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**FEPS YOUNG
ACADEMICS
NETWORK**

**When the World is Out of Joint
A Progressive Critique of
European Foreign Policy**

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FEPS YOUNG ACADEMICS NETWORK

The Young Academics Network (YAN) was established in March 2009 by the Foundation of European Progressive Studies (FEPS) with the support of the Renner Institut to gather progressive PhD candidates and young PhD researchers, who are ready to use their academic experience in a debate about the Next Europe. The founding group was composed of awardees of the “Call for Paper” entitled “Next Europe, Next Left” – whose articles also help initiating the FEPS Scientific Magazine “Queries”. Quickly after, with the help of the FEPS member foundations, the group enlarged – presently incorporating around 40 outstanding and promising young academics.

FEPS YAN meets in the Viennese premises of Renner Institut, which offers great facilities for both reflections on the content and also on the process of building the network as such. Both elements constitute mutually enhancing factors, which due to innovative methods applied make this Network also a very unique project. Additionally, the groups work has been supervised by the Chair of the Next Left Research Programme, Dr. Alfred Gusenbauer – who at multiple occasions joined the sessions of the FEPS YAN, offering his feedback and guidance.

This paper is one of the results of the fifth cycle of FEPS YAN. Each of the meetings is an opportunity for the FEPS YAN to discuss the current state of their research, presenting their findings and questions both in the plenary, as also in the respective working groups. The added value of their work is the pan-European, innovative, interdisciplinary character – not to mention, that it is by principle that FEPS wishes to offer a prominent place to this generation of academics, seeing in it a potential to construct alternative that can attract young people to progressivism again. Though the process is very advanced already, the FEPS YAN remains a Network – and hence is ready to welcome new participants.

FEPS YAN plays also an important role within FEPS structure as a whole. The FEPS YAN members are asked to join different events (from large Conferences, such as FEPS “Call to Europe” or “Renaissance for Europe” and PES Convention to smaller High Level Seminars and Focus Group Meetings) and encouraged to provide inputs for publications (i.e. for FEPS Magazine: The Progressive Post). Enhanced participation of the FEPS YAN Members in the overall FEPS life and increase of its visibility remains one of the strategic goals of the network.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The migration crises, the continuous terrorist threat, the result of the British referendum to leave the European Union (EU) and, finally, the election of Trump as President of United States of America have led to the idea, shared publicly by EU policymakers and senior figures, that if the EU is to survive it must overcome its inner tensions, namely in terms of foreign policy and security.

In this context, this paper critically evaluates the values and practices that guide recent and current EU foreign policy. We do so in a twofold manner: on the one hand, we test to what extent EU external action can be seen as guided by a set of ethical principles broadly understood according to the framework of cosmopolitanism; on the other hand, we evaluate its balancing of conditionality and stabilisation. Our analysis suggests that the EU's Foreign Policy agenda is currently fragmented and responsive to short-term needs rather than strategic or guided by a clear set of values, which offers a clear opportunity for progressives to develop an alternative political vision – that is, a renewed values-based foreign policy driven by an internationalist cosmopolitan *Weltanschauung* – that will respond to the wake of recent global political turmoil posed by Brexit, the advent of Trump and the general spread of sovereignty-based movements and populisms.

Specifically, and firstly, we start by discussing our theoretical framework, which considers both the framework of cosmopolitanism on the one hand, and the nexus between democratisation and stabilisation on the other hand, taking into consideration constitutional patriotism as a possible method of coexistence of different cultures. Secondly, in light of this discussion, we analyse three EU Foreign Policy areas of action: a) the EU Global Strategy and External Action, especially on how it relates to the migration dossier and to the European Neighbourhood Policy; b) democracy promotion in third states and in global institutions; c) recent proposals for the integration of international cultural relations and cultural diplomacy in EU external relations. We conclude with a discussion of our findings and a set of policy recommendations.

Our analysis has a double goal: theoretical and political. While our theoretical discussion allows for a better understanding of the assumptions behind current foreign policy dynamics, the discussion of the political standpoint sheds light on the challenges faced by the European Union in trying to move towards a common action

in the field of foreign policy. On the basis of our institutional and political findings and the critical issues raised in the three case studies, we identify areas of political and geopolitical interest for EU external action and where further EU action is needed.

I. INTRODUCTION

*"The time is out of joint—O cursèd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let's go together."*

Hamlet, Act 1, scene 5

Terrorism, migration crisis, and their nexus with the spread of sovereignty-based narratives and populism, are at the center of the European Union's political agenda and will continue to be among the challenges that it faces in the upcoming years.

After the double terrorist attacks in Paris (January and November 2015) and the ones in Brussels, at the heart of the EU (March 2016) - and again in Nice (July 2016), Berlin, Stockholm (April 2017), Manchester (May 2017), London (June 2017) and Barcelona (August 2017) – the European public opinion was repeatedly chained into a debate on the destiny of Europe in light of radical Islam and on the answers to give (likely also through military operations) to stop the development of so-called ISIS. In addition, the migratory crises – which intensified in the summer-autumn of 2015 – were used by populist forces to gain political momentum by highlighting what they see as a link between such movements and the risk of preservation for our welfare systems and system of values. Such an anti-internationalist discourse has also been evident in the winning campaign of the Brexit referendum and, subsequently, has been legitimised by Theresa May's descriptions of individuals who see themselves as global citizens as being 'citizens of nowhere'.¹

Moreover, the election of Donald Trump as President of USA, under his "America First" slogan, has led to a crisis in Transatlantic relations: namely regarding the continued American support of NATO or the lack thereof, and the threat of withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement (COP21). As it is well-known, the Atlantic alliance has been key in

¹ "Theresa May's rejection of Enlightenment values", *The Guardian*, 9 October 2016.

European security since the post-Second World War and was only occasionally questioned until the fall of USSR, when the meaning of the alliance was strongly debated by (neo)realist, (neo)liberal and constructivist International Relations scholars². The crisis of the old world order, started with the end of the Cold War, opened discussions on the fundamental differences between the US and EU, culminating in the dichotomy “Mars versus Venus” that was coined by the neoconservative ideologue Robert Kagan³ during the Iraq War.

While the Obama administration (overcoming the unilateralist “Bush doctrine” with the idea of a shared global multilateralism) seemed to make possible a reconciliation of these transatlantic divisions, today, in the context of renewed fundamental geopolitical changes, EU policymakers must yet again reconsider the strategic principles that guide the Union’s external action. The acknowledgement of this urgency is evident in the recently intensified impetus behind the proposals and agreements regarding a European Common Defense, which demonstrate an acknowledgement of the limitations of the EU’s military capabilities and its dependence until now on American support.⁴ This is complicated by the fact that, at the same time, the shared sovereignty of EU member states in terms of foreign policy often leads to slow and often contradictory decision-making processes, of foreign policy often

² See for instance: Mearsheimer, J. (1990) “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War”; Wendt, A. (1992) “Anarchy is what States Make of It: the Social Construction of Power Politics”; Kupchan, C. A., (1996) “Reviving the West : For an Atlantic Union”; Walt, Stephen M. (1998/1999). “The Ties That Fray: Why Europe and America are Drifting Apart”; Nye, J. S. (2000) “The US and Europe : continental drift?”.

³ Kagan R. (2003) *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*. The book, issued at the start of the year – extension of the article “Power and Weakness”, *Policy Review*, 113, June-July 2002, pp. 3-28 - can be seen as an ideological preparation of the Iraq war, begun in March 2003.

⁴ A *European Defence Fund* was launched by the Commission in a Communication on the *European Defence Action Plan* (European Commission (2016), “European Defence Action Plan”, 30 November); a *Military Planning and Conduct Capability* (MPCC) was decided by the Council (2017) , “Conclusions on progress in implementing the EU Global Strategy in the area of Security and Defence”, 6 March; a *Permanent Structured Cooperation* (PESCO) in the area of security and defence -already envisaged by the Lisbon Treaty (art. 42(6) and 46)- was started with a joint declaration of 23 Member States to the High Representative and to the Council (See: Council (2017²), “Conclusions on security and defence in the context of the EU Global Strategy”, 13 November; and the connected “Notification on Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)”). See also: European Commission (2017b) “Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence”, 7 June.

leads to slow and even contradictory decision-making processes, producing a gap between expectations and capability.⁵

How can progressive forces deal with this context in a way that overcomes the populist arguments regarding the EU as both non-democratic and bureaucratic on the one hand, and the dangerous rhetoric of the war on terror (with its anti-Muslim, xenophobic, European-centric undertones) on the other hand? In our view, this requires a critical evaluation of the principles and the practices that guide current EU foreign policy. To do so we must consider the revised European Neighbourhood Policy announced in November 2015⁶, the EU Global Strategy issued by High Representative Federica Mogherini in June 2016⁷ and the white paper on the future of Europe release by the Commission in March 2017, among other documents. This will allow us to critically analyse the principles guiding the newest EU external action and assess the strengths and weaknesses of this new instrument.

We will begin by summarising the key normative and institutional discussions in this context before developing four empirical case studies. This will make evident both the centrality and the limitations of policy incrementalism, which has been central in EU policy processes especially in the last 20 years, to achieve effective policy action in foreign and security policy. Rather, we will argue that a more strategic formulation of the common European foreign action would add coherence to its different programmes.

II. COSMOPOLITANISM, NORMATIVE POWER AND EU FOREIGN POLICY: A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS?

From a theoretical point of view, we must begin by addressing a fundamental question: to what extent can the external action of the EU be seen as an empirical operationalisation of cosmopolitanism, whose values seem to underline the European project from its start? Answering this question will help us to develop a progressive critical consideration of European Foreign Policy and the effectiveness of its normative pretension.

⁵ A classic analysis of this gap is Hill, C. (1993) "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role": "Not just in terms of substantive terms of the *ability to take decisions and hold them* – the EC is still far from being able to fulfil the hopes of those who want to see it in great power terms" (p. 318). This statement could still be applied to EU today.

⁶ European Commission and High Representative (2015) "Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy", 18 November.

⁷ EEAS (2016b) "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy", June.

The concept of *cosmopolitanism*, as it is well known, has roots in ancient Stoic philosophy with previous echoes in Diogenes of Sinope, the Cynic⁸ and even before in Socrates⁹. Few years after the French Revolution, Immanuel Kant developed the idea, connecting the quest for a *perpetual peace* with a possible *ius cosmopolitanicum* and an universal right of hospitality¹⁰. More recently, it has been taken up by several leading intellectuals, including Ulrich Beck¹¹, Seyla Benhabib¹², Jacques Derrida¹³, Mary Kaldor¹⁴, Martha Nussbaum¹⁵ who, in different ways, investigate it as a form of universal belonging that does not assume the nation state as the central bearer of rights and obligations¹⁶ and arriving, in some cases, to suggest a path towards a *cosmopolitan democracy*¹⁷. Yet the key reference in contemporary discussions regarding the possibility of a cosmopolitan order is Jürgen Habermas, whose own position vis-à-vis cosmopolitanism has shifted from a more optimistic view imagining a global order that extended the model of the nation state¹⁸ to more recent essays on the

⁸ “Asked where he came from, he said, ‘I am a citizen of the world’ (*cosmopolites*)”, tells Diogenes Laërtius in the chapter dedicated to Diogenes the Cynic (Diogenes Laërtius (1925) *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, vol. II, p. 63).

⁹ The stoic Epictetus, talking about Socrates, suggested to act as him: “Never in reply to the question, to what country you belong, say that you are an Athenian or a Corinthian, but that you are a citizen of the world (*kósmios*)” (*Discourses of Epictetus* (1904), p. 27).

¹⁰ The *ius cosmopolitanicum* is defined as “a constitution formed in accordance with the rights of world citizenship; in as far as both individuals and states, standing in an external relation of mutual reaction, may be regarded as citizens of one world-state.” (Immanuel Kant (1795) *Perpetual Peace. A Philosophical Essay*, p. 119); “THIRD DEFINITIVE ARTICLE OF PERPETUAL PEACE - The rights of men, as citizens of the world, shall be limited to the conditions of universal hospitality” (ibidem, p. 137).

¹¹ Beck, U. (2000) “The Cosmopolitan perspective: sociology of the second age of modernity” and (2003) “Toward a New Critical Theory with a Cosmopolitan Intent”.

¹² Benhabib S. (2004) *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens* and (2006) *Another Cosmopolitanism: Hospitality, Sovereignty, and Democratic Iterations*.

¹³ Jacques Derrida (2001) *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*.

¹⁴ Kaldor, M. (1996) “A Cosmopolitan Response to New Wars”; Kaldor, M. (2003) *Global civil society: an answer to war*.

¹⁵ Nussbaum, M. (1994) *Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism*; (2000) *Women and Human Development: the Capabilities Approach*; (2006) *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*.

¹⁶ Cosmopolitan is “who puts right before country, and universal reason before the symbols of national belonging” (Nussbaum, M. (1994) *Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism*, p. 5)

¹⁷ Archibugi, D. and D. Held (eds.) (1995) *Cosmopolitan Democracy. An Agenda for a New World Order* (with contributions of N.Bobbio, L. Bonanate and M. Kaldor). Held and Archibugi are also among the signatories of a “Global Democracy Manifesto” -launched in June 2012 at the London School of Economics- which claims for an overall reform of the International Institutions, signed by a transnational group of leading global intellectuals (J.Attali, Z.Bauman, R.Esposito, U.Beck, N.Chomsky, B. Boutros-Ghali, M.Kaldor, T.Negri, S.Sassen, F.Savater, R.Saviano, V.Shiva, A.Touraine and many others: <https://globaldemocracymanifesto.wordpress.com>)

¹⁸ Habermas, J. (1998) *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*.

European Union, in which he problematizes the possibility of deliberative democracy on a transnational level¹⁹. However, Habermas maintains the perspective of a cosmopolitan order to be built through a constitutionalization of international law, in which he sees the European project as the first step.²⁰

We must also acknowledge some of the many critics of cosmopolitanism, namely sociologist Craig Calhoun, who argued that cosmopolitan theories are rationalistic, individualistic and imagined in a top-down manner, i.e. they do not pay enough attention to the role of social ties.²¹ However, despite these criticisms, we believe that the cosmopolitan framework is a relevant model to evaluate the foreign and security policy of the EU due to its favouring of supranationality over the national order and to the centrality of the normative approach in its political project, as we will discuss below.

Before doing so, it is important to briefly evaluate the applicability of this concept to the historical construction and model of the European Union. Despite the challenges mentioned in the introduction, some scholars converge in describing the European Union as having not just as a *civilian*²² or an *ethical power*²³ but also a *normative power*. The latter is characterized by a “pooling of sovereignty” and by the Union’s ambition to spread its fundamental values, that is, respect for human dignity and human rights, freedom, democracy, rule of law and equality.²⁴ To use a classical reference, Minerva/Athena was the

¹⁹ Habermas, J. (2008) *Europe: The Faltering Project*.

²⁰ “I would like to develop a convincing new narrative from the perspective of a constitutionalization of international law that follows Kant in pointing far beyond the *status quo* to a future cosmopolitan rule of law: the European Union can be understood as an important step on the path towards a politically constituted world society.” (Habermas, J. (2012) “The Crisis of the European Union in the Light of a Constitutionalization of International Law”, p. 336); “the international community of states must develop into a cosmopolitan community of states and world citizens” (Habermas, J. (2012²), *The Crisis of the European Union. A Response*, p. xi) and EU could potentially transform itself into this “cosmopolitan community” to be understood as a “constitution-building cooperation between citizens and states” (ibidem, p. 58).

²¹ Calhoun, C. (2003) “‘Belonging’ in the Cosmopolitan Imaginary”. A classic critique of cosmopolitanism conceived as abstract universalism is also contained in Gramsci’s *Prison Notebooks*.

²² The concept of “civilian power” was introduced by François Duchêne, arguing, in the bipolarized context of the Cold War, the impossibility for Europe to be a major military power (Duchêne, F. (1972) “Europe’s Role in World Peace”). This position was criticized by Hedley Bull, who argued the need for ‘Europe’ to develop a military capability as a condition to be taken as a serious actor in International Relations, however considering supranationalism not working in foreign policy (Bull, H. (1982) “Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”).

²³ Aggestam, L. (2008) “Introduction: ethical power Europe?”.

²⁴ Manners, I. (2002) “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”. EU’s Normative Power, diffused in the global arena, has for Manners its roots in five ‘core norms’ which already inspired the *acquis communautaire* : peace, liberty, democracy, human rights and rule of law – plus four ‘minor

goddess of wisdom and civilization – spread through law, justice and the arts. Likewise, and today, the Minervian actors on the world stage are those who choose “to commit significant resources and powers (that is, not just discourse) to the advancement of global institutions and global governance”²⁵. Among them, *princeps inter pares*, the European Union (mainly with Canada and Japan) constitutes the Minervian pole of “a group of states and non-state actors that support the creation of credible institutions, possibly backed by a limited but effective use of economic resources of force”²⁶. In this perspective, the European Union can be seen as an actor whose internal principles also shape its external policies. That is, in this view, the Union’s commitment to improving *peace, prosperity* and *progress* around the world corresponds to an historical quest: after a first period of *peace building* (1950-1969), followed from the priority of *market building* (1984-1992), in the post-cold world Europe can now increase its focus on “*progressive global institution building*”²⁷.

In this historical process, the European Union emerges as both in a strong relation with the USA and as increasingly independent from it. This started with the Marshall plan and ended symbolically with the refusal of France and Germany to participate in the Iraq war in March 2003. This denial led to the *European Security Strategy*, a document elaborated under the leadership of the EU’s High representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and adopted by the European Council in December 2003. Against the unilateralism of the Bush administration, this document proposed an *effective multilateralism*, characterized by three basic aspects specified in September 2004 in the Barcelona report *Human Security Doctrine for Europe*: 1) “a commitment to work with international institutions, and through the procedures of international institutions”; 2) “a commitment to common ways of working including agreed rules and norms: creating common rules and norms, solving problems through rules and co-operation, and enforcing the rules”; 3) “coordination, rather than duplication or rivalry”²⁸. This type of document and such declaratory communications are part of the “informational diffusion of norms”²⁹

norms’ sometimes controversial but major in the EU practices: social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance.

²⁵ Tiberghien, Y. (2013) “Introduction: Minervian Actors and the Paradox of Post-1995 Global Institution Building”, p. 6.

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ Manners, I. (2013) “The European Union as a Minervian Actor in Global Institution Building”, p. 33.

²⁸ *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe. The Barcelona Report of the Study Group on Europe’s Security Capabilities* (2004), Presented to EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, 15 September.

²⁹ Manners, I. (2013) ‘The European Union as a Minervian Actor in Global Institution Building’, p. 41.

defined by the international relations scholar Ian Manners as one of the six mechanisms through which European Union manages its Minervian normative influence.

The others mechanisms are: first, normative contagion, evident in the “unintentional diffusion of ideas from the EU to other political actors”³⁰ – for example the emulation of the process of regional integration in other continents (Mercosur and UNASUR, African Union, ASEAN)³¹; second, the procedural diffusion of norms as “the institutionalization of relationship between the EU and third party, such as an inter-regional co-operation agreement, membership of an international organization or enlargement of the EU in itself”³², and moreover through association agreements. Such mechanisms also include: third, the transference as a direct diffusion of norms via conditionality clauses in the framework of development and humanitarian aid and support for NGOs – a good example therein being the decision of the External Relations Commissioner, in April 2016, “to suspend payments to the newly elected Hamas government but to increase aid to the Palestinian people through direct payments for aids to refugees and for fuel cost”³³; fourth, overt diffusion as “a result of the physical presence of the EU in third states and international organizations”³⁴ – for instance the role of Member States' embassies and the Commission delegations or the European action for the creation of a new United Nations Human Right Council in 2006. Finally, and fifth, such mechanisms include cultural filters, that is, the “interplay between the construction of knowledge and the creation of social and political identity by the subjects of norm diffusion”³⁵, more concretely as an effect of “the impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organizations leading to learning, adaptation or rejection of norms”³⁶ – for instance, the improvement of environmental standards through the Kyoto Protocol (1997) - not ratified, however, by the USA³⁷, which has also refused to ratify the International Criminal Court, just like Russia³⁸ - and the disrespect for human rights that is increasingly evident in Turkey.

³⁰ Manners, I. (2002) “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, p. 244.

³¹ On the development of regionalism see particularly: Telò, M. (2015) ed., *European Union and New Regionalism: Competing Regionalism and Global Governance in a Post-Hegemonic Era*.

³² Manners, I. (2013) “The European Union as a Minervian Actor in Global Institution Building”, p. 44.

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Manners, I. (2002) “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, p. 245.

³⁵ Ibidem.

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ See: http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/status_of_ratification/items/2613.php

³⁸ See: https://asp.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/asp/states%20parties/pages/the%20states%20parties%20to%20the%20rome%20statute.aspx

Taking a completely different position, other scholars describe instead the EU as a closed space, i.e. as a fortress of decreasing welfare and inclusion. Even in post-Brexit times, the EU visible narrative has been marked by securitisation and borderisation, especially in the migration field, as something to be enhanced – perhaps in a last attempt to keep the Union united. These trends are accompanied by hypernationalism, i.e. the recent revival of territorial boundaries and nationalist sentiments in the EU.

To understand the Union’s foreign policy and to analyse its perspectives of political consolidation through its own external projection, one must also consider the tension between cosmopolitanism and hypernationalism. This interaction allows us to reflect on the recent revival of territorial boundaries and national sentiments in the EU. Indeed, in the recent years, mixed migratory flows, namely those of asylum seekers, labour migrants or forced migrants, have been wrongly yet regularly conflated by non-progressive politicians with various threats, including criminality, terrorism and social conflict³⁹. In this context, the EU Member States decided to enhance the role of EEAS.

One could see a contradiction between, on the one hand, the normative, and arguably global aspiration of the European project and, on the other hand, the Union’s de facto behavior in its external projection. Without a consistent cosmopolitan framework (i.e., overcoming Eurocentrism) that is reflected in its own external action, the Union’s foreign policy risks being perceived as a particularistic⁴⁰ or even an ‘imperialist’⁴¹ power. However, this tension can be resolved by reading Derrida and Habermas, who identify the Union’s ‘existential’ question: after having emerged as a model of “governance beyond the nation-

³⁹ Lohrmann, R. (2000). “Migrants, refugees and insecurity: current threats to peace?”, *International Migration*, 38(4): 3-22.

⁴⁰ According to Habermas, the risk would be even stronger with a European federation: ““Given its expanded economic basis, a European Federal Republic would at the very least aim at economies of scale, and therefore advantages in global competition. But if the federalist project only pursues the goal of bringing a new global player of the magnitude of the United States onto the field, it will remain particularistic and only add a further, economic dimension to the 'Fortress Europe' attitude now evident in asylum policies” (Habermas, J. (2003) “Toward a Cosmopolitan Europe, p. 98). At the contrary, “cosmopolitans see positively a federal European state as a point of departure for the development of a transnational network of regimes that together could pursue a world domestic policy, even in the absence of a world government” (ibidem, p. 96). The cosmopolitan project has to be achieved through “harmonization instead of synchronization”, taking into account the “temporary multiplicity of ecological and social standards” (ibidem, p. 99) , and taking as a more long-term objective “the steady overcoming of social division and stratification within a global society, but without damaging cultural distinctiveness” (ibidem).

⁴¹ Zielonka, J. (2006) *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union*; Zielonka, J. (2008) “Europe as a global actor: empire by example?”.

state” and of social welfare systems, would the Union be able now “to defend and promote a cosmopolitan order on the basis of the international law against competing visions?”⁴².

The analysis of the EU’s foreign policy through three case studies will allow us to identify the key overlaps and gaps between these questions and, subsequently, to make recommendations on how to strengthen the effectiveness of EU external action.

III. BETWEEN STABILISATION AND DEMOCRATISATION: THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY AND COMMONALITY

Before doing so, it is crucial to discuss EU foreign policy not only from a normative point of view but also regarding the specific form that such policy takes – that is, to focus as well on implementation. In this context, two issues are key: the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and, more specifically, the institutional framework of the European External Action Service (EEAS) .

Let us begin by considering the CFSP, which can be seen as a manifestation of not only the interrelatedness but also the ambiguity of the domestic and foreign policy spheres of EU action, which may explain the regularity and the intensity with which it is criticised. Specifically, there are two patterns that can be recognized in the conduct and the effectiveness of the CFSP as observed generally through the external relations of the EU. These two patterns combine to create a double circular relationship, both between the two orders (national states and the EU) and between what is exported as product of its CFSP and what is imported back from non-EU countries. The latter in certain cases generates political instability and can also be seen as co-creating security issues such as radicalism, terrorism and instability.

The first pattern has to do with the practice of the EU in its external relations, which often emphasizes *stability over democracy*. This can be observed in both the enlargement process and in the neighborhood policy - including the case of Western Balkan countries, with whom the EU’s relationship has been based on an instrument of Stability and Association. Insisting on stability first, the EU seems to tolerate certain authoritarian tendencies in these

⁴² Habermas, J. & J. Derrida (2003), “February 15, or What Binds Europeans Together: A Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in the Core of Europe”, p. 294. The 15th February in the title of the article - issued originally in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* on 31th May 2003 – is the day of the simultaneous demonstrations in many European cities against the imminent start of the Iraq War, That for the authors was “a sign of the birth of a European public sphere” (p. 291).

countries which in essence does harm to the overall process of democratisation of the respective countries and thus damage the image of the EU especially among progressive structures and actors. This approach has been replicated elsewhere as well, and above all in the Middle East, which has subsequently created problems when dealing with the issue of Islam within the Member States.

The second pattern has to do with discrepancies of the values that are promoted by the EU in its external relations and what is being led as an internal policy by the EU Member States. The coexistence of divergent internal policies among the MS with the discrepancy between the action of the EU and that of the MS has put the CFSP's credibility into further doubt. The consequence of such divergence and discrepancy has created a situation in which the EU induced processes of democratisation are often used by domestic political élites, even with the doubtful democratic track record to say the least, to gain the benefits of the EU instruments within the CFSP without producing sustainable reforms.

In this context, it is also important to mention the challenges faced by the EEAS. It is beset by the conflicting interests of the EU member states, overshadowed by internal breakdowns (e.g. Brexit and the authoritarian turn in Hungary and Poland) and external threats, such as the spread of Russian soft power in the Balkans region, unreliable Turkey and the decline of the Atlantic narrative. Moreover, it is influenced globally by the geopolitical turmoil in Southern and Eastern neighbourhood, the politico-security turbulence in sub-Saharan Africa, in Central Asia and in the Far East regions, as well as the rise of increasingly transnational challenges such as terrorism.

Nonetheless, there has been some progress at the internal level. To begin, the decision of the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini to launch the *European Global Strategy* in the immediate aftermath of the British referendum echoes an idea that the global strategy repeats as a mantra: the need to translate "unity of purpose" into "unity in action."⁴³ The goal to enhance the EU's internal unity can also be seen in the cooperative

⁴³ See the Foreword of the HR/VP Federica Mogherini: "The people of Europe need *unity of purpose* among our Member States, and *unity in action* across our policies. A fragile world calls for a more confident and responsible European Union, it calls for an outward- and forward-looking European foreign and security policy. This Global Strategy will guide us in our daily work towards a Union that truly meets its citizens' needs, hopes and aspirations; a Union that builds on the success of 70 years of peace; a Union with the strength to contribute to peace and security in our region and in the whole world" (EEAS (2016b) "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe", cit., pp. 4-5). And further on in the document: "The interests of our citizens are best served through *unity of purpose* between Member States and across institutions, and *unity in action* by implementing together coherent policies" (Ibidem, pp. 16-17).

approach that has characterized the drafting of the agenda: a two year-long reflection process coordinated by Mogherini's Cabinet and the EEAS, the EU's diplomatic corps who worked together with EU Member States and institutions, European experts and third countries representatives. Similarly, as in recent EEAS actions in migration management, the EGS has tried to develop stronger working relationships with European Commission's Directorates-General that are traditionally known to be less collaborative. That is, this comprehensive approach suggests the increased recognition that the EU must become more joined up across internal and external policies to avoid institutional impasses and that the EU's instruments must be increasingly used in a harmonized way.

However, significant shortfalls remains. Specifically, there is a dimension of EU foreign policy that raises serious issues over the credibility of the EU and its soft power in promoting its fundamental values: the correlation between domestic and foreign policy. Indeed, what occurs in any given state most frequently finds some form of reflection in its foreign policy. If this is true for individual states, then it is even more so when it comes to complex supranational organizations such as the EU and its aim to create and lead a common foreign policy.

In light of this, the Union's failed attempts to play a major role in defeating ISIS and the crisis in the Middle East have also been determined by its continued inability to tackle and manage diversity. This is evident in the success of anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic rhetoric and sentiments, particularly from right and far-right populists around Europe. Such development has put the credibility of EU's foreign policy under serious doubt. Therefore, besides looking at the action of the EU and its Member States regarding the specific issue of ISIS and the refugee and migrant crises, one should also focus on the actual policies of the Member States in dealing with increasing levels of diversity in their societies.

The dominant approach of European states has been one of liberal nationalism, which gravitates around moderate cultural nationalism based on the idea of national identity⁴⁴ and a sense of national belonging.⁴⁵ Along with the contentious practices of either policies of integration or accommodation of diversity (which have led to some illiberal outcomes and have seriously compromised the consensus on fundamental values of liberal democracy in Europe) this attitude towards diversity has found its reflection in the Union's external relations. In this sense, there is an urgent need to rethink the Union's approach towards diversity, including (but not only) the role and place of Islam in Europe.

⁴⁴ Gal, A. (2011) "Constitutional Patriotism, Liberal Nationalism and Membership in the Nation: An Empirical Assessment".

⁴⁵ Müller, J.W. (2007) *Constitutional Patriotism*.

Such thinking can be developed through the prism of the theory of constitutional patriotism. Unlike liberal nationalism – which relies on myths of national identity and other abstract values – constitutional patriotism argues for a higher level of inclusiveness of political patriotism, which is understood as based on universal liberal democratic values and principles (derived from and shaped by individual constitutional traditions).⁴⁶ According to this theory, loyalty and allegiance towards these values would create a ‘sense of cohesion grounded in common identity’, which would gradually replace cultural nationalism.⁴⁷ This would mean, to give an example, that member states should pay more attention to whether immigrants respect and demonstrate a sense of allegiance to the liberal democratic values rather than whether they share the social codes of the dominant culture.⁴⁸ To give a specific example, arguably neutral rules and regulations such as burqa bans in the public space or bans on carrying visible religious symbols in public institutions not only raise the issue of how diversity can be approached in modern European societies but also reveal the high level of complexity of today’s societies, which cannot be reconciled with nineteenth century myths around identity.

However, even if when contesting these values, migrants and communities with migrant backgrounds should be required to propose their specific interpretation therein on the basis of a liberal democratic vocabulary.⁴⁹ Doing so would represent the basis for a sense of commonality – built not around national values but on the acceptance of liberal democratic values. This approach would strengthen the EU’s credibility as a foreign policy actor, ie. in promoting tolerance and respect abroad, thus substantially adding leverage of the instruments of soft power employed by the EU.

Moreover, cultural identities are not static but in continuous evolution; this is true not only for individuals, but also for states and social entities. Indeed, the fact that they are all part of a process of mutual constitution has been shown in particular by constructivist scholars.⁵⁰ In an analogous direction, the normative values that guide the action of state actors are also

⁴⁶ Ibid. and Schwartz, A. (2011) “Patriotism or Integrity? Constitutional Community in Divided Societies”.

⁴⁷ Kumm, M. (2005) “To Be a European Citizen? The Absence of Constitutional Patriotism and the Constitutional Treaty”, p. 319.

⁴⁸ Müller, J. W. (2012) “Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State: Human Rights, Constitutional Necessity, and the Limits of Pluralism”, p. 1927.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 1928.

⁵⁰ “Institutions come to confront individuals as more or less coercive social facts, but they are still a function of what actors collectively ‘know.’ Identities and such collective cognitions do not exist apart from each other; they are ‘mutually constitutive’” (Wendt, A. (1992) “Anarchy is what States Make of It: the Social Construction of Power Politics”, p. 399).

subject to change, as is suggested by the learning theory.⁵¹ Taking these theoretical premises into account, a medium-long term possibility emerges: to gradually build a new common culture, shared both by the citizens of the Union and those of the ENP as well as other partner countries. In this process, migrant fluxes can play a central role of cultural mediation.

If “the acknowledgement of differences – the reciprocal acknowledgement of the Other in this otherness – can also become a feature of a common identity”⁵², that is true not only regarding the ongoing construction of an *European demos*, but also for a broader cosmopolitan community, “united in diversity”⁵³ in a global scale. Whether this is achieved depends mostly on the braveness (or lack thereof) of the EU’s foreign policy and action, as well as its consistence, as said earlier, with the domestic practices of the member states in support of a renovated, ambitious European project – one that goes beyond illusory mirages⁵⁴.

This is why it is important to critically assess the current EEAS strategy, i.e. to consider to what extent it carries into effect the European CFSP. Is the former really enhancing, as is declared in the latest Global Strategy, the crosscutting coordination of EU policies with a relevant external dimension, (such as the ENP, migration policy or cultural diplomacy)? And to what extent is this consistent with the normative aspiration of the Union on the international stage?⁵⁵ The following case studies will allow us to try to answer these questions.

⁵¹ “National interest may also be redefined through normative change. The practices or interests of one period become downgraded or even illegitimate in a later period because of normative evolution. Changed views of slavery or colonialism are examples.” (Nye, J. S. (1987) “Nuclear Learning and U.S.-Soviet Security Regimes”, p. 378)

⁵² Derrida-Habermas (2003), “February 15, or What Binds Europeans Together”, cit., p. 294.

⁵³ On the motto of European Union insist also the HR/VP Mogherini in her foreword to the Global Strategy: “Joining all our cultures together to achieve our shared goals and serve our common interests is a daily challenge, but it is also our greatest strength: diversity is what makes us strong.” (EEAS (2016b) “Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe”, cit., p. 4). This refers only to the Member States; the Global Strategy doesn’t mention the goal of a broader community.

⁵⁴ “It is easy to find unity without commitment. The image of a peaceful, cooperative Europe, open toward other cultures and capable floats like a mirage before us all” (Derrida-Habermas (2003), “February 15, or What Binds Europeans Together”, cit., pp. 293-94).

⁵⁵ “A rules-based global order unlocks the full potential of a prosperous Union with open economies and deep global connections, and embeds democratic values within the international system.” (EEAS (2016b) “Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe”, cit., pp. 15-16).

IV. CASE STUDIES

1) EU's External Policy on Forced Migration

Examining the issue of the EU's external action in the field of migration, this section will try to understand the rationale of EU action after the great migration crisis of 2015 seeking to map the performance of the EU external policy response to the ongoing migration crisis. Through an analysis of the theoretical background concerning the externalization of migration policies the analysis will finally offer some policy conclusions with respect to EEAS and the securitisation of asylum and migration in the EU, addressing how this nexus has been elaborated and justified at the EU level and identifying the main political implications and vulnerabilities related to the nature, extent and impact of this strategy.

When, to what extent and how has the EU securitized migration? What have been the implications for the EU in terms of policymaking? Many factors have determined the 'realist turn' of the EU's policy on irregular immigration. The common view of an inevitable global debordering in vogue during the 1990s, has been progressively belied by the rebordering tendencies that have arisen both at the global and EU levels, when the conjunction of economic, social and political factors has contributed to linking migration with the topic of security. Supporting the idea, as Dauvergne argues, is that "the problem of illegal migration is a global one, and the fact that those who seek to migrate outside the law have access to a geographically broader range of options than in earlier eras, contribute[s] to the construction of an identity category of people named by the new noun 'illegal'."⁵⁶ At the EU level, not without ambiguity, the creation of the common space with economic and social cohesion has been strengthened by acts and policies designed to demarcate borders and protect the common European space⁵⁷.

The central act that develops this approach is the Commission Communication "Towards an Integrated Management of the External Borders of the Member States of the European

⁵⁶ Dauvergne, C. (2008) *Making people illegal: what globalization means for migration and law*.

⁵⁷ Geddes, A. (2001) "International migration and state sovereignty in an integrating Europe"; Harvey, C. (2000) "Dissident voices: refugees, human rights and asylum in Europe"; Zielonka, J. (2006) *Europe as empire: the nature of the enlarged European Union*.

Union”, adopted in 2002.⁵⁸ It launched the Integrated Borders Management strategy, which aims to develop an “integrated and global response” to the challenges arising from irregular migration through the common external borders. This characterization of borders aims to secure and police the limits of the common Schengen territory. In this way, the EU’s model of political integration substantiated in the areas of freedom, security and justice and based on full membership status and fortified external borders became an instrument to potentiate an increasingly strident inside/outside dichotomy⁵⁹. Contradictorily, while the European governments have promoted and enhanced intra-European mobility, the EU’s external borders have been reinforced to avoid migration pressure outside regulated channels.

Similarly, other scholars suggest that the EU’s relationship with its neighborhoods is increasingly characterized by a hard territoriality – in which security issues and sovereignty are emphasized, and where borders are increasingly policed⁶⁰. In this way, no less paradoxically, despite the fact that the early aim of the European Project was to incorporate as many states and people as possible, rather than to create a restrictive union, the EU is increasingly working to strengthen the principle of territoriality and its securitisation, as one of the key approaches for facing the challenges posed by immigration⁶¹.

It is in this context that mixed migratory flows, namely the flows of asylum seekers, labour migrants or irregular migrants coming from underdeveloped or institutional transition countries, have been associated with various social problems, prompting decision-makers to adopt a restrictive approach in designing policies for the control of external borders. During the 2000s, this ‘siege syndrome’ has contributed to feeding the ‘realist turn’ of European foreign policy. This interpretation has influenced the development of both the EU and domestic policies on asylum and migration⁶² to date.

Even the latest EU acts on migration, the EU Agenda on Migration and the Valletta Plan of 2015 go in this direction, emphasizing that the European Union needs to preserve itself from the risks of this flows. Since 2015, ‘migration’ has been a key dossier by Federica Mogherini,

⁵⁸ European Commission (2012) “Towards integrated management of the external borders of the Member States of the European Union”, 7 May.

⁵⁹ Carrera, S. (2007) “The EU border management strategy: FRONTEX and the Challenges of Irregular Immigration in the Canary Islands”.

⁶⁰ Bialasiewicz L., Elden S., Painter J. (2005) “The constitution of the EU territory”.

⁶¹ Vitale, A. (2011) “The contemporary EU’s notion of territoriality and external borders”.

⁶² Hyde-Price, A. (2008) “A tragic actor? A realist perspective on ethical power of Europe”; Leonard, S. (2010) “EU border security and migration into the European Union: FRONTEX and securitisation through practices”.

in her dual capacity as High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission and responsible for the Commissioners' Group on External Action - which includes the EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship in the broader cluster. However, as illustrated by a series of initiatives animatedly discussed between the EU member states, the EU has been unable to find 'internal' and shared solutions to the crisis of refugees raised in 2015, and has increasingly relied on targeted 'external' actions to prevent migratory flows from reaching the Union's borders.

The Valetta Summit on migration of 11-12 November 2015 has unequivocally shown this approach, confirming that the fate of the European Union is inextricably hooked to the external dimension of the migration governance in all its articulations with the foreign and security policy and the cooperation to the development. The response of the EU's external action to the crisis of refugees ranges from the external borders policy, to the externalization of migration and asylum policy to third countries and to the direct forms of support to third countries hosting refugees. This is a decisive game that goes far beyond the Mediterranean, embracing the Sahel and much of the Sub-Saharan Africa⁶³, whose main goal is to reinforce the external projection of the EU, and to hold in Africa the largest amount possible of migrants and asylum seekers by avoiding that they reach the EU's external borders in a chaotic and unplanned manner.

Since the 2004 Hague European Council, EU's externalization involves transferring responsibility and outsourcing its immigration and asylum policy by subcontracting controls to third countries, through targeted partnerships (Neighborhood Policy, Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, Eastern Partnership, the Balkans Stability Pact, relations between EU and Africa), in order to improve these countries' ability to manage migration, protect refugees, prevent, and combat irregular immigration. However, the compliance of the externalization of migration policy with the international refugee law, norms and principles and standards of protection is strongly disputed. In fact, it is widely considered that the implementation of migration control agreements between European and non-European countries has led to serious human rights violations.

Analysed from the side of the Commission the priority of the EU seems more or less the same: contain and defense from what continues to be depicted as an invasion. In this sense, Jean-Claude Juncker's white paper on the future direction of the EU along with its five scenarios - "carrying on," "nothing but the single market," "those who want more do more," "doing less more efficiently," and "doing much more together"⁶⁴ - clearly shows the essence

⁶³ Pastore, F. (2016) "Relazioni Euroafricane e Migrazioni. Tra contenimento e sviluppo".

⁶⁴ European Commission (2017) "White Paper on the Future of Europe", 1 March.

of the political stalemate of the European Commission: the hands and feet tied. The vetos of the Council and the tantrums of the 27s have reduced to a flicker the political range of the Commission plans' on migration. In Europe, to demand concrete action on immigration can cost political isolation. And who wrote the white paper knows this very well. For this reason the white paper mentions the word immigration only nine times just to recall the need to act without endorsing any solutions. Of course the underlying truth behind that is that, today, just a handful of countries, including Italy, continues to believe in the burden sharing of migrants' reception. This absence of convergence undermines the roots of what Europe celebrated on 25th March 2017, when the 27s converged for the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome. The only concrete outcome of that meeting has been the legitimization of the concept of a multi-speed and multi-tier Europe. Under this framework, EU member states will be able to work together on various initiatives, while those that would opt out will be allowed to do so. On the side of migration this can imply the collapse of the debate on the reform of the common European asylum system and the legitimisation of a variable geometry of EU migration and asylum policy.

2) Democracy promotion in third countries and in International Institutions

To begin, it is necessary to consider as a whole the migration policy in connection with the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In order to cope with an imposing migration phenomenon, it is not enough to strengthen instruments of borders control (such as Frontex) – rather, it is necessary to understand the deep roots of migrations. Indeed, conflict and socio-economic instability in the countries of origin are often a direct or an indirect consequence of authoritarian/non-democratic regimes.

For that reason, the new revision of the ENP, issued in November 2015, provided an insufficient response to our times and risks compromising the spirit of democracy promotion through peaceful means (which was originally at stake in the conception of the ENP in 2003), since the 'principle of conditionality' is now significantly weaker than in the past. Instead of the golden rule 'more for more' (that is, more money transfers from the EU in exchange for increased civil rights and democratization in the recipient country), which aimed to create a 'ring of friends' around the European Union, a 'more for less' approach now prevails. Today's pragmatic orientation aims to stabilize what is becoming a 'ring of fire' around the Union.⁶⁵ This gives up on the use of "normative power" by "external

⁶⁵ See: Schumacher, T. (2016) "Back to the Future: The 'New' ENP towards the Southern Neighbourhood and the End of Ambition".

governance”⁶⁶, and often legitimates (or even strengthens) illiberal governments, both in the Eastern and in the Southern neighbourhood. In the case of the latter, and even more paradoxically, anti-democratic regimes rapidly took the place of the most innovative movements within the Arab Spring. This was noticed too late by the EU and its Member States, who didn’t make a consistent effort to support such movements⁶⁷.

The approach of the revised ENP is confirmed in the new EU Global Strategy issued in June 2016. In the latter, as mentioned before, there is a major focus on stabilisation and security rather than on democratisation. This is revealed, namely, by the copious use of the term *resilience*, which is repeated throughout the document.⁶⁸ After being highly debated among scholars for its broadness and ambiguity⁶⁹, the term was recently specified in a joint communication issued in June 2017 by the High Representative Mogherini:

Strengthening resilience is a means not an end. The EU's strategic approach to resilience is about building upon underlying institutional and societal strengths in partner countries in order to achieve long term sustainable development or security goals. It is about securing progress towards these goals by addressing vulnerabilities and underlying structural risks. It recognises that development, and progress towards democracy, peace and security, is not a linear process, and that sectoral approaches, on their own, are not always enough to ensure sustainable results.⁷⁰

This orientation was explained in a less diplomatic manner by Nathalie Tocci, who drafted the Global Strategy: the EUGS would be inspired to a “principled pragmatism” in order to

⁶⁶ For the concept of *external governance* see: Lavenex, S. (2004), “EU external governance in 'wider Europe'”; Lavenex, S. & Schimmelfennig, F. (2009) “EU rules beyond EU borders: theorizing external governance in European politics”.

⁶⁷ See for instance: Schumacher, T. (2011) “The EU and the Arab Spring: Between Spectatorship and Actorness” and Simoni, S. (2013) *Transatlantic Relations*, chapter 7: “The Arab Spring. A Missed Opportunity for a Common Transatlantic Agenda”, pp. 87-97.

⁶⁸ The term “resilience/resilient” appears 41 times in the document ; the concept of “(in)stability”/ “(de)stabilisation” 11 times; “democratisation” only 1 time, and just in relation to the enlargement process: “A credible enlargement policy grounded on strict and fair conditionality is an irreplaceable tool to enhance resilience within the countries concerned, ensuring that modernisation and democratisation proceed in line with the accession criteria” (EEAS (2016b) “Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe”, cit., p. 24). Moreover: “security” recurs 150 times, “democracy” only 14 times - up to 24 recurrences considering also “democracies” and “democratic”.

⁶⁹ See for instance: Wolfgang, W. and Rosanne A. (2016) “Resilience as the EU Global Strategy’s new leitmotif: pragmatic, problematic or promising?”: “the ambiguity, if not vagueness of the term ‘resilience’ helped to gain acceptability. Different stakeholders with different interests and backgrounds came to accept the concept on the basis of different understandings of the term.” (p. 417)

⁷⁰ EEAS (2017b) “A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action”, 7 June, p. 23.

move away from “the sterile debate on ‘interests versus values’ or on ‘interventionism versus retrenchment’”⁷¹ and from “the dichotomous and at times hypocritical approach of the past of ‘talking’ democracy while ‘doing’ stability”⁷². To use Tocci’s term, a strong hypocrisy, in fact, is recognizable in the implementation in various third countries of the ‘conditionality principle’, which appears often inconsistent and vulnerable to accusation of ‘double standards’. For instance, the Union’s sanctions towards Azerbaijan were never as strong as those towards Belarus⁷³. Although both countries are led by authoritarian, *de facto* dictatorial regimes, Azerbaijan is a gas and oil producer, and hence a strategic asset for the EU’s energy interests and security.

The concept of “resilience” suggests the idea that democratic reform will only be possible with an economic growth of the Neighbourhood and the development of its civil society. However, it isn’t guaranteed that authoritarian regimes would not exploit the EU’s focus on economic development or security goals to increase their own support. The recent authoritarian turn in Turkey – which followed less than one year after signing an agreement with the EU regarding the management of ‘irregular migrants’ – illustrates this risk. Thus, a more consistent use of positive and negative conditionality is necessary, together with more effective democracy assistance⁷⁴, which would have to be better connected with conflict prevention and resolution through mediation and dialogue⁷⁵.

Another level of action of foreign policy that can favor the process of democratization of third countries is the reform of international institutions, namely the United Nations and international financial institutions. A more democratic representativeness of the the different nations on global fora would allow civil society, minorities and oppositions to have a stronger voice and to be represented in their needs and aspirations. Unfortunately, this issue isn’t mentioned in the EU’s Global Strategy, which dedicates only some lines to the

⁷¹ Tocci, N. (2016) “Interview on the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy”, p. 6.

⁷² Ibidem, p. 5.

⁷³ See for instance: Hale, J. (2012) “EU relations with Azerbaijan: More for Less?”.

⁷⁴ The concept of “democracy assistance” was particularly developed in the first revision of the ENP (“A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood”) issued on 25th May 2011, as a (late) response to the ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings. Many scholars underlined the persistent (neo)liberal model of the approach, leaving unchanged the ‘reputational deficit’ regarding *democracy promotion*. See: Teti A., Thompson D. and Noble C. (2013) “Eu Democracy Assistance Discourse in its *New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood*”. For an analysis of the shortfalls of the ENP see also: Ghazaryan, N. (2014) *The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Democratic Values of the EU: A Legal Analysis*.

⁷⁵ For these concepts see particularly: Hill, C. (2001) “The EU’s Capacity for Conflict Prevention”; Council (2011) *Conclusions on Conflict Prevention*, 20 June; Council (2009) *EU Concept on Strengthening Mediation and Dialogue*, 10 November.

reform of the UN and other international institutions, and does so in a rather Eurocentric perspective.⁷⁶ The position of the European Parliament is much more advanced. Indeed, the later approved in June 2005 a resolution on the reform of the United Nations composed of 48 statements. Among them, the Parliament called for “the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) within the UN system, which would increase the democratic profile and internal democratic process of the organisation and allow world civil society to be directly involved in the decision-making process”⁷⁷. Unfortunately, this innovative idea (which could be institutionalized without the need for reform according to article 22 of the UN Charter⁷⁸) is not included in the EU Global Strategy or in any other official position statement of the European Union as such⁷⁹.

⁷⁶ “A commitment to global governance must translate in the determination to reform the UN, including the Security Council, and the International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Resisting change risks triggering the erosion of such institutions and the emergence of alternative groupings to the detriment of all EU Member States. The EU will stand up for the principles of accountability, representativeness, responsibility, effectiveness and transparency. The practical meaning of such principles will be fleshed out case-by-case. We will continue to call upon members of the UN Security Council not to vote against credible draft resolutions on timely and decisive action to prevent or end mass atrocities. Across multilateral fora – and in particular the UN, the IFIs and the international justice organisations – the EU will strengthen its voice and acquire greater visibility and cohesion. We will work towards an increasingly unified representation of the euro area in the International Monetary Fund.” (EEAS (2016b) “Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe”, cit., pp. 39-40).

⁷⁷ European Parliament (2005) “Resolution on the reform of the United Nations”, 9 June. It was also specified that “the Parliamentary Assembly should be vested with genuine rights of information, participation and control, and should be able to adopt recommendations directed at the UN General Assembly” (ibidem). The idea of a UN Parliamentary Assembly was established by an ongoing campaign supported by a transnational transversal coalition of civil society’s organizations, intellectuals and political leaders: <http://en.unpacampaign.org/>.

⁷⁸ “The General Assembly may establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions.” (UN (1945) “Charter of the United Nations”, 26 June, art. 22)

⁷⁹ The UNPA was at the core of a parliamentary written question asked by a group of S&D MEPs to the VP/HR on 16th September 2016: “Does institutional support for the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly figure in the EU’s external policy?” (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2016-006879&language=EN>). The answer by VP/HR Federica Mogherini on 16th January 2017 was that “the EU has no formal position as regards the establishment of a UN Parliamentary Assembly”, but “nonetheless, there is a clear need for a stronger connection between the system of global governance and an active and responsible citizenship.” (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2016-006879&language=EN>).

Later on the Parliament recommended to the Council “to foster a debate on the topic of the role of parliaments and regional assemblies in the UN system and on the topic of establishing a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly” (European Parliament (2017) “Recommendation to the Council concerning the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 5 July).

3) Culture in EU external relations

In the last years, culture has been increasingly mentioned in discussions regarding the EU external relations, which has led to recent proposals by the Parliament and the Commission to strengthen its role. That is, as we will see below, different EU documents and actors now explicitly recognise the potential role of cultural relations in making the Union's external relations more effective – however, different member states and actors are more engaged on this topic than others.

In 2007, the Commission made the proposal of a European Agenda for Culture in a globalising world, which defended the urgency of promoting culture in the Union's international relations.⁸⁰ However, this document failed to present a set of principles guiding a coordinated EU approach to international cultural relations. This weakness was acknowledged in May 2011, when the European Parliament voted for a resolution on the cultural dimensions of EU external action, covering 54 different countries, which called for the development of a common EU strategy on culture and ran until mid-2014.⁸¹ The resolution referred to the close relation between culture and European values – specifically, to “the value of culture as a force for tolerance and understanding and as a tool for growth and more inclusive societies” and to the centrality of “democratic and fundamental freedoms” as “preconditions for cultural expression, cultural exchanges and diversity”⁸². In what can be seen as reflecting a strongly value-driven framework, the resolution also affirmed that cultural diplomacy can play an active role in disseminating European values. Indeed, the document

- Emphasises the importance of cultural diplomacy and cultural cooperation in advancing and communicating throughout the world the EU's and the Member States' interests and the values that make up European culture; stresses the need for the EU to act as a (world) player with a global perspective and global responsibility;
- Argues that the EU's external actions should focus primarily on promoting peace and reconciliation, human rights, international trade and economic development, without neglecting the cultural aspects of diplomacy.⁸³

⁸⁰ European Commission (2007) “On a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world”, 10 May.

⁸¹ European Parliament (2011) “Resolution on the cultural dimensions of the EU's external actions”, 12 May.

⁸² Ibidem.

⁸³ Ibidem.

This confirms the hypothesis according to which the EU's cultural diplomacy is guided by a set of principles and values – however, the ideal of symbolic equality that is central in the cosmopolitan framework is absent from the document. At the same time the resolution also stresses that intercultural relations, dialogues and partnerships should be developed in a way that places EU and third countries at the same level – i.e., and crucially, conditionality isn't one of their key elements.

This said, and nonetheless, the convention nonetheless third countries to ratify and implement the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which recognises the dual character of cultural goods and services (which mentions its contribution to human rights and fundamental freedoms)⁸⁴ and “recognises the link between cultural rights, diversity and human rights and objects to the use of cultural arguments to justify human rights violations”⁸⁵. This acknowledgement was followed by the 2015 Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU (which was simultaneous with the European Year for Development), which supported a stronger policy overlap between cultural diplomacy and cooperation in development. Specifically, the programme of the presidency stated that

the assessment of culture's potential contribution the European Union's external relations, and in particular in respect of development cooperation policies, will provide an opportunity to focus on third countries.⁸⁶

This analysis led to a meeting of experts both from the EU and from third countries in September 2015, in relation to which the then Luxembourgish Minister of Culture and Housing Maggy Nagel concluded that the debate showed the need “to put a political vision at the heart of the culture and development strategy by coming up with a European process for this topic”⁸⁷. It remains unclear, however, what such a “European process” should include.

Nagel also noted, regarding the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, that “although views diverge somewhat on the exact place of culture in these, it is worth noting that Member States and the EU are making sure that they continue to improve the position

⁸⁴ UNESCO (2005) “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions”, 20 October.

⁸⁵ European Parliament (2011) “Resolution on the cultural dimensions of the EU's external actions”, 12 May.

⁸⁶ Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (2015) “Programme and priorities”.

⁸⁷ Ibidem.

of culture in the post-2015 development agenda"⁸⁸. That is, the Luxembourg Presidency concluded the year identifying areas of overlap between the cultural sector and development and stressing the strategic potential of such a convergence. However, it was unable to solve the tension between the different views of culture that tend to characterise these two domains: on the one hand, and respectively, an understanding of culture as flexible and connected with human rights (e.g. freedom of expression), on the other hand, locally-specific definitions and practices whose protection may be seen as legitimising and crystallising narratives around national differences and, hence, an understanding of national identity as something that is static. In his context, one must also mention the absence of a discussion surrounding the place of culture in the EU's use of political conditionality in its relations with third countries. Nonetheless, the Presidency raised the profile of the discussion to such an extent that the EU Commission published a transversal proposal in 2016 on this matter.

Indeed, at the European Culture Forum in April 2016, Federica Mogherini presented her wish to develop a European strategy for cultural diplomacy which would strengthen EU external relations.⁸⁹ What followed was a Joint Communication to the European parliament and the Council "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations" in June 2016, which recognised the role of culture in fostering not only economic growth but also intercultural dialogue. Specifically, it proposed three pillars to build such a strategy: first, to ensure the promotion of "human rights, diversity, intercultural dialogue while respecting subsidiarity and complementarity and retaining policy coherence by promoting culture within existing partnership frameworks"; second, to develop advancing cultural cooperation with partner countries; finally, to propose a strategic EU approach to cultural diplomacy that enhances European cooperation (notably between EU Member States and their delegations) and intercultural exchanges to promote the diverse cultures of the EU.⁹⁰

Guided by "the aim to ensure that EU action in this area promotes human rights, diversity, intercultural dialogue"⁹¹, culture is presented in this document in a manner that may be read as fundamentally consistent with a soft power approach – a term that was proposed by Joseph S. Nye to refer to ways in which nation states can gather diplomatic support without using force, thereby accompanying 'hard power', i.e. the use of military and economic

⁸⁸ Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (2015b) "Culture and Development - European and international experts meeting in Echternach called for more transversal and systematic integration of culture in the EU external relations", 4 September.

⁸⁹ EEAS (2016) "Speech of the HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the Culture Forum in Brussels", 20 April.

⁹⁰ European Commission (2016) "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations", 8 June.

⁹¹ Ibidem.

power by nations as a form of coercion but that, however, remains fundamentally ambiguous.⁹² However, and once again, the joint communication doesn't propose any form of conditionality as a precondition for the establishment of new cultural partnerships or as a benchmark to evaluate existing protocols and ensure continued cooperation; rather, it merely affirms that "cultural cooperation and exchange on cultural policies can contribute to stabilisation"⁹³, giving the example of ENP countries in the Southern Mediterranean region.

To conclude, these documents and actors repeatedly propose a multidimensional view of culture and, subsequently, its long-term, strategic use in external relations and in development. However, there is a clear hiatus between this official discourse and its implementation. Specifically, and firstly, it is unlikely that there will be an increase in funding that would make such goals and proposals achievable. Secondly, despite the explicit commitment of the EU to support local cultural production and to develop inclusive cultural policies, these discussions tend nonetheless to focus on the potential of the cultural industries and the creative economy as sources of economic growth. Thirdly, the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is not presented as mandatory, i.e. as a condition for the reception of funding related to cultural investment. This undermines the continuum between culture, human rights, development and security, while also revealing a limited understanding of the potential of culture to contribute to increased stability and security around and within the EU itself.

Crucially, as other experts and scholars have acknowledged, such failures reveal a fundamental self-contradiction: despite the repeated reference to the term 'cultural relations' in these documents (which refers to the development of long-term partnerships with state and non-state cultural actors), especially recently, the EEAS' strategy is mostly developed by official actors, many of whom remain unconvinced regarding the non-economic impact of the cultural sector.⁹⁴ The unspoken acknowledgement of this tension has led to the signature of an agreement between the EEAS and the European National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) in May 2017 aimed at advancing cultural cooperation outside the EU.⁹⁵ It remains to be seen to what extent this will alter the current state of affairs.

Ultimately, these contradictions reflect a lack of political will to connect culture and development in a fundamental manner, i.e. to acknowledge the fact that the cultural sector

⁹² See: Nye, J. S. (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*.

⁹³ European Commission (2016) "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations", cit.

⁹⁴ See: More Europe (2017) "Advocacy Paper: Cultural Diplomacy or Cultural Relations".

⁹⁵ EEAS (2017) "National Institutes for Culture and EU to further enhance cooperation", 16 May.

is made possible by and enacts a set of freedoms, and that it is hence aligned with the fundamental values of the Union. Rather, EU actors continue to prioritise the sector's potential as a platform for economic growth – a strategic error considering the growing threats to liberal democracies within and around the Union. Progressives should develop an alternative narrative regarding the long-term, cross-sectoral potential of culture in the EU's neighbourhood and beyond.

IV. CONCLUSION

Our case studies have allowed us to test two hypotheses: first, regarding the importance of cosmopolitan values underlying the EU's CSFP; second, whether said principles are implemented through conditionality-based policies and programmes. Both hypotheses emerged as providing a limited explanatory framework of recent and current EU security and foreign policy.

This finding suggests that there is a set of broad ways in which progressives can contribute to the renewal of the EU CSFP:

- First, its policies and programmes are not guided by a clear set of principles. This is particularly important in a time of increasing questioning of the current model of globalisation. In light of this, progressives must present a new understanding of the ways how their values might be embedded in EU policies, including in its foreign action, without risking being seen as either merely driven by utilitarian considerations or as a form of neo-colonialism: the “market power” of Europe⁹⁶ should be rigorously embedded to promote freedom, democracy and equality and not only economic interests.

- Second, progressives should ask what the EU can do to respond to the changing geopolitical scenario in a way that enforces its role as a global actor. In this context, it is key to replace short-term, reactive thinking with a long-term, strategic approach. To give two examples, it would be a serious error by the EU to wait until it solves the economic crisis or until it makes a decision regarding its future development (for example, regarding the scenarios identified by Juncker in the

⁹⁶ See the analysis of Damro, C. (2012) “Market Power Europe”, p. 684: “The EU is a power that can and does use its market and regulatory strengths to externalize internal policies”. In other terms, the largest ever single market can influence and force indirectly or directly other countries to act differently.

Commission's white paper – or others) before strengthening its position as an international player.

- Third, to avoid that the European neighbourhood regions become increasingly an arena for the economic and geopolitical ambitions of external actors such as Russia, Turkey or China, further steps on the economic and political side are needed to either reinvigorate the process of European enlargement or to intensify the EU's relation with its neighbourhood.

In conclusion, the EU must develop a clear strategy towards its neighborhood as well as the countries impacted by the Global Strategy that strengthens the coherence between the EU's action and its founding values – which are, by definition, close to those of the progressive family. This may include, namely, stronger conditionality regarding the respect of human rights, more investment in capacity building programmes, the transfer of economic resources and knowledge, collaboration and communication between intellectuals and policymakers networks from both sides, and support towards the innovative elements of civil society in the most difficult situations.

Progressive forces play another particularly important role in this context: they can train and support new socialist and democratic leaders among the civil society and political forces in the framework of a renewed stronger internationalism. This process could also include work towards reforming international institutions aimed at their increased democratisation.

Additionally, such a strategy can also include the promotion and support of innovative programmes (on renewable energies, advanced technologies, modernization of agriculture) leading to job creation for both Europeans and neighbourhood citizens. Crucially, this is also likely to improve the consensus towards EU institutions among the poorest European populations, which tend to be the most attracted to the xenophobic sirens of populist forces. Finally, progressives can consider the possibility of strengthening programmes of exchange⁹⁷, or even the overall extension of the principle of freedom of movement under some conditions between the EU and its neighbourhood countries.

This process can be seen as supporting the creation of a new common identity that overcomes the opposition between “us” (the Europeans, the Occident), and “them” (non-

⁹⁷ For example extending the full set of Erasmus plus Actions to the whole Neighbourhood (and other partner countries): https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-a/who-can-participate/eligible-countries_en

Europeans). This shared sense of belonging is intended as a “constitutional patriotism”⁹⁸ of a cosmopolitan community – in a world of the perpetual peace to come. *Id est*: to build up together, step by step.

V. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

According to this rationale, we have identified a set of policy recommendations useful to strengthen the areas of external action discussed earlier.

Migration

- Develop a stronger conceptual approach for the measurement of long-term migratory fluxes and the influence of demographic, labour market and human capital processes;
- Develop future scenarios of demographic, migratory and labour market changes and develop cross-sectoral approaches accordingly;
- Create synergies between EU funded projects on migration and capitalise on the results of different initiatives;
- Subject all third country cooperation on migration to human rights assessment, benchmarking and monitoring;
- Desist from targeting “unsafe” countries for migration cooperation (such as Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Eritrea) and refrain from providing funding to secure readmission and returns from the EU to those countries.

Democracy promotion in third countries (and in International Institutions)

- Guarantee compliance of the EU/Third Countries migration deals with democracy promotion, international human rights law and standards;

⁹⁸ See for instance: Müller, J.-W. (2012) “Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State”, cit.

- Stop the inconsistent use of conditionality regarding human rights by the European Union (which has been, for example, too soft towards Azerbaijan and Turkey);
- Redefine the ENP framework and the Global Strategy to favour the support of technical assistance and capacity building programmes rather than (or in association with) the transfer of funds;
- Promote innovative programmes (e.g. on renewable energies, advanced technologies, modernization of agriculture) leading to job creation for both Europeans and neighbourhood citizens;
- Support stronger programmes of exchange (i.e. extending the full set of Erasmus plus Actions to the whole Neighbourhood) or even the overall extension of the principle of freedom of movement under some conditions between the EU and its neighbourhood countries;
- Push for a democratic reform the international institutions, namely the United Nations and international financial institutions (this could include, for example, support for the creation of an United Nation Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA)).

Culture

- Develop long-term local needs assessments of the cultural sector and the creative industries before initiating any projects with third countries in this domain;
- When applicable, make economic support for the cultural and creative sectors of third countries dependent on progress on human rights indicators and other key values of the EU, such as respect for the principle of the separation of powers and for the rule of law;
- Support cultural policies that foster an inclusive model of development, namely by means of capacity building and technical assistance projects that foster links between the cultural sector and other policy domains. Doing so will not only reflect the progressive agenda but also promote peace and stability in the EU's neighbourhood and beyond.

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