ‘twin track approach’ (AshtonSpeech120201c). Ashton notes how in negotiations with Iran, it is “important to put the pressure on, important to be ready to start the dialogue and that we have made clear not least in our commitment to move forward with dialogue as we can” (AshtonRemark101027). The approach “combines pressure with dialogue”, with the objective “to engage Iran in a phased approach of confidence building, leading to meaningful negotiations on the nuclear programme” (AshtonSpeech110309b). In negotiations with Iran, Ashton emphasises the combination of maintaining the dialogue, including promises of cooperation and rewards should Iran agree to the Union’s propositions, and sustaining the pressure, including sanctioning Iran if the negotiations do not progress. In addition to threats, punishment and promises, authoritative power and persuasion through arguments are also part of this combination, as Ashton’s description of the negotiations in 2011 demonstrates:

“I’ve twice chaired the nuclear talks with Iran, spending in each case two days trying to make progress on proposals that we have set forward to persuade Iran to turn away from the path of nuclear weapons, to recognise that it could be a civil nuclear power, and to engage with them in that process.” (AshtonRemark110322)

In this approach, the cooperation offered to Iran is not only limited to the nuclear issues at the table. Ashton states that “[t]he EU has always expressed its readiness to

address, in the framework of a confidence building process, other issues of concern, which may be of interest for Iran, for instance co-operation in the area of counter-narcotics” (AshtonSpeech120201c).

A similar approach is taken with North Korea, although Mogherini refers to it as a “policy of critical engagement” (MogheriniSpeech180313d). She explains that the Union “stand[s] for maximum pressure and dialogue”, adding that “[b]oth are necessary to avert the danger of war” (MogheriniSpeech180313d). This is in line with how Ashton earlier emphasises that the Union, together with the US, has “consistently made clear that if the DPRK took a path of engagement and positive change, we would respond” (AshtonRemark130313b). As with Iran, the Union’s approach to North Korea combines sanctions with diplomatic engagement and conditional promises of rewards if North Korea changes its policies.

In North Korea, Ashton also calls attention to how the Union continues to provide assistance to the people of North Korea on “purely humanitarian grounds” (AshtonRemark130313b), despite the conflictual policies towards the ruling regime. This is another combination typical for the Union’s foreign policy in the discourses of the High Representatives: Using pressure and conflictual means against the ruling regime, while simultaneously emphasising the support, both symbolic and material, for civil society or the opposition. Ashton describes the principles of this approach when recalling the condemnation of Belarus for its suppression of the opposition:

“I have raised that example to show that this policy of engagement, a policy where we work with the people on the ground but are clear in our stance against regimes is so important.” (AshtonSpeech110606c)

Ashton repeatedly underlines this combination approach with Belarus (see e.g., AshtonSpeech110119c, AshtonRemark110322, AshtonSpeech110511, AshtonStatement110927), calling it “a policy of critical engagement” where “we continue to target those responsible for the crackdown, and those closely associated, with measures and, at the same time, we engage with the people, with civil society and the opposition” (AshtonSpeech120911). Engaging with the people in this case means “intensified dialogue with, and support, for civil society and citizens” (AshtonSpeech110119c) and, in practical terms, “continuing with direct assistance to NGOs, the media and students, and in increased effort to enhance mobility for citizens wishing to travel to the EU” (AshtonSpeech110119c). Furthermore, this kind of support, the authority-based symbolic support granted by the High Representatives and other actors representing the EU, should not be overlooked, either.

From the perspective of the utility of different means, the important aspect here is the belief that the conflictual means, most often sanctions against the regime,

require simultaneous support to the civil society or the opposition in order to work effectively. The combination underlines how the ruling regime, and not the people of the country, are those that the Union opposes. This is apparent in the way in which Ashton describes sanctions against Syria, at the same time underlining the aforementioned symbolic support:

“We will remain steadfast and determined to support the people of Syria. Our sanctions are not directed against them but against the regime and those supporting it. We continue to send a message to the people of Syria that we will help them achieve their aspirations and will mobilize our assistance and improve our trade and economic links as soon as we see that genuine transition begins.”
(AshtonSpeech111012)

In general, combining different means is a recurring theme in the Union’s foreign policy discourses. Besides the forms discussed here, this combination of means emerges in the way other means of power are discussed, for example, as we have seen with conditional promises as well as the use of sanctions discussed previously. It seems that the comprehensive approach is not simply an ideal raised in the Union’s strategy papers but also an institutionalised belief concerning the utility of foreign policy means in general.

Soft power and institutional power

Soft power and utilising international institutions both figure in the speeches of the High Representatives as means for advancing the Union’s interests. Both represent a form of the indirect use of power that falls outside the scope of the notion of causal power’s six categories. While soft power can serve as a resource or a vessel of authority power, its use is nonetheless not reduced to mere authority power. More often, it appears as a way of influencing others indirectly and constitutively (see Barnett & Duvall 2005). Exercising control over others through international institutions, through their rules and procedures, on the other hand represents an indirect form of power that Barnett and Duvall define as *institutional power* (Barnett & Duvall 2005, 51). Both soft power and institutional power play a notable role in the Union’s foreign policy beliefs regarding usable means to advance interests, with institutional power also appearing as a major element of the Union’s foreign policy operational code in general, too.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ About institutional power’s role in the Union’s strategic thinking, see also Chapter 7.

Soft power is defined by Joseph Nye, who originally developed the concept in his book ‘Bound to Lead’ (J. S. Nye 1990), as the ability to get what one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payments (J. S. Nye 2004, x). Whereby, soft power works through co-opt rather than command, persuading others to want the outcomes that the persuader wants (J. S. Nye 2004, 5–11). This resembles the already discussed persuasion as K. J. Holsti (1964) defines it.⁷⁶ However, there are two major differences. First, while persuasion can be based on anything ranging from authority to logical arguments, soft power is based specifically on attraction. According to Nye, soft power is based on the attractiveness of the organisation’s or country’s culture, political ideals, and policies (J. S. Nye 2004, x). Second, while persuasion as Holsti approaches it is direct and causal, soft power is indirect and long-term (Hill 2016, 143).

Soft power is often connected to public diplomacy, which serves as a means to promote the attractive aspects of an actor’s culture, ideals, and policies for a larger audience. Mogherini raises public diplomacy as one of the key areas of implementation of the Global Strategy (MogheriniRemark161122). She notes how the Union has positive stories “of reforms against corruption and innovative start-ups, stories of reconciliation or economic growth” and emphasises that “[t]he future of our Union will also depend on our capacity to tell these stories, explaining the facts and reviving the passion for our European project” (MogheriniRemark161122). It is exactly these kinds of stories, where the main themes are peace and economic prosperity, that can be seen to form the basis for the attractiveness of the Union’s model and thus the basis of its soft power.

While the attractiveness of the Union’s model is recurrently raised in the analysed speeches, the operationalisation of soft power is rarely discussed by the High Representatives, with the above quoted Mogherini’s comment being one of the few examples where the High Representative directly discusses the building and utilisation of the Union’s soft power. More often this arises in the context of countering negative narratives on the EU that are spread by other actors, as is the case in Mogherini’s speech referenced above. Ashton makes a similar comment regarding the Eastern neighbourhood of the Union in 2014:

“We need to continue to broaden our engagement with different groups and society, to combat misinformation about the nature of the agreements with the European Union [...] We need to take these messages out and to use our

⁷⁶ See Chapter 3.5., as well as discussion about the utility of authority above.

Delegations to enhance what we call public diplomacy, countering some of the negative messages” (AshtonRemark140211)

Not all use of authority in the analysed material represents the direct use of causal power. The normative statements of the High Representatives also rely on the authority of the Union but influence others in a more indirect way. When, for example, Ashton demands that universal human rights must be respected (e.g., AshtonSpeech100119b), she also uses the authority of the Union to promote these values as well as the goals and policies that are in line with them. Ashton states that “[d]efence and promotion of human rights around the world is a key component of the EU’s foreign policy” (AshtonSpeech120612d) and that “[p]romoting and protecting the universal rights of freedom of religion, belief and sexual orientation are central to the EU’s approach” (AshtonSpeech111213b). Mogherini similarly claims that “work on human rights lies at the core of our foreign policy”, defining who the European Union is (MogheriniSpeech161213b). Similar statements of commitment to the promotion of normative values such as human rights and democracy are common in the analysed speech material, highlighting the normative work the Union is doing.

Similarly, much of the condemnation statements presented by the High Representatives are normatively based on the status of human rights, international law, and the rules-based international order as shared, universal norms. They promote certain normative values, as well as the identity of the Union as a promoter of these values, by identifying and condemning actions that are opposed to them. Thus, indirect use of authority power, connected to normative statements, can be both positive and negative.

Common actions that spark condemnation are violations of international law and human rights. For example, when Ashton voices the Union’s concern over the violent suppression of demonstrations in Iran, she emphasises that “[t]he use of violence against demonstrators seeking to exercise their freedom of expression and rights of assembly is not acceptable” (AshtonSpeech100119b). This can also be done on a more general level, as in this reference to international law by Ashton:

“It is unacceptable that 80 States still criminalise same sex relations between consenting adults, and that seven even foresee the death penalty. This is incompatible with international human rights law.” (AshtonSpeech120417)

These normative statements have both a function of soft power and a function of institutional power. On the one hand, they seek to constitute the attractiveness of the Union as an ethical actor, an actor whose foreign policy is built on universal values like human rights. On the other hand, they seek to shape the normative structures of

international relations, as well as what is considered ‘normal’ in the international society. This represents one way of controlling other actors through institutional rules, by utilising these institutional rules and norms to steer and constrain.

Besides bilateral dialogues and meetings, multilateral diplomacy and bolstering the regulatory frameworks of the international system also have a major role in the material. Using power through international institutions and structures appears as one of the characteristic aspects of the Union’s foreign policy operational code.⁷⁷ The weight that the Union places on the international institutions is shown in comments such as Mogherini’s emphasis that:

“there is, there will be, and there cannot be any doubt about the EU’s full support to a multilateral global governance, based on international law, on human rights, and on strong international institutions” (MogheriniSpeech170704b)

In practice, this is apparent in numerous mentions of how the Union proposes resolutions and initiatives, for example in the UN, as well as the importance afforded to these propositions as the Union’s response to the issue and hand. One example is clear when Ashton raises the renewal of mandates for various UN Rapporteurs as “real successes” of the Union (AshtonSpeech110606c) and Mogherini recalls that the EU has sought to prevent a new escalation in Syria “mainly with our work in the Security Council of the United Nations” (MogheriniSpeech180313b). A large part of the actions undertaken by the Union seem to, at least in the speeches of the High Representatives, occur in the international organisations and the forums of multilateral cooperation. It should also be noted how especially Ashton and Mogherini tend to refer to international organisations when they mention important partners. Ashton, for example, lists the Secretary Generals of the UN and the NATO, as well as NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, among the key relations for the Union (AshtonRemark110322).

The importance afforded to international organisations, especially in a prominent share of Ashton’s and Mogherini’s discourses, is a sign of the considerable role that indirect power plays in the Union’s operational codes. Working in coordination and cooperation with international organisations is often emphasised in the speeches. But the Union also works through them, using the institutional structure of international cooperation as a means of indirect, institutional power. The Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration are examples of this kind of approach: Institutional frameworks for cooperation that, according to Mogherini, “bring forward the European vision on migration” (MogheriniSpeech180313). Mogherini emphasises

⁷⁷ See Chapter 7.

how achieving the goals of the Global Compacts “will need a strong UN coordination under the leadership of the IOM [International Organisation for Migration] and the UNHCR [UN Refugee Agency] under the respective compacts” (MogheriniSpeech180313). Hereby, cooperation and policies happen in coordination under international organisations, ultimately fostering a European vision. By promoting the Global Compacts as international frameworks for managing migration, the Union indirectly steers the policies of other countries by establishing institutional constraints that benefit its own interests.

When the Union seeks to use isolation to pressure another actor, as it does in cases such as North Korea and Syria, it also utilises institutional frameworks for international cooperation. To succeed in this endeavour, some direct use of authority is typically required, as can be seen, for example, in the way in which Ashton states that the Union has “done everything possible to build a growing international consensus to isolate the [Syrian] regime” and has “worked hard on the international scene, stepping up contacts with key international partners to isolate further the regime and its supporters” (AshtonSpeech111213c). The Union extensively places its trust in international organisations, primarily the UN, whose sanction regime typically forms the core of the Union’s own sanctions and whose resolutions strengthen any pursued isolation. The “real and operational international consensus” (AshtonSpeech120612b) needed to isolate the problematic countries in both cases is usually sought within the UN framework. Other examples of this kind of cooperation against others that have significant institutional aspects include suspending Libya from the Human Rights Council (see AshtonSpeech111213b) and sanctions against Iran (see AshtonSpeech120201c).

This all demonstrates the variance of means utilised in the EU foreign policy operational code, a variance that goes beyond direct, causal means of power. While an examination of how direct use of power is constructed in the speeches of the High Representatives highlights some compelling characteristics of EU foreign policy, at least as pertinent is the utilisation of its institutional frameworks and indirect power. We will return to further discussion of the role of international institutional frameworks in the Union’s operational code from a more strategic point of view when discussing I-1 and I-2 beliefs in Chapter 7.

6.2 Summary: Beliefs about the Utility and Role of Different Means

Examining how the utility of different means of power is constructed in EU foreign policy discourses serves as a starting point for analysing the Union’s operational code belief system. I-5 beliefs map the selection of tools available for the EU to

pursue its foreign policy interests, and how they can be used. The key beliefs concerning this can be summed up as follows:

I-5 What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Use of authority power prominent element, used in positive, negative and neutral forms	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Economic aid, material support and deepening cooperation main forms of offered reward	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Supporting development is emphasised when giving support (structural foreign policy)	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Sanctions and withholding cooperation main forms of threats and punishment	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Conditionality a major element in use of promises, rewards, threats and punishment	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Diplomacy and dialogue utilised	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Combining different means as a comprehensive approach a characteristic element	Ashton, Mogherini
Combining different means present to some extent	Solana
Soft power linked to normative values a recurring element	Ashton, Mogherini
Institutional, indirect power a major element	Ashton, Mogherini

Regarding the means of power, the quantitative VICS analysis demonstrated a common approach that was present in the speeches of all three High Representatives. This approach strongly favours *authority* as a form of power, while simultaneously leaning towards *cooperative* rather than conflictual means. The uniformity of the discourses of the High Representatives here suggests an institutionalised strategic culture guiding the choices in the Union's foreign policy.

The qualitative analysis has offered a more detailed and complex picture. The qualitative analysis also provides a basis for arguing that there is an institutionalised EU foreign policy strategic culture, with the High Representatives displaying fairly uniform approaches to means of power, at least concerning direct causal power. The elements of this strategic culture, however, would appear as more complex than simply the dominance of authority power and cooperative inclination.

Authority as a form of power clearly has a major role in the Union's foreign policy. Its importance might be further strengthened in the material because of the limitations of the High Representative's role as the spokesperson of the Union. The manner in which the use of different means of power is described in the speeches,

nevertheless indicates the importance of authority for the Union's practice of foreign policy in general and not only for actions of the High Representatives. The qualitative analysis offers a more varied picture of the Union's use of authority, demonstrating variations where authority is used in a number of different ways to influence others, including symbolic support, persuasion, condemnation, and making of demands. Furthermore, the role of both negative and neutral forms of authority power appears as more important than what VICS analysis would initially indicate. The role of negative authority in the forms of demands and condemnation appears significant in the qualitative analysis, as does the use of authority in forms where neither a positive nor negative tone is identifiable.

Promises of support, as well as rewards given, feature prominently in the speeches and appear to form a notable part of the Union's foreign policy. Here, *conditionality* appears as a major element and support is often rewarded conditionally and targeted to advance the Union's structural foreign policy goals. This support also takes the form of the security and military assistance of other countries, contrary to the Union's image of purely 'civilian power'. The deepening of cooperation with the Union is also typically treated as a form of reward that can be offered conditionally in order to influence the development and behaviour of other countries.

Negative non-authority power is primarily employed in the form of different *sanctions*, especially as economic sanctions and withholding of cooperation. Here, conditionality blurs the academic distinction between the positive and negative use of causal power, especially regarding the withholding of benefits used as a form of punishment. The Union often uses conditionality of support and cooperation as a form of threat, thus displaying a more coercive side to its policy. Overall, the use of conditionality appears as a prominent element in the Union's foreign policy, which demonstrates that the Union as an actor is not exclusively cooperative but also capable of employing more conflictual means of power. This issue is discussed further in the next chapter in connection to I-2 beliefs.

Another prominent element in the Union's strategic culture is the use of different means in combination, as a *comprehensive approach* to foreign policy. Ashton's and Mogherini's speeches are especially characterised by an approach in which the means of power are used in combination. This understanding that means like sanctions are more effectual when used in combination with other means of power, is also directly discussed and emphasised in their discourses.

The Union further relies heavily on the institutional frameworks of the international order in its foreign policy, displaying tendencies towards the use of indirect *institutional power* through institutional arrangements as well as productive power through social processes. Especially in the latter form, normative power's mechanism of shaping the discourse of what is normal is focal, and the analysed

material shows that the Union seeks to shape the understanding of normal in the international system. In the forms of institutional and *soft power*, these demonstrate the importance of the indirect use of power for the Union.

Indeed, the qualitative analysis also indicates how much of the Union's use of authority power, for example, is, in the terms suggested by Barnett and Duvall (2005), *institutional*, *structural*, and *productive*. In addition to the causal use of authority power in direct interaction with specific actors that VICS tracks, the Union actively constitutes international norms and utilises both of these normative frames, as well as institutional structures, to influence other actors indirectly.

7 Cooperation or Hostility? Beliefs about the best approach (I-1, I-2)

This section of the analysis examines the beliefs that concern the best ways to approach others in international relations as well as the most effective ways for the European Union to pursue its goals. The chapter covers belief types I-1 and I-2 of the George construct framework. To a considerable extent, these beliefs define what kind of actor the Union constructs itself to be and what kind of roles it tends to take in international arenas. I-1 beliefs, concerning the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action, deal with the *strategic* approach regarding others in the political universe. I-2 beliefs, concerning how the goals are pursued most effectively, move towards a more *tactical* level and offer models for the most effective actions in relations with others.

7.1 Strategic Approach to Political Action

I-1 beliefs concern the best approach for pursuing one's interests on a strategic level. The overall theme with both quantitative and qualitative analysis concerns whether the subject primarily seeks cooperation or conflict with other actors.

In the VICS analysis, index I-1 measures the subject's tendency towards either cooperation with, or conflict towards, other actors by comparing the proportions of coded utterances with respect to the subject's own actions. The larger proportion of utterances where the EU's own actions are described with cooperative verbs, is thus interpreted as a sign of cooperative tendencies in the operational code.

The qualitative analysis similarly examines the subject's approach to political action in the context of cooperation or conflict. Here, the coding framework that distinguishes different expressions of cooperative and conflictual approaches of EU foreign policy serves as a basis for a more profound analysis of the elements that define the Union's foreign policy operational code. These elements connect different forms of cooperative and conflictual expressions in the material, constructing meanings for cooperation and conflict in the foreign policy discourses.

First, we discuss perceptions of the international system as deeply **interdependent** and, in connection with this, the general importance of

partnerships in the Union’s external relations. The following two sections address cooperation through **multilateralism**, a key theme of the Union’s foreign policies, and a connected theme of **taking others into account**. After examining these themes, we discuss how cooperation is validated for its **instrumental value** in the Union’s foreign policy discourses, before turning to cases of **cooperation with problematic actors**, cases that further demonstrate the cooperative tendency of the Union’s foreign policy operational code. Lastly, we investigate the less prominent **role of the conflictual approach** in the Union’s operational code.

7.1.1 I-1 Approach to political action: Quantitative analysis

<p>I-1 The best approach for selecting goals for political actions</p> <p>Quantitative VICS analysis</p> <p>Conflictual <-> Cooperative</p> <p>(-1.00) – (+1.00)</p>	
Solana	+ 0.58
Ashton	+ 0.52
Mogherini	+ 0.51

In the VICS analysis, the Union appears as a distinctively cooperative actor. When all the speeches of a High Representative are processed as a single research unit, VICS indices regarding the beliefs concerning the direction of strategy are practically uniform among the three High Representatives analysed, showing a moderately cooperative tendency on a scale of (-1.00) – (+1.00). There are, in other words, no major differences between Solana (0.58), Ashton (0.52), and Mogherini (0.51) in this regard. This indicates a shared operational code in which cooperation is seen as a primary form of interaction with others and conflictual forms of power are only used reservedly.

In the whole of the material, there are 637 verb-based utterances where the subject is coded as Self and the action is coded as conflictual (-3, -2, -1). The most prominent targets of these utterances indicating a conflictual approach are Syria (59 coded utterances), Israel (53), Iran (50), Russia (49), and North Korea (32).⁷⁸ In addition, 52 conflictual utterances where the subject is coded as Self were targeted at an unspecified other actor. It should be noted that these utterances cover all types

⁷⁸ One verb-based utterance can have several targets, but these are still coded as one utterance. The sum of the targets of all conflictual utterances where the subject is coded as Self is 667.

of conflictual statements, for example, expressions of qualified condemnation. This is the case with Israel, where many speeches of the High Representatives include protests of that country's policies and actions in the occupied territories. Because of this, these numbers should not be interpreted as a straightforward measurement of the Union's hostility towards target countries. The conflictual approach includes criticism of certain policies taken by others without necessarily viewing them as enemies. What these numbers do tell us is that the concentration of conflictual means to specific few actors with no single actor, other than the aforementioned five, being a target of more than 30 conflictual utterances.

In the 2057 verb-based utterances where the subject is coded as Self and the action is coded as cooperative (+3, +2, +1), the most prominent targets are the United Nations (207 coded utterances), the United States (103), Russia (100), Palestinians (88), and Syria (76). In addition, 142 utterances were targeted at unspecified actors.⁷⁹ What this displays is how both the support (both symbolic and concrete) given by the Union, as well as the Union's application of a cooperative diplomatic approach – even in the context of problematic actors such as Russia and Syria – affect the overall quantitative VICS score.

While the scarcity of material for Solana makes a yearly analysis of his VICS scores impossible,⁸⁰ the speeches of Ashton and Mogherini allow a more detailed examination of their operational codes focused on single years in office. A more comprehensive examination shows a considerable variation in the yearly scores during the terms of both Ashton and Mogherini, with the yearly scores ranging from 0.69 (2010) to 0.43 (2011) with Ashton and 0.73 (2016) to 0.45 (2018) with Mogherini. Ashton's first year in office (2009) would have an even higher score of 0.76, but due of the low number of speeches that year, this result should be interpreted with caution.⁸¹

This demonstrates first and foremost how different topical events affect the VICS analysis: For example, in the year 2011, the increased number of verb-based utterances about Self coded as conflictual (-3, -2, -1) is partially related to topical events in Syria and Belarus. Utterances targeted at either Syria or Belarus alone, are

⁷⁹ Sum of all the different targets of cooperative utterances where the subject is coded as Self is 2493.

⁸⁰ See Chapter 5.

⁸¹ As mentioned in Chapter 5, Ashton had a considerably fewer analysed speeches in 2009 as it was her first year in office. This amplifies the effect individual issues can have for universal VICS scores and partially explains the exceptional scores of that year. Because this was her first year in office might also have resulted in the speeches having a generally more positive tone. Mogherini's first year (2015) similarly had fewer analysed speeches, but in her case, the weighting effect is more evident in philosophical beliefs than instrumental ones.

responsible for 54 (37%) of the 147 verb-based utterances about Self coded as conflictual in 2011. In Belarus, the increased repression of democratic and human rights following the presidential elections in December 2010, including the violent crack-down of protests against the results of those elections, brought about protests and sanctions from the EU. In Syria, the ruling regime answered large-scale protests with violence and repression that similarly were answered with condemnation and sanctions by the EU. Both developments show as increased amount of negative attention to these countries in the 2011 speech material.

Even with topical variations, the VICS indices for I-1 beliefs clearly remain on the cooperative side of the scale. The quantitative analysis thus points to a consistently shared belief in cooperation as the best approach for the European Union's foreign policy. According to this operational code, a conflictual approach serves the EU only in a limited number of situations, although conflictual forms of power are not entirely absent from the Union's foreign policy toolbox.⁸² This is hardly surprising considering how the support of peace and multilateral cooperation has become a major part of the identity constructed for the Union.

7.1.2 I-1 Approach to political action: Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis supports this broad picture of the primacy of cooperation shared by all three High Representatives. On a general level, it too indicates that a cooperative attitude dominates the EU's foreign policy thinking and how it seeks to interact with and influence others. However, the most compelling finding that the qualitative analysis presents is not whether the cooperative or conflictual approach is constructed as the best choice for the EU foreign policies; rather, the most relevant findings in the analysis demonstrate how cooperation and conflictual approaches are constructed as well as what meanings are given to different strategic approaches.

Many of the beliefs concerning the best approaches to international politics intertwine with beliefs concerning the most effective ways to pursue one's goals. This is especially evident with the cooperative tendency characterising the Union's foreign policy operational code. This tendency is constructed in the analysed speeches simultaneously as a matter of selecting goals for the Union and as an issue regarding the most effective way of pursuing these goals. Because of this, in many sections, this qualitative analysis overlaps with the next part, I-2 beliefs. To reflect on the observations made with quantitative VICS analysis, here, we focus more on the questions of cooperation and conflict, including beliefs concerning the

⁸² See also the more detailed analysis of the means of power in analysis of I-2 and I-5 beliefs in this study.

effectiveness of cooperation and conflict, while in the next part (I-2) we examine the beliefs concerning the more specific ways to pursue one's goals.

Interdependence and partnerships

One of the key beliefs of the EU foreign policy operational code is that the world is deeply interdependent. Both Ashton and Mogherini seem to share this belief wholeheartedly, albeit this discourse is visible to a lesser degree, as a sort of pre-form, in Solana's speeches. This perception raises cooperation as the primary approach to international relations, framing it as both an effective and necessary way for pursuing objectives in interconnected international relations.

Ashton describes interdependence as one of the two most striking features of today's world in 2010:

“Deep interdependence – in political, economic and security terms. Technologies, ideas, diseases, money: everything moves. We are connected in ways we have never been before.” (AshtonSpeech100310)

Accordingly to this analysis, at the beginning of her term as a High Representative Ashton set strategic partners as one of the three key priorities of her term (AshtonRemark101027, see also AshtonRemark140403). She raises the building of a network of strategic relations with key countries and organisations as one of the core objectives for EU foreign policy (AshtonSpeech100310) and, during her term, often emphasises the need to strengthen the Union's relationships with third countries (see e.g., AshtonStatement110927, AshtonSpeech111213b, AshtonSpeech1301023). Investing in a relationship with the BRICS countries is “incredibly important” (AshtonSpeech120201), demonstrating that the EU and Russia have a strong relationship is “critically important” (AshtonSpeech120911) and the partnership with the US is “essential” (AshtonSpeech131023). In 2013, she stated that “[w]e need to operate in a world in which we forge strong partnerships with our Strategic allies such as the US, Brazil, India, China and Russia and with international and regional organisations” (AshtonSpeech131023).

For Ashton, cooperation in terms of partnerships is an essential part of global politics, and all international challenges to peace and security require the ability “to meet them by joining forces and cooperating closely with international, regional and local partners” (AshtonRemark140403). In her discourse, one of the main functions of the structures of the EU's CSDP is “[t]he ability to establish links with other actors, to optimise the overall co-ordination among different actors – or what we loosely call the International Community” (AshtonSpeech100310). Any form of isolation is thus impossible:

“[t]o protect our interests and promote our values we must be engaged abroad. No one can hope to be an island of stability and prosperity in a sea of insecurity and injustice.” (AshtonSpeech100310)

Like Ashton, Federica Mogherini emphasises that the EU needs stronger cooperation with its partners (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech161213). Partnership with international organisations is “the guiding line for our action” (MogheriniSpeech170912) in the field of humanitarian aid. She also underlines the importance of the existing partnerships, for example, by describing the transatlantic partnership as “indispensable for Europe, for America, and for the rest of the world” (MogheriniSpeech181211), and mentioning deepened cooperation with partners like the African Union, Eastern partners as well as individual countries such as Canada and Japan (MogheriniSpeech181211). Global Compacts for migration and building EU-Africa partnership are also focal cooperative partnerships in Mogherini’s discourse (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech170912).

While Javier Solana mentions time and again that the EU seeks to cooperate with various actors and in various situations, the overall importance of cooperation is less apparent in Solana’s discourse. However, when specifically discussing the solving of crises, Solana does reiterate the importance of cooperative international involvement. He states, regarding the Israel/Palestine conflict, that “[t]here is no way out of the crisis without massive international involvement in a number of ways” (SolanaSpeech020409). The Israel/Palestine conflict and the Middle East Peace Process are central concerns during Solana’s term as the High Representative and feature heavily in his speeches in the Parliament. In his discourse, the solution to the situation in the Middle East is the construction of a coalition of peace, first and foremost a question of harnessing various international cooperation efforts (SolanaSpeech020515b) such as the Quartet meetings or regional conferences. It is here that Solana expresses a clear belief in the need for wider international cooperation to solve the conflict, similar to the belief systems of the other two High Representatives, who both emphasise the importance of cooperation as a necessary part of crisis management and the peace processes as well (see e.g., AshtonRemark130313c and MogheriniRemark161122d).

The cooperative emphasis is, in the discourses, deeply intertwined with the identity of the EU as a part of the Union’s essence. Mogherini refers to the EU as “a cooperative power” (MogheriniSpeech170704) and states that the Union’s foreign policy is “cooperative by definition” (MogheriniSpeech181211). Cooperation is an integral part of the Union and its foreign policy:

“[W]e are reliable, and our partners know where we stand. We are predictable, because we are open about our interests and values. We are cooperative, and our friends know that they can always count on us.” (MogheriniSpeech171212b)

Similarly, Ashton claims that at the heart of what the EU does is the “idea that we're here to resolve conflict, to build peace and democracy, to support people's desire for their rights to be respected and for the freedoms they want to enjoy” (AshtonRemark110322). Ashton has described her vision of the EEAS specifically as a conflict-prevention and resolution approach (AshtonSpeech110927) and seems to see building democracy and supporting the transition towards democracy as the mission of the EU:

“I often say that the European Union is there for the long term, that **our job** is to build deep democracy, to support countries in transition and change, to develop effectively the civil society, the politics, their economics so they have long term democratic institutions, long term economic prospects, and we need a service that can achieve that.” (AshtonRemark110322, emphasis by author)

While Solana is not as concerned with the nature of the EU as an actor as much as Ashton, and especially Mogherini, his discourse does not contradict the other HRs regarding the Union's essential cooperative identity. Furthermore, Solana also refers to the ‘European way’ of doing things in foreign policy, even if he more generally discusses what the EU should or could develop into rather than what it already is:

“Europe must be in the front line of those who believe that the answer cannot be expressed simply in the language of security. Dialogue and cooperation must be essential elements of the answer. That is the 'European way' of doing things in foreign policy that I referred to at the beginning as one of which other countries and groups have great expectations.” (SolanaSpeech070329)

Multilateralism

Especially in Ashton's and Mogherini's speeches, the overall cooperative approach of EU foreign policy is linked to the strong role of *multilateralism* and support of a world order based on intergovernmental organisations and international law. The concept of global governance also plays a major part in their discourses; the further strengthening of global governance mechanisms prevails as a self-evident goal for the EU. The choice of pursuing multilateralism thus arises from their discourses as one of the key reasons for the Union to favour generally cooperative approaches in its foreign policy.

Multilateralism and a law-based world order are both presented as strategic objectives⁸³ and as important means to enhance the EU's ability to manage global politics. This central role of multilateralism as both a goal and a favoured means, can be understood as a combination of both I-1 and I-2 beliefs. The utilisation of multilateral frameworks is both a question of cooperative strategic orientation and a belief in them as effectual means for pursuing interests.

In the analysed speeches, the role of multilateralism is much more prominent in later discourses, while playing only a minor role in Solana's speeches, but even he nonetheless repeatedly emphasises the importance of the multilateral system to EU foreign policy. Solana, for example, mentions that the state of the multilateral non-proliferation system worries him, continuing that:

“I think we must strive to re-establish the necessary confidence in the multilateral system to make it effective. It is a cornerstone of international society. I am convinced that the European Union can play a very positive role in re-establishing that confidence and we are working toward that goal.”
(SolanaSpeech070329)

Solana also notes that the financial crisis has demonstrated the need for stronger global institutions (SolanaSpeech081105). Solana regards multilateral cooperation, for example the role of the Quartet, as well as the wider involvement of the international community in the Middle East Peace Process, as important and even imperative (SolanaSpeech031009), although he generally remains reserved regarding the capabilities of international institutions. Concrete cooperation with multilateral organisations such as the UN (see e.g., SolanaSpeech081105) and NATO (see e.g., SolanaSpeech071003) receive a few mentions but are not emphasised to the same degree as in the cases of Ashton and Mogherini.

In the discourses of both Ashton and Mogherini, multilateralism is presented as a crucial element of the EU's foreign policy approaches. According to Ashton, to address the global security challenges, what the EU needs besides comprehensive strategies are “strong international organisations and the rule of law” (AshtonSpeech100310). Accordingly, the EU possesses a “fundamental commitment to multilateralism” (AshtonRemark110119). For Mogherini, in turn, the EU is “an indispensable power for human rights, for multilateralism, for a rules based global order” (MogheriniSpeech161213b) and “the main pillar of the multilateral system based on the UN agencies, on the UN values and principles”

⁸³ “An international order based on effective multilateralism” is also raised as one of the strategic objectives in the 2003 European Security Strategy, and the commitment to UN based global governance also has an important role in the 2016 Global Strategy.

(MogheriniSpeech170704). In Mogherini's discourse, promoting the mechanisms of global governance features as a key aspect of EU foreign policy. She states that:

“We need multilateral institutions to promote rights, to protect our environment, to govern globalisation. We need multilateral institutions to build peace and security worldwide – we could not do this without them, in our multipolar, disordered world.” (MogheriniSpeech181211)

Overall, multilateralism is a highly important theme for Mogherini. For her, “a multilateral global order is possible and it would help us build a more sustainable development world-wide” (MogheriniSpeech180314b). She further claims that the Europeans see multilateralism as “the best way to prevent chaos, conflicts and confrontations in a multipolar world” (MogheriniSpeech180911b), while also noting that the Europeans “know from experience that our national and collective interests are best served through multilateral institutions” (MogheriniSpeech181211). And she demonstrates a belief in the capabilities of the present multilateral institutions:

“The last few years, despite all the crises and all the difficulties inside the United Nations, we have also managed to show the incredible potential of a more cooperative global governance, from the deal on Iran's nuclear programme to the Quartet report on the Middle East, from the Paris agreement on climate change to the sustainable development goals, the international community has delivered on many of the challenges it has faced.” (MogheriniSpeech161213)

The United Nations has a central role in the multilateral world order pursued by the EU, repeatedly emphasised by both Ashton and Mogherini. The EU is specifically committed to “the multilateral system of global governance through the UN and other bodies” (AshtonStatement091202), the support to the UN system is a political objective “very deep in our hearts and minds” (MogheriniRemark170516), and the partnership built with the UN is foremost amongst the EU's strategic partnerships (AshtonRemark140403). The UN is for the EU a “fundamental partner” (MogheriniSpeech181211) and a “natural partner” (MogheriniSpeech161213). Even the European military is, according to Mogherini, “at the service of the UN Charter, at the service of multilateralism” (MogheriniSpeech170704). The UN is also important as a forum through which the EU can promote its values and goals. Ashton describes the UN as a channel through which the EU takes its message to the world (AshtonSpeech110928).

Mogherini strongly promotes the idea of strengthening the UN through reforms. In this vein, she emphasises that the best way forward is not to dismantle global institutions but instead build a stronger and more effective multilateral system

(MogheriniSpeech180913c). In 2016, Mogherini notes that the mandate of the new Secretary-General of the UN, Antonio Guterres, will provide the EU with even greater opportunity to strengthen and reform the system of global governance, noting that “[w]e are entering a phase of change for the United Nations, this is an opportunity for our European Union to be more and more present inside the UN system” (MogheriniSpeech161213). Mogherini believes that the EU has both a duty and an interest to maintain a reformed United Nations at the core of the international system (MogheriniSpeech161213, see also MogheriniSpeech181211).

Another central aspect of the EU’s multilateral world order is *the idea of universal human rights*. This is in line with the Union’s tendency to identify itself as a value-based normative actor (see Cremona 2011; Manners 2002; Sjursen 2006a).⁸⁴ For example, Ashton claims that “[t]he EU is an organisation of values, and it brings those values into the heart of its relationships with its partners beyond its borders” (AshtonSpeech110928), viewing the protection of NGOs and human rights defenders as a core priority of her mandate as the High Representative (AshtonRemark130612). Mogherini regards the EU as the leading global actor in the promotion and protection of human rights (MogheriniSpeech181211c). The EU’s embrace of multilateralism is thus presented as strongly value-based, even if it has its practical side as well.⁸⁵

This self-image of the EU includes a belief that selecting goals and objectives is largely based on universal values, human rights in particular. The EU stands for “the universality of human rights as binding international commitments and norms” (AshtonSpeech111213b). Here, the importance of the UN Human Rights Council is specifically stressed, with for example Ashton promising that “the EU will work hard to strengthen the Human Rights Council and especially its ability to address urgent situation” (AshtonSpeech110309c). The UN and its Human Rights Council, are accordingly, the key platforms for the EU to advance human rights on the multilateral stage (see e.g., AshtonSpeech111213b, AshtonSpeech120417, MogheriniSpeech170704b, MogheriniSpeech171212c).

Another prime example is the consistent support and promotion of the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court (see e.g., AshtonSpeech100616b, AshtonSpeech120417, MogheriniSpeech170704b, MogheriniSpeech180913c). The ICC is believed to hold an important role in the rules-based world order that the EU pursues. The Union has consistently promoted the universal ratification of the Rome Statute, and Mogherini also notes how the EU has actively sought to influence the

⁸⁴ For the evaluation of how this value-based approach is transferred into concrete policy actions, a question that is somewhat beyond the scope of this study, see e. g., (Cremona 2011).

⁸⁵ See the latter discussion of multilateralism as an effective means as I-2 belief.

countries that have decided to withdraw from the Rome Statute (see MogheriniSpeech161213b), urging them reverse their decisions (MogheriniSpeech170704b). The Union's support of the ICC highlights the importance given to international law as a basis of the multilateral world-order in the Union's operational code.

Besides the UN, NATO is another multilateral organisation holding a central position in EU foreign policy discourses. NATO is often presented as a key partner for the EU (see e.g., AshtonSpeech100310, MogheriniSpeech171212b), and improving EU-NATO relations is a major aspect of developing CSDP and European defence capabilities (see e.g., AshtonSpeech101215c, MogheriniSpeech810612). Strengthening European defence is also seen as a matter of strengthening NATO (MogheriniSpeech170704). As with the UN, concrete cooperation with NATO is also routinely mentioned in the discourses (See e.g., AshtonSpeech110309, AshtonSpeech110511, AshtonSpeech111213, MogheriniSpeech180612). NATO's prominent role displays another, less civilian aspect of the EU's emphasis on multilateralism.

Taking others into account

Instead of merely approaching situations from its own perspective, the High Representatives often underline how the EU takes the interests of other actors into account. A good example of this is how Mogherini discusses the crisis in the Korean peninsula where she emphasises not only the unity of the international community, but also the importance of listening to and consulting other relevant actors: "First and foremost, our points of reference are the regional players, our partners, our strategic partners in the region – the Republic of Korea and Japan. But also, as I mentioned, China, the United States, the Russian Federation." (MogheriniSpeech170912b) The Republic of Korea especially needs to have a sense of ownership and to lead the way in solving the crisis, according to Mogherini (MogheriniSpeech170912b).

In both Ashton's and Mogherini's accounts of EU foreign policy, other actors need to be recurrently consulted when planning action. The EU is described as regularly consulting key partners, with, for example, Ashton noting that "[w]e work in close consultation and co-operation with the United States in our areas of common interest" (AshtonSpeech120911), maintaining communication with the State Department "on a daily basis" (AshtonSpeech120911). She further mentions consulting within the E3 + 3 framework on the timing of the EU's next steps with Iran (AshtonRemark130627) and emphasises how the EU needs to closely coordinate its positions and strategy in the Middle East with the US for an effective partnership (AshtonSpeech091215). Besides the US, all three High Representatives

want to include regional actors in the EU's solution for peace in the Middle East. This includes the promotion of the Arab Peace Initiative (see e.g., SolanaSpeech090218b, AshtonSpeech091215, MogheriniRemark161123) and inviting key Arab countries to join the Quartet meetings (MogheriniRemark151028). Similarly, Ashton notes that the EU should seek to consult with Arab countries in all their efforts to solve the situation in Syria (AshtonSpeech111012) and highlights that "[r]egional leadership is a key and should continue" when dealing with the Syrian crisis (AshtonSpeech111213c). In general, recognising and acknowledging the significance of other regional actors is presented as important.

Similarly, sharing responsibilities for global governance with the emerging powers is underlined in the speeches (e.g., AshtonSpeech100310). Important to this belief is an attitude whereby "we are working with them, not at them" (AshtonSpeech110927). This attitude is especially prominent when discussing Africa, where the EU is often presented as keen on sharing actorness with the local actors. For example, Ashton notes that in 2010 she has co-chaired "a meeting on how we bring African leadership into firstly ensuring that we have a strategy for Somalia that we are supporting and encouraging but led from the region and worked with the UN" (AshtonRemark101027). She thus emphasises both local leadership as well as the role of the UN in building a strategy for Somalia.

This move from aid to partnership is even more underlined in Mogherini's discourse on Africa. Mogherini's EU has sought to "put our relationship with Africa on a more equal footing with so many joint initiatives" (MogheriniSpeech171212b). This is especially important in the field of migration, where dialogue and direct discussions with partners is presented as the key mode of interacting (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech170912). Mogherini sums up this partnership approach regarding the External Investment Plan:

"We definitely need to use this money in a sense of partnership with our African friends [...] moving from the concept of aid to the concept of partnership, working together, facing together common challenges and taking advantage together of common opportunities. And also working together on common issues we have close to our heart: multilateralism, a certain way to understand security and peace, climate change, the multilateral agenda." (MogheriniSpeech170912)

By contrast, in Solana's discourse, granting actorness and ownership to others is not strongly apparent. However, this should not be taken as an indicator that Solana sees the role of the EU more as a leader than the other two High Representatives; quite the contrary. This is more a result of Solana's perception of the weaker role of the EU in global politics. In his discourse, other actors are constructed as having ownership and a more prominent role regardless of the EU's actions, and the EU is

very seldomly deemed to occupy a position where it could dictate roles to others. Where Solana's EU is active, as in the Middle East Peace Process, a similar discourse can be found; here Solana emphasises how the solutions and proposals there should be locally-inspired even while deeper international engagement remains essential (SolanaSpeech090218b).

Instrumental value of cooperation

All three High Representatives acknowledge that the cooperative tendency in the Union's foreign policy is not purely altruistic. In addition to the intrinsic value of multilateralism and cooperation in international politics, pragmatic considerations also seem to steer the Union. Cooperative approaches, as well as opting to support others, are also validated by their instrumental effectiveness in promoting the Union's interests. Ashton's comment regarding building the EEAS and a more credible European foreign policy captures this reasoning well:

“At the heart of everything we do lies a simple truth: to protect our interests and promote our values we must be engaged abroad. No one can hope to be an island of stability and prosperity in a sea of insecurity and injustice.”
(AshtonSpeech100310)

The idea that cooperation is necessary for treating the issues of the largest scale is common in the analysed speeches. For Solana, the EU must work with all important actors because “[g]lobal problems require global solutions” (SolanaSpeech081105). According to Mogherini, global alliances are needed to manage phenomena like migration (MogheriniSpeech170912). Hence, cooperation appears as a necessity in a world of global problems.

The security interests of the Union are perhaps the most notable example of the instrumental reasons offered for the preferability of the cooperative approach. Helping others is presented as directly increasing the Union's security, while the support for the stabilisation and democratisation of other countries and regions is motivated partly by the EU's own security interests. As Ashton notes:

“It remains vital for the EU to help its neighbours in their process of transition towards sustainable democracy and to becoming market economies. This process is in our interests since it enhances our own security and prosperity.”
(AshtonStatement110927)

Mogherini describes the security of the partners in Central Asia as also being part of the EU's own security (MogheriniSpeech180314), and comments that “there is no

European security and stability if there is not security and stability in Libya” (MogheriniSpeech180911). Solana similarly argues that the security of the Union and the security of the Balkan region are indivisible (SolanaSpeech000301b). Troubled regions and potential and former conflict zones are seen as potential brewing grounds for security threats, and thus, for example, the peace process in Afghanistan is viewed as “essential” (MogheriniSpeech180314) and stabilisation in Iraq as a “key element” (MogheriniSpeech171212b) for maintaining the EU’s common security. Ashton highlights that the EU’s own security is at risk if they do not help countries like Yemen (AshtonSpeech100119d), and notes that:

“None of us can afford a zone of near-lawlessness stretching from the Horn of Africa to Afghanistan. We would pay the price ourselves.”
(AshtonSpeech100119d)

Indeed, some of those key cooperative policies of the Union, often described as normative or value-based, are also justified in the EU’s foreign policy discourses as security issues. When referring to the EU’s reactions to the United States’ withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran and the accompanying sanctions in 2018, Mogherini notes that the Union has reacted “to protect at the same time our security interests and [...] our economic sovereignty” (MogheriniSpeech180612c), having previously described the deal with Iran as “vital for our collective security” (MogheriniSpeech171212). The stability of the neighbouring regions, for example in the Mediterranean and the Middle East (see e.g., AshtonSpeech110927, AshtonSpeech110202), in the Balkans (see e.g., SolanaSpeech000321, SolanaSpeech070329), as well as in the South Caucasus region (see e.g., AshtonSpeech110606b, SolanaSpeech041013), is a key interest for the EU, making one of the core objectives of the Union “to ensure greater stability and security in our neighbourhood, by promoting political and economic reforms” (AshtonSpeech100310).

The broader value-based foreign policy of the EU is not without its pragmatic side either. Mogherini emphasises that the EU’s work to prevent and address human rights violations is not only a matter of humanity and values but also a matter of interests and strategy (MogheriniSpeech170704b). The change in the nature of security threats has made the EU’s civilian engagement even more important (MogheriniSpeech171212b), but this change has also resulted in the logic of security penetrating the Union’s development and humanitarian aid policies. The ‘European way to security’ does not only mean the emphasis on soft power and civilian means but also that security thinking guides the aid policies and partly turns them into a means of security. Especially the aforementioned political and economic reforms required from others, a key part of the EU’s *structural foreign policy*, are justified as

security issues, with the EU enlargement process and its reform requirements being “the best guarantee for the continued stability and the security of the whole continent” (SolanaSpeech000301b), the promotion of reforms in the neighbourhood being another primary element of regional stability (AshtonSpeech100310), and the “emergence of democratic societies will help to build sustainable security and shared prosperity in our neighbourhood” (AshtonSpeech110309).

Mogherini’s discourse in particular, underlines how the Union’s foreign policy is based on both principles and pragmatism, with the EU’s position on the Iran nuclear deal (see MogheriniSpeech180612c) a prime example of this combination.⁸⁶ This echoes the overarching philosophy of principled pragmatism defining the 2016 Global Strategy (Tocci 2017, 64) but is not a new element in the EU foreign policy discourses. The above remarks demonstrate how the cooperative approach, and selecting cooperation as an objective for foreign policy, is not only viewed as valuable by itself but is also being necessary for the interests of the Union. Therein, the cooperative approach to international politics is constructed as something that has instrumental value for the Union as well as for the intrinsic, moral value often highlighted in the theories built on the Civilian or Normative Power Europe conceptualisation.⁸⁷

Cooperation with problematic actors

Cooperation is naturally preferable with those who share the values that the EU seeks to promote. But the European Union also cooperates, for instrumental reasons, with those who do not always share its values. Indeed, perhaps the most convincing illustration of the overall cooperative alignment of the Union’s foreign policy operational code is evident in the way in which the EU approaches actors that are seen as problematic or antagonistic to the Union’s goals. The most notable examples include China (with Ashton and Mogherini), Turkey (with Ashton and Mogherini), Iran (with Mogherini and to a lesser extent Ashton), and Russia (with Solana and Ashton). Despite the conflictual interests⁸⁸ of these others, the operational code of the EU would nonetheless seem to steer the Union to at least include some cooperative measures in its interactions with them.

⁸⁶ About the EU’s relations to Iran, see ‘Predictability: Cases of Russia and Iran’ in Chapter 8.1., and discussion on Iran in the next subchapter ‘Cooperation with problematic actors’.

⁸⁷ See Chapter 4.2.

⁸⁸ Turkey’s human rights and democracy situation is repeatedly raised as a problem in the speech material. About presentation of China, Iran, and Russia, see discussion on P-1 beliefs in Chapter 9.

The typical reasoning as constructed in the Union's foreign policy discourses is two-fold: On the one hand, the cooperative approach is seen as an effective means to influence the development of the other actor; it is an element of *structural foreign policy*. This reasoning, an I-2 type belief, is discussed more thoroughly later regarding the beliefs concerning the effectiveness of structural foreign policy. On the other hand, the EU needs to maintain good relations with these countries, to pursue its goals in global politics. Mogherini offers a good example of this thinking regarding China when she notes that:

“The European Union and China are two of the great powers of the world of today. We do not always see eye-to-eye; on the contrary, we have some fundamental disagreements that are very evident. But as two global powers, we both understand that our cooperation is essential to address the main challenges we face.” (MogheriniSpeech180911d)

With China, this need for international cooperation is emphasised as one reason for seeking cooperation despite differences, with Mogherini even stating that engagement with China is “an absolute must” to both preserve the multilateral system as well as to make it more effective (MogheriniSpeech180911d). Accordingly, both Ashton (see AshtonSpeech120911) and Mogherini (see MogheriniSpeech180911d) repeatedly point to the various international issues that China is working on in cooperation with the EU, including the E3+3 negotiations with Iran, the fight against piracy, negotiations towards denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, and supporting the Afghan peace process. Even when conflictual interests concern the issue of cooperation, such as development in Africa where Mogherini notes that China's approach comes from a “different starting viewpoint[s]”, she still acknowledges that “engagement with China is key to achieve results on the ground” (MogheriniSpeech180911d). Similarly, Mogherini notes that the EU has a good deal of disagreements with China about trade, pointing out that the EU could choose a conflictual approach and pursue trade wars, but concludes that:

“Dialogue and engagement are the best way forward for us – not just for trade, but on all issues where we disagree with China.” (MogheriniSpeech180911d)

With Turkey, the reasons for cooperation are predominantly linked to EU aspirations of influencing the development of democracy and human rights in the country, in other words they are part of the structural foreign policy of the Union. However, the importance of ensuring Turkey's willingness to cooperate is also raised when justifying why the cooperative approach is maintained despite obstacles. In 2018,

when Mogherini notes that while the negative trend of the human rights situation in Turkey has not been reversed, the EU is still willing to keep all channels of communication open and work to overcome differences with Turkey (MogheriniSpeech180207b). Similar to China, this preference for cooperation with Turkey is partially derived from the support the EU needs to pursue its own interests, as noted for example by Mogherini who notes that “[t]here is much the European Union and Turkey can do together” (MogheriniRemark161122c), mentioning the fight against terrorism, issues of international refugees, as well as Syria, and ensuring the stability of the Caucasus. Ashton also refers to the Syrian crisis, where:

“Regional leadership is key and should continue. The role of Turkey [...] and its decision to impose sanctions is also crucial to weaken the regime.”
(AshtonSpeech111213c)

Regarding Iran, Mogherini mentions how cooperation with Iran can help the EU in facing the threat of Daesh (MogheriniSpeech150909), as well as in the fight against drugs and managing migration issues (MogheriniSpeech171212). But for Ashton and Mogherini, the cooperative approach with Iran is generally constructed more as an effective way of influencing Iran’s own policies. They see the cooperative approach towards Iran in optimistic terms, increasingly so as the negotiations of the deal on Iran’s nuclear program progress and are eventually concluded in the 2015 agreement (JCPOA). Indeed, the nuclear deal, and the cooperative strategy used to achieve it, is something that Mogherini often presents as one of the greatest achievements of EU Common Foreign Policy. The problematic nature of Iran and disagreements with it, especially about human rights issues but also about regional issues and armament building, are acknowledged in the speeches of Ashton and Mogherini both before and after reaching the nuclear deal. But while the use of conflictual authority power via condemnation, and pressure through the United Nations, as well as economic sanctions, are needed to influence Iran (see e.g., AshtonSpeech120201c), negotiations and other cooperative diplomatic means already play a significant role in Ashton’s discourse during the negotiations. And in Mogherini’s speeches, the cooperative approach towards Iran is even more dominant (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech171212, MogheriniSpeech180612c).

Unlike the other two Representatives, Solana is frustrated with Iran and with the nuclear negotiations that do not seem to progress during his term in office, and he consequently places less emphasis on the superiority of a cooperative approach with Tehran. Nonetheless, he is still convinced that the Iranian dossier can be solved through negotiations, arguing that “[w]e want to cooperate with Iran in other subjects, not least the Middle east, and we should do irrespective of the ups and downs in the nuclear issue” (SolanaSpeech061004b). He continues by stating that

while it would be good if the EU were to work more efficiently with Iran in the region, “it is difficult to see Iran as a constructive partner” (SolanaSpeech080130).

Russia presents a somewhat different case, when examining the EU’s approach as it developed in response to global politics and Russia’s own actions. In Solana’s and Ashton’s speeches, Russia is first presented as a difficult but necessary partner, similar to China and Turkey. The shortcomings of Russia’s democracy and human rights situation are recognised, but maintaining cooperation and dialogue is seen as the best way to influence these issues positively. Furthermore, Russia is viewed as an essential partner for the EU in many foreign policy issues (see e.g., AshtonSpeech110606d, AshtonStatement120911). Even while condemning Russia’s conduct in Chechnya, Solana emphasises that:

“Russia is an important strategic partner of the Union. We have to work together. In a mature relationship we have to learn to be frank with each other.”
(SolanaSpeech000301b)

However, the relationship already begins to deteriorate following Russia’s early-2000s actions in Chechnya and continues to deteriorate somewhat as a result of the Russo-Georgian war in 2008. These relations soured even more significantly following the occupation and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014. Already following the events in Georgia in 2008, Solana notes that according to the European Council’s position, the EU must review its relationship with Russia following the crisis, while still mentioning that engagement, although in a united and firm manner, had produced results with Russia (SolanaSpeech080910). Despite the growing tones of conflictuality in the later discourses, Solana notes:

“Although we are at a critical juncture with Russia, there is no alternative to a strong relationship. We need Russia as much as Russia needs the EU and that is why contacts are ongoing.” (SolanaSpeech081105)

Indeed, the declaration on the crisis by the European Council, for example, similarly stressed cooperation with Russia as a key element in enforcing the ceasefire plan. The EU’s response to Russia’s actions in Georgia eventually led to the imposition of only minor sanctions, and the relations between the EU and Russia quickly normalised afterwards (Krasnodebska 2021, 175–76).

Ashton continued along this line, stating that the EU “will continue our engagement [with Russia], building on our common interests while standing firmly by our values” (AshtonSpeech110606d), noting that “Russia remains an essential EU partner, and a challenging one” (AshtonSpeech110606d) and is “sometimes a challenging neighbour, but it remains an important partner of the EU on many

issues” (AshtonStatement120911). The discourse on Russia remains hopeful and cooperation-seeking even while the relationship steadily deteriorates, and Ashton summarises the EU’s relationship with Russia in 2012:

“[W]e work intensively with Russia on international issues. It is not without difficulties, but generally the desire to find common ground and enable the international community to respond prevails.” (AshtonSpeech120201b)

Like the cases of China and Turkey, Ashton continues to emphasise the benefits of having Russia’s support on international issues. She notes that “[w]hen acting together, as strategic partners, the EU and Russia can have a decisive influence on key challenges and conflict situations around the globe” (AshtonSpeech111213d). This is a major incentive for the EU to continue seeking cooperation and refraining from the use of more drastic conflictual means, even while democracy in Russia deteriorates and Russia makes ever more aggressive moves in global politics. While the relationship between the EU and Russia remained merely strained, the Union insisted on seeking cooperation and, only after the annexation of Crimea, “transformed a difficult relationship into a direct confrontation” (Whitman 2015, 20) does the tone of the discourse abandon the emphasis on cooperation.⁸⁹

However, it should be noted that the cooperative approach towards Russia has not always enjoyed complete support from all the Member States. Even though Mogherini took, at least in her speeches in the Parliament, a tougher line towards Russia than her predecessors, often condemning Russia’s actions⁹⁰ and not emphasising the need for cooperation as did Ashton and Solana, she was still criticised for being too lenient during the 2014 Ukraine crisis. For example, Chancellor Merkel has been reported to have been dissatisfied with the ‘soft’ positions adopted by Mogherini as High Representative as the crisis unfolded (Youngs 2017, 66). Moreover, Mogherini’s decision to commission a paper to examine the areas where cooperation with Russia might be restarted in 2015 has been reported to have caused much controversy among many Member States (Youngs 2017, 72). While a cooperative approach is strongly built into the Union’s strategic culture, it is not always uncontroversial.

All these examples still demonstrate a strong preference for a cooperative approach in EU foreign policy. Even with actors that oppose the Union or its goals, cooperation is sought as a default. The Union’s policy disagreements with these problematic actors are not shied away from but the need for cooperation overrides these concerns. This can reasonably be seen as emerging from a general tendency

⁸⁹ See below.

⁹⁰ See below.

that is a master belief in cooperation as the preferred approach for political action that generally guides the European Union's foreign policies.

The role of the conflictual approach

While the cooperative approach dominates the discourses of all three High Representatives, there are also conflictual means of power available for the EU. Most notable among these is the use of authority power to make demands and condemn the actions of others, as well as threatening and punishing others with economic sanctions.⁹¹ Overall, human rights violations and the curtailment of democratic rights are often condemned in the speeches of the High Representatives, and other countries repeatedly face demands to change their behaviour regarding these issues. The Union's reactions to these actions also sometimes include punishing others with sanctions.⁹² However, these individual actions do not usually define the overall tone of interaction with the other in question.

In a limited number of cases, the overall conflictual tone dominates the discourse vis-à-vis the other. Typically, in these cases, the other that is targeted with conflictual means is constructed as a regime ruling the country and not the country itself. In the analysed speeches, others include Lukashenko's regime in Belarus, Qaddafi's regime in Libya, Milosevic's regime in Serbia, and Al Assad's government in Syria as well as North Korea. Russia is also increasingly presented within this frame following the events first in Georgia in 2008 and more clearly after the 2014 annexation of Crimea. There are also, of course, non-state enemies such as terrorists (see e.g., SolanaSpeech031009, SolanaSpeech060502), smugglers, and human traffickers (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech150909, MogheriniSpeech171213c) that are targeted with conflictual means of power and discussed this way.

Serbia, Libya, and Syria are exceptional cases where the EU's High Representatives have openly demanded that the ruling regime should be replaced. Regarding Serbia, Solana notes that "[t]here can be no durable stability in the region as long as Milosevic remains in power" (SolanaSpeech000321) and declares that, as an answer to the resistance to political change in Belgrade, the EU has been working up an overall policy in aide of promoting change (SolanaSpeech000621). Ashton makes a direct demand that Gaddafi must end his regime in Libya and cede power (AshtonSpeech110511). Similarly, she demands that Bashir Al Assad abandon his office in Syria (AshtonRemark1303013c), describing his regime as "brutal" (AshtonSpeech110927) and noting that "Assad has no place in the future of Syria"

⁹¹ For more detailed analysis of these means of power, see Chapter 6.

⁹² More detailed discussion about the EU's use of sanctions as means of power can also be found in Chapter 6, and the effectiveness of sanctions is discussed in Chapter 7.2.

(AshtonSpeech120612b). While Mogherini also demands that Assad's regime must be held accountable for its unacceptable actions in the Syrian conflict (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech180417), she more emphasises the need for a political process to solve the crisis than a conflictual response against the regime.

Both North Korea and Lukashenko's Belarus are targets of EU sanctions, as well as those cases where the overall framing of the Union's action is predominantly conflictual. Besides condemning the nuclear tests of North Korea "in strongest possible terms" (AshtonRemark130313b), both Ashton and Mogherini emphasise the importance of strengthening economic pressure to force the regime in Pyongyang to halt its hostile policies. Lukashenko's regime in Belarus is also targeted with sanctions (see AshtonSpeech110119c, AshtonSpeech110511) in response to its violations of human rights and repressive policies against its own citizens. What distinguishes Belarus from other countries where sanctions are applied in response to human rights violations, such as Cambodia and Myanmar, is the general hostile tone displayed towards Lukashenko's regime. With Belarus, similarly to how Solana speaks about Serbia, the target of the EU's cooperation and support is civil society, methodically separated from the ruling regime.

As previously discussed, the EU's discourses concerning Russia begin as fairly cooperative and gradually become more and more reserved and conflictual. Following the annexation of Crimea, Ashton condemns Russia's actions as breaking international law as well as its own international commitments, in the strictest terms (see AshtonRemark140403). And, while she continues to emphasise positive engagement and use of all diplomatic and political means to stabilise the situation and to arrive at a negotiated way out of the crisis, she also reacts in a manner that can be interpreted as threatening:

"It is important not to underestimate our economic strength and potential of our economic response." (AshtonRemark1400403)

The EU's discourse concerning Russia only develops into a predominantly conflictual one during Mogherini's term. Mogherini condemns Russia's recognition of Georgia's breakaway regions as a violation of international law and stringently denounces Russia's actions in the region (see MogheriniSpeech180612b). Later, Mogherini repeatedly emphasises that the EU does not and will not recognise the illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to the Russian Federation (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech181023b, MogheriniSpeech181211d). In addition to the conflictual use of authority power, the EU also imposes significant sanctions on entities involved in Russia's activities against Ukraine. After the Crimean annexation, the previous emphasis on the importance of cooperation with Russia virtually disappears.

It is apparent in the analysed material that there are very few actors that the EU adopts a predominantly conflictual approach towards. Only very rarely is a conflictual approach presented as the principal orientation towards any specific actor. Even when used, the conflictual means of power rather supplement strategies towards other actors rather than determining them. This also supports the observations in the quantitative VICS analysis about the EU as a predominantly cooperative actor.

However, this is only a part of the picture. A more detailed investigation of the beliefs concerning the most effective means of power shows a more nuanced picture of the operational code belief system. The EU's foreign policy actions seem to be guided by a peculiar approach to how conflictual power behaves and how it should be used effectively. It is this frame, and not just the overall shunning of conflict, that steers the EU towards a model of action often associated with 'civilian' or 'soft' power.

7.2 Tactical Approach to Political Action

I-2 beliefs offer a more detailed look into how the actor believes it can best pursue its goals and what the most effective ways to influence other actors in the political universe are. The quantitative analysis is built on a conceptualisation in which this is understood as a question of the *intensity* of causal power on the cooperation-conflict scale utilised with I-1 beliefs. VICS index I-2 thus measures the intensity of the means of power in the discourses, weighting the utterances based on the scales of Reward-Promise-Appeal and Punish-Threaten-Oppose.

In my qualitative analysis, I have instead focused on how *the most effectual use of means* to influence international politics and to pursue the Union's own goals are constructed in general. The inclination towards a certain means of power, the key question in the VICS-analysis' conceptualisation of intensity, was already discussed in more detail in the analysis of I-5 beliefs concerning the utility and role of different means of power.⁹³ The question of the effectiveness of different means available for the Union is a broader question, and the analysed speeches offer some compelling insights into the beliefs that are not easily reducible to the scale of causal power. On the other hand, the more strategic questions related to a choice between cooperative and conflictual approach were discussed in the analysis of I-1 beliefs. I-2 beliefs concern the middle ground between these levels of detail.

Based on the qualitative analysis of the material, the characteristic elements defining the Union's foreign policy operational code in this regard are beliefs

⁹³ See Chapter 6.

concerning the effectiveness of **multilateralism**, **structural foreign policy**, **use of sanctions**, and **use of conditionality**, as well as a **comprehensive approach** to using different means together simultaneously.

7.2.1 I-2 Intensity of means: Quantitative analysis

I-2 Intensity of means of power Quantitative VICS analysis Conflictual <-> Cooperative (-1.00) – (+1.00)	
Solana	+ 0.30
Ashton	+ 0.25
Mogherini	+ 0.26

When all their speeches are examined together as units of research, the I-2 indices for all three High Representatives position to the middle of the scale of (-1.00) – (+1.00), giving values (0.30) for Solana, (0.25) for Ashton, and (0.26) for Mogherini. The yearly scores range from 0.23 (2018) to 0.33 (2017) for Mogherini and from 0.19 (2011) to 0.33 (2010) for Ashton, if 2009, the year when the score would rise as high as 0.52, is disregarded.⁹⁴ As with I-1 beliefs concerning the direction of strategy, the I-2 beliefs of different High Representatives concerning the best intensity of tactics would seem to be quite uniform. This further suggests that there is a general institutionalised strategic culture directing the use of power in the EU.

While the I-2 scores suggest an operational code with a propensity towards cooperative tactics, they are relatively modest on the scale. Because the I-1 index shows that the Union’s foreign policy distinctively leans towards cooperation, this should be interpreted as a sign of a preference for low intensity in the use of (mainly cooperative) power. It also could be read as a sign of an operational code belief system where more intense action is avoided, marking the Union as an actor that prefers indirect and limited intervention in international politics.

These figures also indicate that the use of authority power, i. e. seeking to appeal to others, as well as using authority to resist or oppose others, would be predominant

⁹⁴ As mentioned before, the year 2009 is somewhat exceptional for Ashton, and her other yearly I-2 scores are considerably lower. This peak can be best explained as a result of the positive tone of her first year in office and the relatively lower number of speeches given that year. Mogherini’s first year in office (2015) has similarly lower number of speeches, amplifying the weight of single issues to universal VICS scores for these years.

in the Union's foreign policy, considering the overall cooperative tendencies visible in the I-1 indices.⁹⁵ While the use of promises and rewards is also present in discourses⁹⁶ and pulls the I-2 indices a little more towards the cooperative end of the scale, the scores are still characteristically cooperative with a low level of intensity of tactics. More direct forms of power, such as using force against others or rewarding others with positive sanctions, are expected to play a lesser role in the behaviour of this kind of actor. It should have internalised the approach of Nye's 'soft power' to an almost archetypal level, seeking the role of a 'normative leader' that influences others with authoritative statements. And this has indeed been the image that has sometimes been fitted on the EU as an international actor. However, the qualitative analysis suggests a more versatile picture would be closer to the truth.

7.2.2 I-2 The most effectual use of means: Qualitative analysis

Belief in cooperation as the primary form of interaction in international relations marks the Union's foreign policy thinking on a tactical as well as strategic level. Besides guiding the general direction of interactions, the overall cooperative tendency also has an instrumental aspect as a more specific type of means to pursue goals in the international system. The sheer number of mentions of cooperating with other actors gives some indication of how useful and effective cooperation as a type of means is seen in the EU's foreign policy belief system.

These beliefs regarding the effectiveness of cooperation have already been discussed in the preceding Chapter 7.1. as these notions overlap with the I-1 beliefs concerning the strategic choice of cooperation.⁹⁷ While it is important to note this more tactical aspect of the Union's cooperative tendency, this general analysis of the construction of cooperation as the most effectual means of foreign policy is not repeated here. Instead, we focus here on the most prominent themes of how this primarily cooperative foreign policy operational code manifests on a more tactical level.

⁹⁵ Examining the I-5 indices indeed confirms that this is the case, especially with Self utterances coded as +1 (Appeal/Support) clearly dominating the discourses of all three High Representatives. See Chapter 6.

⁹⁶ See Appendix 2 and the I-5 categories on Promise and Reward for their percentual appearance in the coded utterances.

⁹⁷ See especially *Instrumental value of cooperation* and *Cooperation with problematic actors*.

Multilateralism as an effective means

Multilateralism and international institutions play a significant role in the operational code of EU foreign policy both in beliefs related to the general direction of political action (I-1) as well as in beliefs concerning the most effective means of pursuing goals (I-2). As previous discussion concerning I-1 beliefs has demonstrated, multilateralism is prominently present in EU foreign policy. This has also been acknowledged in the literature and Caterina Carta (2013), for her part, has similarly noted how multilateralism profoundly informs the EU's foreign policy discourses. While Carta connects this to the EU's value-oriented position and a model of power where the EU sees itself as being able to "better influence the environment if it is loyal to its principles" (Carta 2013, 349), the operational code analysis would suggest that this accentuated role of multilateralism also stems from a causal belief in the effectiveness of multilateralism. In particular, Ashton and Mogherini construct the multilateral approach to world politics as a necessity for the European Union to take effective action in global politics.

The belief in the utilisation of multilateral institutions and the international community as an effective means of pursuing goals stems partially from the need for more coordinated cooperation. The problems that the EU faces cannot be solved by any single actor (AshtonSpeech100310). This belief is demonstrated in the way Ashton notes, regarding resolving the situation in Syria in 2013, that "[s]uccess depends on the willingness of all members of the international community to rally behind a political solution" (AshtonRemark130313c) and when Mogherini mentions the threat posed by North Korea in 2017 that "only a united international community can help build effective solutions" (MogheriniSpeech170912b). Durable solutions to complex issues like migration (see MogheriniSpeech170912, MogheriniSpeech180313) require multilateral cooperation and the involvement of international organisations.

How Mogherini discusses the management of the migration crisis offers one example of how the importance of institutional arrangements and global governance as a means is constructed in EU foreign policy discourses. Multilateral organisations and the development of global governance are presented as essential parts of dealing with migration issues. Mogherini emphasises the role of international organisations, as well as the Global Compacts for migration and for refugees, as the required solution (see MogheriniSpeech170912, MogheriniSpeech171213c, MogheriniSpeech181129b). The UN and the IOM also play an important role (see MogheriniSpeech171213c, MogheriniSpeech180313), and the African Union is viewed as a significant multilateral partner (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech180313) in this framing. What the EU needs, according to Mogherini, is "a strong UN coordination under the leadership of the IOM (International Organisation for

Migration] and the UNHCR [UN Refugee Agency] under the respective compacts” (MogheriniSpeech180313).

Similarly, the IAEA and Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation are important elements for non-proliferation worldwide (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech170912b, MogheriniSpeech171212). The role of the IAEA is connected to the EU’s concept of a rules-based world order, especially visible when dealing with the situation in North Korea but also in the negotiations on the Iran nuclear treaty: Both demonstrate how the EU trusts treaty-based solutions and international organisations. This, as well as the importance of the multilateral system, is visible when Mogherini emphasises that (regarding the Iran nuclear treaty): “We cannot afford to undermine the credibility of a multilateral agreement, endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution” (MogheriniSpeech171212). Multilateral treaties and the UN system of global governance are, for Mogherini, the best means for dealing with the ever more dangerous world. She also believes that these treaties are effective, noting that “the Nuclear Deal [with Iran], the nuclear commitment fulfilled more safety in the region and for us” (MogheriniSpeech171212). According to Mogherini, through the nuclear deal, the EU prevented nuclear proliferation, avoided regional escalation, and ensured that Iran would never acquire a nuclear weapon (MogheriniSpeech180612c).

Multilateral cooperation is typically presented as the most effective approach to various crises and negotiations. In the Middle East Peace Process, it is the multilateral Quartet that, according to Ashton, “can provide the careful yet dynamic mediation that is required” (AshtonSpeech091215), further maintaining that peace in the Middle East requires a comprehensive solution in a multilateral framework complementing the Israeli-Palestinian bilateral framework (AshtonSpeech091215). More generally, Mogherini notes that it is crucial that the EU promotes and preserves international unity on the issue of MEPP (MogheriniRemark161123). Another example is the Syrian crisis, where the international community, and especially the UN Security Council and its member states, play a “crucial and irreplaceable” (AshtonSpeech130911) role in effectively ending the conflict (see AshtonSpeech120612b, AshtonRemark130313c, AshtonSpeech130911, MogheriniRemark170516, MogheriniSpeech180313b). Concerning the Syrian conflict, the EU’s strategy is to seek a political solution within the UN framework, as “[i]t is only through a collective UN effort that we can get there” (MogheriniSpeech180313b). According to Mogherini, “it would be simply impossible to bring peace to Syria without everyone’s contribution” (MogheriniSpeech180313b). Multilateral formats such as the E3+3 negotiations with Iran or the Quartet in the Middle East Peace Process are often emphasised in the EU foreign policy discourses as primary ways of solving different kinds of crises.

While responding to global events, cooperation with the international community and the relevant actors is emphasised as necessary for achieving preferable outcomes. The EU's approach to international issues should be 'regional and inclusive' (e.g., AshtonSpeech091215), while a 'coordinated' or 'united' international response (e.g., AshtonSpeech091216, AshtonSpeech100119, AshtonSpeech130911) is frequently mentioned. As Mogherini characteristically notes regarding the situation in the Korean peninsula: "only a united international community can help build effective solutions" (MogheriniSpeech170912b), later noting that "[t]he unity of the international community will be an essential factor to determine whether we collectively succeed or fail" (MogheriniSpeech180313d). Coordination with others is typically constructed as effectively enhancing the policies.

When dealing with a crisis, the need for coordination and united action is also accentuated. For example, according to Ashton, the success in resolving the crisis in Syria "depends on the willingness of all members of the international community to rally behind a political solution" (AshtonRemark130313c) and "the solution lies in terms of bringing everybody together" across the entire region (AshtonRemark131218). To alleviate the human rights situation in Syria, the EU has built an alliance in the UN General Assembly of countries from all regions, including the Arab world (AshtonSpeech111213b), and Ashton emphasises the need to "build real and operational consensus" to deal with the crisis (AshtonSpeech120612b). Similarly, Mogherini highlights the importance of engaging internationally with all relevant actors and working in coordination with the UN as well as reaching out to the key regional actors (MogheriniRemark161122d, see also MogheriniSpeech180313b) in order reach a resolution of the Syrian crisis.

Ashton and Mogherini thus share a discourse where multilateral cooperation is presented as an effective way of influencing international politics, while multilateral institutions and frameworks are utilised effectively to pursue the goals of the Union. Solana, on the other hand, is more cautious in his discourse on the multilateral system. In his speeches, multilateral cooperation holds potential for the Union, however, its institutions still need development and strengthening to fulfil this potential:

"I think we must strive to re-establish the necessary confidence in the multilateral system to make it effective. It is a cornerstone of international society. I am convinced that the European Union can play a very positive role in re-establishing that confidence and we are working toward that goal." (SolanaSpeech070329)

“The financial crisis has also shown that we need stronger global institutions. Therefore we need to change the formats of these institutions and bring new powers around the table.” (SolanaSpeech081105)

Solana holds that the Quartet and involvement of the international community are important, even imperative (SolanaSpeech031009) in the Middle East Peace Process but otherwise does not emphasise multilateral cooperation or the role of international organisations to the same extent as Ashton and especially Mogherini do. Solana speaks more about cooperation and coordination with other countries, for example, about how close coordination with the United States can make the EU’s role more effective in the Middle East Peace Process (SolanaSpeech060405) and less about multilateral frameworks or institutions. The unity of the international community nevertheless remains important for him in various crisis contexts.

Structural Foreign Policy

One important reason why the EU seems to favour the cooperative approach is the linked belief in integration and cooperation as effective means to influence others to develop in the direction modelled by the Union itself. Supporting societal change and democratisation are often offered as the motivation for cooperation with the actors portrayed as troublesome or who pursue policies in conflict with the EU’s own policies.⁹⁸ In general, the EU’s cooperative foreign policy approach towards problematic others is built on the assumption that integration leads to cooperation and the convergence of interests. This belief is crystallised in Ashton’s comment regarding the EU’s policies towards Russia:

“As we remove barriers to trade, travel and exchange, the outlook and expectations of our citizens can be expected more and more to converge and the fundamental interest in co-operation will increase.” (AshtonSpeech111213d)

This kind of structural foreign policy (see Keukeleire 2003; Keukeleire & Delreux 2014) is another element that can be seen to define much of the European Union’s foreign policy and to significantly influence its approach to different means of power. When seeking to sustainably transform the political, economic, social, and other structures of a state (see Keukeleire & Delreux 2014, 27–30), the Union utilises its cooperative approach to support and encourage developments potentially leading to preferred transformations. This is visible, for example, in the specific way the

⁹⁸ See discussion about the I-1 beliefs concerning *cooperation with problematic actors* in Chapter 7.1.

High Representatives, especially Ashton and Mogherini, refer to human rights dialogues as means to influence the structural development of other actors (see e.g., AshtonSpeech120612d, MogheriniSpeech180911d). They believe that such dialogues can make a difference for example in Cuba (MogheriniSpeech161213b, MogheriniSpeech180314b) and Iran (MogheriniSpeech171212).

The structural foreign policy approach is most apparent in terms such as ‘critical engagement’ (MogheriniSpeech180313d) as applied towards North Korea or ‘diplomatic but critical engagement’ (MogheriniSpeech171212) with Iran. These represent a long discursive tradition, with the EU already initiating a policy of ‘constructive engagement’ with China in the mid-1990s (Keukeleire & de Bruyn 2017, 425). Ashton’s and Mogherini’s speeches in particular, demonstrate a belief in this strategy of engagement as an effective means of facilitating social change and structural reforms in other countries. This can be seen not only in the numerous mentions of such an approach, but also, for example, in the (perhaps in hindsight optimistic) statement by Ashton that:

“the EU approach of constructive yet critical cooperation with Russia is bearing fruit. We will continue our support to modernize both Russia’s economic basis and the foundations for a dynamic society oriented towards the future.”
(AshtonSpeech120201b)

Similarly, in the case of Turkey, both Ashton and Mogherini display a strong belief that cooperation and maintaining positive engagement are the most effective ways to influence the country to adopt policies favoured by the EU. Ashton notes, after condemning the Turkish regime’s actions against protestors, that “[t]his is not the moment to disengage from Turkey but to engage more closely” (AshtonRemark130612c). Ashton notes that the EU’s relationship with Turkey “gives us a unique opportunity to influence” (AshtonRemark130612c) and “continued engagement with Turkey is the best way to exert leverage” (AshtonRemark130627). A few years later, Mogherini’s remark is very similar:

“I believe the best way to strengthening Turkey’s democracy – the most effective way – is by engaging with it, by keeping channels open.”
(MogheriniRemark161122c)

Mogherini also emphasises that the dialogues held with Iran have positively affected the country’s human rights situation, leading to the adoption of revised laws more in line with the EU’s expectations of human rights standards (see MogheriniSpeech171212). She also notes that the JCPOA deal has opened channels for diplomacy and dialogue (MogheriniSpeech180612c) that have enabled the EU to

influence Iran in ways unthinkable without this cooperation. For Mogherini, in the case of Iran, as well as in a more general sense, “the diplomatic track is often challenging, is often more difficult one to be followed, but it is always the rewarding one and needs to be sustained over time” (MogheriniSpeech180612c).

In the structural foreign policy approach, maintaining dialogue with a ‘problematic’ actor utilises authority power similarly to how, in a more traditional relational foreign policy approach, the EU seeks to persuade others to change their behaviour. But it is more important to note that in structural foreign policy, this use of authority is typically linked to other forms of power, be they promises of rewards, maintaining cooperative relations that include rewards for the other, or negative powers of threats and sanctions.⁹⁹ The structural foreign policy of the Union is typically a composition of different means. In structural foreign policy, the persuasion of others for a desired structural change should be accompanied by economic support and cooperation, as Mogherini demonstrates with her comment regarding Cuba:

“Our political dialogue and cooperation agreement is the tool we need to better accompany and support a process of economic and social reform. It is the best tool we have to work for sustainable development, social justice, democracy and human rights.” (MogheriniSpeech180314b)

With more powerful actors like China, this combination is more about cooperative trade relations enabling the EU to try to persuade other actors through human rights dialogues. In more asymmetrical power relations, the structural foreign policy is also combined with more negative forms of power. There, the Union’s positive use of authority power is linked to economic support that is specifically restricted to only promote the desired reforms. In addition, more coercive forms of power, including threats of withdrawing support or raising sanctions, are also applied in combination with said persuasion.

Use of sanctions

The different sanctions and restrictive measures used to pressure others play a significant part in the European Union’s foreign policy. Ashton notes that “[r]estrictive measures are an important Foreign Policy tool that the EU uses” (AshtonSpeech120201d). Indeed, the use of sanctions is mentioned repeatedly, for example with respect to Syria, Libya, North Korea, Belarus, and Iran, just to name a

⁹⁹ See the structural foreign policy aspects in the I-5 beliefs concerning promises and threats, and especially conditionality in promises and threats, discussed in Chapter 6.1.

few examples in the material. The way in which the use of these sanctions is conceptualised is particularly interesting. While the utility of sanctions as means was discussed with I-5 beliefs, certain aspects of how the sanctions and their use by the Union are constructed in the analysed speech material are relevant for understanding how foreign policy goals are pursued most effectively according to the Union's operational code.

One essential element defining the use of sanctions is their intentionality, meaning that they are used for specific objectives. When discussing the way the EU uses sanctions and restrictive measures as important tools in international relations, Ashton underlines that “[t]he purpose of these measures is to bring about the change of policy or activity in a country, in entities or indeed in individuals” and they need to be “tailored to the specific objectives of each restrictive measures regime” (AshtonSpeech120201d). It is also understood as important to clearly communicate the Union's goals and plans for the sanctions to others. Ashton emphasises that “we have to be actively engaged in communicating on EU sanctions, including with the targeted country and its population” (AshtonSpeech120201d).

This also highlights other key elements in the Union's approach to sanctions, namely maintaining dialogue with the target and communicating the conditions under which the sanctions will be lifted. Both are elements of a *comprehensive approach*¹⁰⁰ where sanctions are used as a part of a mixture of positive and negative means of power to influence others. The comprehensive approach combining different means of power is an essential part of how the EU approaches the effective use of sanctions. The use of sanctions alone is typically seen as ineffective, especially for structural foreign policy aims. Ashton and Mogherini, who discuss the Union's sanction policies in detail, tend to repeatedly speak of a combination of positive and negative uses of power – positive engagement through dialogue and negative pressure through sanctions. For example, concerning the negotiations with Iran, Ashton emphasises an approach combining pressure with dialogue (AshtonSpeech110309b); it is important to both pressure as well as to be ready to open a dialogue (AshtonRemark101027). Similarly, regarding North Korea, Mogherini talks about the “critical engagement” policy of the EU, which “stands for maximum pressure and dialogue” (MogheriniSpeech180313d), strengthening economic pressure with sanctions while keeping the door open for dialogue (MogheriniSpeech170912b).

There is a somewhat similar logic in how, in the analysed discourses, the EU's approach to combining negative means of power against the leadership of a country, with support to the country's civil society or even opposition, is constructed. Here

¹⁰⁰ See discussion on I-5 beliefs subchapter *Comprehensive approach and mixing of means* in Chapter 6, see also below.

too, the Union seeks to combine different means of power into a comprehensive ensemble that influences the development in the country most effectively.

This is evident in the Belarussian case, for example, where the EU has simultaneously imposed sanctions against the regime while increasing assistance to Belarussian civil society (AshtonStatement110927). Belarussians are considered to be “neighbours and partners, and their interests should be paramount” (AshtonSpeech110119c), even while their ruling regime is targeted with both negative authority power as well as concrete sanctions. This situation also includes direct assistance to NGOs, media, and students as well as efforts to enhance mobility for citizens wishing to travel to the EU (AshtonSpeech110119c). Ashton describes this approach as a “policy of engagement, a policy where we work with the people on the ground but are clear in our stance against regimes” (AshtonSpeech110606c). A similar approach is apparent, for example, with Syria, where the Union claims to support the people while the sanctions are directed against the regime and its supporters (AshtonSpeech111012). All these are examples of constructing the use of effective sanctions only as a part of a mixture of different means of power, specifically combined with cooperative means.

Another important element of the Union’s foreign policy discourses on the effective use of sanctions is cooperation with other actors in the context of *multilateralism*. The unity of the international community, including the need to maintain a united front, is often raised by the High Representatives when conflictual means of power are imposed against other actors. This is unsurprising as the effective use of economic sanctions is understood to benefit from the support of international institutions and multilateral cooperation (see Martin 1992; Jeong 2023). Actively seeking cooperation with others to bolster the effects of sanctions and pressure is an essential part of the EU’s operational code regarding the use of sanctions, which often takes the form of using authority and diplomacy to isolate the country in question, as already discussed regarding I-5 beliefs.¹⁰¹

For example, Mogherini stresses the importance of bringing together those who have leverage on the Syrian regime, to pressure the regime to commit to political talks (MogheriniSpeech180417). Similarly, regarding Belarus, which is also pressured with sanctions to improve its human rights situation, Ashton raises the importance of working with partners “to maximize the strength of the message sent” (AshtonSpeech110119c). Besides engaging with Eastern Partnership countries to build consensus on this issue (AshtonSpeech110119c), the EU also seeks to work through the UN, by leading a cross-regional initiative to record a condemnation of

¹⁰¹ See subchapter *Authority power* in Chapter 6.1.

Belarus at the UN Human Rights Council (see AshtonSpeech110606c, AshtonSpeech111213b).

The use of authority power to steer the international community is especially important when the EU views its own abilities to pressure the target of the sanctions as limited, as in the case of North Korea. As Mogherini points out, economic relations between the EU and North Korea alone are not relevant enough to have an economic impact (MogheriniSpeech170912b). Because of this, ensuring that others implement economic sanctions against a third party, recognising that the EU has not a sufficient leverage by itself, becomes a relevant foreign policy means for the Union. In 2018, Mogherini notes that the EU has not only implemented all the UN sanctions, as well as adopted additional autonomous measures against North Korea, but has also worked with third countries to help enforce all UN resolutions, and also committed itself to launch a new outreach to third countries, thus maintaining both direct and indirect pressure on North Korea (MogheriniSpeech180313d).

Syria is, especially in the Ashton's discourse, an example of what happens when the international community fails to act in consensus against a third party, demonstrating how cooperation is necessary for the EU to enable effective conflictual actions against others. After the Union's efforts to strengthen pressure on the Syrian government by passing a resolution in the UN Security Council have initially failed (see AshtonSpeech111012), she for example notes her regrets that the members of the UNSC have not yet shouldered their responsibility with regard to conflict (AshtonSpeech130911), lamenting that:

“The situation reflects in part the inability of the international community to find a coherent, united way to respond to the horror that is being perpetrated and to act collectively to protect the people. Without a Security Council mandate or a clear situation on the ground, military action by the international community is not under consideration.” (AshtonRemark130313c)

Sanctions are perhaps the most visible form where the EU clearly coerces others. However, the Union's coercive use of power includes means other than direct threats and punishment via sanctions. The Union's foreign policies also make use of more nuanced forms of coercive power. It is in these aspects that we notice another key element in the analysed discourses that also plays a part in the conceptualisation of the most effective ways for the EU to pursue foreign policy goals: the role of conditionality.

The role of conditionality

Conditionality features prominently in the discourses of the High Representatives.¹⁰² It is often through the imposition of conditions that the EU is seen to wield considerable power to further its structural foreign policy aims. Conditionality was already introduced as a major element of the Union's foreign policy by Solana. In the year 2000, talking about Stabilisation and Association Agreements, he outlines that:

“We must place sufficient emphasis on the need for conditionality, but at the same time be ready to offer generous terms, for example in the trade field, where this is going to have a direct impact on economic development and stability.”
(SolanaSpeech000321)

Conditionality plays an important part in the Union's structural foreign policy and is especially prominent in the policies regarding the Union's neighbours. Applying more conditionality is a key element in Ashton's renewed Neighbourhood Policy (see AshtonStatement110927, AshtonRemark111213). According to Ashton, this means “more financial support, closer political cooperation and deeper economic integration for those partners who have embarked on deep reforms”, adding that this “is what we call ‘more for more’” (AshtonStatement110927). Ashton calls this a guiding philosophy of an ‘incentive-based approach’, where “those partners that go further and faster with reforms should be able to count on greater support from the EU” (AshtonSpeech110309). Later, she describes it as “making sure that instead of just one allocation of resources we were able to give more for those who wish to move faster in ways that we felt were developing the values that we hold and supporting their people” (AshtonRemark111213).

Especially when discussing potential Membership Candidates, or countries seeking different kinds of Association Agreements with the Union, it would appear that the Union is able to use conditionality to full effect. The underlining of conditionality and demands presented by the Union for deeper cooperation can be expressed rather directly:

“As I stressed everywhere: progress on the path to the EU depends on the commitment to reform at home.” (AshtonSpeech100310)

Conditionality is strongly present in these negotiations for closer integration and has accordingly been recognised in the literature as a particularly effective way for the

¹⁰² See discussion about I-5 beliefs in Chapter 6.

Union to influence others (see e.g., Grabbe 2006; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2020; Trauner 2009). Offering membership of the Union has been understood to represent particularly appealing benefits, giving the Union significant leverage. But in the analysed discourses, a similar conditionality is applied for promises of both shallower cooperation as well as promises of aid and support.

This conditionality can also take a form of more or less veiled threats. A conditional promise of support can easily change into a threat of withholding said support, blurring the line between cooperative and conflictual use of power. This aspect is apparent, for example, when Mogherini states that:

“We have also made clear to the Myanmar authorities that our trade preferences with Myanmar are linked to clear conditions on human rights and democracy, and that to preserve our current trade arrangements, we need to see decisive action to improve the situation.” (MogheriniSpeech180913b)

These types of threats have also been enacted. Mogherini mentions, for example, that the EU has placed the disbursement of macro-financial assistance to Moldova on hold in 2018 until the political pre-conditions attached to the assistance are met (see MogheriniRemark180705). Ashton also notes that the EU suspended the negotiations of the EU-Libya framework agreement, together with technical cooperation, immediately after the outbreak of violence in Libya in 2011 (AshtonSpeech110309).

As we can see, the conditionality of cooperation presents a challenge for analytical approaches that are grounded on the dichotomic separation between the cooperative and conflictual uses of power. The questions that Baldwin (1989) raises¹⁰³ about the baseline of expectations as well as about the implicit nature of foreign policy discourses are especially relevant here. What appears as cooperative persuasion through the offer of rewards can easily change into pressure on the other through the withholding of benefits.

Both implicit and explicit formulations of pressure are common in the analysed material. As an example of the former, Ashton notes in 2013 that “[w]e know that Turkey, as a candidate country, needs to aspire to the highest possible democratic standards and practices” (AshtonRemark130612c). Explicitly formulated requirements also often figure in the context of the negotiations with the candidate countries, where the “substantial economic and political reforms” (SolanaSpeech000301b) expected from them are a clear condition for the progression of the integration process.

¹⁰³ See Chapter 3.2.

Conditionality is a recurring element of the Union's foreign policy discourses. Its manifestations were previously discussed in more detail in the context of I-5 beliefs, where it forms a part of the utilisation of different means for the Union to influence others. What should be noted here is the belief that applying conditionality to relations is an effective element of influencing others, especially their development as part of the structural foreign policy goals of the Union.

The comprehensive approach and applying multiple means

The *comprehensive approaches* to the use of power, meaning the combinations of different means into mixtures of influencing, emerge as a characteristic element of the EU's foreign policy discourses in the qualitative analysis. The comprehensive approach characterises many different aspects of the Union's foreign policy, from the successful utilisation of sanctions to the promotion of human rights through structural foreign policy. The practice of this approach has already been discussed in connection with I-5 beliefs about the utility of means¹⁰⁴ as well as in the Union's uses of sanctions¹⁰⁵. However, it can also be seen as a more extensive theme informing the Union's foreign policy operational code, defining how the most effective way to pursue goals in international politics is understood.

Ashton describes this comprehensive approach as a unique characteristic of the Union:

“We are unique in foreign policy terms. I don't just say this but you can hear this said across the world because we bring together economic, diplomatic, development and military assets in support of a comprehensive approach to complex crises.” (AshtonRemark140403)

While often specifically raised when talking about crisis management, this comprehensive approach is not only ‘the European way’ to crisis management (AshtonSpeech100310) but marks the EU's foreign policy thinking more generally. “The great strength of the EU [...] is the range of diplomatic tools at its disposal” (AshtonSpeech120911) and the EU is a power “always believing in an integrated approach” (MogheriniSpeech170704). The effectiveness of the EU's foreign policy requires mobilisation of “all the means at our disposal – diplomacy, political engagement, development assistance, civil and military crisis management tools in support of conflict prevention, peace building, security and stability” (AshtonSpeech100707).

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 6.1.

¹⁰⁵ See above.

Indeed, this belief becomes a prominent part of the EU's strategic culture during Ashton's term in office. This is clear, for example, in the way in which the EU sets out to prepare a Strategy for Sahel as a "Strategy which would be based on a holistic and integrated approach, making use of various instruments in a coherent way to foster security, stability, development and good governance in Sahel" (AshtonSpeech110119b). Political and diplomatic dimensions are combined with development aid as well as support for enhancing the capabilities of the countries' security sectors. Ashton herself places the development of a comprehensive approach to her terms in office, stating that "[t]his approach did not exist 4 years ago and it exists now" in 2014, adding that it "increasingly makes us the partner of choice for others" (AshtonRemark140403).

Solana's take on this issue is somewhat different. He clearly shares his successors' understanding of the effectiveness of the comprehensive approach, especially when crisis management is concerned (see e.g., SolanaSpeech080604, SolanaSpeech090218). However, in Solana's discourse on this issue, the main emphasis is on developing the military and defence capabilities that the Union lacks. He states that while the military option will always be a measure of last resort, "[w]e must have the capacity to intervene militarily in order to be credible" (SolanaSpeech000301b). This conceptualisation of security is thus fairly traditional.

Ashton and Mogherini understand the concept of security more broadly. For example, Ashton recognises the limitations of a hard power response to threats like terrorism, noting that "[w]e will not tackle this through military action alone but by helping build a secure and safe environment free from the tensions and inequalities that feed extremism" (AshtonSpeech091216). She notes that the growth of extremism, like with the establishment of Al Qaeda in Yemen, is a symptom of deeper problems, where the linkages between economic, political, social, and security challenges are crucial; A comprehensive approach is thus needed (AshtonSpeech100119d). Similarly, security in Mogherini's discourse is inherently complex, incorporating military and civilian aspects, defence and development, artificial intelligence and climate changes, crisis management and reconciliation (MogheriniSpeech181211, see also MogheriniSpeech170704). While Mogherini promotes further development of the EU's military capabilities, she emphasises that crises and threats in the world cannot be dealt with via a purely military approach (MogheriniSpeech170704): "In today's world, security and development go hand in hand. Hard and soft power must also go hand in hand." (MogheriniSpeech171212b). This broader understanding of security can also be understood to generally strengthen the comprehensive approach to foreign policy means.

This aim to combine different means of power, both hard and soft, cooperative and conflictual, into an effective confluence of influence is characteristic for the EU's strategic culture. In addition to the use of sanctions, it can also be observed in

the EU's structural foreign policy practices as well as in the general way that it seeks to interact with other actors considered problematic. While with Solana this mostly manifests as an aspiration to strengthen the hard power means that the EU of his era is lacking, with the more developed EU of Ashton's and Mogherini's, this takes the form of a specific understanding of the use of power as mixture of different means, used together for the most effective result.

7.3 Summary: Beliefs about the Best Approach

These two instrumental belief types form more general foreign policy guidelines, especially concerning a choice between cooperation or conflict with other actors. I-1 beliefs describe the best strategic approaches for the actor's foreign policy, while I-2 beliefs show how the actor believes it can pursue its goals most effectively. Based on the qualitative analysis, the key beliefs concerning these two themes in the discourses of the High Representatives can be summed up as follows:

I-1 What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Cooperation is the primary approach	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Identity of the EU as cooperative present in the discourse but does not define the best approach. Cooperative tendencies linked to instrumental reasons	Solana
Cooperative tendencies linked in the discourse to the identity of the EU, to pursue of multilateralism, and to instrumental reasons	Ashton, Mogherini
Multilateral institutions have positive potential for the EU	Solana
Multilateral institutions, especially the UN system, are the key framework for political action	Ashton, Mogherini

I-2 How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Cooperation as the most effective overall approach	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Even problematic actors are influenced best through dialogue and positive engagement	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Potential of multilateralism as effective means and the need for strengthening multilateral system are recognised	Solana

Multilateralism is an effective means. Importance of multilateral system is emphasised, with the UN having a prominent role therein.	Ashton
Multilateralism is an effective means. Importance of multilateral system is strongly emphasised, with the UN having prominent role in it.	Mogherini
Structural foreign policy relies on cooperative use of power, but combines it with conflictual aspects, especially through conditionality	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Sanctions without positive engagement, promises of rewards, or other forms of cooperation are not seen as effective for facilitating structural change in others	Ashton, Mogherini
Comprehensive approach present in crisis management	Solana
Comprehensive approach to foreign policy instruments and approaches in general emphasised	Ashton, Mogherini

The quantitative VICS analysis of EU foreign policy discourses indicated operational codes characterised by cooperative strategy (I-1) as well as cooperative tactical intensity (I-2). Furthermore, all three High Representatives displayed highly similar operational codes, indicating that there is an institutionalised belief system regarding strategy and tactics preferred in the Union's foreign policy.

In the qualitative analysis, the overall cooperative tendency is similarly apparent. All three High Representatives regard *cooperation as the preferred strategy* for the EU in international politics, believing it to be the most effective way of pursuing the Union's goals. Ashton and Mogherini construct cooperation as a more general approach to international relations, raising it to an overall approach for selecting objectives in the Union's foreign policy thinking. Solana, while sharing the overall inclination towards cooperation, sees cooperation in a more instrumental way, more as a means to pursue goals effectively than as the Union's primary approach by default. While in Ashton's and Mogherini's discourses, cooperation becomes a central element of the EU's identity.

The primacy given to the cooperative approaches in the Union's foreign policy belief system is explicit in the way in which cooperation dominates even the relations where the other actor is seen as hostile or otherwise not sharing the Union's interests and values. Belief in cooperation as the most effective means to pursue goals characterises the way all three High Representatives frame different situations, emphasising dialogue and cooperation.

The qualitative analysis raises a number of additional themes that characterise the more tactical aspects of the Union's foreign policy. What all three High

Representatives seem to share a belief that *multilateral cooperation* and *rules-based institutional frameworks* are well suited for the Union and offer opportunities for the Union to pursue its goals more effectively. Solana treats this more as a potential for the Union to *eventually* utilise, while for Ashton and Mogherini, they *already* are features shaping international relations, actively supported and defended by the Union.

The role of multilateralism and international institutions in the Union's foreign policy discourses demonstrates the importance of both indirect institutional power and constitutional forms of power in the Union's foreign policy operational code. The rules-based, multilateral global order is particularly suitable for the Union's approach to the use of power in international relations. It offers ways to exercise power indirectly, through rules that eventually steer and constrain other actors as well as through participation in the constitution of the international system and the social positions the actors occupy therein. In both aspects in the analysed discourses, the Union appears to seek to exercise this power deliberately to shape the international order for the sake of its own goals.

The prominent role of the UN in the Union's foreign policy operational code, and the EU's strong support of its authority in international relations, are linked to this. As for example Hanna Ojanen (2006, 8) has noted, if the EU's international legitimacy is based on international norms and the UN system, strengthening the role of the UN also becomes a means for the Union to strengthen its own international role and authority.

A significant part of the Union's foreign policy can be termed *structural foreign policy*. With this policy, it also becomes evident that the Union is not solely a cooperative actor but also utilises sanctions and pressure to pursue its transformative goals. *Conditionality* also tends to hold a prominent role in those Union's relations that are characterised by the structural foreign policy approach. This conditionality of promised rewards and threats of negative actions highlights a more complex approach to the cooperative-conflictual dichotomy in the Union's foreign policy operational codes. The role of conditionality underlines that the Union's approach to international politics is not as black-and-white as VICS analysis would indicate. Furthermore, it highlights the Union's tendency towards exploiting unbalanced power relations as conditionality is typically applied from a position where the EU has a dominant role.

Another prominent theme in the Union's foreign policy belief systems is the *comprehensive approach* to foreign policy, where different instruments and means of power are combined. This element demonstrates a combination of cooperative and conflictual approaches utilised in concert, for example, with sanctions but also as a more general belief that different instruments, such as economic, diplomatic, and even military means, are most effective when utilised together. The prominent role

of this comprehensive approach in the Union's operational code is in line with what Tiilikainen (2011) has said about the comprehensive setting of available instruments being the main asset of the EU's power in the Union's own self-understanding.

The cooperative tendency of the Union's foreign policy operational code, notable in both quantitative and qualitative analysis, would seem to endorse the descriptions of the Union as a 'civilian' or 'normative' power. The qualitative analysis, however, calls into question this kind of simplified interpretation. While values do play a role in the Union's tendency towards cooperation, the High Representatives also emphasise the interests of the Union, including base security interests, as reasons behind cooperation. The Union's strategic culture of cooperation does not appear as exclusively value-based but also as a pragmatic choice. The qualitative analysis also brings forth the more complex, subtle aspects of conflictual means of power portrayed in the Union's foreign policy discourses, which would indicate a more complicated role than just 'civilian' or 'normative' power for the EU.

8 Control (P-3, P-4, P-5, I-3, I-4)

This section of the analysis assembles together a number of different belief types within the operational code framework. What connects these interlinked categories is that they all concern the ways in which control is understood: how much control the Union has in the world of international politics, how control over events can be achieved and maintained, and how best to respond to a potential lack of control over events.

P-3 measures how predictable the operational environment is believed to be and, thus, also how predictable historical development is viewed. P-4 beliefs pertain to the amount of control one has over historical development, while P-5 beliefs concern the role of chance in shaping it. The last two belief types concern how to maintain control in the political universe: I-3 beliefs give directions on how to best control risks, while I-4 beliefs help to identify the best timing of action in the political universe.

8.1 Predictability

P-3 beliefs concern the predictability of the political universe as perceived by the subject. The quantitative analysis focuses on the predictability of other actors, while the qualitative analysis also covers the predictability of the political environment and the international system in general.

The index P-3 in VICS measures whether other actors are seen as predictable or unpredictable. Although, it does not directly describe the predictability of the system itself but rather how consistently other actors are perceived to act within it. This conclusion is interpreted as the predictability of the political universe. If others are seen to employ a wider variety of actions, the scores are low, while if others are perceived to primarily use only one or two categories of the means of power, they are regarded as predictable. This is, in other words, a very specific point of view regarding predictability, as it focuses only on the variation of the use of power by others in the environment the subject operates in.

The qualitative analysis covers both the predictability of individual actors, as well as the overall picture of the predictability of the political universe. In addition, the subject's understanding of predictability and its value in international relations

is discussed. During qualitative coding, the themes concerning predictability were divided into categories of the predictability of the political universe as a system where the EU operates in, the predictability of other actors, and the predictability of the Union itself. In addition to the examination of how predictable or unpredictable each of these appears to be, the analysis also investigates the meanings that are constructed for predictability in the EU's foreign policy operational code.

In the following, we first discuss the **predictability/unpredictability of international relations**, both regarding the whole system and the actors therein. We then take a closer look at **predictability in the cases of Russia and Iran**. These two particular cases offer some important insights into the role predictability plays in EU foreign policy thinking. Last, we examine how the **ideal of predictability** is constructed in EU foreign policy discourses.

8.1.1 P-3 Predictability of the political future: Quantitative analysis

P-3 Predictability of the Political Universe Quantitative VICS analysis Low <-> High (0.00) – (+1.00)	
Solana	+ 0.12
Ashton	+ 0.16
Mogherini	+ 0.11

For the perceived predictability of the political universe, all three High Representatives display fairly low scores. Perhaps surprisingly, it is Mogherini who seems to see other actors as most unpredictable (+ 0.11), while Ashton's speech material results in the highest score (+ 0.16) among the three. However, this difference is quite insignificant and once again, all three overall indices are on a uniform level. The High Representatives thus believe that the others use the scale of the means of power quite variedly. This of course is at least partially a result of the variety of different actors that the Union's foreign policy encounters. Some of these actors are perceived to use positive means of power, others negative, and some seek to use their general authority more while others are more prone to making demands or promises. The yearly scores range from 0.12 (2014) to 0.17 (2011, 2012, 2013) with Ashton and from 0.04 (2017) to 0.19 (2016) with Mogherini, if the scores for

the first years in office, where the low number of speeches typically skews the index as previously discussed, are disregarded.¹⁰⁶

Mogherini's low point of perceived predictability in 2017 deserves some special attention. The agenda of the year is marked by the ongoing conflict in Syria, the search for a peaceful resolution to the crisis in the Korean Peninsula as well as an increasing need to handle migration flows towards the Union. All three were issues that raised elements of both conflict but also cooperation in the discourses. Several of Mogherini's speeches during the year were also focused on human rights and democracy issues in countries like Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Gabon, including descriptions of actions in these countries that appear as conflictual from the EU's point of view. It is also during this year that, under the Trump presidency, the United States' policies towards several issues begin to contradict the Union's goals. The travel restrictions imposed by the US President's executive order (see MogheriniRemark170201b), change in the US strategy towards Iran that no longer supported the more cooperative approach of the Union (see MogheriniSpeech171212), as well as the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (see MogheriniSpeech171212d), all appear as conflictual actions in the speeches. All these elements increase the versatility of descriptions of other actors, interpreted as unpredictability in VICS analysis.

What can be said on the quantitative analysis of P-3 operational code beliefs is that in the Union's foreign policy operational codes, the political universe appears as a versatile and varied operating environment. There is no dominant practice of acting in that system that would be uniformly shared by its actors. Thus, the Union must be ready to perform in an environment where the whole scale of means of power is in use, meaning that a certain willingness for constant policy recalibration is needed.

8.1.2 P-3 Predictability of the political future: Qualitative analysis

The unpredictability of the political future is a significant concern throughout the analysed speeches. Where the High Representatives' discourses do differ to some

¹⁰⁶ The P-3 scores for the first year in office are considerably higher, 0.33 (2009) with Ashton and even 0.67 (2015) with Mogherini, following the low number of speeches and thus the operational code focusing on fewer issues and only on a very small number of other actors. The year 2015 is especially problematic for the analysis as in the two speeches Mogherini made in the Parliament, there are very few VICS codable utterances that refer to the actions of others. This considerably skews the index but does offer a demonstration how the low P-3 scores are connected to a variance of other actors discussed.

extent is the Union's ability to influence this unpredictability. Therein, Solana presents more limited expectations with respect to the chances of the Union to increase the predictability of others, while Ashton and Mogherini indicate that the Union can indeed increase the predictability of the relations it has.

The predictability of individual actors is not typically evaluated directly in the discourses of the High Representatives. Direct references to the state of the international environment in general, its predictability, and stability are much more common. However, expectations about the predictability of other actors can be interpreted from the way their relations with the Union are discussed in the Representatives' speeches.

Predictability/unpredictability of international relations

On a general level, all three High Representatives describe the Union's international environment as increasingly unpredictable. Solana, for his part, describes the world as "unquestionably more uncertain" (SolanaSpeech070329). Ashton notes that the UN General Assembly in 2011 "took place at a time of huge change and growing tension in the world" (AshtonSpeech110927). Mogherini recalls that "[w]hen we look at the world around us, we see not just uncertainty, not just unpredictability, but confusion, and sometimes a dangerous one" (MogheriniSpeech171212b). This is a significant change when compared to the past; In 2018, Mogherini describes the present international situation as "the most delicate moment since the end of the Cold War" (MogheriniSpeech180314). The shared discourse among the Representatives paints a picture of an international system that is heading towards a period of more uncertainty.

This uncertainty represents a major challenge or even a significant threat to the Union. For example, Ashton, noting how the EU operates "in a fast changing geopolitical landscape", emphasises that the Union "cannot afford to act in a disparate manner in a world that is seeing fundamental power shifts and where problems are increasingly complex and inter-linked" (AshtonSpeech100707). Mogherini declares that "we live in a world that is moving fast but not always in the right direction, which is quite dangerous and challenging" (MogheriniSpeech180314). It is apparent in the utterances that the High Representatives see it as important to call attention to worrying developments in international relations.

While direct, individual descriptions of other actors' predictability are uncommon, the High Representatives do nonetheless discuss other actors in ways that seem to relate to their perceived predictability. For example, expressions of trust towards other actors also indicate that these actors are understood as predictable actors. This ensuing trust can be based on earlier positive behaviour. For example,

Ashton tells, in 2013, that the EU is expected to launch accession negotiations with Serbia, and that she hopes that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations with Kosovo can be concluded in the year 2014 (AshtonRemark131218). Ashton praises both Serbia and Kosovo as “a model that should inspire the rest of the Western Balkans to deal with outstanding problems and to move forward” (AshtonRemark131218). Ashton also demonstrates similar trust in the Iraqi government in 2010, when she notes that the country is “on a positive trajectory” and states that she is “confident it will use its new institutions to find the compromises necessary for national reconciliation” (AshtonSpeech100119c). Similarly, in 2007, Solana advises the Union to trust the new Palestinian Government based on their past behaviour:

“I call on the Union to commit itself to work as soon and as intensely as possible with the new foreign and finance ministers of the Palestinian government, deploying all necessary resources. We know them. They have consistently shown themselves to be serious in their intentions. Who would doubt that they would act otherwise now, at a time when their people are being so severely tested.” (SolanaSpeech070329)

One aspect of unpredictability is that coordinated action can effectively decrease uncertainty. When criticising the unilateral decision of the United States to withdraw from the JCPOA treaty with Iran, Mogherini also underlines how the bulk of the international community has confirmed and reiterated their support for the agreement (MogheriniSpeech180612c). Similarly, Solana praises countries such as South Korea, China, Japan, Russia, and the US for reacting “calmly and responsibly” to the nuclear test carried out by the North Korean government in 2006 (SolanaSpeech061011). This coordination is seen as another important element that can increase predictability in the political universe.

On the other hand, High Representatives also express distrust, or at least a certain level of prudence, towards some potentially unpredictable actors. For example, when Ashton strongly criticises the Argentinean Government’s announcement of expropriating the majority stake held by a Spanish company in the YPF energy company in 2012, she specifically demands that the government ensures Argentina’s compliance with its international commitments (AshtonRemark120417). Further, when condemning the Ukrainian verdict against Yulia Tymoshenko in 2011, Ashton laments that “2011 was to have been a year of unparalleled opportunity and development in EU-Ukraine relations” (AshtonSpeech111012b), indicating that Ukraine failed to meet these expectations. This perception of failing expectations also appears later in 2013, when Ashton highlights how it would be possible to sign the Association Agreement with Ukraine only conditionally, “provided Ukraine

fulfils the benchmarks that have been provided by the Council” (AshtonRemark130627).

These kinds of indications of unpredictability of a specific actor usually take the form of either criticism of certain policies or a failure to meet the EU’s expectations. Mogherini’s criticism of countries withdrawing from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, strongly supported by the EU, can be viewed in this same vein (see MogheriniSpeech161213b, MogheriniSpeech170704b). Ashton’s disappointment with the negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, where “[r]egrettably, despite strong messages at the highest level, the expected breakthrough [...] did not materialise” (AshtonSpeech110606b), expressed the same tone with her comments on Ukraine above.

Similarly, some of Turkey’s actions (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech180207b) are condemned, often described as surprising or unprecedented. In 2016 Mogherini describes Turkey as being “at a crossroads” (MogheriniRemark161122c), indicating uncertainty about the country’s political progress. This position represents a more general pattern: Countries that are in the process of transitioning towards democracy, or countries that are experiencing a crisis or recovering from one, are, in the material at least, recognised as unpredictable because of the nature of their situation.

One region where the unpredictability of the situation continues to create challenges for the EU is the Middle East. Already early on during Solana’s term, he describes the Middle East as “once again going through a period of turbulence and uncertainty” (SolanaSpeech010131); throughout his time in office the situation remains uncertain with various risks and the potential for deterioration often mentioned (see e.g., SolanaSpeech010131, SolanaSpeech020409, SolanaSpeech061004b). As he notes:

“An almost constant feature of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis has been the near impossibility to make advance planning in the process. Every time that that international efforts are focusing on a political solution, **unforeseen, dramatic events intervene and take hostage the political process.**” (SolanaSpeech020515b [bolding original]).

The unpredictability of the region is not only limited to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Later, Ashton notes that the entire Southern neighbourhood of the EU is rapidly changing (AshtonSpeech110309), especially with the “dramatic change” (AshtonSpeech131023) of the Arab Spring. Here again, the unpredictable nature of the events and the environment is emphasised, with Ashton recalling in 2011 that “none of us in this house know where this will end, and what the end will bring” (AshtonSpeech110511) and that “there is no certainty in the outcome in any country,

and no quick fix or short term solution that will create the world so many long to see” (AshtonSpeech110511).

Besides the manner in which the events on the ground make the situation unpredictable, the key actors of the Israel-Palestine conflict are also described as recurrently not living up to the expectations of the Union. Solana shares his frustration over the fact that “the Israelis and Palestinians have not been able, or have not wanted, to implement the commitments so formally entered into” (SolanaSpeech031009), and has to note, for example, that “[a]fter major progress [...] the discussions between Syria and Israel in Geneva came to an abrupt halt” (SolanaSpeech010131). Mogherini, for her part, displays a certain level of prudence, not taking the commitments of the parties for granted, when she notes in 2015:

“It is now up to the Israeli and the Palestinian leadership to demonstrate with acts that their commitment to the two-state solution is real, and not just fake, not just a slogan.” (MogheriniRemark151028)

Predictability: Cases of Russia and Iran

Russia is unsurprisingly a country that appears increasingly unpredictable in the material. Mogherini in particular, has reasons to underline Russia’s negative actions, which are portrayed as failing the expectations of the Union as well as the rules-based world order. These comments include her condemnation of Russia’s recognition of Georgia’s breakaway regions as a violation of international law (MogheriniSpeech180612b) as well as the militarisation of the Azov Sea (MogheriniSpeech181023b). Regarding Russia’s actions in the latter, Mogherini explains that “when the basic rules of peaceful coexistence are disregarded, instability and tensions are bound to rise” (MogheriniSpeech181023b).

However, for Ashton and Solana, Russia is, in many respects, a predictable actor. Ashton’s description of the annexation of Crimea, where “Russia has contravened the international law, and its own international commitments” (AshtonRemark140403) notes the country’s unexpected action, but with Ashton this represents a change in her discourse regarding Russia. Indeed, and perhaps interestingly in retrospect, the way both Solana and Ashton (prior to the annexation of Crimea) describe Russia indicates that they see Russia primarily as a predictable actor, although with some reservations. For example, right after demanding that Russia takes its obligations for international peace and security seriously (specifically regarding the situation in Syria), Ashton notes that “experience suggests that we manage fairly well to find common ground on international affairs” (AshtonSpeech120201b). She later continues that working with Russia on international issues “is not without difficulties, but generally the desire to find

common ground and enable the international community to respond prevails” (AshtonSpeech120201b). Solana uses similar discourse when he tells that the EU-Russia summit in 2000 “underlines the commitment of President Putin to working closely with the EU, despite our differences on some issues, most notably Chechnya”; and regarding EU’s hopes for reforms in Russia, he further notes that Putin is “clearly determined to introduce an effective rule of law in the commercial sector” (SolanaSpeech000621).

Different institutional frameworks form an important part of what Solana and Ashton see as possibilities for controlling Russia’s actions and steering it towards more predictable behaviour. This is a recurring theme in the EU foreign policy discourses concerning predictability: a belief that predictability can be increased effectively through institution-building and by promoting various institutional and regulatory frameworks of interaction. Solana believes that launching international discussions about security and stability in the region “is essential in order to continue to hold Russia accountable for the steps it has taken and commitments it has now made” regarding the Georgian crisis (SolanaSpeech080910). Ashton, for her part, sees it as especially important to pull Russia into international organisations:

“WTO accession will be a historic moment which will open a new chapter in our bilateral relations. It will bind Russia to international trading rules, open new opportunities for trade and investment and protect our companies from arbitrary decisions.” (AshtonSpeech111213d)

Ashton also displays strong trust in increasing the predictability of Russia through connectivity, stating that “[a]s we remove barriers to trade, travel and exchange, the outlook and expectations of our citizens can be expected more and more to converge and the fundamental interest in co-operation will increase” (AshtonSpeech111213d). However, by 2012, Ashton had to acknowledge that neither WTO accession nor dialogue had produced the expected positive effects. The expected reforms have not progressed, and instead of more openness on the side of the Russian authorities and stronger safeguards for fundamental rights and freedoms, less dialogue and more intolerance of the expression of dissenting views are apparent in Russian society (AshtonStatement120911). In this, the case of Russia also demonstrates the EU’s belief in international institutions, and *institutional power*, as means to increase general predictability in the political universe. Even though it proves ineffective in Russia’s case, maintaining approach based on this belief demonstrates its importance to the EU’s operational code.

Iran’s nuclear programme offers another particularly interesting case on the concept of predictability in the Union’s foreign policy operational code. Being one

of the few cases to run through the terms of all three High Representatives studied, it also displays some of the differences between their reactions.

As previously discussed with I-1 and I-2 beliefs in Chapter 7, attitudes towards Iran as a negotiation partner differ considerably between the High Representatives. Solana is very reserved towards Iran, explaining that “[t]he problem with Iran is essentially a problem of confidence” (SolanaSpeech061004b) and noting how the ‘twin-track’ policy promoted by the EU is meant to “demonstrate to the Iranian authorities on the one hand that the international community cannot accept its policy of *faits accomplis*” (SolanaSpeech070329). Solana describes Iran as an actor that cannot be trusted to act predictably or honour its commitments without controlling mechanisms and threats of sanctions. And while in his discourse the Union “desire[s] to forge a completely different kind of relationship with this country [...] to achieve that, we need trust and that trust must be restored” (SolanaSpeech090218b). Thus, trust and predictability are closely interlinked in EU foreign policy discourses.

While still maintaining a certain level of reservation towards Iran, Ashton sets out to promote a new sense of trust. This task is by no means easy as Ashton notes that in 2010 about how the confidence deficit has further increased due to Iran’s actions and lack of cooperation (AshtonSpeech100119b). She also provides a direct example of Tehran’s unpredictable behaviour:

“On the nuclear issue, we regret that Tehran has not followed up on the last meeting between Solana and Jalili on 1 October in Geneva. We all assessed that the meeting was positive. But in effect, Iran has now rejected a draft agreement proposed by the IAEA and has been refusing to pursue talks on the nuclear issue.” (AshtonSpeech100119b)

Ashton continues to demand that Iran follow the resolutions of the UN Security Council and IAEA and “take the steps necessary to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme” (AshtonSpeech110309b), despite recurring disappointments (see e.g., AshtonRemark110322, AshtonSpeech110309b, AshtonSpeech120201c). However, from 2013 onwards, Ashton’s discourse on Iran becomes more optimistic. She mentions that the conclusion of a Joint Plan of Action in November 2013 “represent a first step towards a long-term comprehensive solution that would ensure Iran’s nuclear programme will be exclusively peaceful” (AshtonRemark131218). Her comment that she remains “committed on behalf of the EU to get this job done, **if it can be done**” (AshtonRemark131218, [bolding added]), displays a certain level of assumed unpredictability of the outcome, yet her later discourse nonetheless shows increasing trust on the treaty framework eventually ensuring that Iran cooperates.

Mogherini's discourse on Iran is very different and focuses on the success of the JCPOA treaty. In 2018, Mogherini emphasises that after three years "the deal is delivering" and "Iran abides by its nuclear-related commitments, as it has been confirmed eleven times by the International Atomic Energy Agency" (MogheriniSpeech180612c). The deal reached with Iran is presented as a major achievement for the EU, not only ensuring nuclear non-proliferation but also opening the door to new possibilities for regional stabilisation (MogheriniSpeech150909). According to Mogherini, the deal is one example of how the international community has "managed to show the incredible potential of a more cooperative global governance" (MogheriniSpeech161213), and the deal "has shown to the world that with patience, perseverance, diplomacy and political will, nuclear non-proliferation is indeed achievable" (MogheriniSpeech170912b).

While discussion of Iran thus noticeably changes, this is a result of the institutional framework of the JCPOA treaty rather than the nature of Iran as an actor. Mogherini rhetorically raises the question of whether the EU trusts Iran, answering:

"It is exactly because it is a country like Iran that you need to have a nuclear deal with Iran. Because you do not want a country like Iran in that region to develop a nuclear weapon. If it was Switzerland, maybe, we would be in a different position. So it is not about being naive – it is the contrary. It is the lack of trust that makes the deal indispensable. [...] So, it is exactly because there is and there was no trust that an agreement was needed. [...] [t]his agreement could open the way, could put the basis for a different kind of engagement, a more constructive engagement in the region." (MogheriniSpeech171212)

Therefore, what Mogherini trusts is not Iran as an actor but rather the institutional framework and international agreements that can bind an actor to more predictable behaviour, in other words, *institutional power*. The binding agreement is seen as the basis needed for more constructive, more trusting engagement with Iran. And this is seen as successful, as Mogherini demonstrates when she recalls that "[s]ince we reached the nuclear deal, our engagement with Iran has entered into a new phase" (MogheriniSpeech171212).

The ideal of predictability

The quantitative VICS analysis indicated only whether other actors are portrayed as predictable or unpredictable in the analysed discourses. A broader inspection of the discourses concerning predictability generally offers valuable information about the strategic thinking that guides foreign policy, too. Previous qualitative analysis has not only discussed the predictability of other actors, but also the nature of the

political universe. However, to fully understand the role of predictability in the operational code belief system, it is also important to briefly examine how predictability as a concept is constructed in the EU's foreign policy discourse. This includes how predictable the Union itself is presented in the speech material.

In the speeches of the High Representatives, predictability is seen as an ideal characteristic for both international actors and the international system, especially for the Union itself. The High Representatives often emphasise the importance of the EU's commitment to a certain policy path or to a certain international plan. According to the High Representatives, predictability is also a trait that others value in the EU and Mogherini especially emphasises the importance of this. According to her, the EU has become more and more a point of reference to others around the world because:

“we are reliable, and our partners know where we stand. We are predictable, because we are open about our interests and values. We are cooperative, and our friends know that they can always count on us.” (MogheriniSpeech171212b)

Similarly, according to Mogherini, the Central Asian countries see the EU as “a reliable, predictable, cooperative power with no hidden geopolitical agenda” (MogheriniSpeech180314). This is presented as an important aspect of the Union's image in the world; Ashton specifically emphasises how important it is for the EU to make others, in this case Egyptians, “feel that they have long-term security and long-term partnership with us” (AshtonRemark110322). Discussing the creation of the EEAS in 2010, Ashton notes that “in a world that is seeing fundamental power shifts”, the EU “cannot afford to act in a disparate manner” (AshtonSpeech100707). The Union thus needs to respond to the unpredictability of its environment with emphasised predictability. In doing so, the EU seems to have truly been successful. Ashton believes that during her last year in office, “building trust and credibility has begun to deliver results” (AshtonRemark140403).

A number of words are regularly employed to describe this predictability when referring to the Union and its actions. They include “consistent” (SolanaSpeech031009), “consistently” (SolanaSpeech060405, AshtonRemark130313b, AshtonSpeech091215, AshtonSpeech130911b), “fully committed” (AshtonRemark140413), “with a strong commitment” (MogheriniSpeech171212c), and “reliable” (MogheriniSpeech180207, MogheriniSpeech180911b). Mogherini sums up this image when she emphasises that with the EU, “our pledges always turn into real money, into real projects that help real people, meaning that we always deliver on our pledges” (MogheriniSpeech171212c). She further explains that “[o]ur external credibility

depends highly on our internal coherence and consistency” (MogheriniSpeech150909).

The High Representatives thus also indicate that the Union seeks to be predictable when implementing its policies. For example, Mogherini emphasises that regarding the Western Balkan Strategy, the Union presented “a clear path indicated for the Western Balkans [...] to finally join the European Union”, noting that while the process is merit-based, “there is a clear political commitment on our side to make this perspective credible and finally come true” (MogheriniSpeech180206). Ashton notes that recognizing Albania’s progress with a Council Conclusions that look forward to a decision regarding candidate status in 2014 gives “a signal that goes beyond Albania and contributes to regional stability” (AshtonRemark131218). Thus, it is clear that the reliability of these commitments and the trust of other actors in the Union are important for the Union and enhance its ability to influence others.

The conditional policies of the Union are also constructed in terms of predictability. For example, the ‘more for more’ principle applied to the Union’s neighbourhood during Ashton’s term in office depends on others trusting the predictability of the EU. As Ashton explains: “those partners that go further and faster with reforms **should be able to count on** greater support from the EU” (AshtonSpeech110309, [bolding added]). Here too, commitments are mentioned, and “[m]utual accountability is at its [the new neighbourhood policy] core: the EU and the neighbourhood are responsible to each other for delivering on the commitments that we make” (AshtonSpeech110511). The Eastern Partnership is similarly “built on mutual accountability and responsibilities, and the shared commitment to the principles” (AshtonStatement110927).

8.2 Control over Development

These beliefs form the core of the subject’s perception of its own ability to have an effect or some level of control in the political universe. The quantitative analysis measures this ability against the control that other actors have, while the qualitative analysis applies a more descriptive approach to the nature of control the subject has over historical development.

VICS index measures the ratio of references to the subject itself as a power user and references to other actors using power in the analysed text. In other words, if the subject more often discusses its own actions, this implies a significant amount of control over historical development. If the analysed material focuses more on the actions of others, this is interpreted to mean that the subject believes others to have greater control over historical development in international politics. In this way, the question of historical development is condensed into a dichotomy of who is more active in the political universe: the subject or the other actors.

In the qualitative analysis, the focus is more clearly on the various intimations of control that the subject has over events in the political universe. While the qualitative coding builds on the dichotomy of whether the subject or others wield more control in the presented situations; here, the more relevant question is the nature of this control.

In the text, we first investigate the **development of the EU's control** during the analysed period. Then we discuss the **limitations of that sense of control**. Last, we discuss how the Union exercises the control it has through **a range of means of control**.

8.2.1 P-4 Control over historical development: Quantitative analysis

P-4 Control over historical development	
Low <-> High	
(0.00) – (+1.00)	
Solana	+ 0.72
Ashton	+ 0.76
Mogherini	+ 0.76

The overall VICS scores for control over historical development are quite high for all three High Representatives. They are also fairly uniform, with (+ 0.76) for both Ashton and Mogherini and (+ 0.72) for Solana. However, there is some more variation in the yearly scores, with Ashton's score rising to (+ 0.89) at the highest in 2009 but otherwise remaining in the range of (+ 0.73) to (+ 0.78). Mogherini's yearly scores vary from (+ 0.71) in 2016 to (+ 0.83) in 2015. On the surface, this would suggest a shared belief system where the EU is seen to control its surrounding environment. This kind of actor is proactive and able to relatively freely choose its actions in various situations according to its own interests, instead of having to adjust its approaches to the actions of others.

Here, however, the rhetorical characteristics of the material must be noted. One factor causing these high scores might be the genre of the analysed speeches. The role of the High Representatives in these speeches is to report on the policies of the EU, which in turn leads them to use more verb-based utterances where the subject is Self, meaning the European Union. One should thus be cautious when drawing conclusions from the quantitative analysis alone as VICS's ability to take this factor into account is limited. Here, qualitative analysis is useful to evaluate how the indications of VICS analysis should be interpreted.

8.2.2 P-4 Control over historical development: Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis does offer some support to the interpretation that the European Union is in control of events in global politics. In many situations, the EU is even portrayed as having a significant amount of control. However, here too one should remember the context of the analysed speeches: The High Representatives could have some inclination to present the Union's foreign policy in a more positive light when reporting to the parliament, including depictions of the EU as a significant actor that is in control of international affairs. But there are nonetheless significant differences in the level of control the EU appears to have in different situations and in its relationships with different actors.

There is also much more diversity than the VICS analysis indicates between the High Representatives when it comes to beliefs concerning the control that the EU has over international affairs. Here, Solana appears as cautiously optimistic about the EU's possibilities to eventually develop into a significant power but remains reserved about the Union's present capabilities. Ashton already sees the EU as being much closer to fulfilling this potential, and Mogherini describes the EU as already a global power. Instead of being in an immutable state, the Union's ability to control the political universe appears in the qualitative analysis as gradually developing.

Development of the EU's control

In Solana's discourse, the EU does hold the potential to become an international power, and he emphasises the need for the Union to develop its capabilities. However, especially in his earlier speeches, the actorness of the EU is expressed in a conditional tone. For example, in 2000, while discussing the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy, Solana notes that "[i]f the Union has the capacity and commitment, it can act as a strong catalyst for stability and peace beyond its own frontiers", continuing that the Union then "will be in a stronger position to support democracy and the rule of law, and to defend human rights throughout the world" (SolanaSpeech000301b). It is clear from his tone that this is not something that Solana feels the EU capable of at this stage. Only quite late in his term in office does he express the hope that the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty will finally allow the EU "to move on in the field of foreign and security policy, in a much more coherent manner" (SolanaSpeech080408).

There are areas where the EU already wields considerable power in Solana's discourse. According to Solana, the Union is in "a unique position" to bring peace, stability and prosperity to the Balkans (SolanaSpeech000321), having already achieved much in the region in 2000 (see SolanaSpeech000321). Solana also considers the authority that the Union wields in the Middle East Peace Process,

giving credit to Europe for instigating the Road Map and taking part in devising and establishing the Quartet (SolanaSpeech031009). Indeed, many of Solana's speeches in the parliament concern the Middle East Peace Process and the Union's role therein. Solana himself recognises this focus, noting that "[t]he fact that the European Union has an enhanced Common Foreign and Security Policy is due in part to the formulation of its policy on the Middle East" (SolanaSpeech010131).

However, even in the Middle East Peace Process, the EU's role is portrayed as relatively limited. Despite the Union's efforts, Solana acknowledges that from time to time "set-backs in the peace process are discouraging" (SolanaSpeech000301b) and "the great hopes held out [...] have been dashed" (SolanaSpeech010131). In 2003, he does not try to conceal his frustration "because the Israelis and Palestinians have not been able, or have not wanted, to implement the commitments" (SolanaSpeech031009). It is clear that even in this theatre the Union does not have a mastery over historical development and cannot control the behaviour of others.

Besides the Union's limited success in persuading the parties to proceed in the Middle East Peace Process as hoped, the role of the Union is not as significant as that of other actors, particularly the United States. The need for the participation and support of the United States for the peace process is often emphasised, and Solana even notes that the parties "had become perhaps over-dependent on energetic mediation from Washington" (SolanaSpeech010131). While according to Solana, the EU "can play an even more important role" in the peace process, this role happens "working alongside the United States, supporting the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General, through its sustained dialogue with Egypt and Jordan" (SolanaSpeech010131). While the European efforts, initiatives, and contributions are praised, it is the Quartet that has the crucial role in facilitating the peace process. And the workings of the Quartet are presented as dependent on cooperation with the US administration.

The international actorness of the EU strengthens modestly in Solana's discourse over time. In 2006, the EU is "increasingly a global actor" (SolanaSpeech060530), and "more active than ever" (SolanaSpeech061004b) with there being "hardly a crisis in the world where the EU is not playing an active role" (SolanaSpeech061004b), even if such a role is still chiefly dependent on cooperation with other actors and supporting rather than leading. In 2009, Solana reflects on the development of the EU's actorness:

"Speaking today, at the beginning of 2009, at the European Parliament, on CFSP and ESDP, reminds me of where we were 10 years ago, in 1999. That was really when we began working on ESDP. And when I look at where we are today, I see how much progress has been made. Nobody can fail to see what has been achieved." (SolanaSpeech090218)

Ashton also recognises this progress. When addressing the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament for the first time after her appointment, she notes that “[t]here is much to be proud of where there was only a common will ten years ago” (AshtonStatement091202). Now, according to Ashton, the security and defence policy of the Union is a reality, its capacity in the area of crisis management is making a tangible difference on the ground, and the Union is not just making declarations, but acting to monitor, to protect and to stabilise with concrete results (AshtonStatement091202).

However, for Ashton this is only the beginning of a development that could lead to the realisation of the EU’s full potential. When discussing the EU’s strategic partners, Ashton emphasises that “it is really essential that the European Union determines for itself what it wishes those relationships to be in the future” (AshtonRemark101027). For her, the Lisbon Treaty expressly presents the Union with the means to increase its control over its environment:

“I would argue that our partners generally have a clear idea of what they want to see in this relationship with the European Union; but in the world that is post Lisbon Treaty we are given the opportunity to be more clear and more effective in what we believe we want to get out of the partnerships that we have.” (AshtonRemark101027)

The Lisbon Treaty and the EEAS form the base of Ashton’s vision of strengthening the Union’s actorness. According to Ashton, the reason for negotiating the Lisbon Treaty was “to build a stronger, more assertive and self-confident European foreign policy” (AshtonSpeech100310), and “the promise of the Lisbon Treaty is a more coherent, more consistent and hence more effective EU foreign policy” (AshtonSpeech100616b). The Lisbon Treaty “offers us the chance of a stronger and more coherent voice on the world stage” (AshtonStatement091202), while “the European External Action Service will be key to deliver this” stronger, more credible European foreign policy (AshtonSpeech100310). However, at the beginning of Ashton’s term, it is still uncertain if the EU can achieve this aim, depending on the capability of the Member States to cooperate: “If we pull together we can safeguard our interests. If not, others will make decisions for us. It really is that simple.” (AshtonSpeech100310)

Ashton’s speeches, in general, give an impression of the EU as a growing actor in global politics. However, the Union’s ability to affect and control events is still often limited and dependent on other actors. Furthermore, the EU is typically not the leader in these situations but instead relies on its role of influencing the other actors that are making the crucial decisions. Nonetheless, Ashton also sometimes still describes the EU as having significant power to affect others. According to Ashton,

the EU was “the first to offer a serious response to the Arab Spring” and soon after that “launched a new and ambitious European Neighbourhood Policy” (AshtonSpeech110606). Ashton also increasingly describes the EU as a leader in international diplomacy. The EU is a prime mover in the establishment of the Cairo Group (AshtonSpeech110927) and plays a key role in the UN Human Rights Council regarding the situation in Yemen (AshtonSpeech111012). The Union is also described as an active participant in UN policies, promoting its agenda effectively (see AshtonSpeech110928, AshtonSpeech120417). Ashton’s EU also has “the will and capacity to take action in support of conflict stabilisation [...] as, for example, it showed during and after the war in Georgia in August 2008” (AshtonStatement110927). In this way, Ashton’s portrayal of the Union is of an actor that is slowly increasing its control over international politics.

For Mogherini, the European Union is already a real power: a diplomatic superpower (MogheriniSpeech161213), an indispensable power for international security (MogheriniSpeech171212b), and the main pillar of the multilateral system (MogheriniSpeech170704). Quoting the report on the implementation of the CFSP, in 2016, she speaks of the EU as “the largest economic power, the most generous donor of humanitarian and development assistance, and the front-runner in global multilateral diplomacy”, adding that she is “glad that we are finally starting to realise our potential” (MogheriniSpeech161213). In 2018, Mogherini describes the development of the European Union’s relationship to its ally the United States that helped Europe during the II World War:

“Yet, after seventy years, the European Union has grown up. We are a global power and a global security provider. We have our own principles, our interests, and our unique European way to peace, security and development.” (MogheriniSpeech180911b)

The Union has thus clearly assumed a leadership role in Mogherini’s speeches. It is “an important point of reference for the Arab world” (MogheriniSpeech171212d) and “a strong point of reference for all countries in the region, regardless of the religion of their citizens” (MogheriniRemark170201b). Mogherini’s EU is ‘a central actor’ (e.g., MogheriniSpeech180612b) that can take the lead in discussions and define the international agenda according to its goals. Overseeing the negotiations with Iran with successful results (see MogheriniSpeech170912b, MogheriniSpeech171212, MogheriniSpeech180612c) is one of the most prominent examples of this leadership role.

This change of the EU’s role is evident if one compares the previous discourses about its supporter-role in the Middle East Peace Process to how Mogherini describes these negotiations: “Our role is more important than ever today. Our

regional partners can also play a major role in promoting and supporting a solution” (MogheriniRemark161123). While previously it was the EU that could mainly just support others; now, the others can only ‘also’ play a major role, while the Union’s own role is emphasised.

While Mogherini describes the EU as an already mature global power, more can still be done. She especially emphasises the Union’s need to build security cooperation and capabilities. Mogherini notes that “if we want to be able and free to do security our own way – our own European way – we need to strengthen our own capabilities and capacities to act also as a security provider for our citizens and also for our partners in the world” (MogheriniSpeech170704). Stronger cooperation among the Member States as well as with its partners is still an important factor, as is the building of a more coherent institutional framework. Here, the EU’s Global Strategy in particular, plays a key role in Mogherini’s discourse (see e. g., MogheriniSpeech161213).

Limitations of the control

The analysed discourses paint a picture of the EU’s steadily growing ability to control international affairs but this control is never monolithic. In the speeches of all three High Representatives, there are also descriptions of situations where the speaker acknowledges the limitations of the control that the EU can exercise. Especially when the High Representatives refer to greater powers like the United States, China, and Russia, the control that the Union has in relation to those actors is presented as considerably limited.

The EU’s mastery of different situations is periodically presented as dependent on cooperation with the United States. This is especially apparent in the Middle East, where the US as an “indispensable and crucial actor” (AshtonSpeech091215) often appears to be the leader. Washington’s leading role is evident, for example, in the way in which Solana describes how the change of the US administration has led to a hiatus in the negotiation machinery after eight years of diplomatic effort under the leadership of President Clinton. He even notes how the parties have become perhaps over-dependent on mediation from Washington (SolanaSpeech010131). The Union’s ability to persuade the US to adopt European positions is obviously not on the same level as its ability to influence smaller actors, which are often dependent on the Union’s support. This issue became especially problematic for the Union during the first Trump presidency, with the US pursuing policies regularly conflicting with the Union’s goals.

With China, the EU must acknowledge the benefits of cooperation, but this sets limits on the control the Union can have over its relationship with that country. A good example is the way in which Mogherini discusses China, noting that despite

disagreements, the Union has with it, “[i]f we want to preserve the multilateral system, to make it more effective, engagement with China is an absolute must”, and later continuing that “if we want to promote sustainable development and sustainable security in Africa, engagement with China is key to achieve results on the ground” (MogheriniSpeech180911d). The Union’s need for stronger cooperation with problematic countries, often emphasised by the High Representatives,¹⁰⁷ also shows the limitations of the control the Union has over these relations.

With Russia, the EU’s chances of control continuously weaken. The Union has obvious interests in influencing Russia, both its foreign policy and societal development, but the attempts to do so are not presented in the material as particularly successful. This is clearly demonstrated regarding the war in Chechnya that is, according to Solana, “of increasing concern to all of us” (SolanaSpeech000301b). While Solana demands a response from Russia regarding human rights issues, he has to content himself with the following:

“[t]he positive element arising out of his [Human Rights Commissioner Alvaro Gil Robles] visit was confirmation from the Russian Government that they are establishing a human rights office in Chechnya, and more importantly that they had agreed that two representatives from the Council of Europe should be present in this office, under Russian control.” (SolanaSpeech000301b)

This statement hardly demonstrates the Union’s control over the situation or Russia’s actions. The later attempts to influence Russia’s democratic development in the vein of structural foreign policy are not described as any more successful, either. In 2012, Ashton is forced to admit that the initial steps of easing party registration remain the only positive political reforms in Russia that year, and “[t]o allow for a truly pluralistic parliamentary system, without undue obstacles to the work of a viable opposition, much more remains to be done” (AshtonStatement120911). While Ashton is also defiant in her proclamation that “[i]t is important not to underestimate our economic strength and the potential of our economic response” (AshtonRemark140403) after Russia’s annexation of Crimea, the overall tone concerning the Union’s ability to influence Russia remains pessimistic.

The greater powers are not the only actors with which the Union must admit the limits of its capacity of control. Even after reinforcing the sanctions against Syria, Ashton acknowledges that “[d]espite the efforts of everyone, the Syrian regime has remained defiant” (AshtonSpeech111213c). In the Israel-Palestine conflict, Ashton is similarly made to acknowledge that it will not be easy to find an agreed way to lift

¹⁰⁷ See I-1 beliefs in Chapter 7.1.

the blockade that Israel has set on Gaza (AshtonSpeech100616). There is a limit to what the EU can do in mediating these conflicts, as Mogherini notes regarding the parties of the Israel-Palestine conflict: “We can build all the international and regional support, but they have to take responsibility for showing responsibility inside” (MogheriniRemark151028). And, earlier Solana already expresses his frustration because “the Israelis and Palestinians have not been able, or have not wanted, to implement the commitments so formally entered into in Aqaba only a few weeks ago” (SolanaSpeech031009), later noting that:

“Obviously, there can be no negotiation if the parties do not recognise one another. There can be no peaceful settlements if the parties resort to arms in order to resolve the conflict.” (SolanaSpeech060405)

Nor are the structural foreign policy means of the Union without their own limitations. This is demonstrated for example with Egypt in 2013, where Ashton notes that while the EU raises concerns related to human rights, building political consensus, and establishing a conducive business environment, Egypt remains focused on the EU financial package. As the EU cannot allow the country’s economic collapse, it must “show ‘strategic patience’ with the political development” (AshtonRemark130313). This is in line with her earlier acknowledgement that “the democratic transitions have to be home-grown” (AshtonSpeech110309), in Egypt as well as in Tunisia.

The important role of the United Nations in the European Union’s foreign policy belief systems, as previously discussed, also means that the EU often adjusts its policies according to the UN policy. For example, in the Syrian crisis, other actors, most notably the UN, are described as leaders in mediating the crisis. The EU seeks to “put our support behind the UN process” (AshtonRemark111213), and “continue to remain determined to support the efforts of the UN” (AshtonRemark140403), taking a supporting role in solving the crisis, rather than claiming leadership. When US Secretary of State Kerry meets with Minister Lavrov (of Russia) in 2013 to discuss the situation in Syria, the role Ashton sees for the Union is that “we put the EU at the disposal of the work that is on-going in order to see how we can contribute” (AshtonSpeech130911).

The cooperative tendency in the EU’s operational code naturally also implies limitations to the Union’s control over events. Concerning for example migration issues, when the EU has achieved results, it is noted that these results “were achieved by way of cooperation, partnership and mutual respect and understanding with a strong role of the United Nations” (MogheriniSpeech181129b). The EU thus needs international cooperation and multilateral institutions for control, as Mogherini summarises:

“We need multilateral institutions to promote rights, to protect our environment, to govern globalisation. We need multilateral institutions to build peace and security worldwide – we could not do this without them, in our multipolar, disordered world. (MogheriniSpeech181211)

While this is typically not presented as a weakness in the EU’s foreign policy discourses, and the Union’s interests are usually not depicted as conflicting with the interests of the Union’s partners or the international community, this nevertheless represents an actual limitation to the control that the EU can exert over historical developments. The guiding belief that “the problems we face cannot be solved by any single actor” (AshtonSpeech100310) means that no single actor can control the historical development alone either. These limitations become visible when other actors are unwilling to cooperate, for example, what happened in the Syrian crisis leading to Ashton’s comments in 2013:

“We have consistently emphasised the need for efforts in the Security Council to try and effectively end this conflict. I say again that the role of the Security Council is crucial and irreplaceable but it does rely on the Members of the Security Council taking their responsibilities. And it is deeply regrettable that they have not yet shouldered that responsibility with regard to this conflict.” (AshtonSpeech130911)

As Ashton herself states, “[a]ll challenges that we face internationally when you think about peace and security, that all requires to meet them by joining forces and cooperating closely with international, regional and local partners” (AshtonRemark140403). This reality is not always an asset but sometimes a limitation on the EU’s control over its environment, a hinderance that becomes even more prominent when others have taken the leadership role. For example, when the United States is more prominently seen as a leader in the Middle East during the terms of Solana and Ashton, the EU’s role is to “continue to support and work closely with the US via the Quartet” (AshtonSpeech091215, see also SolanaSpeech090218b). When Solana mentions in 2001 that the European Union can play an even more important role in the Middle East, it can do so specifically “working alongside the United States, supporting the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General” (SolanaSpeech010131). Similarly, when discussing the EU’s actions in Afghanistan, Ashton emphasises that the Union’s actions are combined with US efforts and NATO security operations, within a coordinated international response (AshtonSpeech091216).

Range of means of control

Despite its limitations, the Union's self-image is prominently an actor in control over international affairs, especially in Ashton's and Mogherini's discourses. A range of means is utilised to maintain this control. Some aspects of the means of control utilised naturally overlap with the means of power discussed earlier with I-5 beliefs. After all, power is often about controlling events and other actors. Here, we try to focus more on what means are believed to guarantee the Union's control over events and the actions of others.

The portrayal of the EU's leading role in multilateral diplomacy, common for Ashton and Mogherini, presents the Union as having control over events in the world. The EU has "real regional leadership" in the Balkans (AshtonRemark140211), was "a prime mover in the establishment of the Cairo Group" (AshtonSpeech110927), and was "the first to offer a serious response to the Arab Spring" (AshtonSpeech110606). The EU is also described as being able to influence, for instance, Palestinian willingness to enter into the peace process (AshtonSpeech091215). Ashton takes credit on behalf of the EU for invigorating the Middle East Peace Quartet in 2011 (AshtonSpeech110309) after the peace process had again stalled. Similarly, according to Mogherini, the EU has "been running the Iran negotiations [leading to the JCPOA] for quite some years with a successful result" (MogheriniSpeech170912b) leading to the Iranian nuclear deal which "has shown to the world that with patience, perseverance, diplomacy and political will, nuclear non-proliferation is indeed achievable" (MogheriniSpeech170912b).

The High Representatives tend to describe the EU as especially capable of uniting international and regional consensuses to further its goals. This is shown in the above examples of facilitating negotiations towards preferable outcomes and also when discussing the EU as a captain of the international community, steering it in the directions it most prefers. Mogherini states that the EU "make[s] full use" of the Brussels Conference on Supporting the future of Syria and the region to "shift the focus now to diplomacy and peace-making" (MogheriniSpeech180417, see also MogheriniSpeech180313b). Thus, while the need to ensure cooperation of others can be seen as a limitation of the control the EU has, the belief about the Union's particular capability to establish the needed cooperation of others balances this limitation.

As we have already established, the use of authority is one of the key means of power for the European Union's foreign policy. This is demonstrated in the ways in which the EU indirectly applies control through the structures of multilateral diplomacy, something it does directly as well. In direct bilateral relations, the Union's use of authority is also often presented as effective in influencing other actors, indicating that the EU controls the other. For example, Ashton notes that her condemnation of religious intolerance and discrimination has achieved results,

giving as a concrete example that “the statements made in Tripoli contributed to the release of Egyptian Christians held in Libya” (AshtonRemark130612). Mogherini indicates a similar use of authority to control others with Gambia, South Africa, and Burundi, countries that gave notification of withdrawal from the Rome Statute of the ICC. According to Mogherini, after the EU “kept close contacts” with them, two of these nations reversed their decisions (MogheriniSpeech170704b).

A significant part of this authority power takes the form of Nye’s (J. S. Nye 1990; 2004) soft power. When Mogherini refers to the EU as “an important point of reference for the Arab world” (MogheriniSpeech171212d) or “a strong point of reference for all those in the world who believe in international cooperation, human rights and the rule of law” (MogheriniRemark170201b), it highlights the importance of this kind of power of attraction, describing an authority position based on the status of the Union’s model. An important part of the base of this authority power is, at least in the typical discourse of the EU, an idea of the EU as a role model. In this vein, for example, Ashton claims that “[o]ur own history of entrenching human rights, democracy and the rule of law across 27 member states, is a success story and acts as a source of inspiration for others” (AshtonSpeech100616b). Key building blocks of this role include the history of European integration as a success for peace and democracy, the triumph of the European economy as well as a capability to practice a value-based approach emphasising democracy and human rights in international relations. Others are assumed to admire these characteristics of the EU and seek to emulate them.

Another key element that gives the EU control in its political universe is the Union’s considerable economic power. One area where this is visible is the EU’s policies in its neighbourhood. Market access to the EU is an important asset for the Union, as Ashton notes:

“We have a genuine contribution to make to stimulating economic growth and supporting economic recovery. [...] Some neighbourhood countries rely on us as their major export market and source of imports. Allowing those countries to develop their markets with us could make a real difference” (AshtonSpeech110511).

The EU is also able to provide significant direct economic support to its neighbours, as well as influence others to support them and coordinate said support:

“And Money: or rather resources. Not just what the EU can do in direct support – important though that is – but in what it can leverage. We have already hosted a meeting of senior officials from around the world and from the big financial

institutions, to discuss what we all might be able to contribute if asked.
(AshtonSpeech110511)

As Ashton notes, “[t]he EU has the power [...] through its engagement by placing countries and regimes on a range that runs from engagement to isolation” (AshtonSpeech120417). Often, the Union is ready to use this power of granting or denying the benefits of engagement with the Union to control the development of others as a form of *structural foreign policy*.

The economic support offered by the EU is described as important for the recipient countries, making “a significant difference to the lives of people” (AshtonSpeech120911). The humanitarian aid of the Union is “literally keeping people alive in very difficult conditions” (MogheriniSpeech171212c). This indicates a significant effect that the Union’s policy decisions has for others. For example, Ashton notes that the decision of the General Affairs Council (of the EU) to send the recommendation to the Commission is “important for Serbia” (AshtonRemark101027). The EU’s decision on the terms of trade is “particularly important to Pakistan”, who in turn “recognize the significance of this” and “see this as a very substantial move on behalf of the EU” (AshtonRemark101027). The Union’s economic power is clearly seen as a means for increasing control in the its operational code.

The Union as the controller of the relationship is a prominent element in the discourses discussing Membership Candidates and the Union’s neighbourhood. By setting a merit-based process and the conditional opening of negotiating chapters, the EU ultimately controls its relationship with the Candidate countries, defining how (and if) they can proceed towards full membership of the Union (see e.g., SolanaSpeech000301b, SolanaSpeech000621, MogheriniSpeech180206). The path for the candidates is “a merit-based process” (MogheriniSpeech180206), and they “have to undergo substantial economic and political reforms” (SolanaSpeech000301b). Similarly, with the Eastern Neighbourhood countries, the EU iterates needed reforms, sets benchmarks for progress, and demands delivery of issues, signalling their determination to adopt the required reforms to sign or initialise Association Agreements (see AshtonSpeech121023). *Conditionality* thus acts also as an effective means of control.

Conditionality-based structural foreign policies are typical of the Union’s relations with the Memberships Candidates and those neighbours seeking Association Agreements with the Union. But, for example, Ashton also uses similar discourse, highlighting the EU’s control over the relation, when she notes that it is the EU who makes decisions on the terms of trade with Pakistan (AshtonRemark101027), and Mogherini uses similar discourse when discussing, for example, Cambodia (MogheriniSpeech170914c, MogheriniSpeech180913), Gabon

(MogheriniSpeech170915), Venezuela (MogheriniSpeech180502b), and Myanmar (MogheriniSpeech180913b). These are all countries that either receive aid from the EU or would benefit significantly from closer trade relations with the Union, placing them in an unbalanced power relationship with the Union. In these conditional relationships, it is the EU that also judges when the conditions set on, for example, financial assistance programmes are fulfilled and when they are not. The conditional nature of the enlargement process serves as a leverage that gives the EU considerable control over the political development of these countries.

The EU is described as important for the democratic and socio-economic development of countries in transition like Egypt where, according to Ashton, “the EU has an incredibly important role to play [in facing challenges]” (AshtonRemark130313), or the Ivory Coast where Ashton gives particular credit to the European Union’s support that the elections had finally taken place there (AshtonSpeech101215b). In Tunisia, the EU has “played a key role in supporting Tunisia on the road to a stable and democratic future” (AshtonRemark140403) in a manner that Ashton considers “a real success story” (AshtonRemark140403). And in Sudan, “the EU has an important role to play in supporting a peaceful, stable and democratic future for the Sudanese people” (AshtonSpeech1102020b).

Here too, the conditional nature of policies presents the EU with an ability to control others. As Ashton notes, “we as EU shall make it clear that our commitments require a corresponding commitment from the Government of Afghanistan to make progress on the issues which matter to us” (AshtonSpeech120612c). Financial aid is targeted towards certain issues, and progress with these defined issues is required for receiving aid from the Union. But this kind of structural foreign policy controlling mechanism can also be linked to wider goals, as Mogherini demonstrates when she explains temporarily withholding the disbursement of the EU’s macro-financial assistance programme to Moldova after issues with elections, noting that the assistance programme depends on “the successful implementation of specific economic policy measures laid out in the memorandum of understanding [...] but also the fulfilment of political pre-conditions related to respect of democratic mechanisms, the rule of law and human rights” (MogheriniRemark180705). Similarly, Mogherini notes that she has made clear to the Myanmar authorities that the Union’s trade preferences with Myanmar “are linked to clear conditions on human rights and democracy, and that to preserve our current trade arrangements, we need to see decisive action to improve the situation” (MogheriniSpeech180913b).

Treaties, international institutions, and the rules-based world order generally present an important way for the EU to control international politics, as Ashton demonstrates when stating that the EU needs, in addition comprehensive strategies, strong international organisations and the rule of law to address the global security challenges (AshtonSpeech100310). A good example is the Joint Plan of Action on

the Iranian nuclear program, an agreement that according to Ashton “really does represent a first step towards a long-term comprehensive solution that would ensure Iran’s nuclear programme will be exclusively peaceful” (AshtonRemark131218). Mogherini also states her belief that the deal with Iran will ensure the peaceful nature of the country’s nuclear program (MogheriniSpeech171212), later describing the deal with Iran in a confident tone: “Through this deal, we prevented nuclear proliferation, we avoided a regional escalation, and we made sure that Iran would never acquire a nuclear weapon. Never.” (MogheriniSpeech180612c).

Ashton places similar trust in Russia’s EU-supported WTO accession, an accession that “will bring the last major economy under a global rules-based system” (AshtonSpeech120201b). According to Ashton, Russia’s WTO accession “bind[s] Russia to international trading rules” (AshtonSpeech111213d). This integration was expected to control Russia by binding it to the common international institutional and regulatory framework. It serves as another good example of the EU’s belief in the controlling effect of the international institutions. Together with its authority and economic power, as well as its ability to use conditionality in its relations effectively, they present the Union with the means for maintaining control in the international environment.

8.3 Role of Chance

P-5 beliefs describe how the subject sees the role of chance – the emergence of an unexpected development – in the political universe. In the quantitative analysis, this is examined through variance in the use of power in the analysed material, while the qualitative analysis describes the role that is given to chance, random events, and the accidental outcomes of decisions.

In the VICS framework, the role of chance is seen as a combination of the subject’s beliefs about the predictability of others and the subject’s own control over historical development. Accordingly, the P-5 index is calculated by multiplying the P-3 and P-4 indices (and deducting them from 1 to maintain the direction of the index). The more predictable the political universe appears, combined with the more the subject sees itself as having control over events, the lower the role of chance is seen to be.

The coding framework utilised for the qualitative analysis highlights those elements that refer to actors controlling the events and those that refer to events being uncontrollable. This belief type plays a minor role in the operational code and is not prominently featured in the High Representatives’ discourses either, but a few issues are nonetheless noteworthy.

8.3.1 P-5 Role of chance: Quantitative analysis

P-5 Role of Chance:	
Low <-> High	
(0.00 – 1.00)	
Solana	0.91
Ashton	0.88
Mogherini	0.92

VICS analysis would indicate that all three High Representatives share a perception of the very prominent role of chance in international relations. The scores vary from Ashton's 0.88 to Mogherini's 0.92 and Solana's 0.93. The yearly scores of both Ashton and Mogherini remain relatively high as well, with Ashton's scores varying from 0.87 (2011, 2012, 20213) to 0.90 (2014), and Mogherini's from 0.86 (2016) to 0.97 (2017), if the anomalous scores of the first years are again disregarded.¹⁰⁸ This could normally be interpreted as a sign of a belief system where forecasting the future is understood as difficult and predicting political outcomes is challenging.

To place these scores into a proper context, it is particularly important to remember how the VICS indices are calculated. This means that the low scores of P-3, based on the means of power that others are believed to be using, affect these scores considerably. This is, as previously discussed, a result of the utilisation of VICS analysis to track the foundations of a universal operational code, instead of an operational code focusing only a certain other actor. As other actors in the political universe are diverse, their actions considered together appear as highly versatile. Because the High Representatives' P-3 scores are so low, it thus follows that even their stronger belief in the Union's control over political outcomes does not lower the scores of P-5 considerably. While this way of calculating the index works better with a targeted operational code, limited to a single other actor or particular case, it is questionable whether it offers a clear view of the role of chance in the entire political universe.

8.3.2 P-5 Role of chance: Qualitative analysis

Contrary to the picture that the VICS analysis gives, chance does not feature prominently in the qualitative analysis of the speech material. There are some considerable differences between the High Representatives in how they construct the role of actors in determining outcomes in international politics, but in general, the

¹⁰⁸ These being 0.71 (2009) for Ashton and 0.45 (2015) for Mogherini.

events appear not as determined by chance but by the decisions of relevant actors, the Union included.

Solana is the only High Representative in whose discourses the role of chance can be seen as occasionally controlling or dominating the events. It is certainly a notable element in his discourse about the Israel-Palestine crisis and the Middle East more broadly, where risks of deterioration or regional overspill are introduced as elements of uncertainty. For example, in 2002 he predicts that if current events progress, the cease-fire plans under discussion will be largely overtaken by events (SolanaSpeech020409). In 2006, he notes how major changes have followed such events as the stroke suffered by Ariel Sharon, the emergence of the Kadima party, and the election of Hamas in the Palestinian Territories (SolanaSpeech060530), all events where chance apparently has played a part. Solana himself even directly notes this role that unforeseen events play:

“An almost constant feature of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis has been the near impossibility to make advance planning in the process. Every time that that international efforts are focussing on a political solution, **unforeseen, dramatic events intervene and take hostage the political process.**”
(SolanaSpeech020515b, bolding original)

While the Israel-Palestine crisis is perhaps the case where the role of chance is most prominent in Solana’s eyes, even there he also gives a role to decisive actors, as can be seen, for example, in how he emphasises that what matters to ending the conflict is “the political will to implement it [the parameters of the solution to conflict] among Israelis, and Palestinians, among Arabs and the wider international community” (SolanaSpeech090218b). While chance can influence conflict situations like the Israel-Palestine crisis, relevant actors are nevertheless given a major role in shaping the development of events.

Ashton also uses expressions that indicate a role for chance in political developments. The ‘Arab Spring’ is for Ashton “an event of truly historic proportions that will shape not only the future of the Arab World but our own future too” (AshtonSpeech110927), clearly a case where the role of strategic action is more limited. With the ‘Arab Spring’, Ashton emphasises the uncertainty of the situation, noting that “none of us in this house know where this will end, and what the end will bring” (AshtonSpeech110511). The events of the ‘Arab Spring’ represent “changes occurring” (AshtonRemark111213) and not intentional choices made by the actors. However, the role of chance is not as dominant here, nor elsewhere in Ashton’s speeches, as in Solana’s discourse on the Israel-Palestine crisis. While events can lead to unforeseen situations, actors are typically able to react to them in some significant way. After all, regarding the events of the ‘Arab Spring’, Ashton also

notes how the Union was able to reshape its neighbourhood policy (AshtonRemark111213) and thus influence events.

Analysis of Mogherini’s speeches indicates that the shared belief system of the Union’s foreign policy has moved even more in a direction where chance has a less prominent role. Mogherini typically describes international actors as the force that sets motion the events and controls them. A good example, in contrast with Solana’s discourse, is the Israel-Palestine conflict, where the EU’s role is according to Mogherini “more important than ever today” and the Union’s regional partners can play a major role as well (MogheriniRemark161123). Nevertheless, the elements of chance do sometimes appear in Mogherini’s discourses, for example, as she notes that the international initiative regarding the situation in Venezuela in 2018 “could – with plenty of question marks – help build the conditions that would eventually lead to relaunching a political process” (MogheriniSpeech181023).

The above indicates the progression from a perception of a political universe where chance determines developments towards a worldview in which chance plays a less and less of a part in international politics. However, the picture of this development is ultimately mixed. For example, while Solana describes situations as more susceptible to chance, he also offers a significant role for actors in some situations. After all, Solana does believe that the Union itself “can act as a strong catalyst for stability and peace”, if it only develops its capacity and commitment first (SolanaSpeech000301b). Even in Solana’s discourse the Union is constructed as an actor that can potentially affect the events through its foreign policy. Actors are also provided a decisive role in determining possible developments, for example, when Solana insists that the Arab people “must and can shape their future”, noting that “[t]he Arab world is not condemned to backwardness” (SolanaSpeech070329). While the role of chance is more prominent in Solana’s discourse, all three High Representatives offer a significant role to the decisions of actors in international politics.

8.4 Calculation of Risks

I-3 beliefs concern the subject’s approaches to the risks of action in international politics: when these risks should be taken and when avoided, how to estimate them, and how to best control them.

VICS analysis measures the risk aversiveness of the subject, interpreting this from the diversity of the means of power they use. Less diversity across the six verb categories, when the utterances refer to the EU’s own actions, is thus understood as a sign of a tendency towards the avoidance of risk-taking.

The qualitative analysis also evaluates risk aversiveness/acceptance tendencies in the EU’s foreign policy operational code. Furthermore, the analysis covers the

ways in which the risks are avoided and controlled in foreign policy strategic thinking.

We first discuss the general attitude towards taking risks in the analysed discourses. We then move on to the key themes that arise from how **controlling risks** is presented in the material. These include demanding guarantees and conditionality, preparing for risks, frameworks of cooperation, and utilising the institutional settings of international institutions. Last, we discuss issues of **accepting risks**.

8.4.1 I-3 Calculation of risks: Quantitative analysis

I-3 Risk Orientation: Averse <-> Acceptance (0.00 – 1.00)	
Solana	0.23
Ashton	0.24
Mogherini	0.22

The overall risk orientation of the High Representatives is portrayed in the quantitative analysis as fairly averse, from Mogherini’s score of 0.22 to Ashton’s 0.24. All three Representatives have scores that are close in range to each other, indicating a shared operational code. This operational code thus guides the actor to steer away from taking risks whenever possible and to try to control risks whenever taking them is deemed necessary. The cooperative tendency of the shared operational code (see I-1 and I-2) indicates that this aversion should be especially strong towards risks associated with provocation and escalation as well as with relations that could end in deadlock¹⁰⁹. In other words, the Union tends to be more willing to risk being eventually dominated by others by opting for cooperation rather than risking their provocation with conflictual actions. The risk aversiveness of the Union’s strategic culture appears stronger when the risks in question are associated with the escalation of situations.

The yearly scores of Ashton and Mogherini portray some variation. Ashton’s yearly scores vary from 0.23 (2011) to 0.29 (2010), excluding the score of the year 2009 (0.11), where the number of speeches is exceptionally low. Interestingly, Mogherini’s score varies considerably more, having the lowest score of 0.20 (2017), but peaking at a considerably higher score of 0.57 (2016), indicating a more risk-acceptant set of strategic beliefs. Both Ashton and Mogherini are relatively flexible

¹⁰⁹ As opposed to relations that could end in submission. See VICS approach to I-3 and I-4 beliefs in Chapter 3.4.

in their approach to taking risks, but while Ashton always displays more risk-averse attitudes, Mogherini seems considerably more willing to change her approach if the events call for it. Nevertheless, Mogherini still generally opts for risk-averse strategies. Considering that in Mogherini's speeches, self-attributions are mainly in cooperative categories (see I-1) – the year 2016 having a particularly high score of +0.73 (in the range of -1.00 to +1.00) of cooperative tendencies – this means acceptancy specifically regarding the risks related to submitting oneself to others. However, even the score of 0.57 is still relatively low and indicates only a modestly risk acceptant operational code.

8.4.2 I-3 Calculation of risks: Qualitative analysis

It is perhaps unsurprising that there is relatively little direct discussion about the overall wisdom of accepting or avoiding risks in the Union's foreign policy. However, the analysed speeches do offer some examples that can be used to find an understanding of the general tendencies of risk acceptance/avoidance of the EU in its relations with others. Moreover, the High Representatives regularly discuss how the Union ought to control various risks. Some approaches that the Union is described as taking underline risk aversiveness, while other descriptions of the Union's ability to control risks can be read as signals of risk acceptance.

When they discuss the Union's overall approach to taking risks, the High Representatives tend to portray a risk-averse image. Mogherini describes the logic of the Union's Syria Strategy: "we don't try to bet on the future, but to prepare for it and contribute to shaping it" (MogheriniRemark170516). This sums up the attitude that generally characterises the Representatives' discourses: The EU prepares for and seeks to control risks. Regarding the situation in Syria, Ashton notes that the EU "cannot rule out that the conflict will drag on and we must be prepared for a direct impact on the EU" (AshtonRemark130313c). The value placed on predictability and stability in EU foreign policy discourses further underlines this risk aversiveness: both elements decrease the role of risk-taking in international relations. When risk-taking cannot be avoided, the Union prepares for negative outcomes, seeking to reduce their impact. This leads to several strategies for controlling risks.

Controlling risks

A recurring approach to controlling risks is the requirement of various guarantees from others. The High Representatives seems to share, at least to some extent, a common belief that demanding guarantees from others is an effectual way of managing risks in relationships. Other actors can only be trusted if they have proved themselves trustworthy through concrete actions or other kinds of guarantees

demonstrating their commitment and goodwill. Solana emphasises the importance of this kind of trust building with the Road Map of the Middle East Peace Process in 2003:

“However, it is not enough to proclaim the validity of the Road Map. The only way to break the current deadlock is but adopting concrete steps, measures which allow the parties concerned to see that the other side has a definite desire to move forward. Such measures aimed at creating a minimum amount of trust must also be verifiable. The lessons of the past led us to insist on the inclusion of a verification mechanism when the Road Map was being drawn up.” (SolanaSpeech031009)

It is worth noting how Solana emphasises verifiable actions as a requirement for actors to trust one another. Similarly, when Solana promotes working with the new ministers of the Palestinian government in 2007, he emphasises that the reason for this trust is that “[w]e know them” and that “[t]hey have consistently shown themselves to be serious in their intentions” (SolanaSpeech070329).

This emphasis on commitment is a common attitude in EU foreign policy. In 2011, Ashton emphasises that the Union can only sign the Association Agreement with Ukraine “if we are convinced that the Ukrainian leadership believes in the values on which it is based, and is committed to upholding them” (AshtonSpeech111012b). Similarly, Ashton emphasises in 2013 that the Syrian regime is required not only to say that it will agree to international action, but to do so and follow it up with transparency, noting the broken promises and obstacles that the regime has earlier put in the way of international efforts (AshtonSpeech130911). In both cases, what is clear is that the other actor is required to provide guarantees of their trustworthiness. If not concrete actions, at least a commitment to a cooperative approach is required.

Another good example is the negotiations with Iran about the country’s nuclear program. With Iran, all three High Representatives emphasise the requirements connected to issues of trust, despite their other differences.¹¹⁰ Risk-aversively, Solana notes that “[e]ven the suspicion that Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapon can destabilise the Middle East” and that the EU’s objective is to remove those suspicions through a negotiated solution (SolanaSpeech080130). Solana views that the control of the risks related to Iran’s nuclear program can only be accomplished by requiring Iran to provide answers to questions about its past activities as well as transparency about its present activities and future intentions (see

¹¹⁰ See previous discussion on relations with Iran, especially with I-1 beliefs in Chapter 7.1. and with P-3 beliefs in Chapter 8.1.

SolanaSpeech080130). Ashton similarly states that “the door remains open for negotiations through a confidence building process, which could be launched once Iran demonstrates its readiness to do so” (AshtonSpeech120201c). Both require Iran to demonstrate its trustworthiness through actions and commitments. Mogherini does not trust Iran blindly either, but emphasises the importance of guarantees of good behaviour, for example, noting how “civil nuclear cooperation makes the nuclear deal more solid through increased transparency” and mentioning that “the strongest monitoring system ever set up” was established with the deal with Iran (MogheriniSpeech171212).

The requirement of guarantees is of course connected to the elements of conditionality, that play an important role in the EU’s foreign policy as discussed previously.¹¹¹ The use of conditionality in a relationship also serves as a means of controlling risks. For example, Ashton states that the EU’s commitments to help Afghanistan “require a corresponding commitment from the Government of Afghanistan to make progress on the issues which matter to us” (AshtonSpeech120612c). In this way, she displays the need to control the potential risks of cooperation with the other actor. Mogherini demonstrates the use of this kind of conditionality when the EU places a on hold its macro-financial assistance programme with Moldova in 2018, noting that disbursements under the assistance programme are contingent on the successful implementation of specific economic policy measures and on the fulfilment of political preconditions related to democratic mechanisms, the rule of law, and human rights, too (MogheriniRemark180705).

Risk aversive control also manifests as the form of requirements of accountability, for example when the Union considers offering support to other countries. The principle of mutual accountability in the Renewed Neighbourhood Policy is one example of this: According to the policy, the EU will support the development of others and their economic growth, but “would expect that accountability would show that the resources have been used in the right way” (AshtonRemark111213). Ashton also notes that the partners’ “European choice goes hand in hand with our expectations for their commitment to progressing towards deep and sustainable democracy” (AshtonStatement110927). Regarding cooperation with Cambodia Mogherini similarly emphasises that:

“All our programmes are implemented, subject to close monitoring and on the basis of political and policy dialogue with the government. The respect of human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law are fundamental elements in our

¹¹¹ See I-2 beliefs in Chapter 7.2. and P-4 beliefs in Chapter 8.2.

development policy and they are closely monitored in this context.”
(MogheriniSpeech170914c)

The risks are controlled in the EU’s foreign policy not only by requiring guarantees from others but also by demanding guarantees of the effectiveness of the Union’s own tools and approaches. The EU needs to review its work regularly to make the best use of available instruments, including dialogues, guidelines, bilateral assistance, and actions in multilateral fora (AshtonSpeech100616b). In 2010, Ashton emphasised that the EU needs a sharper focus on results in its human rights policies, continuing that:

“Previous resolutions of this House have called for more information to better assess the effectiveness of our policies. I share this concern. We must judge our efforts by outcomes, even if our contributions to improving human rights situations are an investment over the longer term.” (AshtonSpeech100616b)

The strengthening of cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral, is often constructed in the speeches as a means of control. In bilateral relations with other actors, cooperation controls the risks inherent in the relationship. For example, when Solana emphasises the need to build a strong and forward-looking partnership with Russia (SolanaSpeech000621), the underlying belief seems to be that growing cooperation and dialogue can make the other actor more manageable. Ashton portrays a similar belief, seeing the EU-Russia relations as an engine for a modernisation process and expecting that the removal of barriers to trade, travel, and exchange will result in the convergence of citizens’ expectations as well as serve to increase fundamental interest in cooperation (AshtonSpeech111213d). As already discussed,¹¹² the cooperation through ‘constructive yet critical cooperation’ is seen in EU Foreign Policy discourses as an effective way of influencing actors such as Russia, Turkey, and Iran. With these kinds of actors, perceived as problematic and somewhat unpredictable, cooperation is believed to decrease risks.

In multilateral settings, the logic is somewhat different. Multilateral cooperation and its institutionalisation are constructed in EU foreign policy discourses as important stabilising factors in the political universe and are thus actively supported and strengthened. As Mogherini notes, the Europeans “remain convinced that all states can benefit from closer international cooperation” (MogheriniSpeech180313), and “continue to see multilateralism as the best way to prevent chaos, conflicts and confrontations in a multipolar world” (MogheriniSpeech180911b). The ideal state of

¹¹² See I-2 beliefs in Chapter 7.2.

the international system in the EU foreign policy belief system consists of cooperative networks working against common threats. In this vein, for example, Ashton describes the overriding interest of the Union regarding developments in Pakistan to be “a stable democracy [...] able to join with its neighbours in defence against common threats” (AshtonSpeech091216). Regional cooperation such as this is seen to increase regional stability and is thus promoted in the Union’s foreign policy.

Multilateral institutions and international law are presented in discourses as mechanisms for controlling and decreasing risks. The emphasis on their importance, as when Solana notes how the financial crisis has demonstrated the need for stronger global institutions (SolanaSpeech081105) or when Ashton states that global security challenges require strong international organisations and the rule of law (AshtonSpeech100310), underlines this. While stating that both national and collective interests are best served through multilateral institutions, Mogherini explains that:

“We need multilateral institutions to promote rights, to protect our environment, to govern globalisation. We need multilateral institutions to build peace and security worldwide – we could not do this without them, in our multipolar, disordered world.” (MogheriniSpeech181211)

International institutional and legal frameworks are thus seen as important elements in increasing stability, controlling risks, and answering threats. Multilateral institutions, international law, and treaty-based relations form a framework of global governance that is often presented in the EU discourses as an opposing force to conflict and risks in international relations. Hereby, they are understood as both means of preventing risks as well as controlling them. The High Representatives indeed place significant weight on the importance of international law. Solana underlines that “[w]e cannot be selective in our call for the respect of International Law. All – I repeat **all** – governments in the region must abide by the rule of Law” (SolanaSpeech020409, bolding original). Similarly, Mogherini emphasises how the EU “will stand by the fundamental belief that international rules should not be seen as a constraint for some, but rather as a guarantee for all” (MogheriniSpeech180911b).

Special importance is also given to international treaties. Mogherini’s emphasis on preserving and implementing the nuclear deal with Iran offers, again, a good example of how treaties are seen as a means of decreasing risks. She believes that the 2015 multilateral JCPOA agreement provides a solution for the lack of trust with Iran. For Mogherini, “preserving and implementing the nuclear deal with Iran is an absolute must” because the EU cannot afford rising tension in the Middle East or

another nuclear proliferation crisis (MogheriniSpeech171212). The deal has worked and delivered on its promises, having ensured the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and preventing nuclear escalation in the Middle East (MogheriniSpeech171212).

It is illustrative that discussing the risks controlled with the above-mentioned nuclear deal with Iran, Mogherini mentions alongside the nuclear proliferation crisis the risk of undermining the credibility of the multilateral framework, stating that “[w]e cannot afford to undermine the credibility of a multilateral agreement, endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution” (MogheriniSpeech171212). This is clearly viewed as a serious threat, and it underscores the intrinsic value the international institutional framework has in the EU foreign policy belief system. Mogherini later emphasises how the EU continues to defend not only the nuclear deal with Iran but also the Paris Agreement on climate change and continues to fund the essential work of all the UN agencies and invest strongly in the UN system (MogheriniSpeech180911b). She also praises the International Criminal Court for having strengthened universal justice beyond power politics and geopolitical interests (MogheriniSpeech180913c). All these underline the importance given to the international institutional framework as a means of control of risks in the Unions foreign policy discourse.

Accepting risks

Despite the overall tendency towards caution and risk aversion, there are also some indications of risk acceptance in the Union's foreign policy discourses. It is recognised that, to a certain extent, risks must be accepted to pursue the Union's goals in different situations. As Ashton notes, “[i]f you want results, you have to act – and sometimes take risks” (AshtonSpeech100310), continuing immediately with a critical notion that “there is a tendency in Europe to put process ahead of outcomes” (AshtonSpeech100310). This criticism of excessive risk aversion and slow reaction is not unique in the speeches of the High Representatives, who often encourage the Union to act more decisively and react more quickly.¹¹³ What are considered risks is also sometimes a matter of perception: Regarding the changes within political systems, Ashton notes that “[m]ore often than not, making these changes is less risky and uncertain than not making them” (AshtonSpeech120201b).

There is a certain element of risk acceptance in the way that adaptability is emphasised in the Union's foreign policy discourses. When, for example, Ashton underlines during the beginning of her term that the Union needs to adapt in order to

¹¹³ See discussion regarding I-4 beliefs below.

deal with complex problems and do so in a new geo-political landscape (AshtonSpeech100310), she in a way recognises that there are some risks in this landscape that the Union needs to accept and adapt its policies accordingly. Here flexibility arises as an important characteristic. Ashton tells that:

“The great strength of the EU; working with member states and international partners, is the range of diplomatic tools at its disposal. By mobilising them all in the appropriate way, we can be more effective at preventing crises, and swifter in resolving them.” (AshtonSpeech120911)

The range of means that can be used depending on the situation, as well as the flexibility to apply these means, gives the EU the ability to react to changes effectively. This kind of flexibility can be seen in the way in which Ashton describes the EU’s application of sanctions on Iran in a flexible, phased manner, allowing the Union to adjust to new situations when required (AshtonSpeech120201c) and in the manner in which Mogherini describes in 2018 the accession process of Western Balkans countries as setting not a target or a deadline, but proceeding with a realistic perspective of timing with an adaptive process (MogheriniSpeech180206). Depending on the interpretation of what risk acceptancy and aversion mean, this kind of adaptability can be either seen as enabling more risk-prone actions or as yet another means of controlling the actualisation of risks that could be read as an indication of a risk-averse approach.

8.5 Timing of Action

I-4 beliefs relate to the timing of one’s actions to achieve one’s goals in international politics. In essence, this is a question of flexibility: how flexible the subject’s policies are and how smoothly it reacts to events in the political universe.

Divided into two indices, the VICS analysis measures the EU’s flexibility between cooperation and conflict in its relations to others as well as the fluctuation between the use of ‘word’ category means – meaning ‘authority’, ‘promises’ and ‘threats’, and the use of more concrete ‘deed’ category means – meaning ‘rewards’ and ‘punishment’.

The qualitative analysis focuses on the long-term strategies as contrasted to short-term reactions in the analysed discourses. The text is formulated accordingly: after a brief discussion of the differences between the High Representatives, we first examine the construction of the value of **short-term reacting**, before focusing on the more **strategic, long-term approach** to foreign policy. After this, we examine the **mixing of long-term and short-term approaches**, a combination typical of EU foreign policy thinking, as we will see.

8.5.1 I-4 Timing of actions: Quantitative analysis

I-4a Importance of Timing of Actions: Diversity of Choices: cooperation vs conflict flexibility Low <-> High (0.00 – 1.00)		I-4b Importance of Timing of Actions: Diversity of Choices: words vs deeds flexibility Low <-> High (0.00 – 1.00)	
Solana	0.42	Solana	0.24
Ashton	0.48	Ashton	0.26
Mogherini	0.49	Mogherini	0.34

VICS analysis separates the beliefs about the best timing of action into two indices and treats them as a question of the flexibility of the used means of power. As the table demonstrates, the I-4a index portrays the discourses of all three High Representatives as representing a moderate shift propensity between cooperative and conflictual acts, with Solana having a slightly lower score (0.42) than Ashton (0.48) and Mogherini (0.49). There is some variation in yearly scores, with Ashton's scores varying from 0.24 (2009) and 0.31 (2010) at the lowest¹¹⁴ to 0.57 at the highest, and Mogherini's score varying from 0.27 (2016) at the lowest to 0.55 (2018) at the highest, however, both remain inside the same approximate scale. With the overall cooperative strategic (I-1) and tactic (I-2) approach of the EU's foreign policy discourses, this reads as a stable shared operational code, an established dominant strategy of cooperation. However, this approach is relatively flexible and can sometimes shift to include more conflictual means if the situation calls for them.

The diversity of choices between words and deeds (I-4b) shows considerably lower scores, with Solana (0.24) and Ashton (0.26) showing somewhat lower shift propensity than Mogherini (0.34). With an overall inclination towards the use of authority power means (see I-5 beliefs), this would indicate a belief system where using resources of authority, promises, and threats form the basis of the EU's foreign policy toolbox. Mogherini appears slightly more prone to the use of rewards or punishments when authority, promises and threats are not working but the 'word' category of VICS analysis appears to cover the dominant ways of influencing others in her case, too. Again, there is some yearly variation, with Ashton's score varying

¹¹⁴ As previously noted, Ashton's year 2009 has considerably fewer speeches, making it somewhat skewed, so the next lowest score is also provided for comparison.

from 0.19 (2014) at the lowest to 0.29 (2012) at the highest¹¹⁵, and Mogherini's scores varying from 0.12 (2016) to 0.45 (2017).

This analysis presents the EU as a relatively prudent actor, assessing situations before acting and tending to follow a dominant strategy, but nonetheless capable of shifting to a different strategy if necessary. The moderate shift propensity between cooperative and conflictual self-attributions is read in VICS analysis as indicating medium importance provided to the timing of action in EU foreign policy strategic culture. The low shift propensity between word and deed self-attributions on the other hand would indicate low flexibility on this scale and therefore could be read as a sign that the timing of action is seen as relatively unimportant in the EU operational code.

Risk orientation: Using I-4 indices to interpret I-3 results

As discussed previously, the I-4 indices are typically used in VICS analysis to help interpret the subject's risk orientation and management of risks (Schafer & Walker 2006c, 37; for examples, see Walker, Schafer & Young 1998; 1999). Here, the analysis of the discourses indicates an operational code where risks are controlled more through shifts between conflictual and cooperative approaches than between categories of 'words' and 'deeds'. Considering the propensity of using means of authority power (see I-5 indices), this indicates a foreign policy doctrine in which shifting from approval to condemnation is seen as the most effective way of controlling potential risks in a relationship with other actors. The variation of means inside the 'word' category, that is shifting from condemnation to threat or from approval to promises, is also regarded as a possible means to steer the other actor away from unwanted developments. On the other hand, according to the EU's operational code, escalating situations with a move from threat to punishment is best avoided.

The risk-averse scores of I-3 beliefs, and the dominant cooperative strategies (see I-1 indices), together with medium scores of diversity between cooperation and conflict (measured with the I-4a index), indicate an operational code that is relatively tolerant regarding the risk of domination by others, while on the other hand more averse to the risks associated with provocation or escalation in relations with others. In other words, escalating hostilities with other actors is seen as a greater threat to the EU's foreign policy goals than becoming dominated by others. However, the distribution across conflict and cooperation categories is still only very modestly unpredictable, meaning that the relative preference of accepting the risk of

¹¹⁵ If the anomalous score of 2009, 0.62, is not included.

submission should not be overrated. An actor like this should be generally risk-averse to both types of risks but displays a stronger aversion from escalation.

The low scores on I-4b on the other hand are typically interpreted to indicate aversion from doing too much, as opposed to not doing enough. They also indicate, somewhat stronger than I-4a, a relative acceptancy regarding the risks associated with the direction of the distribution: In the EU's case this would be acceptance regarding the risk of submission to the will of others as a possible outcome of cooperation. This would indicate an operational code where actions are taken carefully, which further supports the tendency of aversion from escalation. In the EU foreign policy strategic culture, cooperation with others is seen as less risky than initiating conflict, even when there is a potential risk that seeking cooperation will lead to being dominated by other actors. For example, continuing to avoid escalation with an increasingly hostile Russia¹¹⁶ fits this risk-orientation profile.

8.5.2 I-4 Timing of actions: Qualitative analysis

In the qualitative analysis, the beliefs of the three High Representatives regarding the timing of action appear fairly similar. Ashton displays a slight tendency to emphasise the need for flexibility more, while Mogherini places more weight on a strategic, immutable approach. These differences are not particularly distinct, however, and appear more as nuances rather than major differences in belief systems.

EU foreign policy has often been characterised as prominently 'reactive', chiefly only reacting to events and emerging power threats (see e.g., Davis Cross & Riddervold 2019; Giusti & Ambrosetti 2022), thus emphasising more short-term aspects of foreign policy decision-making. But especially post-Lisbon EU has also been seen to seek a more strategic orientation for its foreign policy (see e.g., Morillas 2019; Tocci 2017; Fiott & Simón 2019), even though at least the Union's pre-Lisbon attempts at strategy-based relationships have often suffered from discrepancies between expectations and reality (Bendiek & Kramer 2010). A more general tendency towards a 'long-termism' in EU policy decision-making has also been noted in the research literature (see Vogt & Pukarinen 2022). Interestingly, both kinds of timing of one's foreign policy actions are presented in a positive light in EU foreign policy discourses, as we will see.

Overall, the discourses of the three High Representatives would seem to be based on a shared strategic culture that values both quick and flexible reactions, along with a more long-term, strategic approach. These approaches are not treated in the discourses as oppositional but rather as mutually supportive and complementary.

¹¹⁶ See discussion about cooperation with problematic actors in Chapter 7.1.

The ideal for the EU is to be able to react rapidly to changing situations, while at the same time pursuing long-term goals strategically.

Short-term reacting

The urgency of unveiling events is often touched upon in the speeches, as is a need for the EU to respond to them in a timely manner. For example, in 2011 Ashton describes the situation in Egypt as “rapidly evolving” (AshtonSpeech110309c), the Southern neighbourhood in general as “changing fast” (AshtonSpeech110309d), noting that “I think we can all agree that the pace of change has been relentless” (AshtonRemark110322). Mogherini similarly raises the economic situation in Zimbabwe as something that “needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency” (MogheriniSpeech180208).

These rapid changes demand the ability to react swiftly. Ashton emphasises that for the Union, the uprisings across North Africa and the Arab world pose “opportunities we cannot afford to miss” (AshtonSpeech110511). Similarly, a few years earlier Solana underlines how, in resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict, when the efforts by the US and the Quartet offer a new opportunity, everybody “must do what has to be done to seize this opportunity”, adding that “[w]e could never forgive ourselves if we failed to do so” (SolanaSpeech070329). Both statements demonstrate a belief in the need to act in certain important political moments before the window of opportunity closes. Ashton emphasises this when she notes regarding the international community rallying behind a political solution to the Syrian crisis that “[t]he EU must keep the momentum and avoid that this initiative starts to disappear” (AshtonRemark130313c).

Sometimes the situation also makes it difficult to approach the issues with a long-term perspective. For example, Solana laments:

“An almost constant feature of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis has been the near impossibility to make advance planning in the process. Every time that that [sic] international efforts are focussing on a political solution, **unforeseen, dramatic events intervene and take hostage the political process.**” (SolanaSpeech020515b, original bolding).

If the situation and the other actors make advance planning and meeting strategic guidelines impossible, a successful actor needs at least some degree of flexibility. Because of these demands set by the environment, the Union’s ability to react quickly is valued in the High Representatives’ discourses. For example, Solana praises the “decisive response by the European Union” that “managed to stop a dangerous conflict” in Georgia and emphasises how the EU’s crisis management

bodies “are working full speed” (SolanaSpeech080910). Ashton emphasises that restrictive measures are for the EU “preventive instruments which should allow us to respond swiftly to political challenges and developments”, adding that the Union must also be ready to lift them quickly when they have served their purpose (AshtonSpeech120201d). Indeed, the need for the EU to develop into a faster actor is a recurring theme in the speech material.

Flexibility is one of the defining traits of Ashton’s description of the Union’s approach to the events of the Arab Spring. She emphasises that the EU leaders “have to develop tailor made policies in response to the needs identified by each country” (AshtonSpeech110927). Similarly, efforts must be targeted in the human rights agenda, “tackling each case based on a detailed understanding of the country at hand” (AshtonSpeech100616b). But this flexibility is also relevant in the wider context. Despite the importance of the strategic approach in her comments in March 2010 (AshtonSpeech100310), Ashton nonetheless underlines how the Union needs to adapt when dealing with complex problems in a new geo-political landscape:

“This is not a time for flying on auto-pilot. Or for sticking to the narrow defence of national ways of doing things. This is a time to be smart and ambitious.” (AshtonSpeech100310)

This type of flexibility is also present when Mogherini comments on the situation in Venezuela in 2018: “Let me stress once again that we will adapt our policies to any change in the situation” (MogheriniSpeech180208b), and later emphasises that the EU “will continue to monitor any development” and “will calibrate future actions in light of the evolution of the situation” (MogheriniSpeech180502b). Mogherini uses similar rhetoric when she comments on the killing of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, stating that the EU “will have to continue to monitor the situation as it continues to evolve [...] and decide on any measure to be taken collectively as European Union, based on, first and foremost the steps that will be taken by the Saudi authorities” (MogheriniSpeech181023c).

Strategic, long-term approach

As can be seen from previous comments, the High Representatives value the Union’s ability to flexibly react to events and act from a short-term perspective. This is in line with the ‘reactive’ image of the EU, even though this is constructed as a strength in the EU discourses. However, perhaps even more prominent in the analysed speeches is a long-term approach to foreign policy, combined with strategic planning. In 2009, Ashton emphasises this by highlighting how the European Security Strategy underlines the need for the Union to become not only a more

capable but also a more coherent and more strategic global actor (AshtonStatement091202).

Ashton also emphasises the importance of a strategic approach covering individual countries. Regarding the Maghreb region, she emphasises that the EU needs to “make sure that we are developing an approach that differentiates each country but builds an overarching strategic approach to the region” (AshtonRemark110322). Similarly, in the Horn of Africa, the Union needs to “build on African leadership [...] to ensure that we have an overarching view of what Europe can do in support of that region” (AshtonRemark110322). Mogherini similarly emphasises the importance of the strategy addressing the entire region of Western Balkans (MogheriniSpeech180206).

The EU often uses different strategies to set a long-term direction for its foreign policies. These strategies play an important part in shaping the Union’s responses to events. Especially for Solana and Mogherini, the strategies form a key element of strengthening the European Union as an international actor. These strategies also come up frequently in their speeches. Solana states that the ESS has “helped us to give direction to the CFSP and ESDP” (SolanaSpeech090218). Mogherini praises that “since I’ve presented the global strategy on foreign and security policy, our work for a stronger Union has moved on very concretely and very fast” (MogheriniSpeech161213).

Ashton, on the other hand, has been depicted as hesitant to draft a new foreign policy strategy during her term in office (Helwig 2013, 249–50). Despite this, Ashton emphasises the importance of strategies as a tool for a more long-term, coherent foreign policy. This is evident when she discusses the development of EEAS, which Ashton sees as important because the Union needs “to defend Europe’s interest and project Europe’s values in a more coherent and effective way” (AshtonSpeech100707). Ashton’s reluctance towards drafting a strategy of her own thus does not necessarily mirror a more general belief about the role of strategic approach in foreign policy but instead might have been connected to the lack of broad support among the Member States as Helwig (2013, 250) also suggests.

The general need for long-term planning is recurrently raised in the speech material. Following this line of thought, Mogherini’s EU approaches the Syrian conflict with the European Union’s Strategy on Syria, a strategy that “indicates the direction of our actions” and “is a roadmap for acting together” (MogheriniRemark170516). Before the Council’s adopting this Strategy, Mogherini already reiterates that she has begun to reach out to the key regional actors on the future of Syria with a particular view to the post-conflict end state (MogheriniRemark161122d). She continues:

“I understand that it might sound strange to talk and to work on post-conflict at exactly the moment when war still rages on, and yet, talking about reconstruction, reconciliation, post-conflict, the system of governance, that could ensure Syria a future, is a way of maybe opening the door for a process of peace. Because only if we start putting all the pieces together and to create some kind of consensus among the regional actors and among the citizens will we contribute to building peace in Syria.” (MogheriniRemark161122d)

The High Representatives thus place significant importance on the long-term perspective on solving crises and conflicts. But while valued, the long-term approach to foreign policy has not always been easy for the EU. Ashton indicates that the strategic approach is something that the Union has unsuccessfully tried to adopt, at least until the Lisbon Treaty and the EEAS had come to present an opportunity to strengthen this aspect of the Union’s foreign policy:

“For years, we have been trying to frame and implement comprehensive strategies. But the structures and systems we had, made this difficult. With the Lisbon Treaty and the EEAS we should be able to achieve this.” (AshtonSpeech100310)

Structural foreign policy is, by definition, conducted over the long term and aimed at sustainably shaping the structures in a given space (Keukeleire and Delreux 2014, 28). Typically, the European Union formulates its structural foreign policy goals as building ‘deep democracy’, a process that according to Ashton “is not just about changing governments, but also building the right institutions and the right attitudes” (AshtonSpeech110511). Ashton further recognises this when she notes, regarding Africa, that:

“the European Union is there for the long term, that our job is to build deep democracy, to support countries in transition and change, to develop effectively the civil society, the politics, their economics so they have long term democratic institutions, long term economic prospects [...] Deep democracy is built brick by brick. It’s not necessarily glamorous, but it’s absolutely essential.” (AshtonRemark110322)

This thinking within the structural foreign policy framework is also connected to the root causes of issues. Ashton refers to the importance of root causes when she defines the establishment of Al Qaeda in Yemen as only “a symptom of deeper problems” and emphasises how the linkages between economic, political, social, and security challenges are crucial (AshtonSpeech100119d). For Mogherini, the migration crisis

of the mid-2010s is a primary example of the importance of focusing on the root causes:

“I believe that the time when we had the illusion of managing migration flows only through border management is gone. We have now finally understood, not only that we need to act as Europeans, all together, but also that we need to act on what we all usually define as the root causes: poverty, climate change, lack of democratic spaces, violations of human rights, opportunities for life.”
(MogheriniSpeech170912)

In this way, structural foreign policy, typically involving deep institutional and societal development, in particular steers the Union’s strategic culture towards long-term, strategic foreign policy.

Mixing long-term and short-term approaches

Characteristically in the EU’s foreign policy discourses these short-term and long-term approaches are not separate nor opposed to each another but form a coherent combination of causal beliefs. Solana sums up this ideal ensemble:

“The European Union’s action in the Middle East must be firm and determined, but also creative and consistent.” (SolanaSpeech031009)

Ashton also notes, immediately after discussing the manner in which deep democracy is built brick by brick, that “[a]t the same time we have to be able to act quickly, flexibly and creatively when required, like now” (AshtonRemark130322). She then continues that “it’s like a big tanker which is a service which is the EU, which is the institutions, but it needs a speed boat that can also manoeuvre in difficult circumstances to try and put support on the ground” (AshtonRemark130322). Indeed, Ashton sees both a clear definition of strategy and a swift delivery as parts of the comprehensive approach that the EU needs in situations in which the Union operates, situations that she describes as multi-faceted, complex and particular (AshtonSpeech120911).

A similar mixing of long-term strategic goals and the urgency of action that demands rapid advancement on those goals, are common in the discourses of all three Representatives. The goals are long-term solutions, but the actions need to be taken now. In this vein, for example, Ashton notes that in handling the crisis in Ukraine in 2014, the EU “will only succeed if we act at the same time on the needs of the short term and the objectives of the long term” (AshtonRemark140403). Regarding support to neighbourhood countries such as Egypt and Tunisia, Ashton

underlines that “there is an immediate urgency and there is a long term strategy, and we need to have both in what we do” (AshtonSpeech110511). Solana describes a similar combination, noting that “[T]he EU has to tackle it on the basis of two principles, which are contradictory only in appearance” (SolanaSpeech060405), these two principles being rigour and flexibility.

In the analysed speeches, the long-term approach and strategic planning are typically combined with a need for urgency as well as some ability to react to changing situations flexibly. But the strategic approach is also seen as supporting the flexibility and ability to act quickly. In the most concrete form, this is shown in the emphasis on strategic preparation to support the fast use of different means to operate. The long-term planning and development of structures is recognised as a necessary precondition for quick and flexible action. Ashton demonstrates this aspect when she emphasises that “[a]ctions must be rooted in strategy” and then immediately continues to underline the quick action by noting how the EU was the first to offer a serious response to the Arab Spring and only two months later launched a new and ambitious European Neighbourhood Policy (AshtonSpeech110606). This flexibility is thus presented as rooted in strategic planning, with a long-term approach allowing the quick and flexible response to events. Long-term and short-term instruments, as well as strategic rigour and tactical flexibility, thus form a combination in the EU’s operational code.

8.6 Summary: Beliefs Concerning Control

All beliefs discussed above deal with the concept of control in the political universe. Philosophical beliefs P-3, P-4 and P-5 offer insights into the perception of the extent and limits of control that the actor can have in the environment they operate in. The instrumental beliefs I-3 and I-4 offer insights into the actors’ understanding of how best to increase and utilise their control over their political environment. The construction of these beliefs in the discourses of the High Representatives can be summed up as follows:

P-3 Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Political universe increasingly uncertain	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Predictability is seen as ideal, and forms an important part of the Union's self-image	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Rules-based systems and democratic institutions increase predictability, lack of them decreases it	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Increased belief in control also increases belief in the Union's ability to positively affect predictability of others	Ashton, Mogherini

P-4 How much "control" or "mastery" can one have over historical development? What is one's role in "moving" and "shaping" history in the desired direction?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
The control is context-dependant, and especially more limited with greater actors	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Ability to control events grows as the EU develops	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Cautious optimistic about the Union's potential to have more control in the future, but reserved about the Union's present capability to control events	Solana
The Union is starting to fulfil its potential to control events in international relations	Ashton
The Union is a global power, and has significant control over international relations	Mogherini

P-5 What is the role of "chance" in human affairs and in historical development?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Chance has a significant role in certain situations, together with strategic action of relevant actors	Solana
Chance has some role in shaping events	Ashton
Chance has a minor role in shaping events	Mogherini
Events are sometimes describes as happening by themselves	Solana
Events are primarily described as shaped by actors	Ashton, Mogherini

I-3 How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled, and accepted?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Risks are avoided and controlled with demanding guarantees and using conditionality	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Cooperation can be used to control risks	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Rules-based international order and multilateral institutions decrease and control risks	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini

I-4 What is the best timing of action to advance one's interests?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Combination of short-term flexibility and long-term strategic approach	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini

The quantitative VICS analysis of the speeches of the High Representatives portrays a fairly uniform operational code in which the world is seen as considerably unpredictable (P-3), where chance has a major role in international affairs (P-5), but also where the Union nevertheless can wield considerable control over events (P-4). The Union itself appears as a risk-averse actor (I-3), particularly cautious of escalation. The EU tends to be somewhat flexible in its approach to taking cooperative or conflictual stances towards others (I-4a), but at the same time, appears fairly inflexible in its preference for using authority power and promises/threats instead of more concrete means of causal power (I-4b).

The EU thus appears as a cautious and prudent actor that typically avoids escalating situations with conflictual actions but is less worried about being potentially dominated by other actors as a result of maintaining cooperative relations. VICS analysis also indicates a tendency towards slower action, as well as towards following a dominant strategy instead of ad hoc decision-making. The dominant strategy in the operational code accentuates the use of authority power as well as, to a considerably minor degree, the use of promises and threats. When necessary, controlling risks through shifting the tone of authority power is preferred in the Union's strategic culture. This means shifting from appreciation and voicing support, to condemnation and expressing opposition, and vice versa. Shifting from the use of authority to promises or threats is also possible, but the threshold for shifting from words to using more concrete means of power is considerably higher.

However, this is all based on a point of view in which the operational code is regarded as universal. A more detailed examination suggests that targeted operational codes, where the focus would be a particular issue area or particular other

actor, might differ considerably from this big picture. Especially the high scores of the index measuring beliefs about the role of chance (P-5) should be interpreted with caution as the variety of analysed material affects the variety of coding in ways that are perhaps not intended by the VICS framework.

According to the qualitative analysis, the Union's increasing ability to control events in the political universe is connected to its own institutional development, leading to a gradual change of the role constructed for the Union. Regarding the current state of the Union's capabilities is where the discourses of the three High Representatives differ, but otherwise their beliefs appear fairly similar when it comes to questions of control. The High Representatives share a similar perception of how the Union can control its political environment; their only real differences concern the state of progress in the Union's development as an international actor. We can again, with some justification, speak about an institutionalised strategic culture, characterising how the understanding of the European Union and the world it operates in is represented in the analysed speeches.

Predictability (P-3) is constructed in the discourses as an ideal characteristic both for the international system and the individual actors therein. In line with this, the Union itself is portrayed as a particularly predictable actor, and the discourses also indicate that the Union seeks to maintain this image through its actions. As, for example Teija Tiilikainen, has previously noted, the Union sees itself as a force for stability, maintaining the status quo of the current international order (Tiilikainen 2011, 194–95). Our qualitative analysis supports this interpretation.

All three High Representatives see both elements of predictability and unpredictability in the political environment surrounding the EU. While Ashton and Mogherini regard the Union as increasingly more capable of affecting the predictability of its political universe alone, otherwise the three High Representatives share a similar operational code concerning the predictability of others. The international environment in general is described as increasingly uncertain and this development is presented as a significant threat to the Union. This also indicates an operational code where one needs to be prepared for unpredictable outcomes, materialising both as risk aversiveness and as the importance given to the control of risks.

International cooperation and agreements are presented as ways to increase predictability in the international system. Indeed, the increasing challenges to the rules-based multilateral system noted elsewhere in the analysis link to this perception of the international environment as increasingly unpredictable, highlighting the role that multilateral cooperation and rules-based institutions have in the Union's strategic culture. Including others in the frameworks of international institutions is also presented as an effective means to increase predictability.

The perception of predictability of the political environment is closely connected to optimistic beliefs about the prospects for the realisation of one's aspirations (P-2) and the control one has in the political universe and over historical development therein (P-4). An actor that sees itself as being able to control situations and achieve desired outcomes regards the surrounding environment as more predictable based on this. The reverse of this is of course also true. It is easier to see oneself being in control of events and to evaluate the prospects of realising one's goals in an environment in which other actors are behaving predictably and where the universe in general seems predictable. This well demonstrates the complicated interconnectivity of the beliefs in the operational code belief systems.

The VICS profiles all three High Representatives as having a similar level of high trust in the Union's ability to shape the history towards the desired direction (P-4). Instead, in the qualitative analysis, Solana appears as fairly reserved about the Union's ability to control international events, at least presently. There are few areas where Solana gives more credit to the Union's ability to shape events, and he is cautiously optimistic about the potential the Union has for strengthening its control in the future. He also shares with the other two High Representatives a perception that the Union's ability to control events is in the process of growing stronger. Ashton presents the EU in her speeches as an actor having significantly more control already yet there are still significant limits to this control. Mogherini on the other hand, portrays the EU as a global power, an actor that can exert a significant degree of control over its environment. This is connected to the institutional development and integration process of the Union, where the Lisbon Treaty is expressly seen to give the Union the tools to control historical development relevant to its foreign policy goals.

The control the Union does have varies considerably. Especially concerning greater powers, like the United States, China, and Russia, the control the Union can have is presented as considerably limited. On the other hand, with smaller countries, especially those seeking cooperation and support of the Union, the EU wields remarkable control. Especially with its enlargement and neighbourhood policies, the Union actively utilises considerable control over other actors. The level of control is thus often linked to the balance, or imbalance, of the power relationship between the actors: the more imbalanced the relation is to the Union's favour, the more control the Union is described as using in the relationship.

The main elements enabling control are the robust institutional structure of the Union itself; its economic power; its 'social capital' and standing in the international system; and the effective utilisation of the multilateral institutional frameworks of the rules-based world order. It should especially be noted that the Union's control over events in international politics is presented in the speeches as considerably dependant on the cooperation with others and the role of international institutions.

The control that the Union can have in the international system is enhanced while working in accord with the UN. The Union alone cannot control the events that affect it and its goals and must seek cooperation with others. However, the perception of the Union as particularly capable of controlling others through diplomatic means and its leadership position in multilateral frameworks balances this limitation.

While the quantitative VICS analysis indicated a strong, shared strategic culture that offers a very prominent role to chance in international relations, the qualitative analysis indicates a less prominent role for chance (P-5) with a stronger belief in actors' own abilities to shape events and historical developments. While the speakers rarely can be certain about the ways in which events will unfold, the ability of the actors to steer and shape the events is indicated on a general level. Furthermore, there is an observable development, where Solana's discourse refers more to events being subject to chance, while Ashton and Mogherini provide a more prominent role to actors and their decisions. This development mirrors the connected belief in the Union's own growing control (P-4).

Regarding approaches to risks and risk-taking (I-3), the qualitative analysis does indicate a certain inclination towards risk aversion in the Union's foreign policy strategic culture, but this mostly appears as an emphasis on the need to control risks. Especially through the distinctive use of conditionality, the EU seeks greater control over its relationships with other actors and thusly a greater control over the risks involved in these relations. A certain level of flexibility and the need to adapt to situations is also raised in the speeches, indicating a more risk-acceptant approach but these play only a minor role in the analysed speech material. However, the Union's policy of seeking cooperation with even problematic actors does display a tendency towards risk aversiveness, especially a tendency to avoid the risk of escalating conflict with others.

Deepening cooperation is another feature that is constructed in the analysed speeches as a way of controlling and decreasing risks in relationships with other actors. This indicates a belief in the beneficial nature of interdependence in international relations. The multilateral, rules-based system also has an intrinsic value for the Union as a framework for decreasing and controlling risks in international relations. All three High Representatives underline the importance of these institutional structures, including international treaties as forms of managing risks. As already noted, the Union's foreign policy strategic culture is characteristically rules-based in its approach and affects the Union's approach to managing risks as well.

Regarding beliefs concerning the best timing (I-4), both short-term flexibility and a more long-term strategic approach are constructed in the analysed speeches as important for the Union. The nature of the international political environment especially demands the ability to act swiftly and flexibly from the Union. While the

High Representatives acknowledge the importance of short-term action and flexibility in pursuing the Union's foreign policy goals, all three still more emphasise the importance of a strategic approach to foreign policy and more long-term planning of action for the Union. While the Union's foreign policy operational code thus appears in the qualitative analysis as a combination of both approaches to the timing of the action, it perhaps better values the strategic approach that adopts a more long-term perspective to advancing one's interests. This is in line with what Vogt and Pukarinen have noted about the EU's inclinations towards long-term decision-making in general (see Vogt & Pukarinen 2022).

Two important themes arise with respect to the timing of action. The first is the emphasis on developing the coherency of the Union's external action, connected to the implementation of strategies and other formal guidelines for the Union's foreign policy (see Fiott & Simón 2019; Morillas 2019; Tocci 2017). The other is the connection between the long-term approach and the structural foreign policy pursued by the Union. Structural foreign policy, with its significant role in the Union's foreign policy activities, is, by definition, conducted over the long term and aimed at a sustainable transformation of its target (see Keukeleire & Delreux 2014).

In the Union's foreign policy discourses, the short- and long-term approaches to advancing the Union's interests in international politics are constructed as mutually supportive. Therefore, the question of the best timing of action in the Union's foreign policy operational code is not a dichotomic question but rather a more complex combination where both quick reaction and more coherent, strategic action are valued. These two approaches to timing of action are combined in the discourses into a coherent ideal of a strategic but flexible actor.

9 Friend or Foe? Nature of Others and Political Universe (P-1, P-2)

This chapter investigates how the political universe and its actors other than the EU are constructed in the material. The analysis covers belief types P-1 and P-2 of the George construct framework. These beliefs deal with the hostility or friendliness of the Union's operational environment. These perceptions naturally have a considerable effect on how to best pursue one's goals in the political universe, in interaction with other actors. P-1 beliefs offer a general description of the political environment, as well as of the character of other actors: are they essentially harmonious or conflictual? P-2 beliefs focus on the effect of these perceptions on one's ambitions: do the prospects for the realisation of one's aspirations appear as good or bad?

9.1 Nature of Political Universe

P-1 beliefs concern the overall nature of the operational environment. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses examine how hostile or friendly the political universe appears to be in the material. VICS analysis counts the mentions of the actions of others, measuring their hostility or friendliness. The qualitative coding framework builds on the description of the behaviour and nature of other actions, drawing a distinction between cooperative and conflictual interpretations and also covering the general descriptions of the political universe.

In the qualitative analysis, we first discuss the **cooperative and conflictual actions** of others in the speech material. The image of other actors is then further discussed, making a distinction between **major actors**, **shifting actors**, and **conflictual actors**. Finally, the **picture of the political universe** as a whole is discussed.

Much of the perception of the political universe as either friendly or hostile to the Union's ambitions ties into several other beliefs already discussed, for example, beliefs concerning the predictability of others (P-3) and those concerning forces opposed to the EU's control (P-4). Here, I have sought to avoid unnecessary

repetition by focusing primarily on the depiction of the behaviour of other actors vis-à-vis the EU. Some overlap is unfortunately unavoidable.

9.1.1 P-1 Nature of political universe: Quantitative analysis

P-1 The Nature of the Political Universe Friendly <-> Mixed <-> Hostile (-1.00 - +1.00)	
Solana	+ 0.14
Ashton	- 0.09
Mogherini	+ 0.06

The overall scores of all three High Representatives settle in the mixed region of the P-1 scale, indicating a perception of the political universe that is neither particularly friendly nor hostile. Solana’s discourse displays a somewhat more positive perception of others (+0.14), while Ashton’s score indicates a view where others are seen as more hostile (-0.09), with Mogherini remaining closest to the middle (+0.06). All three scores indicate a belief system where others are believed to approach and pursue their goals in the political universe using a mixture of means, both cooperative and conflictual.

However, if we more closely examine the yearly scores of Ashton and Mogherini, we notice significant yearly variation. With Ashton, the yearly scores stay inside a zone that can be interpreted as mixed, varying from -0.20 (2009 and 2012) at the lowest to +0.15 (2010) at the highest. With Mogherini, the scores variate from -0.19 (2016) to +0.15 (2017). In addition, Mogherini’s yearly score of 2015 is calculated as +1.00, indicating a completely harmonious perception; however, Mogherini gave only two speeches in the parliament that year, and in neither of these speeches were the conflictual actions of others are raised. While this anomalous score should not be generalised as the universal operational code of Mogherini, it nevertheless shows that the perception of others can vary considerably from case to case.

This variation implies that the nature of the political universe is strongly affected by individual events. Another explanation would be that some actors are prone to using conflictual means of power, while others are typically inclined towards cooperative means, suggesting that the beliefs about the nature of the political universe are strongly connected to individual actors whose importance in the speeches varies.

If we take an even closer look, examining the coding behind the scores, this becomes clearer. The P-1 index of VICS analysis is based on the ratio of cooperative or conflictual verb-based utterances where the actor is other than the speaker, i.e. the EU. In all the conflictual-coded utterances where the subject is Other (435), there are 441 instances of different actors¹¹⁷ coded as subjects using conflictual means of power. Nearly half of them (215) refer to six actors: Russia (46), Iran (43), Israel¹¹⁸ (42), Syria (35), a general category of various terrorists (26), and Turkey (23). In addition, a significant portion of these codings (67) refers to unspecific actors. What this demonstrates is that the majority of actions coded as ‘conflictual use of power’ cover only a few specific actors. To some extent, the same can be said of cooperative utterances, where from the 528 instances of actors coded as subjects, six actors are responsible for close to half of them (237): again Russia (55), United Nations (54), United States (50), China (29), NATO (27), and the International Community as an actor (22).

A closer look at the coding of subjects also reveals that interestingly, Russia is the only actor that dominates both cooperatively and conflictually coded actions. The qualitative analysis of the speeches offers some additional explanation for this.

9.1.2 P-1 Nature of political universe: Qualitative analysis

In the qualitative analysis, the nature of the Union’s political universe appears to be a combination of harmony and conflict. Overall, the three High Representatives display a similar belief system regarding the nature of international politics. While most other actors are constructed as cooperative and friendly by all three High Representatives, there are some major exceptions that affect the overall tone of their discourses. References to conflictual actions that are not made directly against the Union, but nevertheless conflict with the Union’s goals and values in international politics, also provide the overall picture of the Union’s political universe with more hostile tones. All things considered, the three High Representatives display a mixed,

¹¹⁷ Single coded utterances can have several subjects in the coding approach used in this study.

¹¹⁸ As Israel is not typically conceived as a hostile actor towards the EU, this might need additional explanation. Many actions taken by Israel, described in the speeches of the High Representatives, are hostile actions towards Palestinians. These actions, while not targeting the EU, are typically presented in a critical tone, as actions against the policy goals and values of the EU. Acts of violence by Palestinians are also discussed in similar tone, but they do not receive as much attention in the speeches as the actions of Israel. In addition, the subject of the verb-based utterances describing conflictual action by the Palestinian side of the conflict is not usually the Palestinian Authority, but various groups or unnamed actors. Because of these reasons, Palestinians do not show as a conflictual actor in VICS analysis in the same way that Israel does.

although cooperation-leaning perception of the essential nature of the political universe.

Cooperative and conflictual actions

In the analysed speeches, the most typical mention of an activity of other actor is its cooperation with the Union, as for example Ashton does when she tells that “[w]e are working closely with our partners – the UN, NATO, USA, Turkey, Arab League and many others with who we are in constant contact” (AshtonSpeech110309). Ashton also notes that “there is a growing interest from other countries, in particularly from Asia partners – India, Indonesia, South Korea, Vietnam and China – to engage with us in a security and defence dialogues” (AshtonRemark121107). These kinds of brief mentions of cooperative others recur in the speech material. That an actor has contributed particularly well to the progression of events towards the outcomes preferred by the Union is also recurrently praised.

Typical are also mentions of countries, subject to the Union’s structural foreign policy, carrying out the reforms encouraged by the Union. Ukraine has “passed important reforms” in line with its Association Agreement implementation (MogheriniSpeech181211d), and Serbia has made “good progress on the road to the European Union” (SolanaSpeech081105).

The cooperative behaviour of others also materialises by way of appreciation or gratefulness towards the EU’s policies. One example of this is the way in which Ashton states that after a decision on terms of trade by the European Council, the reaction of Pakistan was “to recognize the significance of this and to see this as a very substantial move on behalf of the EU to support them not just in the immediate but also into the future” (AshtonRemark101027). Solana’s description of the attitude of the US administration to the EU’s policies in the Balkan region is also illuminating:

“Certainly the US administration have long recognised the extent to which we have dedicated ourselves both in terms of our long-term policies, and of current resources. At the EU-US summit in Lisbon at the end of last month, President Clinton made it clear that he personally very much appreciated and supported that commitment.” (SolanaSpeech000621)

Another aspect of the perceived cooperative nature of the international system are the mentions of others working in cooperation. For example, Ashton praises the “unprecedented unity” of the International Community dealing with North Korea (AshtonRemark130313b), while Mogherini emphasises the unity of the international community to pressure North Korea (MogheriniSpeech170912b). Both underline the

importance of the cooperation of the international community to handle the situation with North Korea. The willingness to participate in regional cooperation with others is also specifically noted, for example, among the Central Asian countries (see AshtonRemark130627, MogheriniSpeech180314), as well as in the Balkans, where Solana welcomes “the fact that the need for regional co-operation is more fully recognised by the countries of the region” (SolanaSpeech000321).

While cooperation is the prominent description of actions of others in the political universe of the EU foreign policy discourses, conflictual actions are also present. Very often these mentions concern violence against a country’s own citizens by its ruling regime, the repression of democratic rights in the country, or human rights violations. Examples include violence against protestors and restrictions on the freedom of the press in Turkey (AshtonRemark130612c, AshtonRemark130627), “violent suppression of demonstrations”, and arrests targeting human rights defenders and journalists in Iran (AshtonSpeech100119b), or violence against demonstrators in Egypt (AshtonSpeech110202, AshtonSpeech111012). These are typically presented as conflictual actions against the Union’s values. For example, Ashton notes how President Lukashenko of Belarus “using violence against peaceful demonstrators and multiplying the number of political prisoners, he has shown contempt for democracy and the rule of law” (AshtonSpeech110511).

One of the conflicts where the negative use of power by actors is recurrently raised is the Israel-Palestine conflict. The occupation of the Palestinian territories by Israel is often mentioned as a violation of international law and, in many comments, the actions of Israel are presented as conflictual not only towards Palestinians but also towards the international order supported by the EU. For example, Solana lists the settlements policy, the construction of a separating wall that infringes territories beyond the 1967 limits, the policy of selective assassinations, and other measures as contrary to international law and demands an end to them. He reminds that “[t]he Israeli government also has essential obligations under the Road Map [peace plan]” (SolanaSpeech031009). Similarly, Ashton notes that “[S]ettlement expansion must be condemned as they are illegal under international law and put current peace efforts at risk” (AshtonSpeech120612b). And Mogherini notes that “the so-called regularisation bill”, which would legalise Israeli outposts in the occupied West Bank, would “mean the exact opposite of what the Quartet has called for” (MogheriniRemark161123).

In all these examples, the actions of Israel are presented two-fold as contrary to international law and conflictual to the goals of peace negotiations. Often, they are also noted to break the obligations that Israel has agreed to. Besides Israel’s settlement policy, which the EU “has repeatedly stated its strong opposition to” (MogheriniRemark180911), other actions such as Israel’s military responses (see

SolanaSpeech020409) and blockade of Gaza (see AshtonSpeech100616) are also represented as conflictual in a similar manner. Of course, the terrorist acts against Israel are also mentioned and condemned by the EU but these mentions are not usually connected to a specific actor.

In addition to these descriptions of conflictual others, various conflicts and crises of course are discussed in the speeches and include mentions of the conflictual use of power by the participants. Further, the manner in which the High Representatives mention issues such as terrorist attacks (see e.g., SolanaSpeech060502, SolanaSpeech071003, SolanaSpeech080604, AshtonSpeech100119d, AshtonSpeech110119, MogheriniSpeech170704, MogheriniSpeech180529), piracy (see e.g., AshtonRemark121107), human trafficking (see e.g., AshtonSpeech100119d), and kidnappings and killings of EU citizens (see e.g., AshtonSpeech110119b, AshtonStatement130115) also communicates the conflictual nature of the world, even while the perpetrators are often generalised.¹¹⁹

Major actors

There are some actors that the High Representatives recurrently raise as important and longstanding partners of the European Union, underlining their positive relationship with the Union. Particularly prominent among these is the United Nations. Ashton and Mogherini emphasise strongly the UN as a particularly important partner for the EU (see e.g., AshtonSpeech100310, AshtonRemark111213, AshtonRemark140403, MogheriniSpeech180529). Mogherini calls the EU and the UN as “natural partners” working together on a daily basis and describes cooperation with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as having been “really impressive” (MogheriniSpeech161213).

Both Ashton and Mogherini see the UN as a cooperative partner for many segments of the Union’s foreign policy, viewing the relationship between the two as mutually supportive. Solana makes rarer references to the UN as an important partner but instead emphasises the importance of cooperation with the international community (see e.g., SolanaSpeech060530). In Solana’s discourse, the UN is mentioned as a partner mostly in the context of the Middle East Peace Process, (see e.g., SolanaSpeech010131, SolanaSpeech020515b, SolanaSpeech090218b). The UN appears more as a medium and arena for international cooperation and less as a strategic partner for the EU.

¹¹⁹ In the discourses of the High Representatives, issues such as terrorism, piracy, and human trafficking are typically treated as passive phenomena of the world. This means that instead of actively presenting them as a named actor doing something, they happen passively, like a terrorist attack ‘taking place’.

Besides the UN, another international organisation that is discussed as an actor by itself, and whose partnership with the EU is emphasised, is NATO. While during the Cold War there existed a *de facto* division of labour between the EU as an economic-political community and NATO as a military alliance, both organisations broadened their field of activities towards each other after the Cold War, making direct relations between the two desirable (Ojanen 2010). The transformation of the relationship is clear in the analysed material as well. All three High Representatives both mention cooperation that has happened with NATO and emphasise the need to develop this cooperation further (see e.g., SolanaSpeech000301b, AshtonRemark110322, MogheriniSpeech180612). The EU is “working in constant coordination with NATO” (MogheriniSpeech180612). High Representatives meet with NATO representatives on a regular basis, much like with major state actors such as the US and China.

The United States is unquestionably the most important EU ally:

“Our cooperation is unparalleled because of its depth and breadth. We work closely together across the entire spectrum of foreign policy issues.”
(AshtonRemark140403)

Cooperation with the US is mentioned in connection with a range of political events by all three High Representatives. The role played in the Middle East Peace Process, seen by the EU as “strong collaboration” (AshtonSpeech131023), is especially recognised (see e.g., SolanaSpeech090218b, AshtonSpeech091215, MogheriniRemark161123). The diplomatic efforts of the US in other cases, for example regarding North Korea (AshtonRemark130313b, MogheriniSpeech180612c), are similarly praised. Ashton notes in 2012 that the EU “work[s] in close consultation and co-operation with the United States in our areas of common interests [...] And we remain in touch with the State Department on a daily basis” (AshtonSpeech120911).

However, this picture does not remain completely stable over the years. The United States begins to be presented in a more critical tone following such actions as, for example, the withdrawal from the nuclear deal with Iran and the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, both objected by the EU. The increase of a more critical, conflictual perception of the actions of the US is amplified by the controversial presidency of Donald Trump, whose policies and comments often clashed with the Union. Indeed, the Trump presidency has been described as the abyss of the oscillating transatlantic relationship (Bindi 2022b, 229). Mogherini’s speeches naturally reflect this but not explicitly. In 2018, she describes the transatlantic relationship as “evolving”, emphasising that while the Union has grown up and has its own principles and interests, it also recognises the importance of the

historical assistance that the US rendered to Europe during and after the Second World War (MogheriniSpeech180911b) and continues:

“I have no doubt that the European Union and the United States are and will remain natural partners, natural friends, **in spite of disagreements we may have with the US administration.**” (MogheriniSpeech180911b, bolding added)

In the field of security, the US and the EU staff are even told to be “working today together as never before in the past” (MogheriniSpeech180911b).

Trump’s announcement of a new US strategy towards Iran in 2017, a first step that would eventually lead to the US withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018, was met with strong criticism from the EU. Mogherini emphasised that preserving the deal with Iran was a shared security interest and “the best way for the United States to address their security concerns which are also ours, is in close cooperation with us, Europeans” (MogheriniSpeech171212). The comment highlights the perception of the US, and the Trump administration specifically, as the party that steered away from mutual cooperation with the EU. And when the US eventually withdrew from the JCPOA and re-imposed all secondary sanctions against Iran in 2018, Mogherini declared that the action was “extremely problematic and needs to be addressed” (MogheriniSpeech180612c). The US withdrawal from the Global Compact for Refugees, seen as breaking from the unity of the international community important for the EU, was met with similar regret (see MogheriniSpeech180313).

On a more general level Mogherini, notes that “it is no secret that we have one main disagreement that concerns multilateralism and the very idea of a system of global governance” (MogheriniSpeech180911b). However, while the actions of the US in some fields are seen as increasingly conflictual, continuing cooperation is still emphasised. And importantly, the Union’s position remains to “always seek cooperation with the United States” (MogheriniSpeech180911b).

Another “key relationship” (AshtonRemark110322) that the EU has is with China. As already discussed, the Union’s relationship with China is complicated; the country is at the same time seen as problematic but also as an actor that the Union seeks cooperation with.¹²⁰ The effects of this dual approach can be seen in the description of China’s own policies. Both Ashton and Mogherini, who discuss China regularly in their speeches, present China as a cooperative actor, while still noting, in a cautious manner, some of the unacceptable aspects of the country’s behaviour.

Acknowledgement of the cooperative actions of China includes appreciation of the diplomatic efforts regarding North Korea (SolanaSpeech061011,

¹²⁰ See Chapter 7.1.

AshtonRemark130313b, MogheriniSpeech170912b), playing an important part in nuclear negotiations with Iran (AshtonSpeech120911, AshtonRemark140403), and participating in efforts to combat piracy at sea (AshtonSpeech120911, AshtonRemark140403). Mogherini recalls:

“Our cooperation is already intense on most foreign policy dossiers: we are working together to preserve the nuclear deal with Iran; we both support the ongoing negotiations towards a reconciled and de-nuclearised Korean Peninsula; we both want to see peace in Afghanistan, and we are both actively supporting the Afghan government’s efforts to bring forward the peace process.” (MogheriniSpeech180911d)

China’s attitude towards the EU thus appears cooperative. For example, Ashton emphasises “the importance which China attaches to developing relations with Europe as part of a multipolar world” (AshtonRemark140403). Mogherini similarly notes that “China looks at the European Union as a partner on many issues where our interests converge” (MogheriniSpeech180911d), and praises China for “a very strong engagement [...] in working more and more in the multilateral framework, in the multilateral system on global issues” (MogheriniSpeech180911d).

Despite this continuing emphasis on cooperation from the Chinese side, the High Representatives also mention several significant problems. These include disagreement over trade issues, the situation in the South China Sea, and the freezing of dialogue with Taiwan (MogheriniSpeech180911d). Both Ashton and Mogherini also raise China’s human rights issues (see e.g., AshtonSpeech120612d, MogheriniSpeech180911d), depicted by Mogherini as “the most outstanding disagreement” between the two actors (MogheriniSpeech180911d). However, the fact that “Europe and China recognise and understand each other’s importance in shaping a more cooperative global order” (MogheriniSpeech180911d) means that these disagreements do not endanger the cooperation between the two actors.

Shifting actors

The depictions of a number of other actors fluctuate a great deal. Good examples are Russia and Iran, not just due to their behavioural changes on the conflictual-cooperative axis during the terms of the three High Representatives, but also because the expectations the EU seems to have with respect to them change, too.

In the early years of Solana’s term in office, Russia’s actions, especially in Chechnya, muddy its picture in the EU discourse. In 2000, Solana states that the EU “cannot continue to talk to Russia as if Chechnya was not a problem” (SolanaSpeech000301b). However, while referring to the shocking images from the

region that “require a detailed response from the Russian authorities” (SolanaSpeech000301b), he still notes positive elements like the Russian Government allowing the establishment of a human rights office in Chechnya (see SolanaSpeech000301b). The attitude towards the case of Georgia is similar: while the EU “strongly disagree[s] with Russia over the status of South Ossetia and Abkhazia” and has “strongly condemned Russia’s recognition of these regions” (SolanaSpeech080910), the discourse indicates an expectation that Russia is still willing to negotiate with the EU, and it can be made to cooperate.

Ashton for her part, notes that the EU works “intensively” with Russia on international issues and while it is not without difficulties “generally the desire to find common ground and enable the international community to respond prevails” (AshtonSpeech120201b). Despite its problems, “Russia is a partner for the EU on large number of foreign policy issues” (AshtonSpeech110606d). Similarly, regarding democratisation promoted by the EU, Ashton states that she is seeing “some encouraging signs” of economic and political modernisation (AshtonSpeech110606d). Russia’s joining the WTO is “a major step forward in its ongoing integration into the international rules-based trade system” (AshtonStatement120911).

This discourse resembles the one used for China. While conflictual behaviour is noted, the overall cooperative approach of the actor is nonetheless underlined. However, this discourse already begins to shift during Ashton’s term in office and continues to turn towards the predominance of conflictual elements during Mogherini’s leadership.

In 2012, differences begin to emerge over how to deal with the crisis in Syria. Ashton strongly urges Russia to join the international consensus, referring to a serious lack of cooperation from Russia’s side on this issue (see AshtonSpeech120201b). At the same time, the problems with the state of democracy in Russia are increasingly brought forth. The political reforms that Russia enacts are called “limited” and Ashton notes that the expectations on the Presidential elections, seen as the next benchmark on the subject, are told to be higher (AshtonSpeech120201b). At this point, Russia nevertheless remains for Ashton “sometimes a challenging neighbour” but “an important partner of the EU on many issues and in many fields” (AshtonStatement120911). But after the Russian occupation of Crimea, Ashton’s tone becomes much clearer:

“We’ve been clear about Russia’s violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is just unacceptable. Russia has contravened the international law, and its own international commitments.”
(AshtonRemark140403)

Mogherini's general discourse on Russia lacks the emphasis on partnership and willingness to cooperate described above. For example, when Mogherini discusses Russia's recognition of Georgia's breakaway regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia, she condemns it as a clearly conflictual act, further denouncing "the steps taken by Moscow to consolidate what it calls 'new realities' on the ground (MogheriniSpeech180612b). While Russian authorities must be reminded that the situation is unacceptable, the engagement with Georgia for the EU is "a true partnership, a strong friendship based on political association and development cooperation, on economic exchanges as well as on a strong friendship between our people" (MogheriniSpeech180612b). The illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia is also very strongly condemned (MogheriniSpeech181023b, MogheriniSpeech181211d).

The EU's foreign policy discourses concerning Iran offer a reverse example of this kind of shift. The representation of Iran's behaviour on the cooperative-conflictual scale transforms gradually. The country is first presented as a problematic and uncooperative actor, then a somewhat more cooperative one and, finally, Mogherini's discourse emphasises cooperation with Iran.

To Solana, Iran is "a troublesome and difficult actor in the Middle East" (SolanaSpeech080130). He describes Iran as unwilling to act as a constructive partner in the region, for example, being "the only country in the Middle East that does not accept the idea of a two-state solution [to Israel-Palestine conflict]" and even having "urged Muslim countries to boycott the Annapolis conference" promoted by the EU (SolanaSpeech080130). Solana also accuses Iran of playing a destabilising role in Lebanon, supplying weapons to Hezbollah, and working with groups that pursue violence in Iraq (SolanaSpeech080130).

In Ashton's discourse on Iran, the country's human rights and democracy problems are prominent (see AshtonSpeech100119b, AshtonSpeech110309b). Ashton discusses "continued and systematic oppression, arrests and harassment of lawyers, journalists and others who are exercising their rights" (AshtonSpeech110309b), "repression of political opposition" (AshtonSpeech120201c), and "excessive application of the death penalty" (AshtonSpeech120201c). In 2011, she states that the EU is "seriously concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran" (AshtonSpeech110309c) and the next year, notes that the Union "continue to harbour grave concerns regarding the human rights situation" (AshtonSpeech120201c). The image of Iran is an actor who does not respond to the EU's concern over human rights issues and continues to act against the Union's values and goals in this sector.

The protracted negotiations over a framework to control Iran's nuclear program dominate the EU's relations with the country. Solana and Ashton both speak of Iran as a conflictual negotiation partner that does not follow up on previous meetings,

keeps rejecting proposals, and refuses to pursue talks (see e.g. AshtonSpeech100119b). Solana describes “endless hours” of negotiations that nevertheless have not led to Iran making a commitment to suspend its nuclear activities (SolanaSpeech061004b). Ashton notes in 2011 that the latest IAEA report confirmed Iran’s failure to comply with its international obligations, and calls Iran’s response to the EU’s latest proposal as “disappointing” (AshtonSpeech110309b). In 2012, Iran is “of particular concern this year”, but Ashton laments the lack of progress in the talks, leaving the EU no choice but to adopt a new round of sanctions (AshtonSpeech120201b). According to her, despite several UNSC Resolutions, Iran still continues to violate its obligations (AshtonSpeech120201c). Neither Solana nor Ashton thus have confidence in Iran’s intentions to build a nuclear programme for exclusively peaceful purposes.

While Mogherini acknowledges the past difficulties with Iran, noting that “[i]t took us twelve years of extremely difficult negotiations, led by the European Union, to achieve these results” (MogheriniSpeech171212), there is no similar doubt about Iran’s willingness to cooperate in the nuclear deal present in Mogherini’s discourse. While she does present some reservations regarding Iran, for example, noting how the EU shares many of the US’s “preoccupations regarding the regional situation and Iran’s ballistic missile programme” (MogheriniSpeech171212), her depiction of Iran is reminiscent of China’s, discussed above: a problematic actor but ultimately one that can be steered towards mutual cooperation. She states that:

“For more than two years now, we have built a very frank relationship with Iran: we are always open about our disagreements, and there are many, and we always try to find the best way to address them.” (MogheriniSpeech171212)

Similar progress can be observed regarding human rights: While “substantive disagreements” remain on human rights issues, Mogherini states that “together with Iran we have agreed to focus on tangible results” (MogheriniSpeech171212). While Iran’s human rights issues remain a concern for the EU they are, at least to some extent, treated through dialogue. Nor is there similar conflictual presentation of Iran as a regional actor in Mogherini’s speeches. Instead, Mogherini emphasises Iran’s cooperation for example in the role it has played and continues to play in hosting millions of Afghan refugees (MogheriniSpeech171212). This all is presented as a result of a successful nuclear deal:

“Since we reached the nuclear deal, our engagement with Iran has entered into a new phase, not always easy as I mentioned – there are a lot of issues of disagreements – but definitely a new phase.” (MogheriniSpeech171212)

Conflictual actors

There are only a few, exceptional actors that the High Representatives explicitly describe as hostile. These include North Korea (see e.g., SolanaSpeech061011) and the Milosevic regime in Serbia (see e.g., SolanaSpeech000621) for Solana; North Korea (see e.g., AshtonRemark130313b), the al-Assad regime in Syria (see e.g., AshtonRemark130313c), and the Lukashenko regime in Belarus (see e.g., AshtonSpeech110119c) for Ashton; and North Korea (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech170912b) for Mogherini. As already discussed above, there are other actors that are depicted as taking conflictual actions or holding hostile attitudes towards either the EU or its goals but only with these aforementioned actors, are the overall depictions characteristically conflictual.

The tone used of these actors is strongly judgemental. For example, Ashton describes the situation in Syria as “appalling” (AshtonRemark130313c), refers to al-Assad’s government as “a brutal regime” (AshtonSpeech110927), and discusses the regime’s “[v]iolent oppression and threats inside and outside [that] are tools of an era long gone” (AshtonSpeech110511). The acts of violence and repression are also directly linked to the regime and strongly condemned time and again. Solana talks about Milosevic’s regime in Serbia as “the single main obstacle” to achieving the EU’s objectives in the Balkan region (SolanaSpeech000621). According to Ashton, the “DPRK [Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, or unofficially North Korea] remains the most isolated country in the world and one of the most hostile to its neighbours” (AshtonRemark130313b). Mogherini speaks of “the unprecedented threat posed by North Korea” (MogheriniSpeech170912b).

There is no trust towards these actors. Solana warns that the EU “must also be alert to any attempt by Milosevic to exploit and destabilise the situation” (SolanaSpeech000301b). Ashton declares that “President Assad’s promises of reform and dialogue remain weak” (AshtonSpeech110606) and that “[h]is regime fails to comply with its own commitments and everyday underlines its lack of legitimacy” (AshtonSpeech120612b).

Interestingly, in all these cases, the discourses clearly distinguish between the ruling regime and the citizens and civil society of the country. It is specifically the regime in power and the authorities that are described as hostile. This is clearly underlined in the case of Belarus where the distinction between the ruling regime and civil society prominently affects the EU’s discourse.¹²¹ In a more indirect sense, not referring to direct violence against its own citizens, Solana demonstrates this way of thinking regarding North Korea and its policies on nuclear weapons:

¹²¹ See I-2 beliefs earlier in Chapter 7.2.

“It is important also to point out that this act by North Korea is an act directed against its own population. North Korea is a poor country, where most of the population go hungry and do not enjoy the living conditions we could all wish them to have; yet their government goes on spending millions of dollars on an arms race or on achieving a nuclear capability of which it has no need whatsoever for the development and well-being of its people.” (SolanaSpeech061011)

It is also noteworthy that Ashton’s discourse on Syria differs somewhat from Mogherini’s, despite the fact that the conflict there continued throughout the terms of both High Representatives. While Mogherini notes and condemns the human rights violations (see e.g., MogheriniSpeech180313b, MogheriniSpeech180417), these are raised in a fairly passive tone and al-Assad’s regime is not condemned as directly and totally as in Ashton’s discourse. For example, when discussing human rights violations in Eastern Ghouta, she details the “dramatic re-escalation of the military activities” (MogheriniSpeech180313b) and states that “we have witnessed the intentional bombing of civilians and medical facilities and snipers shooting on those trying to flee” (MogheriniSpeech180313b). However, instead of underlining the illegitimacy of al-Assad’s regime and demands for its removal, the focus of the discourse shifts to achieving a political solution, stopping the fighting, and bringing relief to the civilian population (see MogheriniSpeech180313b) to “push the Syrian parties towards the negotiating table” (MogheriniSpeech180417). The less aggressive construction of al-Assad’s regime serves this goal better, underlining how pragmatism and causal beliefs influence the way others and their actions are depicted.

Picture of the political universe

The descriptions of other actors in the international system would, despite some notable exceptions of the conflictual actors, seem to construct a predominantly harmonious picture of the political universe. The High Representatives’ general discourses on the state of the world and international politics point to the conflictual elements slightly more prominently. As previously discussed when analysing beliefs about predictability,¹²² the High Representatives seem to perceive the world as increasingly unpredictable and dangerous.¹²³ In the case of China, Mogherini emphasises, for example, the mutually recognised need to cooperate because “in this moment in world history, cooperation and engagement are simply the smartest

¹²² See Chapter 8.1.

¹²³ See also discussion on P-2 beliefs below.

choice” and how “dialogue can help the world move beyond the current chaos” (MogheriniSpeech180911d). This naturally indicates that they see at least some elements of the political universe as conflictual – but cooperation can provide ways out.

One conflictual aspect that is raised repeatedly and held to be important is any opposition to the human rights and democratic values promoted by the EU. Ashton notes in 2012 that the “scale of the challenges facing human rights remains huge” (AshtonSpeech120417), and Mogherini laments that the year 2016 “has been a very difficult year indeed for democracy and human rights” (MogheriniSpeech161213b) and complains that “[s]ome around the world [...] are arguing that human rights are somehow outdated or not relevant to foreign policy anymore” (MogheriniSpeech161213b). Ashton sums up this conflict:

“The historic developments in our Neighbourhood have significantly advanced human rights. The bringing down of longstanding repressive regimes has led to the formation of new Governments and to free and fair elections. The continuing violent crackdowns in Syria, repression in Belarus, and protracted conflicts, including in the Middle East, require us to keep up the pressure.” (AshtonSpeech111213b)

The conflictual elements of the operational environment also materialise as a lack of support for the international regimes promoted by the EU. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court appears as an especially important example for Mogherini, for whom the withdrawal of some countries from the statute “demonstrates that the pressure on the international system of global governance is going to be raised” (MogheriniSpeech161213b). Later in 2017, she describes the current state of the world as “a complex moment for the multilateral system at large, for the United Nations and the UN system in particular, **which has come under attack from many corners**” (MogheriniSpeech170703b, bolding added), referring to the withdrawals from the statute and the questioning of the relevance of the ICC (see also MogheriniSpeech180913c).

The High Representatives often relate that they see the multilateral, rules-based world order pursued by the EU as threatened. Lamentations on the inability of the international community to cooperate in certain cases paint a similar picture. This element is especially present in the context of the Syrian crisis, where Ashton tells that “[t]he situation reflects in part the inability of the international community to find a coherent, united way to respond” (AshtonRemark130313c) and where she states that it is “deeply regrettable” that the members of the UN Security Council have not shouldered their responsibilities (AshtonSpeech130911).

However, there are also strong elements of cooperation in the descriptions of the overall political universe in which the EU operates. While the multilateral, rules-based world order has come under attack, it is also defended by others. Mogherini maintains that “there is a whole world calling for effective multilateralism and for partners to build it” (MogheriniSpeech180911b). And, referring to the Union’s role as a supporter and champion of multilateralism and the UN system, she continues that “they are all looking at the European Union as the reliable and indispensable partner they need in this world of today” (MogheriniSpeech180911b). Solana similarly states that “the rest of the world has great expectations of the European Union’s global role” (SolanaSpeech070329). While the international system promoted by the EU faces some opposition, it also has its supporters. Thus, while the disunity of the international community does occasionally rise in the discourses of the High Representatives, it is hardly the predominant state of the international community. Like the depiction of other actors individually, the High Representative’s depiction of the international system is a mixed patchwork, somewhat weighted towards cooperation.

9.2 Prospect for Realisation of Values and Aspirations

P-2 beliefs concern the prospects for realising one’s goals in the political universe. In other words, these beliefs measure the subject’s optimism or pessimism in relation to the other actors.

VICS analysis measures the intensity of causal power on the cooperation-conflict scale, similarly to how index I-2 was calculated but now focusing on the use of power by others, as reported in the material. The more intense the conflictual means that others are reported using, the more pessimistic the prospects for realising the political goals of the Union. The qualitative analysis focuses more on optimism and pessimism portrayed in the material, and the reasons presented for them. While how the other actors are seen plays a significant part in this, the analysis also pays attention to the image of the Union’s own capabilities.

The text begins with a description of the differences between the High Representatives’ discourses. We then turn to the depiction of the **overall state of the political universe**, followed by a discussion of **others as causes for optimism and pessimism**. Finally, the **development of the EU’s instruments**, which plays a major role in assessing the prospects of the Union, is discussed.

9.2.1 P-2 Prospects for the realisation of values and aspirations: Quantitative analysis

P-2 Prospects for Realising Fundamental Values	
Optimist <-> Pessimism	
(-1.00 - +1.00)	
Solana	-0.06
Ashton	-0.25
Mogherini	-0.10

VICS analysis portrays the EU's foreign policy operational code as slightly pessimistic, with Ashton's overall score (-0.25) being somewhat more on the pessimistic side, and those of Solana (-0.06) and Mogherini (-0.10) located near the middle of the scale. The yearly variations are in line with this. Ashton's scores remain on the negative side of the scale, rising to -0.03 at the highest (2014) while reaching -0.32 at the lowest (2012), even if the lower score of the year 2009 (-0.40) is disregarded due to the scarcity of speech material for that year skewing the index. When the anomalous score (+0.39) of Mogherini's first year (2015) is disregarded,¹²⁴ her yearly scores similarly vary from +0.04 (2017) to the lowest score of -0.32 (2016). These can be read as belief systems through which the prospects for realising one's aspirations are limited but still exist and where events have considerable effect on these prospects. This could also indicate that the perceived prospects of realising one's goals vary considerably between different foreign policy cases or theatres.

The interpretation of the beliefs about these prospects in VICS analysis is based on seeing others as more or less hostile. Both P-1 and P-2 scores are based on the number of utterances coded as positive or negative where the subject is other than the speaker, so clustering these coded utterances to only a few actors affects the P-2 score similarly to what was discussed with the P-1 score. However, in the calculation of the P-2 score, the higher or lower the score for an individual utterance is,¹²⁵ the heavier it is weighted on calculating the P-2 score. This means that for example, the use of 'punishment' or 'rewards' type of means has a greater effect on the P-2 score than other types. Therefore, the clustering of the more extreme scores on the scale affects even more when calculating P-2 than they do on calculating P-1 score.

¹²⁴ As previously noted, both Mogherini's year 2015 and Ashton's year 2009 have considerably fewer speeches than other years, thus the weight of an individual speech is overrepresented in these scores.

¹²⁵ On the scale of -3 to +3.

While the ratio of utterances where Others use either cooperative or conflictual power is balanced in the analysed material, as index P-1 showed, there are significant differences between cooperation and conflict when it comes to the intensity of means used. The use of a ‘punishment’ type of power by others is far more common (314 utterances) than the other two conflictual categories; There are 103 utterances where Others use negative authority and only 18 utterances coded as threats. Regarding the cooperative use of power by others, positive authority use is much more common (299 utterances), whereas promises (60) and rewards (78) have a lesser presence in the analysed discourses.

The most common named subjects in the speeches using what is classified as a ‘punishment’ type of power (-3) in the VICS analysis are Russia (37), Israel (30), Syria (25), terrorists (general category) (24), Iran (23), Turkey (20), and Belarus (11). The score -3 weighs more than the other two conflictual codes; we see how the use of force by these few actors has a significant effect on the overall scores. Many of these mentions concern violence against the country’s own citizens or violations of human rights, still regarded here as conflictual from the EU’s point of view. The overall number of instances of different actors coded as subjects in the utterances coded as (-3) is 318, meaning that seven actors are responsible for more than half (170) of these instances.¹²⁶

Besides the named subjects, the negative use of power coded as (-3) appears most often with the subject as ‘Unspecified’ (55 times). This means that the other user of power in these sentences has been an unspecified actor. Typically, these are sentences in which violence is reported in a passive tense, without being attached to a specific actor. Some of these sentences refer indirectly to some of the previously mentioned seven actors.

The VICS-scores do not seem to represent an environment hostile to one’s prospects in general but rather an environment where there are only few actors that considerably oppose one’s aspirations. This would indicate that while in some cases the Union regards the prospects of realising its aspirations in pessimistic terms, in many cases, the perception can be more optimistic. The universal operational code can thus be misleading, and a more area-specific operational code analysis could be more useful for making sense of the optimism/pessimism scale of the belief systems.

¹²⁶ As mentioned earlier, a coded utterance can have several subjects in the coding approach used in this study, meaning that there can be more instances of a different subject for coded utterances than there are coded utterances. See quantitative analysis of P-1 beliefs in Chapter 9.1.

9.2.2 P-2 Prospects for the realisation of values and aspirations: Qualitative analysis

All three High Representatives studied display a combination of both optimism and pessimism towards the Union's prospects for the realisation of its goals and the successful promotion of its values. Mogherini presents the most optimistic views among the High Representatives, with the other two mixing somewhat more pessimistic evaluations vis-à-vis the Union's foreign policy prospects. However, none of the three could be described as prominently pessimistic.

Solana tends to display more caution in his expectations regarding the challenges and possible developments faced by the EU in the various theatres in which the Union operates. His overall view of the state of the world is also somewhat pessimistic than that of his successors. In his discourse, others are not particularly hostile to the Union's goals in general, nor are they particularly cooperative, either. Solana does occasionally highlight the successes and diplomatic victories of the EU and indicates a hopeful attitude towards the potentially positive outcomes of the challenges faced. What is perhaps the most important element that brings pessimistic tones to his discourse are the limitations of the Union's capability to influence the events at hand. In the cases where other actors are not always cooperative, for example when considering how the Israel-Palestine conflict dominated Solana's agenda as several points during his term, this further increases the pessimistic outlook in his speeches.

Ashton portrays a Union that is in the process of enhancing its capability to act. In general, the EU in her speeches successfully promotes its values on multilateral fora, even though it also faces growing opposition. While the Union's structural foreign policy for advancing human rights and democratic transition in other countries faces both opposition and difficulties as well, she mostly describes it as successful. A good example of this is apparent in her tone when she recalls that "[e]ven in the toughest environments, where basic rights and freedoms are the most repressed, we have been able to provide assistance to civil society" (AshtonSpeech111213b).

However, the role of others in opposing the Union's policies or not sharing its values is more pronounced in Ashton's speeches than in those of the other two High Representatives. While Solana is pessimistic because of the limitations of the EU's capabilities, Ashton's pessimism is connected to others appearing as hostile. Ashton's discourse on Syria is particularly pessimistic but is hardly the only example where opposition by others is presented as a significant obstacle in the path to the realisation of the Union's goals. Especially with Syria, Ashton also raises the lack of unity and cooperation in the international community as one reason preventing the Union from reaching its policy goals. The situation of human rights inside several

other countries, as well as the opposition of other countries to the Union's promotion of human rights on multilateral fora, also gives cause for a pessimistic outlook.

Mogherini continues the theme of negative developments in the overall international environment, which was already present in Ashton's discourse. She refers to the "dangerous world indeed" around the EU (MogheriniSpeech171212), and for example points out how "[t]he conditions around Israel and Palestine are today much, much more dangerous than they used to be decades ago" (MogheriniRemark151028), further describing how "2016 has been a very difficult year indeed for democracy and human rights" (MogheriniSpeech161213b). She shares the same narrative describing how international politics are turning more hostile to the Union's goals. However, she still expresses a strong belief that the Union can advance its goals despite the observed opposition. A good example is the way in which she summarises the global human rights situation in 2016:

"Yes, the situation of human rights in the world is very serious. But there are also success stories. And wherever things are moving in the right direction, the European Union is there, engaged directly – through our funds, through our delegations, through our Special Representative, through dialogues and diplomacy." (MogheriniSpeech161213b)

Because of this belief in the Union's growing abilities, Mogherini appears as the most optimistic of the High Representatives in her analysed speeches. While there are many similar elements in her and Ashton's discourses, the positive elements are more prominent in Mogherini's speeches and construct an image of the Union that has reasonably solid prospects for realising its goals and values. This general image is especially strengthened by her emphasis on the success stories of the Union's foreign policy, as indications of the Union's growing ability to pursue its goals effectively.

While they arguably are relevant to the analysis of all belief types, especially when interpreting optimism in the discourses of the High Representatives, it is important to note the context and the audience of the speeches. In the analysed speeches the High Representatives are presenting the state of EU foreign policy to the European Parliament. Thus, they have reasons to convince their audience of both the optimistic outlook and the successful outcomes of the EU's foreign policy actions. This might affect their presentations and underline more optimistic elements in EU foreign policy.

Overall state of the political universe

As already noted when discussing beliefs about the nature of political life (P-1) and predictability (P-3), in the speech material the political universe is constructed as increasingly unpredictable, and hostility towards the Union's values is simultaneously increasing. Solana refers to "a world which is unquestionable more uncertain and faced with more complex threats" (SolanaSpeech070329); Ashton to "a world that is seeing fundamental power shifts and where problems are increasingly complex and inter-linked" (AshtonSpeech100707). Mogherini describes how "[i]f we look around us, and we do it quite consistently today, we see a dangerous world indeed" (MogheriniSpeech171212) and "[w]e are probably living in the most delicate moment since the end of the Cold War and there is very little space for positive news" (MogheriniSpeech180314).

The values that the European Union has chosen to promote in its foreign policies, such as democracy and human rights, are also increasingly opposed. Ashton tells that "[t]he indivisibility and universality of human rights is increasingly being challenged globally" (AshtonSpeech111213b) and Mogherini, quoting the 2017 Report on human rights and democracy in the world, refers to "a global pushback against democracy, human rights and the rule of law" (MogheriniSpeech181211c). Besides human rights, the Union's vision of a multilateral, rules-based world order is seen as facing increasing opposition. Mogherini declares that "this is a complex moment for the multilateral system at large, for the United Nations and the UN system in particular, which has come under attack from many corners" (MogheriniSpeech170704b). Ashton notes how "the entire treaty-based non-proliferation system with the NPT as a corner-stone is under growing pressure" (AshtonSpeech100310).

This all sets a background for a somewhat pessimistic outlook on the prospects of the EU for realising its fundamental values and aspirations. However, this is only one side of the coin. Despite these notable difficulties, the Union and the values it promotes are also told to enjoy considerable support. As previously discussed in the context of P-1 beliefs, the majority of other actors are described more as supporting the Union in multilateral fora than opposing it. For example, Mogherini tells how "[f]rom Canada to Australia, from South America to East Asia, from the African Union to ASEAN – there is a whole world calling for effective multilateralism and for partners to build it" (MogheriniSpeech180911b). The overall picture of the environment the Union operates in is not as negative as the perspective on the problems raised by the High Representative would initially indicate.

Individual others as causes for optimism and pessimism

Previous experiences, both successes and failures, play a part in the formation of the expectations towards the future realisation of goals. On these, all three High Representatives have their share of both positive and negative examples.

For example, Solana displays some amount of optimism when, during the aftermath of the Russo-Georgian War in 2008, he states that he “can report good progress” (SolanaSpeech080910) on Georgia, continuing that “[i]n one month, decisive response by the European Union has managed to stop a dangerous conflict” and “ensure [...] the definitive end to hostilities and resumption of dialogue and diplomacy as the way to solve the crisis” (SolanaSpeech080910). Similarly in Kosovo, according to Solana, the EU’s efforts “have had a substantial impact” (SolanaSpeech000321), bringing the region back from the verge of a humanitarian disaster.

Both Ashton and Mogherini note several success stories, occasionally in a very personal manner. Ashton for example tells that “[e]ven in the toughest environments, where basic rights and freedoms are the most repressed, we have been able to provide assistance to civil society” (AshtonSpeech111213b); she further gives several examples of such successful assistance. Talking about Libya, Ashton tells:

“But nonetheless, to be able to walk openly in Martyr’s Square and to meet ordinary people going about their business, who talked about their aspirations for the future, was a day I will never forget. This demonstrates again the importance of our support.” (AshtonRemark111213)

In a similar way, Mogherini recounts how she remembers herself “with a lot of emotion and positive memories, when we achieved visa liberalisation for the Moldovan citizens” (MogheriniRemark180705).

This discourse makes it clear that the EU can make changes happen in the countries it seeks to steer on their road to democratisation and economic prosperity. Here, the structural foreign policy of the Union appears effective. Solana notes “a number of concrete improvements on the ground in Kosovo”, mentioning economic regeneration and improvement in the status of ethnic minorities (SolanaSpeech000621). Regarding Turkey, Ashton describes the country’s reforms as having “already been truly impressive” (AshtonRemark130612c) whereas Mogherini praises the country’s accession process as having “achieved important results in many fields, from energy sector, to both our economies and business, to the talks on Cyprus” (MogheriniRemark161122c).

The High Representatives also tend to present optimistic evaluations of the prospects of the future achievements of the Union’s structural foreign policy. In a response to the Arab Spring, Ashton declares that “[w]e have a once in a lifetime

opportunity to build deep and lasting democracy and prosperity in the Southern Mediterranean” (AshtonSpeech110927). Similar expectations are typically presented regarding reforms in other countries.

The European Union is also typically portrayed as realising its aspirations as a diplomatic negotiator and mediator. Regarding the problems in Lebanon, Solana boasts that “[t]he EU played a very important role in the work of the UN Security Council”, having been “central to the efforts behind the cessation of violence” (SolanaSpeech061004b). Mogherini tends to highlight nuclear negotiations with Iran as a particular success story, that “showed that diplomacy is the best way to overcome longstanding problems that sometimes seem impossible to solve” (MogheriniSpeech171212). She tells that “[t]hrough this deal, we prevented nuclear proliferation, we avoided a regional escalation, and we made sure that Iran would never acquire a nuclear weapon” (MogheriniSpeech171212). Similarly, Ashton describes how in the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue facilitated by the EU that “[t]he results of the work that has been done are there for everyone to see” and have sometimes even exceeded her own expectations (AshtonRemark131218).

The overall picture is more diverse, however. While the High Representatives prefer to highlight the Union’s ability to mediate conflicts, they are often forced to acknowledge the failure of the relevant parties to reach an agreement in the negotiations promoted by the Union. Solana describes how he does not wish to conceal his frustration over the fact that “the Israelis and Palestinians have not been able, or have not wanted, to implement the commitments [previously negotiated]” (SolanaSpeech031009). Indeed, the negotiations of the Israel-Palestine conflict seem to present increasing disappointment for Solana, culminating in a situation where, after the rise of the Hamas government “there can be no negotiation if the parties do not recognise one another” (SolanaSpeech060405) and three years later in 2009 “the diplomatic fall-out of the Gaza conflict in the wider region has been very significant” causing talks between Syria and Israel to be suspended, resulting in the threat of a withdrawal of the Arab Peace Initiative (SolanaSpeech090218b). The development of the Middle East peace process, a central theme in his speeches to the Parliament, gives Solana little reason for optimism.

Similarly, Ashton acknowledges disappointment in the negotiations over the Nagorny Karabakh conflict (see AshtonSpeech110606b), and Mogherini decries the lack of political agreement on the future of Syria (MogheriniSpeech180313b). Regarding the Middle East peace process, Mogherini acknowledges that what the EU is seeing in 2015 is a stalemate in the peace process (MogheriniRemark151028), and in 2018 she notes that the two-state solution promoted by the Union, “is today under serious threat – more than ever before” (MogheriniRemark180911). Even the Union’s structural foreign policies prove a disappointment from time to time, with the target countries failing to progress in reforms as expected or even opposing these

reforms. For example, in 2018 Mogherini admits that in Turkey, “[t]he negative trend of the human rights situation in the country has not been reversed” (MogheriniSpeech180207b).

Overall, while the observation of others opposing the Union’s goals and values¹²⁷ indicates some level of pessimism in the foreign policy belief system, the High Representatives often express optimistic beliefs in the Union’s ability to cope with the actors who do not share all the Union’s values. The previous discussion about the Union’s approach to problematic actors like China and Russia is a good example of this optimism. Often, the High Representatives expect that the ways to address disagreements can be found, even with difficult actors. However, sometimes this fails, as acknowledged in the disappointments previously portrayed, but there typically is a general undertone of optimistic expectations. And, as previously discussed both here and regarding P-1 beliefs, the others in the international system are predominantly described as cooperative and supportive of the Union’s goals. The descriptions of other actors offer the foundations for a mix of optimism and pessimism regarding the Union’s prospects for pursuing its goals. But trust in the EU’s own abilities to influence others tends to tip the scales towards optimism.

Development of the EU’s instruments

One key source for optimism is the potential for development, as well as the actual development, of the Union’s capability for acting in international politics. As previously discussed regarding P-4 beliefs, this can be seen to progress from an initial, somewhat pessimistic acknowledgement of the limitations of the Union’s capability to increasing confidence in those capabilities.¹²⁸ From the beginning, there is a conditional sense of optimism placed in the Union. Solana describes how “[i]f the Union has the capacity and commitment, it can act as a strong catalyst for stability and peace beyond its frontiers” (SolanaSpeech000301b).

During Ashton’s term in office, this development is presented as already well on its way to becoming reality. But there is still much to do, as can be seen in Ashton’s comment on the capabilities of delivering humanitarian aid: “But we need to get faster and smarter in how we do this. And I am the first person to admit that there is much more we need to do.” (AshtonSpeech110511). In another context, Ashton states that “Europe is going through a phase of building something new” and continues that “[r]ight now we have a chance to build what many across Europe – and many in this House – have long wanted: a stronger, more credible European foreign policy” (AshtonSpeech100310). Four years later, in her last address to the

¹²⁷ See previous discussion about P-1 beliefs.

¹²⁸ See Chapter 8.2.

Parliament for the annual Article 36 debate covering CFSP and CSDP, she describes the development of the Union's foreign policy institutions:

“[W]e have made some achievements. We do have a European External Action Service. We do have strong relationships and a clear role in our Neighbourhood and we have deep political strategic relationships with key international partners. We have in other words in place the core components for a comprehensive and coherent EU external policy.” (AshtonRemark140403)

Mogherini continues from Ashton's legacy. She regards the EU as already a formidable power but one that can and should develop its instruments further. In her opinion, the Global Strategy of 2016 in particular, represents a way to further strengthen the Union as a global actor. In December 2016 Mogherini states that “since I've presented the global strategy on foreign and security policy, our work for a stronger Union has moved on very concretely and very fast” (MogheriniSpeech161213). She continues that “[i]f we finally manage to make full use of our different European and national instruments and at the same time to act as one single force, then our potential truly has no parallel in the world” (MogheriniSpeech161213). Mogherini's discourse makes it clear that she believes that the EU has diverse capabilities for promoting its goals and values in the international system, which gives reason for optimism.

9.3 Summary: Beliefs Concerning the Nature of Others and the Political Universe

The final two beliefs discussed above, deal with the EU's perception of the international environment. P-1 beliefs describe other actors and how cooperative or hostile they appear towards the EU and its goals. Partially based on this perceived nature of the political universe, P-2 beliefs measure the optimism or pessimism, that the Union can hold regarding the prospects of its foreign policy. The construction of these beliefs in the discourses of the High Representatives can be summed up as follows:

P-1 What is the 'essential' nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or of conflict? What is the fundamental character of other actors?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Political universe essentially a mix of harmony and conflict	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Most of the other actors are cooperative	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
UN a key cooperative partner	Ashton, Mogherini
Important cooperative partners include NATO, US	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
China is an important cooperative partner, but with problematic aspects	Ashton, Mogherini
Few distinctively conflictual others	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini

P-2 What are the prospects for the eventual realization of one's fundamental values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other?	
Key beliefs in qualitative analysis	
Overall outlook of prospects a mix of optimism and pessimism	Solana, Ashton
Overall outlook prominently optimistic, with some features of pessimism	Mogherini
Somewhat pessimistic perception of the development in political universe	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
Experiences with others give reason to optimism, but also to some pessimism	Solana, Ashton, Mogherini
The values of the Union increasingly opposed	Ashton, Mogherini
The EU's potential for development gives reason for future optimism	Solana
The EU's development gives reason for optimism	Ashton, Mogherini

In the VICS analysis, there is some variation between the High Representatives concerning their beliefs about the nature of the political universe and the other actors therein. The overall scores of friendliness or hostility of Others (P-1) are mixed for all three High Representatives but vary from the slightly positive (+0.14) score of Solana to the slightly negative (-0.09) of Ashton, with Mogherini remaining in the middle (+0.06). This portrays a political universe with a variety of actors pursuing their goals using a mixture of different means. The more detailed analysis demonstrates that the mixed nature of the political universe is essentially a result of differences between actors.

The overall quantitative analysis of P-2 beliefs displays similar level of variation between the High Representatives, leaning towards a moderately pessimistic outlook on the prospects for realising the Union's fundamental values with its foreign policy. A more detailed look at the coding that the scores are based on indicates that the VICS scores for this belief group are very much dependent on what the other actors actually are; their targeted operational codes would probably vary considerably from the universal operational code portrayed here. The Union's strategic culture thus regards relations with different actors with different levels of optimism or pessimism.

The qualitative analysis demonstrates that the High Representatives portray most other actors as cooperative, able to work together with the Union, and support its goals. However, there are a number of other actors that practice, from the Union's point of view, conflictual policies. These policies do not necessarily directly target the Union itself but are nonetheless in conflict with the EU's goals and values. Various conflicts, as well as the oppression practised by certain countries against their own citizens, significantly affect the overall portrayal of the political universe. Therefore, in the qualitative analysis, the nature of international politics appears as neither predominantly harmonious nor conflictual but a mixture of both.

Major cooperative partners remain essentially the same during the examined period, with the exception that Solana does not offer as prominent a role to the UN as the later High Representatives and discusses cooperation with China less. The prominent role of the UN as an actor in Ashton's and Mogherini's discourses is connected to their beliefs about the best approaches for selecting objectives (I-1) and the most effective means (I-2). The importance and effectiveness of multilateral cooperation and global governance can be seen to affect the presentation of the UN as an important friendly actor.

The examination of the discourses on the United States, China, Russia, and Iran demonstrates how the construction of cooperativeness or conflictuality of the other actor is connected to the Union's own preference for cooperation with the subject. The change in the depiction of the other, particularly with Russia and Iran, demonstrates this quite clearly; the discourse presents the conflictual behaviour of the other differently when the Union's own approach is strongly cooperation-based. Russia's conflictual actions receive much less attention before the perception of the relationship with Russia eventually changes and the conflictual depiction begins to dominate it. This is in line with how it has been argued elsewhere that the escalation of the crisis in Ukraine has changed European governments' strategic perception of Russia, turning them away from seeking partnership towards acknowledged confrontation (see Whitman 2015, 20; Youngs 2017, 66). On the other hand, while the Union's dual-track policy on Iran leans more towards sanctions, the depiction of Iran's attitude is also predominantly conflictual. But when the Union's policy turns

more towards cooperation after a deal is reached on Iran's nuclear development, the overall depiction of Iran shifts more toward the cooperative end of the scale.

Two developments arise as prominent themes in the qualitative analysis of beliefs about the prospects for the realisation of aspirations in the Union's foreign policy discourses. First, the negative development of the international environment, where it is described as increasingly difficult for the promotion of the Union's values. This generates some pessimism in the analysed speeches. The second theme, the positive development of the Union's own capabilities, however, increases optimism for the Union's prospects of pursuing its goals and promoting its values internationally. These two themes explain much of the development of the Union's foreign policy operational code.

The qualitative analysis of the speeches of the High Representatives lends some support to the earlier observations about the limits of the universal VICS scores. The speeches indicate a much more optimistic interpretation of the Union's prospects in general, while still presenting considerable pessimism in some cases. Interestingly, the qualitative comparison of the High Representatives unveils pessimism in Ashton's discourse, similar to how she is ranked in the overall quantitative VICS scores. While the differences between Mogherini and Solana are not great in the overall quantitative scores, the former's discourse appears in the qualitative analysis considerably more optimistic than the other two High Representatives. Nonetheless, considering how the yearly scores of Mogherini vary in quantitative analysis, the quantitative scores do seem to correspond with the observations of the qualitative analysis, even though the qualitative analysis brings forth more optimistic beliefs guiding the EU foreign policy in general.

10 Conclusions

This study set out to examine the causal beliefs of European Union foreign policy through an operational code analysis of the speeches of the High Representatives in 2000 – 2018. It contributes to academic discussion with two important points: one methodological and one substantial. Regarding methodology, the study demonstrates how quantitative and qualitative forms of operational code analysis operate as methods for analysing foreign policy, indicating the relevant elements that affect their particular use both together and separately. Most importantly, it demonstrates how the conceptualisation of power as direct causal power sets limits on the VICS analysis and how qualitative analysis can expand the analytical perspective. Substantially, the study examines whether and in which ways the European Union has developed a strategic culture for its foreign policy through the institutionalisation of key causal beliefs. Here, the study finds a significant stability in the operational codes of the High Representatives during the analysed period. In this process, the study offers a detailed look at EU foreign policy, its key elements, and its development during the first two decades of the new millennium. It highlights how the Union's foreign policy is built on a strategic culture that is essentially cooperative but still includes a versatile approach to the uses of power with the use of conditionality and a combination of cooperative and conflictual means. Other major elements include the focal role of multilateralism and normative structures in foreign policy thinking as well as the perception of an increasingly unpredictable political universe that the Union is still able to control relatively well. This strategic culture could have a significant effect on how the Union will respond to the challenges of our times, setting foundations that the inevitable change in the EU foreign policy will be built on.

Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses portray operational code beliefs as highly stable. In the quantitative VICS analysis, the differences between the three High Representatives are minimal. Slightly more differences appear in the qualitative analysis, especially between Solana's discourse and the other two High Representatives. However, even these differences are limited and largely linked to the development of the Union's capability as an international actor. The differentiation of Solana's discourse can also be understood as a result of his

different institutional role rather than as an actual change in the operational code: The role of the High Representative in the Union's foreign policy decision-making was much more limited before the Lisbon Treaty, as was the role of the Parliament in the EU's foreign policy. Solana's more reserved descriptions of the Union's foreign policy ambitions and guidelines can thus be seen to mirror the weaker common foreign policy institutions of the pre-Lisbon EU.

According to the analysis of the High Representatives' speeches, operational code beliefs form a consistent strategic culture for EU foreign policy. The main elements of this shared operational code appear to be deeply institutionalised in the Union's foreign policy thinking, apparent in the striking similarity of the High Representatives in both quantitative and qualitative analysis. This does not mean that the Union's foreign policy would be unchanging. For example, the analysis shows a significant change in both the perception of, and approach to, Russia during the studied timeframe. However, these changes happen gradually and are built on the foundations of an institutionalised belief system that characterises the Union as an international actor.

10.1 Foreign Policy Analysis with Operational Code Analysis

One of the two main objectives of this study has been to test and compare the quantitative and qualitative operational code analyses to better understand how they operate and how to best use them as tools of foreign policy analysis. Using EU foreign policy as an example, the study demonstrates that quantitative VICS analysis and qualitative content analysis can complement each other to form a nuanced, descriptive analysis of any foreign policy operational code. Regarding the application of operational code analysis, the study raises several observations.

First, it is important to recognise the nature of operational code as a belief system of *causal* beliefs. Operational code analysis tells **how** the actor believes it can best pursue its goals, but it does not tell **what** those goals should be, at least not when the choice of goals represents a normative question. While normative beliefs like values are sometimes reflected in the chosen means, as can be seen in the analysis of the EU's foreign policy operational code, beliefs concerning how these values are actually chosen are left outside the analytical framework.

Regarding the difference between qualitative and quantitative OCA, perhaps the most important observations of this study concern the conceptualisation of power. While the qualitative OCA is flexible with its approach to the conceptualisation of power, allowing the inclusion of more indirect and constitutive forms of power into its investigations, the quantitative VICS analysis is built on a *causal notion of power*.

Furthermore, VICS analysis assumes a dichotomy of positive and negative power as clearly separable and identifiable categories.

In Chapter 3, I raise some concerns over the limited conceptualisation of power in VICS analysis. My analysis of EU foreign policy discourses proves the validity of these concerns. In the qualitative analysis, both institutional and productive forms of indirect power (see Barnett & Duvall 2005) appear as a significant part of the Union's operational code. While these aspects, obscured in VICS coding based on the causal notion of power, do not contradict the interpretation of the quantitative analysis, they nevertheless expand the picture of the Union's foreign policy thinking considerably. In the increasingly interconnected and institutionalised international system, the inclusion of these forms of power in the analysis in some systematic way is necessary. There are multiple ways to do this, including the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis used in this study, but it requires that the analyst is well aware of the range of different conceptualisations of power that ultimately frame the analysis.

The study also questions the assumption that making a clear distinction between cooperative and conflictual use of power is always possible. It demonstrates how some means to influence others, like implicit threats, withholding benefits, and the use of conditionality, blur the line between cooperation and conflict. Constraining the analysis into the dichotomy of positive and negative use of power can thus ignore the significant complexity of the use of power in international relations.

The conceptualisation of power according to the causal notion of power also affects the interpretation of the original questions of the George construct. These interpretations easily turn out to be considerably narrower than the original questions, as this study indicates. Trying to directly answer the original questions of the George construct using results of VICS analysis can thus lead to questionable outcomes if these differences are not paid attention to in a systematic manner.

In the case of several belief types, the standard interpretation of VICS comes close to the original George construct but there are also belief types the interpretation of which differs significantly from the original. For example, narrowing down the I-1 and P-1 beliefs to a scale of cooperation and conflict is, while perhaps one-dimensional, still a reasonable modelling of the original George construct. On the other hand, the P-5 index for example, which is supposed to describe beliefs concerning the role of chance in the political universe, is based only on the variation of the means of power used by others in the analysed text in VICS. Similarly, it is questionable how well the weighted ratio of cooperative/conflictual means used by others in the material describes the P-2 beliefs as a depiction of the speaker's optimism/pessimism regarding the prospects of realising one's goals. After all, one's own capability to pursue those goals can also provide grounds for optimism or pessimism as our qualitative analysis demonstrates. With some belief types, the

focus on the six forms of causal power works better, while with others it simplifies things considerably. VICS indices can thus be useful measurements, but they do not necessarily render any comprehensive answers to the questions presented in the George construct.

The study clearly demonstrates the challenges of trying to portray a universal operational code of an actor. Indeed, concentrating on targeted, policy-area specific operational codes might offer a more accurate portrait of the multiple belief systems guiding foreign policy action. Nonetheless, there is some value in the multi-methodological mapping of the general belief systems: It can identify universal guidelines such as, for example, the strong preference for cooperation and avoidance of escalating conflicts visible in my analysis of EU foreign policy operational code. Both quantitative and qualitative Operational Code Analysis do manage to offer some indications about the nature of these kinds of more general beliefs that serve as a backbone of the strategic culture of an actor.

The interpretative approach to VICS coding adopted in the study appears to sufficiently map the use of causal, direct power. It avoids simplification or misrepresentation of the meaning of the sentences, a risk whenever utterances are mechanically coded based on pre-made verb lists. The issue of multiple purposes of an utterance (see Chapter 3.2.), however, cannot be completely solved with interpretative coding. There are always cases where a single action is at the same time both cooperative towards one direction and conflictual in the other. The only way to counter this issue is to narrow the focus of analysis to a limited or targeted operational code, where the Other in question is defined as a single actor and the operational code is concerned only with that specific actor or with a particular, temporally clearly demarcated issue. This seems to suggest that the universal operational codes should be analysed only with qualitative analysis and VICS analysis applied only in the cases of targeted operational codes. Despite this consideration, however, while there are some inaccuracies, the overall VICS scores of the High Representatives in this study are generally supported by the qualitative analysis. It would appear that at least to some extent, the more extensive the material, the better this holds true. VICS can indeed be used to analyse a universal operational code on a very general level if the material is sufficiently large, otherwise its use should be limited to targeted operational code analysis.

One of the key advantages of adopting a quantitative approach to Operational Code Analysis has been argued to be its efficiency. Automated coding enables an analysis of large amounts of material in a much shorter time than qualitative analysis would take. Comparison of the VICS results to the findings of the qualitative analysis, as well as the more detailed examination of the quantitative coding in this study, raises some cautionary observations in this regard. It is easy to misinterpret the results of VICS analysis if one is not deeply familiar with both the particularities

of the analysed material as well as its context. Using the VICS to accurately profile political leaders or strategic cultures requires careful examination of both the material and the coding procedures to avoid faulty generalisations and misinterpretations of the coding results.

Mapping the general elements of cooperation and conflict in international relations is where the VICS analysis excels. Both P-1 and I-1 indices measure interesting and relevant elements of foreign policy strategic thinking, and P-2 and I-2 indices offer an evaluation of the intensity of these elements. These are the indices that count the ratio of cooperative and conflictual uses of power by others (P-1) and by the self (I-1), and more specifically the uses of six means of causal power by others (P-2) and by the self (I-2). Comparison of these measures and examination of their development produce valid data for analysing foreign policy, even if they do not offer comprehensive answers to the original questions of the George construct. If the limitations of the causal notion of power are considered in the interpretation of the results, they present insights into the use of power that can well serve overall operational code analysis.

The third ‘major belief’ index P-4, which concerns the control one has over historical development, and the I-3 index, which concerns risk-calculation, also provide useful measurements for analysing the strategic thinking of a political actor. However, how well these indices actually portray the wholeness of the operational code beliefs in question involves some complex issues. While their simplified form makes them usable, for example, when placing actors into game-like decision-making models, important aspects of these belief types are lost when they are measured based on the ratios of VICS coded verb utterances.

The qualitative OCA has problems of its own. It is essentially an interpretative approach, and thus the researcher’s subjective biases inevitably affect the analysis. While adopting a systematic approach, like the qualitative content analysis variant utilised in this study, can reduce the negative influence of this subjectivity to some extent, it can never be completely eliminated from the analysis – a fact that simply needs to be acknowledged.

Quantitative VICS analysis and qualitative content analysis of operational code serve different purposes and produce different kinds of knowledge about the strategic beliefs of the subject. Both can be effectively used for foreign policy analysis, separately or in combination to guarantee a more comprehensive examination. However, it is vitally important that the researcher understands how the methods operate as well as how the points of view of these methods on the operational code framework ultimately differ.

10.2 The European Union as a User of Power

The shared operational code in the High Representative's speeches is founded on a strong identity of the EU as a *cooperative power*, and the Union's overall foreign policy doctrine is constructed as essentially cooperative. Cooperation is seen as a preferable type of relationship with others in a general sense (I-1) and as an effective means of influencing others (I-2). Even with other actors that are regarded as hostile or uncooperative, cooperation is still typically pursued for as long as possible. The roots of this cooperative approach can be traced back to the Treaties and Strategies of the Union (see Chapter 4.2.). Especially the treatment of 'problematic actors' like China, Russia, and Iran, displays a strong belief in the effectiveness and preferability of cooperation for influencing others.

This cooperative tendency could be seen to support the idea of the Union as a civilian power (Duchêne 1972). However, this would be an oversimplification of the Union's foreign policy approach. While the Union's foreign policy appears in the analysis to be predominantly cooperative, it is not without any conflictual elements. Sanctions, as well as conflictual uses of authority, have had a significant role in the Union's foreign policy toolkit in the 2000s. Furthermore, the more nuanced forms of power that blur the line between cooperation and conflict, such as conditional promises, implicit threats, and withholding benefits as a form of punishment, are all part of the EU's operational toolbox.

Regarding the civilian power conceptualisation, it should also be noted that all the High Representatives repeatedly emphasise the need for the EU to strengthen its military capabilities and underscore the importance of developing tangible capabilities to perform military operations. The necessary development of the EU, required for it to become the major global power that all the three High Representatives hope it will eventually turn into (or in Mogherini's case is already turning into), is often linked specifically to the development of these military capabilities. Thus, it is questionable whether the Union is in fact willing to remain a 'mere' civilian power, although the military development of the Union is presented through a cooperative framing.

Indeed, EU foreign policy seems to have a complicated relationship with military power. While the *ideal* of the Union as a civilian power appears as an important part of the Union's foreign policy identity, the need for military capabilities *in reality* is still recognised. However, even the potential military capability of the Union is not discussed as a capability to use force against other states¹²⁹ in the analysed material and the defensive use of force against other states is also a topic avoided. This lack

¹²⁹ The use of force against, for example pirates and terrorists, on the other hand is discussed.

of a significant aspect of ‘hard power’ still clearly distinguishes the EU’s operational code from those of traditional state-actors. Rather than a civilian power, a conceptualisation of the EU as a postmodern security actor that rejects the use of force as an inherent element of the traditional security agenda (Mälksoo 2010, 69), might be closer to the EU’s operational code during the analysed period. But this topic is also a sort of taboo subject for the EU and there is some contradiction between the lack of discussion about the use of force and the ambitions to increase the military capabilities of the Union in EU foreign policy discourses.

The analysis lends support to earlier research (see Keukeleire 2003; Keukeleire & Delreux 2014) that has identified *structural foreign policy* as a typical element of EU foreign policy. In many cases, the Union’s foreign policy approach is geared towards producing long-term structural changes in the other actors, rather than merely influencing their short-term preferences. Many of the major elements in the EU’s operational code, such as the utilisation of support or the role of *conditionality*, tie into this structural foreign policy approach.

Another prominent element of the Union’s operational code is the emphasis on the strengthening and utilisation of multilateral institutions as well as the consolidation of a *rules-based world order*. This clearly presents the significant role that *multilateralism* has in EU foreign policy thinking. International organisations, especially the UN, are seen as both valuable allies and effective means of using structural, indirect power to pursue the EU’s goals in international politics. Related to this, norms and institutional frameworks are seen as important instruments of power that serve the EU particularly well.

Multilateralism is both a goal and a favoured means of the Union’s foreign policy. Strengthening the multilateral, rules-based framework of the international system certainly has a normative value for the EU, often underlined in its official discourse. But the analysis of the speech material also shows that multilateral institutions are seen in the Union’s operational code as effective tools, and as arenas that favour the Union as an actor. Multilateral frameworks are also understood as instruments that decrease risks (I-3) and increase predictability (P-3) in the international system. Thus, the Union’s support for multilateralism and a rules-based world order has also its pragmatic side, rooted in causal beliefs. The EU has clearly accustomed itself to trusting the power of the multilateral world order. However, the growing geopolitical tensions in the international system might force the Union to adjust this approach.

The EU’s operational code appears as considerably risk averse (I-3) in both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Concerns over inherent risks are prominent in the analysed speech material. Different forms of avoiding and controlling potential risks, such as the prominent role of conditionality in the Union’s foreign policy, highlight this aspect of the causal belief system. The Union appears as a prudent

actor that seeks to avoid escalation of situations to conflict if possible. The Union's relations with the aforementioned 'problematic actors' make this tendency apparent. Especially the prolonged attempts at cooperation with Russia, despite that country's evident conflictual stance towards the Union's foreign policy goals, can be seen as a good example of avoiding escalation at almost any cost. The risk aversiveness of the EU's operational code can be expected to have a restraining effect on the Union's response both to conflict in Ukraine and Russia's aggressive behaviour in Eastern Europe, as well as to its currently deteriorating relations with the US.

When it comes to the timing of action (I-4), the EU's operational code sees value for both long-term and short-term approaches to international politics. In the Union's foreign policy discourse, these approaches are seen as mutually supporting, and the Union's operational code combines the ability to react quickly and to pursue a coherent, long-term policy, along the lines of its ideal of being both a strategic and a flexible actor.

Though versatile, the Union's range of means (I-5) for advancing its foreign policy interests favours using authority as a form of power. In the quantitative VICS analysis, authority is clearly the dominant means utilised by the EU, but the role of authority appears as prominent in the qualitative analysis of the High Representatives' speeches as well. Together with the strong preference for cooperation, this would support those depictions of the EU as a *normative power* (see Manners 2002; 2006) that by its nature, approaches international relations cooperatively and is characterised by the use of ideational power and the shaping of international norms as a means of influence.

All the mechanisms of normative power¹³⁰ identified by Forsberg (2011, 1195–98) are clearly present in the Union's discourses: The authority power of the causal conception of power involves the persuasion of others as well as utilisation of the power of example. In the latter case, the Union's claim of it itself epitomising the values and policies it requires from others plays a vital role. But what is identified as authority power use in the material also largely relies on internationally shared norms as a basis of the authority that the Union seeks to invoke. This not only makes invoking norms and shaping the shared understanding of what is normal as a focal element for the Union's use of power but also explains the interest the Union has for strongly supporting international institutions and normative frameworks. Indeed, both the positive and negative uses of authority in the analysed speeches is often grounded on normative values and utilises the rules and structures of international institutions, while also highlighting the prominent role of the *indirect use of power* in the Union's external actions.

¹³⁰ Persuading others, invoking norms, shaping the discourse of what is normal, and the power of example (Forsberg 2011, 1195–98).

In this way, the analysis indeed supports the conceptualisation of the EU as a normative power. However, here the distinction between normative power as an actor using mechanisms of normative power and a normative power understood as an actor who pursues normative interests (see Forsberg 2011) is important. While my operational code analysis indicates that the former describes the EU rather well, the latter is much more questionable. Aspects that are typically seen as signs of the latter conceptualisation of normative power appear in our analysis as building on instrumental, pragmatic reasoning, even if they might have normative motives behind them as well. For example, the EU's support for a multilateral, rules-based world order is not only a normative goal but is also understood as beneficial for the EU itself and pursued because of this. Similarly, normative values are not the only, or even the most important factor behind the Union's tendency to seek cooperation with problematic actors. For example, the Union's relations with China and Russia have been characterised by tensions between economic interests and concerns over the problematic policies of those countries (Whitman 2015, 20), but the former has tended to prevail, turning the Union towards cooperation. A cooperative operational code is thus not necessarily linked to a particular moral belief system.

The EU appears as an international actor that relies heavily on two types of power resources for advancing its interests in international politics: the aforementioned normative power and what Baldwin (2020) would call *economic statecraft*. While the results of the VICS analysis focus on the authority power side of the Union's operational code, the qualitative analysis also notes the importance of economic statecraft. Both the positive and negative non-authority means of power are primarily economic in nature: Economic statecraft, in the form of economic sanctions or as a capability of offering economic support, and the attractiveness of economic cooperation with the Union, have a prominent role in the analysed material.

The qualitative analysis also highlights the role of diplomacy for the Union's foreign policy in general as well as a number of important details in how the utility and role of different means of advancing interests are constructed in the speeches. Besides the authoritative influencing of others, negotiation, facilitating negotiations, and other forms of more argumentative and discussive engagement with others share a major role in the Union's interaction with others.

Furthermore, even the Union's use of authority power does not rely only on direct compulsion. Authority power takes both direct and indirect forms in the Union's foreign policy, as the High Representatives demonstrate both by directly appealing to other actors and by seeking to use authority through the detached connections of formal and informal institutions of international order. Similarly, the Union's authority power is used not only in direct interaction but also as a constitution of the social and institutional norms of international society. The importance of multilateralism and multilateral order can be seen as connected to this;

they enable the indirect, constitutional use of the Union's authority power more effectively and are thus suitable for the Union as a versatile power user.

Two additional defining traits arise from the more detailed examination of the construction of usable foreign policy means in the Union's operational code. First is the tendency to combine different means in concert. This *comprehensive approach* includes combining cooperative and conflictual means. For example, sanctions are seen to operate more effectively when combined with positive means of power. This particular approach to the use of foreign policy instruments recurs in the analysed material and appears as characteristic for the Union as an international actor, as also noted in the previous literature (see Tiilikainen 2011).

The other defining trait of EU foreign policy means is the role of *conditionality* as a recurring element in the Union's relations with other actors. Conditional promises, as well as withholding rewards to pressure others, form a significant part of the EU foreign policy toolbox. The Union's structural foreign policy especially, is often advanced using conditionality. Elements of conditionality in the support offered by the Union represent a subtle form of coercive power, easily overlooked by VICS analysis. In the Union's operational code, the use of conditionality also serves as an important means for strengthening control over relations with others (P-4) and for decreasing risks (I-3).

The prominent role of both combined means and the use of conditionality indicates a more complex approach to the use of power than the simple cooperation-conflict dichotomy would imply. Together with the notable use of indirect power through the utilisation of multilateral institutions and normative structures, they form a distinctive part of the Union's foreign policy operational code that is better captured by more constructivist conceptualisations of power. Indeed, these aspects demonstrate how, besides traditional compulsory power, the other three types of power in the taxonomy of Barnett and Duvall (2005) are important for the Union's foreign policy. For example, the normative power aspects and the importance of multilateral frameworks require productive and institutional power, and structural foreign policy depends on the utilisation of structural power, a constitutive form of direct power. The analysis of the EU foreign policy beliefs thus shows a distinctive and particularly versatile approach to the uses of power.

10.3 The World in their Minds

The High Representatives also share a similar outlook on the political universe within which the EU operates. While this political universe is perceived in the analysed material as increasingly unpredictable, and the opposition to the Union's goals and values is believed to be growing, its essential nature remains the same

throughout the studied period. We can thus safely speak about an operational code institutionalised into a strategic culture here as well.

The political universe in the EU's operational code is by its nature mixed but predominantly friendly (P-1). There are significant other actors that do not share the Union's goals and values, even acting against them, but the majority of other actors are individually described as cooperative towards the Union. Furthermore, the international community, especially when acting through the UN framework, is perceived as largely cooperative. However, the political universe is also generally described as increasingly unpredictable and, similarly, increasing hostility towards the values promoted by the Union is recurrently raised. These perceived negative developments form a significant concern for the Union.

Predictability (P-3) has a visible role in the analysed speeches. The construction of the international rules-based system, promotion of international law, and binding of actors to treaty-based structures can all be seen as part of an effort to increase the predictability of international politics. The Union's structural foreign policy, promoting democracy, the rule of law, and a stable market economy in other countries, is strongly linked to stability in the EU's discourses. Ensuring stability and seeking to stabilise unstable regions are themes that recur in the speech material. One of the main goals of the structural foreign policy that the Union practices in its neighbourhood has always been the creation of a stable external environment; this view has gained an increasingly prominent role since the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2015 (Casier 2022). This predictability is increasingly seen as being threatened in the political universe. While the Union seeks to maintain its control through the strengthening of the rules-based institutions, this negative development continues throughout the analysed period.

An important aspect of the Union's operational code arises when the beliefs concerning the predictability of the political future are studied closely. When Mogherini discusses how the nuclear agreement has made Iran a more predictable actor, she displays her belief in the Union's own ability to control the unpredictability of the political universe. The main differences and developments between the three High Representatives here are not so much in what they believe concerning the predictability of other actors in the political universe but concerning their trust in international frameworks and the Union's own ability to effectively use these frameworks. Together with analysis of the beliefs concerning control over historical development (P-4) and the prospects of realisation of one's goals (P-2), this indicates development in the Union's operational code: The Union's abilities to influence global politics, and the prospects for the realisation of its aspirations, grow from Solana's cautious hopes to Mogherini's perception of the EU as a major actor on the world stage. While the nature of the world is described as increasingly

unpredictable and chaotic, the Union's growing abilities can counter this trend, at least to some extent.

Despite the negative developments in the international system, the prospects of realising the Union's own aspirations and values appear in the qualitative analysis as increasingly optimistic (P-2). This is connected to the belief in the EU's growing control over its political environment (P-4), which is in turn connected to the belief that through its institutional development, the Union is strengthening itself as an international actor. As the Union's capabilities develop through reforms such as the Lisbon Treaty or formulation of the Global Strategy, the more the EU is portrayed as a great-power-like leader in its foreign policy discourse. This significantly affects the perception of the surrounding environment in the Union's operational code as well. The nature of the political universe is increasingly controlled by the Union.

It is interesting to note how this analysis does not indicate a similar 'loss of faith' in the Union as a major global actor that affected the popular image of the EU after the 2008 financial crisis. After all, the general expectations for the Union's ascension as a global power were much stronger before the financial crisis than they have been after it. However, while the High Representatives do acknowledge the challenges brought by the financial crisis, it does not seem to significantly affect their belief in the Union's growing potential. It is difficult to say whether this tells about the strength of the shared belief in the Union's potential as a global actor or is more a result of the need for the High Representatives to portray, in their speeches, that they represent an increasingly capable Union, despite some setbacks.

A few interesting country cases recur throughout the analysis of different belief types. These cases, particularly due to their high priority for the EU, showcase some of the distinctive elements of the Union's foreign policy operational code. *China*, *Iran*, and *Russia* are all countries that the EU regards as problematic in some way during the analysed period. China and Iran are interesting because they demonstrate the Union's approach to encouraging transformation among other actors. With a great power like China, the Union raises its concerns over human rights and democracy predominantly in a very diplomatic manner, utilising cooperation in the hope of encouraging some sort of positive transformation. The cooperativeness of China is also emphasised in the EU discourses, and China is depicted as an important partner. Iran, on the other hand, is pressured to change with a combination of cooperative and conflictual means. The depiction of the regime in Tehran is much more critical but shifts gradually when an agreement is reached regarding the country's nuclear programme.

The relationship with Russia evolves during the analysed period dramatically, even though Russia's actions, both internal and external, are already often in significant conflict with EU foreign policy during Solana's term. Indeed, the development of the EU's relationship with Russia offers a prime example of how the

cooperative operational code of the EU steers the Union's foreign policy to refrain from conflictual approaches as long as possible. Even while Russia's actions are increasingly in conflict with the Union's goals and values, up until the annexation of Crimea, the High Representatives insist on approaching Russia as an essential, if sometimes challenging, partner. Compared to how in the EU's Strategic Compass plan of 2022, Russia's policies are eventually described as a "long-time and direct threat for European security" (European Union 2022, 18), even Mogherini's post-Crimea discourse appears rather optimistic regarding the prospect of maintaining a cooperative relationship with Russia. The shift to a more conflictual perception of Russia is very slow and careful, highlighting how the strategic culture of cooperation affects foreign policy without completely determining it.

The examination of discourses on China, Russia, and Iran, and also on the United States, shows how the construction of cooperativeness or conflictuality of other actors is connected to the Union's own preference for cooperation with the subject. Moreover, the conflictual articulations are dampened by the emphasis on the Union's eventual willingness to cooperate or the successful cases in which cooperation has materialised. Russia's conflictual actions receive much less attention until the perception of the relationship with Russia eventually changes and the conflictual depiction starts to dominate it. Similarly, as long as the emphasis of the Union's dual-track policy on Iran is more on sanctions, the depiction of Iran's attitude is predominantly conflictual until a deal is reached on Iran's nuclear development, the overall depiction of Iran itself also moves towards the cooperative end of the scale in all policy sectors.

10.4 Looking into the Crystal Ball: The Future

At the time of writing this, the next High Representative, Josep Borrell, has just concluded his term in the office. While his period falls outside the outline of this study, I can to some extent reflect on the findings of this study *vis-à-vis* his term as well as present some speculation of their long-term effects on the European Union and its foreign policy.

Borrell's term in office was framed with crises, first the Covid-19 pandemic and then the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine into a full-scale war with Russia's invasion. These crises left scant time for the strategic development of the Union. There was some talk about drafting a new strategic document to replace Mogherini's Global Strategy when she stepped down from the office of High Representative. However, upon taking office, Borrell decided against a new strategic review and instead continued with the 2016 EUGS. His Strategic Compass, approved in 2022, is considerably narrower in its scope, focusing only on security and defence (see Rantanen 2022). It can be considered to be one of the sub-strategies of the EUGS,

while the Global Strategy of 2016 still remains the EU's grand strategic framework (Biscop 2021, 30). Thus, ambitions for a more strategic EU foreign policy have given way to short-term management of crises.

Yet these crises also further underline the importance of strategic planning and established strategic culture for the EU as a global actor. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, especially as an accelerator of the geopolitical dynamics already in play, has been such that it has been seen as a potential 'game-changer' for the future of international politics (Delphin 2021, 42–44). Accordingly, in its resolution regarding the consequences of the Covid-19, the European Parliament called for an update of the 2016 Global Strategy (Delphin 2021, 48). While it remains to be seen when the Union will update its foreign policy strategy, the past crises have made the need for strategic planning clearly recognisable.

The initial, uncoordinated response to Covid-crisis in Europe is a good demonstration of ad hoc responses to new crises. The EU had already been developing its health security coordination in response to previous outbreaks (see Bengtsson & Rhinard 2019, 359–61), but despite this preparation, the Union's strategic response to the crisis turned out to be lacking. There was no coordinated response to Covid-19 throughout 2020, with individual Member States initiating their own policies in an unsynchronised manner (Fraundorfer & Winn 2021, S14; but see also Immonen et al. 2024). Especially border control measures inside the Schengen Area were undertaken in a highly disorderly manner, although the closure of EU external borders was implemented in a more coordinated way (de Bruycker 2021). The Union's initial response to the economic challenge of the spread of Covid-19, as well as the later recovery instruments and the EU vaccination policies, also demonstrated more coordination (Ladi & Wolff 2021). These differences show where the coordinated response to similar events was institutionalised and where they needed to be constructed.

The crises of the past years, not only the global pandemic but also the reappearance of war in Europe, have certainly highlighted the need for strategic preparation. While flexibility has its place in the face of dramatic events, a strategic framework for responding to crises has been shown to be vitally important in the often chaotic early days of escalating major events. The growing need for the urgent development of European defence capabilities has perhaps shifted the focus from foreign policy to defence but the need for wider strategic resilience remains. If the EU hopes, as a global actor, to be able to respond to future challenges engendered by rising geopolitical tensions, this means the implementation of both concrete strategic policy planning as well as the cultivation of a common strategic culture. This study indicates that the groundworks for these are firm but nonetheless still require active investment – discursively and concretely.

With an increasingly hostile Russia as its neighbour, uncertainty about the continuation of the US commitment to European defence, and the rise of tensions between the great powers globally, the Union's cooperative approach to foreign policy seems increasingly challenged. In the introduction of the 2022 Strategic Compass, Borrell refers to the need for the EU to learn "to speak the language of power", and how "if you want dialogue, diplomacy and multilateralism to succeed, you need to put power behind it" (SCSD 2022, 6). This shifts the discourse on military power: While before the Union's potential military capabilities were discussed primarily in the context of cooperation and various peacekeeping and similar operations, these types of formulations imply a need for a common *defence* in a traditional sense. This would mark a conceptual shift in the Union's operational code regarding military power. While the *offensive* use of force against state actors is still not discussed, acknowledging the need for the *defensive* use of force seems to have become acceptable in EU foreign policy discourse.

Increasing the Union's capability for using military means, even while limited to defensive use, requires some adjusting of the operational code that focuses on normative power and economic statecraft as main power resources. This change is possible, but it should be noted that substantial changes in the belief system tend to happen gradually and over time. However, the versatile approach to the uses of power also present in the Union's operational code could speed up this adjustment.

Indeed, there has been much discussion about the EU increasingly accepting a more realist outlook on international politics, involving a retreat from its civilian power roots. The underlying assumption is that the EU has been, either because of the necessity of lacking capabilities or because of its particular identity, a *sui generis* international actor, and now it will be changing into a traditional one. The EU is certainly adapting its foreign, as well as defence, policies for the changing environment. In addition to the shift in the discourse on military power, the perception of threats to Europe has also changed dramatically: It has been shown that the sovereignty of European states can be challenged militarily, an observation that requires a significant change in the Union's strategic thinking. More recently, the policies of Donald Trump's second presidency have brought turmoil to transatlantic relations. While it is still too early to say what long-term consequences the changing US foreign policy will have for Europe or to the world, it further emphasises the EU's need for strategic autonomy. However, while these are dramatic changes in themselves, they are, or at least can be seen as, compatible with the main elements of the Union's existing strategic culture.

While the invasion of Ukraine forced the Union to re-evaluate its relations with Russia, we can see from the previous analysis that the perception of Russia has been gradually shifting towards an acknowledgement of its conflictual nature over the years. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the High Representative's

speeches track this shift in discourse and highlight how the move from a cooperative into a conflictual description has been a result of long-term development. Further, the EU's need to exert power behind multilateralism does not appear out of nowhere, either. Its roots are in the 'principled pragmatism' of Mogherini's Global Strategy and even in Ashton's and Solana's emphasis on developing European military capabilities. The groundwork for these adjustments has been laid in the previous strategic thinking, and the institutionalised key beliefs of the operational code still frame the Union's responses in international relations. From this perspective, continuity prevails, even in change.

This all means that if and when the Union shifts its foreign policy approach in the future, as the dramatic changes in the international system pressure it to do, it is reasonable to expect that the fundamental principles of this institutionalised belief system will still influence this development, at least to some degree. While the Union might have to reevaluate at least the level of its trust in rules-based multilateral world order, it will likely continue to defend it, still preferring to act through its institutional frameworks whenever possible. Finally, the Union's cooperative, risk averse approach to its relations will probably continue to be an element of EU foreign policy in the increasingly uncertain future as well.

The age of increasing geostrategic rivalries has brought to more recent EU discourses a notion that global institutions are becoming less effective. The established role of these institutions in EU foreign policy strategic culture has led the Union to further emphasise the importance of these institutions of multilateral cooperation rather than abandoning them. This clearly demonstrates the relevancy of an institutionalised strategic culture. The essential core causal beliefs of the Union's foreign policy still seem to remain unchallenged, even while the Union's operational code also evolves. Multilateral cooperation, structural foreign policy, and normative power, all as effectual means for influencing others, still define the Union's foreign policy plans, even while the increasing tensions in the political universe are acknowledged and the Union seeks to respond to these challenges in various ways. It remains to be seen whether this strategic culture proves to be a strength or a hindrance in the long term.

Abbreviations

CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSFP	Common Security and Defence Policy
EC	European Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEC	European Economic Community
EPC	European Political Cooperation
EU	European Union
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
HR	High Representative
HR/VP	High Representative/Vice-President
IR	International Relations
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
OCA	Operational Code Analysis
QMV	Qualified majority voting
SEA	Single European Act
US	United States of America
VICS	Verbs In Context System

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Formulae of the VICS Indices (Schafer & Walker 2006c)

P-1 The Nature of the Political Universe: Friendly, Mixed, Hostile

The formula for the P-1 index is the percentage of positive utterances about others minus the percentage of negative utterances about others. The index varies between -1 and +1.

P-2 Prospects for Realising Fundamental Values: Optimism versus Pessimism

To calculate this index, each verb is weighted according to the intensity value of its coding category (-3 to +3). The formula for the P-2 index is the mean intensity of utterances about others divided by three. The index varies between -1 and +1.

P-3 Predictability of the Political Universe: Low to High

The formula for the P-3 index is one minus the Index of Qualitative Variation (IQV; see Watson & McGaw 1980, 88) of other utterances. The index varies between 0 and 1.

P-4 Control Over Historical Development: Low to High

The formula for the P-4 index is the number of self utterances divided by the sum of self utterances plus other utterances. The index varies between 0 and 1.

P-5 Role of Chance: Low to High

The formula for the P-5 index is one minus the product of the P-3 index times the P-4 index. The index varies between 0 and 1.

I-1 Direction of Strategy: Cooperative, Mixed, Conflictual

The formula for the I-1 index is the percentage of cooperative (+) utterances made when talking about self minus the percentage of conflictual (-) utterances regarding self. The index varies between -1 and +1.

I-2 Intensity of Tactics

To calculate this index, each verb is weighted according to the intensity value of its coding category (-3 to +3). The formula for the I-2 index is the mean intensity of utterances made when talking about self divided by three. The index varies between -1 and +1.

I-3 Risk Orientation: Averse to Acceptant

The formula for the I-3 index is one minus the IQV (see Watson & McGaw 1980, 88). The index varies between 0 and 1.

I-4 Importance of Timing of Actions: Low to High Flexibility

The first index (I-4a) investigates the diversity of the subject's choices in term of cooperation and conflict actions. The second index (I-4b) measures the diversity of the subject's actions in terms of the distribution of words and deeds.

The formula for the I-4a index is one minus the absolute value of [the percentage of cooperative self utterances minus the percentage of conflictual self utterances]. The index varies between 0 and 1.

The formula for the I-4b index is one minus the absolute value of [the percentage of word self utterances minus the percentage of deed self utterances]. The index varies between 0 and 1.

I-5 Utility of Means: Low to High

Six different indices are created, each corresponding to one of the six verb categories found in VICS. These indices vary between 0 and 1. The formulae for these indices are:

I-5 Punish: The sum of all self utterances coded as 'Punish' divided by the sum of all self utterances.

I-5 Threaten: The sum of all self utterances coded as 'Threaten' divided by the sum of all self utterances.

I-5 Oppose: The sum of all self utterances coded as 'Oppose' divided by the sum of all self utterances.

I-5 Promise: The sum of all self utterances coded as 'Promise' divided by the sum of all self utterances.

I-5 Reward: The sum of all self utterances coded as 'Reward' divided by the sum of all self utterances.

Appendix 2. Overall VICS Scores of the High Representatives (calculated from all speeches)

Index	Solana	Ashton	Mogherini	(scale)
P-1 The Nature of the Political Universe	+0.14	-0.09	+0.06	Friendly, Mixed, Hostile (-1.00 – +1.00)
P-2 Prospects for Realizing Fundamental Values	-0.06	-0.25	-0.10	Optimism vs Pessimism (-1.00 – +1.00)
P-3 Predictability of the Political Universe	0.12	0.16	0.11	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
P-4 Control over Historical Development	0.72	0.76	0.76	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
P-5 Role of Chance	0.91	0.88	0.92	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-1 Direction of Strategy	+0.58	+0.52	+0.51	Cooperative, Mixed, Conflictual (-1.00 – +1.00)
I-2 Intensity of Tactics	+0.30	+0.25	+0.26	Cooperative, Mixed, Conflictual (-1.00 – +1.00)
I-3 Risk Orientation	0.23	0.24	0.22	Averse to Acceptant (0.00 – 1.00)
I-4 Importance of Timing of Actions				
I-4a Diversity of Choices: cooperation vs conflict	0.42	0.48	0.49	Low to High Flexibility (0.00 – 1.00)
I-4b Diversity of Choices: words vs deeds	0.24	0.26	0.34	Low to High Flexibility (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 Utility of Means				
I-5 Appeal/Support	0.54	0.56	0.54	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 Promise	0.13	0.10	0.08	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 Reward	0.11	0.10	0.14	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)

I-5 Oppose	0.19	0.19	0.19	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 Threaten	0.02	0.02	0.02	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)
I-5 Punish	0.01	0.03	0.03	Low to High (0.00 – 1.00)

Appendix 3. Yearly VICS Scores of the High Representatives

Year	I-1	I-2	I-3
Ashton			
2009	0.76	0.52	0.16
2010	0.69	0.33	0.29
2011	0.43	0.19	0.23
2012	0.45	0.21	0.25
2013	0.62	0.31	0.27
2014	0.63	0.30	0.28
Mogherini			
2015	0.66	0.29	0.36
2016	0.73	0.28	0.57
2017	0.56	0.33	0.20
2018	0.45	0.23	0.21

Year	I-4a	I-4b
Ashton		
2009	0.24	0.62
2010	0.31	0.21
2011	0.57	0.25
2012	0.55	0.29
2013	0.38	0.25
2014	0.37	0.19
Mogherini		
2015	0.34	0.28
2016	0.27	0.12
2017	0.44	0.45
2018	0.55	0.32

Year	I-5 support	I-5 promise	I-5 reward
Ashton			
2009	0.40	0.17	0.31
2010	0.60	0.15	0.10
2011	0.54	0.09	0.08
2012	0.55	0.07	0.10
2013	0.58	0.11	0.12
2014	0.59	0.15	0.08
Mogherini			
2015	0.66	0.07	0.10
2016	0.79	0.01	0.06
2017	0.50	0.08	0.20
2018	0.52	0.08	0.13

Year	I-5 oppose	I-5 threaten	I-5 punish
Ashton			
2009	0.12	0.00	0.00
2010	0.13	0.02	0.01
2011	0.22	0.02	0.04
2012	0.22	0.01	0.04
2013	0.17	0.01	0.01
2014	0.17	0.00	0.01
Mogherini			
2015	0.14	0.00	0.03
2016	0.12	0.01	0.00
2017	0.18	0.01	0.03
2018	0.21	0.03	0.03

Year	P-1	P-2	P-3
Ashton			
2009	-0.20	-0.40	0.33
2010	0.15	-0.04	0.15
2011	-0.15	-0.29	0.17
2012	-0.20	-0.32	0.17
2013	-0.05	-0.24	0.17
2014	0.14	-0.03	0.12
Mogherini			
2015	1.00	0.39	0.67
2016	-0.19	-0.32	0.19
2017	0.15	0.04	0.04
2018	0.04	-0.13	0.13

Year	P-4	P-5
Ashton		
2009	0.89	0.71
2010	0.77	0.88
2011	0.77	0.87
2012	0.74	0.87
2013	0.73	0.87
2014	0.78	0.90
Mogherini		
2015	0.83	0.45
2016	0.71	0.86
2017	0.79	0.97
2018	0.75	0.90

Appendix 4. Qualitative Content Analysis Code-tree

P-1 Nature of political universe

Conflictual action of others

- Action against EU
- Action against others
- Action against own citizens

Others described as conflictual

- Others resisting EU
- Others challenging international institutions
- Others described as hostile

Cooperative action of others

- Others work cooperatively with EU
- Others work cooperatively with others
- Others promise cooperation
- Others act against third parties with EU

Others described as cooperative

- Others appreciate EU

Others cooperative, but also problematic

Political Universe described

P-2 Prospect for realising fundamental values

Causes for optimism

- Goals satisfied
- Others share EU's goals or values

Optimistic comment

Causes for pessimism

- Challenges and threats described
- Goals unsatisfied
- Inability of international community
- Others don't share EU's goals or values

Pessimistic comment

Miscellaneous

- Need to develop abilities further
- Prospects not easy, but possible

P-3 Predictability of political future

Predictability of political universe

- World is predictable
- World is unpredictable

Predictability of other actors

Others are predictable
Others are unpredictable

Predictability of Self

EU is predictable
EU fails to be predictable

Miscellaneous

Predictability of the EU's own future

P-4 Control over historical development

EU controls

EU as leader
EU determines its relations to others
EU has important role
EU influences events
EU is active participant

EU controls weakly

EU needs to develop in order to control
EU seeks control

Others control

Others as leaders
Others determine their relations to EU
Others influence events

Others control weakly

EU needs cooperation with others for control
EU responds to events
Others control, EU can help
Others control, EU can influence them

Miscellaneous

P-5 Role of chance

Actors can control events

Events control political environment

Development needed for control

I-1 Direction of Strategy

Cooperative action taken

Direct cooperation done
Multilateral cooperation done

Cooperative action should be taken

Direct cooperation sought

Multilateral cooperation sought

General cooperative stance

Engaging others

Engagement through dialogue

Others included in EU's approach

Increasing of stability or peace

Helping others as means of increasing EU security

Security of EU through stability of region

Stability of the world as a goal

Conflictual action taken

Conflictual action should be taken

Mix of cooperation and conflict

I-2 Ways of Pursuing Goals

Cooperative means seen effective

Conflictual action is not useful

Cooperation as effective means

Cooperation needed

Building networks effective

Deals effective

Multilateralism and/or global governance as effective means

Regional cooperation and/or integration as effective means

Giving support effective

Conflictual means seen effective

Condemning and/or demanding

Sanctions as a way of opening dialogue

Sanctions as a way of forcing structural change

Use of force needed

Mixing means

Multiple means

Opposing regime while supporting society

Promises including threats

Sanctions combined with support

Both military and civilian approaches needed

Use of authority effective

Positive use of authority effective

Negative use of authority effective

Non-categorised use of authority effective

Structural foreign policy

Demand that other changes

Structural changes needed for progress
Supporting structural change
Engaging in order to change other
Integration negotiations as means of structural foreign policy

Miscellaneous

Flexibility effective
Need to act not just make statement
Strategic overarching approach

I-3 Calculation of Risks

Ways of controlling risks

Through adaptability
Through conditionality
Through increasing stability
Through testing
Through value-based strategy
Through action
Through cooperation

Need for controlling risks emphasised

Taking risks is necessary

Miscellaneous

I-4 Timing of Actions

Long-term approach

Short-term approach

Mixed approach

Miscellaneous

I-5 Utility of Means

Negative authority

Negative authority
Demand
Isolation

Threat

Threat
Threat of sanctions
Threat of withholding reward or privilege

Punish

Punish
Punish through cancelling of meeting or communication

Punish through sanctions

Punish through withholding assistance or integration

Positive authority

Positive authority

Appreciation

Proclamation of shared goals or values

Authority used to get other to oppose third party

Promise

Promise

Promise of symbolic support

Promise of market access or mobility

Promise of reward

Promise of reward conditionally

Promise of reward for structural development

Reward

Reward

Cooperation done

Cooperation compact done

Support of military building

Support as economic reward

Support as enabling humanitarian aid

Support as opening of trade or movement

Support through structural diplomacy

Support to civil society or NGOs

Pressure

Pressure

Need for reforms stated

Pressure through mentioning candidate status

Pushing others to make progress in negotiations

Mixing of means

Comprehensive approach

Mixing dialogue with pressure

Mixing promises with pressure

Mixing support of opposition with opposing of regime

Mixing support of opposition with sanctions of regime

Mixing support of opposition with pressure

Miscellaneous: Diplomacy and communication (including neutral authority)

Engaging through meetings

Facilitating dialogue

Neutral raising of issues to others

Talking with the international community

Miscellaneous: Cooperative action

Cooperative working together

Enabling cooperation through platforms

Engaging through making agreements

Exchange of information

Proposing cooperation

Military assets

CSDP Missions

Fighting against

Using force to support others

Using military assets

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SolanaSpeech041013

Date: 13.10.2004 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Summary of the intervention by Dr Javier Solana, High Representative of the European Union for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, before the plenary session of the European Parliament, on the Middle East and on Georgia, S0274/04

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech060405

Date: 5.4.2006 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by Javier Solana EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Middle East Peace Process, Appearance before the European Parliament, S101/06

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech060502

Date: 2.5.2006 Forum: European Parliament, Special Committee

Introductory remarks by Javier Solana EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, European Parliament Committee on the alleged use of European countries by the CIA for the transportation and illegal detention of prisoners, S119/06

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech060530

Date: 30.5.2006 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee

Summary of address by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, to the EP Foreign affairs Committee and Chairs of Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of National Parliaments, S141/06

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech061004b

Date: 4.10.2006 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee

Summary of address by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, to the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee, S278/06

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech061011

Date: 11.10.2006 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Summary of the remarks by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, before the plenary of the European Parliament concerning recent events in North Korea, S284/06

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech070329

Date: 29.3.2007 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Summary of the speech by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and

Security Policy to the plenary of the European Parliament on the current international situation and the role of the EU, S114/07

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech070507

Date: 7.5.2007

Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee

Summary of remarks by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy to the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee and representatives of Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of the national parliaments of the EU Members States, S140/07

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech071003

Date: 3.10.2007

Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee

Edited transcript of address by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, to the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, S287/07

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech080130

Date: 30.1.2008

Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Statement to the European Parliament on Iran by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, S036/08

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech080408

Date: 8.4.2008

Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Brussels

Address by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament, S129/08

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech080604

Date: 4.6.2008

Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Address to the European Parliament on EU Foreign, Security and Defence Policy by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, S194/08

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech080910

Date: 10.9.2008

Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee Brussels

Address by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament, S297/08

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech081105

Date: 5.11.2008

Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Brussels

Summary of remarks by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, to the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee and the Chairs of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of the National Parliaments, S360/08

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech090218

Date: 18.2.2009 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, addresses the European Parliament on the EU common, security and defence policy, S045/09

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

SolanaSpeech090218b

Date: 18.2.2009 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, addresses the European Parliament on the Middle East, S044/09

Access Date: [NonElectronic]

Source: Council of the European Union General Secretariat, Records Management and Central Archives Unit

ASHTON

AshtonStatement091202

Date: 2.12.2009 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Brussels
Written statement, based on remarks to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament (SPEECH/09/567)

Access Date: 18.12.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech091215

Date: 15.12.2009 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement at the European Parliament debate on the Middle East Peace Process (SPEECH/09/584)

Access Date: 18.12.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech091216

Date: 16.12.2009 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement at the European Parliament debate on the new EU action plan for Afghanistan and Pakistan

Access Date: 18.12.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100119

Date: 19.1.2010 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement on the situation in Haiti (SPEECH/10/3)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100119b

Date: 19.1.2010 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement on Iran (SPEECH/10/04)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100119c

Date: 19.1.2010 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement on Iraq (SPEECH/10/5)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100119d

Date: 19.1.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement on Yemen (SPEECH/10/6)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100310

Date: 10.3.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Joint Debate on Foreign and Security Policy (SPEECH/10/82)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100420

Date: 20.4.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech to the European Parliament on the situation in Kyrgyzstan (SPEECH/10/171)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100616

Date: 16.6.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech to the European Parliament on the situation in Gaza (SPEECH/10/315)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100616b

Date: 16.6.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech to the European Parliament on human rights (SPEECH/10/317)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech100707

Date: 7.7.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by High Representative Catherine Ashton to the European Parliament on the creation of the European External Action Service (A 127/10)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark101027

Date: 27.10.2010

Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Bruxelles

Remarks by HR/VP Catherine Ashton at the AFET Committee (SPEECH/10/603)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech101215b

Date: 15.12.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement on Ivory Coast (SPEECH/10/758)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech101215c

Date: 15.12.2010

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

NATO Lisbon Summit (SPEECH/10/759)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark110119

Date: 19.1.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Remarks at the Official Opening of the EU Delegation to the Council of Europe (SPEECH/11/31)

Access Date: 11.12.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)
 Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110119

Date: 19.1.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Situation of Christians in the context of religious freedom (SPEECH/11/32)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110119b

Date: 19.1.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 The Sahel region (SPEECH/11/33)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110119c

Date: 19.1.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Remarks on Belarus (SPEECH/11/34)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110202

Date: 2.2.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels
 Remarks on Egypt and Tunisia (SPEECH/11/66)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110202b

Date: 2.2.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels
 Remarks on Sudan (SPEECH/11/67)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110309

Date: 9.3.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech on the situation in the Southern Neighbourhood and Libya (SPEECH/11/159)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110309b

Date: 9.3.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 EU's approach to Iran (SPEECH/11/160)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110309c

Date: 9.3.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Remarks on UN Human Rights Council (SPEECH/11/161)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110309d

Date: 9.3.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Remarks on the Middle East peace process (SPEECH/11/162)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark110322

Date: 22.3.2011 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Bruxelles
 Remarks at the AFET Committee (SPEECH/11/202)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110511

Date: 11.5.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech of High Representative Catherine Ashton on main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence policy (A 179/11)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110606

Date: 6.6.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech on North Africa and the Arab world (SPEECH/11/504)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110606b

Date: 6.6.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech on Nagorny Karabakh (SPEECH/11/505)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110606c

Date: 6.6.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech on de Keyser report on democracy (SPEECH/11/506)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110606d

Date: 6.6.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech on Preparations for the Russian State Duma elections (SPEECH/11/507)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110927

Date: 27.9.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Address to the European Parliament on the United Nations General Assembly, the Middle East Peace Process and the Arab spring (SPEECH/11/608)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonStatement110927

Date: 27.9.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement ahead of the Eastern Partnership Summit (SPEECH/11/609)

Access Date: 11.12.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech110928

Date: 28.9.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Statement by HR/VP Catherine Ashton to the European Parliament on 'Sexual orientation and gender identity at the United Nations Human Rights Council' (A 387/11)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech111012

Date: 12.10.2011

Forum: European Parliament, Bruxelles

Statement on the situation in Egypt, Syria, Yeamen and Bahrain (SPEECH/11/661)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech111012b

Date: 12.10.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Bruxelles
 Speech on the situation in Ukraine (SPEECH/11/662)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark111213

Date: 13.12.2011 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Strasbourg
 Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the AFET Committee in European Parliament in Strasbourg, 12.December 2011 (A 511/11)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech111213

Date: 13.12.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the Common Security and Defence Policy in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, 13 December 2011 (A 512/11)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech111213b

Date: 13.12.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech on the Annual Human Rights Report (SPEECH/11/885)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech111213c

Date: 13.12.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech on Syria (SPEECH/11/886)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech111213d

Date: 13.12.2011 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech of High Representative Catherine Ashton on the EU-Russia Summit (A 513/11)
 Access Date: 11.12.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)
 Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120201

Date: 1.2.2012 Forum: European Parliament, Bruxelles
 Speech on EU foreign policy towards the BRICS and other emerging powers (SPEECH/12/56)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120201b

Date: 1.2.2012 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels
 Speech of High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in Russia (A 36/12)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120201c

Date: 1.2.2012 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels
 Speech of High Representative Catherine Ashton on Iran and its nuclear programme (A 36/12)
 Access Date: 19.6.2014
 Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120201d

Date: 1.2.2012 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels
 Speech of High Representative Catherine Ashton on the EU's policy on restrictive measures (A 39/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark120417

Date: 17.4.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton in the European Parliament on Argentina's decision to expropriate the majority stake held by Repsol in YPF (A 177/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120417

Date: 17.4.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech on the report on Human rights in the world and the Eu's policy on the matter (SPEECH/12/270)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120612

Date: 12.6.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Speech by HR Catherine Ashton on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (A 264/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120612b

Date: 12.6.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech on the latest developments in the Middle East & Syria (A 268/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120612c

Date: 12.6.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by High Representative Catherine Ashton in the European Parliament on a new strategy for Afghanistan, 12 June 2012, Strasbourg (A 269/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120612d

Date: 12.6.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by High Representative Catherine Ashton in the European Parliament on the situation in Tibet, 12 June 2012, Strasbourg (A 270/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonStatement120612

Date: 12.6.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement on EU annual report on human rights and democracy (A 266/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonStatement120612c

Date: 12.6.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement on the adoption of the UN resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty (A267/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech120911

Date: 11.9.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by High Representative Catherine Ashton in the European Parliament on the Brok Report on the Annual Report on CFSP (A 402/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonStatement120911

Date: 11.9.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton in the European Parliament on the political use of justice in Russia (A 403/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonStatement120911b

Date: 11.9.2012

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton in the European Parliament on the situation in Syria (A 404/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark121107

Date: 7.11.2012

Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Brussels

Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton in Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), Brussels, 7 November 2012 (A 495/12)

Access Date: 19.6.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonStatement130115

Date: 15.1.2013

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the Situation in Mali, European Parliament (A 14/13)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark130313

Date: 13.3.2013

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the current situation in Egypt (A 132/13)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark130313b

Date: 13.3.2013

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on nuclear threats and human rights in North Korea (A 133/13)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark130313c

Date: 13.3.2013

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in Syria (A 134/13)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark130612

Date: 12.6.2013

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the EU annual report on human rights (A 313/13)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark130612c

Date: 12.6.2013

Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the latest developments in Turkey, European Parliament, Strasbourg (A 310/13)

Access Date: 11.9.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark130627

Date: 27.6.2013 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Brussels
Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton at the AFET Committee, European Parliament (A 356/13)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech130911

Date: 11.9.2013 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Speech by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton to the European Parliament on the situation in Syria (130911/03)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech130911b

Date: 11.9.2013 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Speech by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton to the European Parliament on the situation in Egypt (130911/04)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonSpeech131023

Date: 23.10.2013 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the latest developments in the common foreign, security, and defence policy (131023/01)

Access Date: 11.9.2014

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/2013/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark131218

Date: 1.12.2013 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Brussels
Opening Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton at the meeting of AFET Committee, European Parliament (131218/02)

Access Date: 11.9.2019 (Archived on 22.1.2015)

Source: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/ashton/news/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark140211

Date: 11.2.2014 Forum: European Parliament, AFET Committee, Brussels
Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton at the AFET Committee, European Parliament Brussels, 11 February 2014 (140211/02)

Access Date: 9.9.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

AshtonRemark140403

Date: 3.4.2014 Forum: European Parliament, Brussels

Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton at the European Parliament in the debate on foreign and defence policy (140403/3)

Access Date: 9.9.2014

Source: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ashton/speeches/index_en.htm

MOGHERINI

MogheriniSpeech150909

Date: 9.9.2015 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini on Migration

Access Date: 11.9.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark151028

Date: 28.10.2015 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Opening Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the Situation in Israel and Palestine at the European Parliament plenary session
Access Date: 20.2.2018
Source: <http://eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark161122

Date: 22.11.2016 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Remarks by F. Mogherini on EU strategic communication to counteract anti-EU propaganda by third parties
Access Date: 10.3.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark161122c

Date: 22.11.2016 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on EU-Turkey relations at the plenary session of the European Parliament
Access Date: 10.3.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark161122d

Date: 22.11.2016 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the situation in Syria at the plenary session of the European Parliament
Access Date: 10.3.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark161123

Date: 23.11.2016 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Remarks by HRVP Mogherini on the situation in the West Bank, including settlements at the plenary session of the European Parliament
Access Date: 10.3.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech161213

Date: 13.12.2016 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament on the Implementation of the CFSP
Access Date: 3.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech161213b

Date: 13.12.2016 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the Annual report on human rights and democracy in the world in 2015
Access Date: 3.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark170201b

Date: 1.2.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Bruxelles
Opening remarks by Federica Mogherini at the debate on the travel restrictions following the US President's Executive Orders, at the European Parliament Mini-Plenary Session
Access Date: 6.4.2018
Source: <https://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark170516

Date: 16.5.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the EU Strategy on Syria during the plenary session of the European Parliament
Access Date: 6.4.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170704

Date: 4.7.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the European Defence Plan and the Future of Europe
Access Date: 4.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170704b

Date: 4.7.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by Federica Mogherini on the PREDA report - Addressing human rights violations in the context of war crimes, and crimes against humanity, including genocide
Access Date: 4.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170912

Date: 12.9.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Bruxelles
Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the recent developments in migration
Access Date: 4.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170912b

Date: 12.9.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Access Date: 4.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170914

Date: 14.9.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Bruxelles
Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament urgency debate on the situation in Laos
Access Date: 4.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170914b

Date: 14.9.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament urgent debate on Myanmar, in particular the situation of Rohingyas
Access Date: 4.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170914c

Date: 14.9.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament urgent debate on Cambodia, notably the case of Kem Sokha
Access Date: 4.2.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech170915

Date: 15.9.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Bruxelles
Speech by High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament

urgency debate on Gabon
 Access Date: 4.2.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech171212

Date: 12.12.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA)
 Access Date: 4.2.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech171212b

Date: 12.12.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on European Foreign Security and Defence Policy
 Access Date: 4.2.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech171212c

Date: 12.12.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech by Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation of the Rohingya people
 Access Date: 4.2.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech171212d

Date: 12.12.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on US President Trump's announcement to recognise Jerusalem as capital of Israel
 Access Date: 4.2.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech171213c

Date: 13.12.2017 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech by Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation of migrants in Libya
 Access Date: 4.2.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180206

Date: 6.2.2018 Forum: European Parliament
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament Plenary Session on the Western Balkan Strategy
 Access Date: 29.11.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180207

Date: 7.2.2018 Forum: European Parliament
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament Plenary Session on the Situation of UNRWA
 Access Date: 29.11.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180207b

Date: 7.2.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament Plenary Session on the human rights situation in Turkey and the situation in Afrin, Syria
 Access Date: 29.11.2018
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180208

Date: 8.2.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation in Zimbabwe
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180208b

Date: 8.2.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation in Venezuela
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180313

Date: 13.3.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the Progress on the UN Global Compact for safe, regular and orderly migration and the UN Global Compact on refugees
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180313b

Date: 13.3.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation in Syria
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180313d

Date: 13.3.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on peace prospects for the Korean Peninsula in the light of recent developments
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180314

Date: 14.3.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by High representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the new agenda for EU-Central Asia relations
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180314b

Date: 14.3.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the EU Perspectives for the first EU-Cuba Joint Council meeting
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180417

Date: 17.4.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by HR/VP Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation in Syria
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180502

Date: 2.5.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament

plenary session on Presidential elections in Venezuela (closing remarks)

Access Date: 29.11.2018

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180502b

Date: 2.5.2018 Forum: European Parliament

Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on Presidential elections in Venezuela

Access Date: 29.11.2018

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180529

Date: 29.5.2018 Forum: European Parliament

Speech by HR/VP Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on Libya

Access Date: 29.11.2018

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180612

Date: 12.6.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on EU-NATO relations at the European Parliament plenary session

Access Date: 29.11.2018

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180612b

Date: 12.6.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the conflict in Georgia

Access Date: 29.11.2018

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180612c

Date: 12.6.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg

Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the Iran nuclear agreement at the European Parliament plenary session

Access Date: 29.11.2018

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180703

Date: 3.7.2018 Forum: European Parliament

Speech by HR/VP Mogherini on EU-Armenia relations at the European Parliament

Access Date: 29.11.2018

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark180705

Date: 5.7.2018 Forum: European Parliament

Remarks by HR/VP Mogherini on breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Moldova at the European Parliament plenary session

Access Date: 30.1.2019

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniRemark180911

Date: 11.9.2018 Forum: European Parliament

Remarks by HR/VP Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on the threat of demolition of Khan al-Ahmar and other Bedouin villages

Access Date: 30.1.2019

Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180911

Date: 11.9.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by HR/VP Mogherini at the plenary session of the European parliament on the situation in Libya and the Mediterranean
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180911b

Date: 11.9.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by HR/VP Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on EU-US relations
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180911d

Date: 11.9.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by HR/VP Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on the state of the EU-China relations
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180913

Date: 13.9.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by HR/VP Mogherini on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law - the situation in Cambodia
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180913b

Date: 13.9.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by HR/VP Mogherini on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law - the situation in Myanmar
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech180913c

Date: 13.9.2018 Forum: European Parliament
Speech by HR/VP Mogherini on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law - the situation in Uganda
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181023

Date: 23.10.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini on the situation in Venezuela
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181023b

Date: 23.10.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini on the situation in the Sea of Azov
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181023c

Date: 23.10.2018 Forum: European Parliament, Strasbourg
Speech by HR/VP Federica Mogherini on the killing of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi
Access Date: 29.11.2018
Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181129b

Date: 29.11.2018 Forum: European Parliament
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on the preparation of the Marrakech Intergovernmental Conference of 10-11 December on the UN Global Compact for Migration
 Access Date: 21.1.2019
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181211

Date: 11.12.2018 Forum: European Parliament
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the reports on Common Foreign and Security Policy and on Common Security and Defence Policy
 Access Date: 21.1.2019
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181211b

Date: 11.12.2018 Forum: European Parliament
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament Plenary session on the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights on the case of Selahattin Demirtas
 Access Date: 21.1.2019
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181211c

Date: 11.12.2018 Forum: European Parliament
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on the Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2017 and the European Union's policy on the matter
 Access Date: 21.1.2019
 Source: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>

MogheriniSpeech181211d

Date: 11.12.2018 Forum: European Parliament
 Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on the state of play of the implementation of the Association Agreement with Ukraine
 Access Date: 21.1.2019
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