



**How has the EU foreign policy changed in the wake of the US-led Iraq war?**

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03.03.2017

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## **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the foreign policy changes that the EU experienced due to the Iraq crisis. The increasing complexity of the global security environment has played an important role in the EU foreign policy evolution by challenging the EU's effective management of its external relations. Hence, the central question of this research looks closer at "How has the EU foreign policy changed in the wake of the US-led Iraq war?" In order to better understand the changes that the EU foreign policy has gone through in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, various research methods were used to reach an adequate answer to the question under research. The information used in this work is mainly derived from an extensive desk research with a part of it collected through qualitative methods in the means of a semi-structure interview with an Estonian diplomat. The findings of this research showed that although the EU was able to act unified and be an important soft power actor during the Afghanistan war, it was confronted with deep intra-community divisions over the Iraq crisis. These proved that the EU is incapable to act within its normative approaches when facing disagreements among member states. As a reaction to these intra-Union conflicts and the malfunctioning of the external policy, the EU adopted the European Security Strategy (ESS). The ESS enabled the Union to improve the decision-making over Iraq and to provide valuable reconstruction assistance to Iraq. In this post-war period the EU emerged as a normative superpower by being an irreplaceable soft power actor. These developments faced in the times of the Iraq invasion led to the establishment of the Lisbon Treaty that in nature addressed similar objectives as the ESS. The Lisbon Treaty, with its legal status and more detailed amendments, aimed to strengthen the organisation of the EU foreign policy. The creation of the office of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy together with the EEAS improved the EU's foreign policy coordination. Furthermore, the enhanced cooperation was a step forward to assure EU's active presence in its external relations. Therefore, the Iraq crisis has undoubtedly inspired the EU foreign policy reforms introduced by the ESS and the Lisbon Treaty. With the help of these changes, the Union's foreign and security policy has become more coherent, efficient and capable.

### **Acknowledgement**

*My sincerest gratitude goes to my supervisor Mihaela Anghel for the support throughout the writing process and to my closest ones who have been a great source of inspiration and motivation on this journey.*

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## 1. Introduction

The beginning of the 2000s has played a defining role in the establishment of the EU foreign policy. Although the European political and economic community has proven to be an influential and respected ally in world politics, it has shown a lack of competencies in imposing itself as a credible partner in foreign relations. The current global issues, such as terrorism and migration, that require strong intergovernmental cooperation, test the European political elite's security capabilities to act fast, efficiently and unified more than ever in the first decade of this century.

The West's fear of authoritarian governments that arguably pose threat to western values and, above all, to democracy, has today led to more heightened problems than they were in the first place. In this regard, the deepening instability and continuous political unrests in the Middle East have regularly been challenging EU's unity and coherence in deciding upon its strategy in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the increasing number of member states has not made the decision-making in foreign affairs any easier. It has, on the contrary, added complexity, controversy and deceleration to the process. The EU's commitment to act in solidarity and contribute to the promotion of democracy has made it increasingly difficult to speak in one voice on the international stage.

The political, cultural and economic diversity among Union's member states and the struggle to define a common and concrete foreign policy framework has clearly characterised the possible vulnerability of the EU's foreign policy. In this matter, various Middle East conflict zones have probed well the strength of the EU's foreign policy and reflected its evolution throughout the years. Thus, the on-going issues coming forward in international relations have largely influenced the EU foreign policy's developments. Undoubtedly, one of these cornerstone events was the second Gulf War that contributed to the way that the EU foreign policy is conducted today.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to investigate how the EU's foreign policy has changed in the wake of the US-led Iraq war in 2002/3. The Iraq conflict accentuated many crucial aspects about the functioning of the EU foreign and security policy due to its controversial essence. The objective is to closely analyse the way that the EU performed as a global actor and which changes followed the foreign policy experience in Iraq.

In order to gain in-depth insights on the EU foreign policy changes that the Iraq war resulted, different sub-questions help to guide through the research. The first chapter discusses the EU's approaches to conflict resolution at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This helps to move towards a clearer understanding of the Union's position on the world scene before the Iraq war. The second chapter elaborates on the reasons behind US-led Iraq invasion and the member states' opinion on EU's involvement in the conflict. The effect of the EU's discord over Iraq on its foreign policy and the ways that the European Security Strategy (ESS) depicted those changes, are looked at in the third chapter. The fourth chapter describes the initiatives that the ESS led to after overcoming the internal disagreements. The final fifth chapter, analyses the Lisbon Treaty and the reform that its adoption brought along in reaction to the challenges that the EU was posed to during the Iraq conflict.

All these previously mentioned points carry a crucial task to conclude on the changes that EU's foreign and security policy experienced after the challenges it faced in the times of the Iraq invasion. The EU's foreign policy is certainly still developing and, thus, it is of first importance to closely look at its evolution in the past decade to fully understand its essence today.

## 2. Methodology

This dissertation largely contains information obtained from secondary research. The already existing information and data gave an excellent basis for wide and in-depth investigation on the given research topic. In order to better understand the changes of the European Union (EU) foreign policy, a well-balanced set of sources needed to be collected. These sources included various governmental reports gathered from EU's and US' governmental databases, journal articles and other academic writings either from online platforms or books.

Yet, while conducting desk research, it occurred from time to time that there were not enough of high quality documents or information on the EU's position over both Gulf Wars and the evolution of the EU foreign policy in response to those conflicts, available in full to the public. Also, as stated by Stewart and Kamins, the difference of findings can lead to opposing conclusions and challenge the process of interpreting the extensive range of information that desk research generally offers (Stewart & Kamins, 1993). In this matter the credibility of sources deserved great attention to ensure that the content of this dissertation is built upon trustworthy and valid sources that have been evaluated carefully. Thus, the information provided by EU institutions, international organisations, state governments or scholars possessed great value towards a successful completion of this research.

In addition to secondary research, this research paper partly also concentrated on collecting data through primary research. This was done in terms of qualitative methods, which hereby included a semi-structured interview. The use a of qualitative research method was especially appropriate to this topic as it allowed to explore the reasons and opinions on the issue under study in a more detailed and concrete way (Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project*, 2011). The motivation to conduct a semi-structured interview was to expand more on the topic of the interview and avoid generalising information. The application of open questions gave the interviewee the chance to explicitly explain its views and the interviewer the opportunity to ask clarifications where needed. The purpose of closed questions was to give directions to certain answers that help to control the overall flow of the interview (Flick, 2009 ).

The interview was conducted with an Estonian diplomat who has extensive and long-term knowledge and experience in foreign affairs. Since 2000 the person has been working on

foreign policy related matters in countries, such as, the United Kingdom (UK), The Netherlands and Greece and served the Estonian Foreign Ministry since the 90s. His contribution to this dissertation was valuable as the interviewee was active in diplomacy during the Iraq crisis and, thus, had the opportunity to observe the EU foreign policy during throughout the First and Second Gulf War. Although Estonia remained rather an observer in the Iraq situation, the interviewee provided remarkable insights about how the EU has evolved over the past decade. However, it is important to note that the scope of the interview was relatively limited as the person in question provides mainly the perspective of one EU member state rather than the view of the EU as a whole.

Lastly, the quantitative research methods were not applied in this dissertation, as statistical findings could not have contributed to answering the research question. In this regard, the dissertation was build upon secondary research with the support of qualitative research methods in terms of an interview. The findings collected and evaluated by using the previously mentioned methods allowed to adequately answer the main research question.



### **3. What were the EU foreign policy approach and the position over the Afghanistan invasion prior to the second Gulf War?**

The beginning of the 2000s set a clear example of the type of foreign policy power the EU tended to exercise in particular. In a world of complicated external relations and increasing number of challenges, global actors have begun to apply different foreign policy approaches to manage external affairs related issues. Unlike the US, one of the biggest allies of the EU, the Union has become characterised by its notion of soft power. As Haukkala describes the EU's soft politics, "the EU has in fact actively sought to project and promote its norms and values internationally" meaning that the Unions' main foreign policy instruments are used within its normative powers (Haukkala, 2007, p. 5). This suggests that Europe's preferences lean towards the use of political and economic rather than military-oriented external operations.

It is also argued that the indication of the EU's normative power could be found in the nature of the European community. According to Linklater, "the European civilizing process" has largely formed the character of the Union throughout its history (Linklater, 2011, p. 23). Indeed, the European integration process has been under constant development and gathered many valuable experiences in community building. University Professor Nielsen sees a direct linkage between EU's soft power and its territorial extensions as he states, "the EU's enlargement policy has helped promote democratisation and political reform in candidate states, and stable, peaceful relations between them" (Nielsen, 2013, p. 729). Therefore, the Union has been well familiar with the application of normative approaches and practiced its soft power capabilities since the early years of its establishment. In the pursuit of achieving a peaceful and efficient cooperation between its member states, the EU certainly possesses valuable soft power expertise and should not be perceived as a newcomer among other soft power actors.

Yet, the changing international security environment has posed regular challenges to the EU as well as to the rest of the global players. Due to various issues that have required the attention and support from the international community, the EU has actively been involved in providing help for the countries in need. As Nielsen argues, active use of soft power is of high importance as it "is a resource which in order to be useful needs to be reinforced through consistent action in keeping with those values and policies that brought

it about in the first place” (Nielsen, 2013, p. 730). Undoubtedly, one of these touchstones was the Afghanistan war.

Afghanistan came into the international spotlight in 2001 on September 11 when a group of al-Qaeda Islamic terrorists made an attack on the United States (US). Afghanistan had since long been under the attention of the international community due to the malfunctioning of its political system and poor economic performance which made it vulnerable to extremist groups and great powers in the region. Although the establishment of the Taliban rule in Afghanistan in the second half of the 90s created a critical political context, there was no clear evidence for actual threat until 2001 (Whitman & Wolff, 2012). However, the 9/11 attacks came to be as a wake up call to the majority of the global leaders who believed that in this peaceful post-Cold War era, safety could still be taken for granted.

Consequently, the US immediately decided that those behind the massacres need to be held accountable and a clear response has to be given either with or without the allies. As Whitman and Wolf argue in their book on *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager*, the war on terrorism started out with an initial plan to topple the Taliban regime and ensure that terrorists no longer rule Afghanistan. Later on the initial steps were followed by the task of reconstructing the country, which promised to be an extremely complicated, and resource consuming process ahead. Despite the US taking the leading role in countering terrorism, the international intervention in Afghanistan became a foreign policy priority in many other parts of the international community, including the EU (Whitman & Wolff, 2012). The EU's engagement in Afghanistan was undoubtedly a challenging endeavour and a testing point for the practical application of the Union's foreign and security policy.

The EU institutions and leaders did not take any considerable time to negotiate or deliberate their position over the Afghanistan invasion and instead, their reaction to the 9/11 events was rapid and united. Among all the member states, the United Kingdom with the Prime Minister Tony Blair at the head showed the greatest dedication to stay side by side with the US in countering terrorism. Quite soon Javier Solana, the EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), confirmed “the pledge of its 15-nation membership” which, besides that, was also strengthened by the 13 other European countries that were at the time part of the negotiations to join the EU and

expressed their solidarity for the US (University of Miami Jean Monnet Chair Staff, 2001, p. 4).

Europe's support was also clearly stated in the extraordinary Council meeting for the members of the Justice, Home Affairs and Civil Protection on September 20. The report of this meeting confirmed that "the European Union is prepared to carry out immediately, together with the United States, an assessment of the terrorist threat from all aspects, including in particular the identification of terrorist organizations, which will benefit from both the US contribution and an in-depth analysis by the Union concerning regional situations and thematic issues" (European Commission, 2001, s. 3, para. 1). Hence, with the latter the EU-15 expressed its unconditional loyalty and commitment to the US in the Afghanistan invasion.

Furthermore, the joint decision of the Council of the EU, the European Parliament and the Commission proved that the EU institutions shared the same point of view and are ready to work collectively in this crisis. The Europe-wide support was also seen by the Council of Europe, various European media outlets, scholars, researchers and organizations that agreed upon Europe's responsibility to engage in Afghanistan (University of Miami Jean Monnet Chair Staff, 2001). Thus, an unequivocal pledge of the EU provided a strong ground for the institutions to act at the world forefront and speed up the process to act immediately.

The efficiency of the Union's collective act was reflected on its quick outcomes on conflict management. Already three days after the attacks, the European Commission had filed a document that proposed to amend the common definition on terrorism and reform the extradition system in all aspects of cross-border terrorism in the current crisis context. Only within ten days followed by 9/11 the European Council put forward a Plan of Action that concentrated on an extensive cooperation between member states, the US and the Europol especially in exchange of information and investigations (European Commission, 2002). Therefore, the Afghanistan intervention provided the EU a momentum in which it convinced that the Union is able to speak with one voice, closely engage in foreign policy dialogues and, above all, commit itself to the coalition against terrorism.

Other than that, the rapid decision on its position was not the only aspect characterizing EU's participation in the Afghanistan invasion. How the EU approached and contributed to the crisis management in Afghanistan is as important as the formation of its position in understanding the EU's foreign and security policy at the beginning of the century. In the

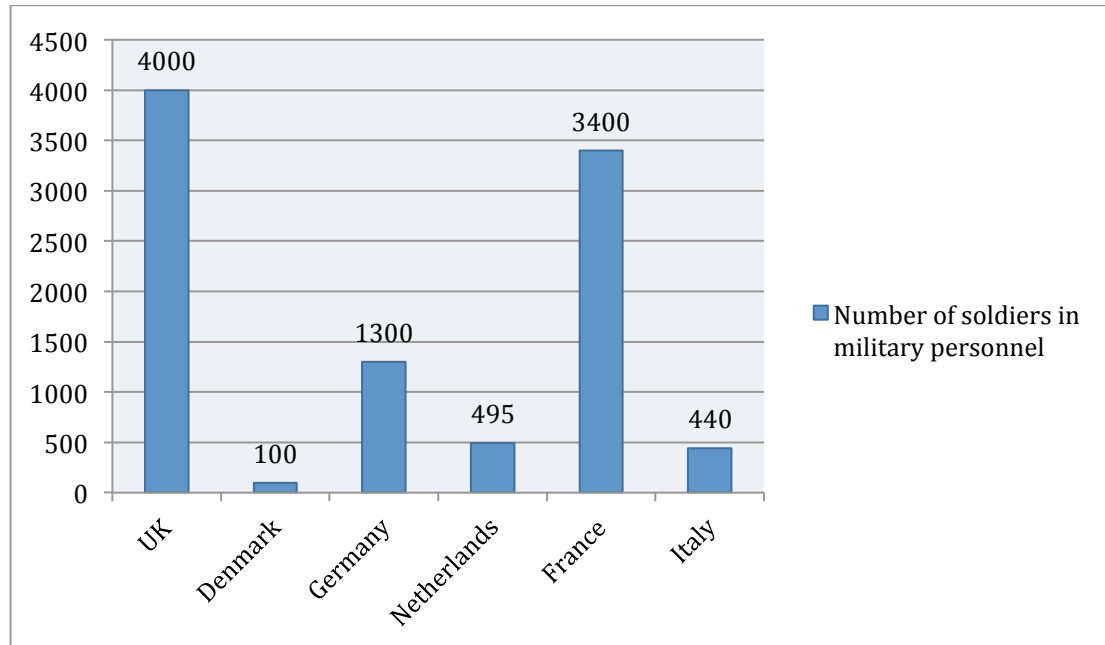
Afghanistan intervention, as Lindstrom argues, the European continent was labeled as a soft power due to avoiding the use of military force in the conflict resolution and the US, on the other hand, as a hard power by enforcing the use of force (Lindstrom, 2003). The EU's notion of soft power depended largely on the contributions it made in the US-led invasion, such as, providing "police and judicial cooperation, humanitarian aid, air transport security, economic and financial measures and emergency preparedness" (European Commission, 2002, para. 1). All these previously mentioned activities that the Union undertook are part of a normative approach that does not involve any military action in a crisis situation.

For certain reasons, the EU's soft power approach did receive considerable criticism for not helping the US to carry out military operations, but instead, only contributing to the reconstruction of the Afghan nation (Lindstrom, 2003). As Robert Kagan explains, strong powers "measure risks and threats differently, they define security differently and they have different levels of tolerance for insecurity" and argues that "those with great military power are more likely to consider force a useful tool of international relations than those who have less military power" (Kagan, 2003, p. 27). This argues that the absence of Europe's own military sources also affected the vision on the Afghanistan conflict and, thus, the European leaders chose the soft approach over the hard one. This, too, was the reason for the American leaders' criticism on the EU, as the US, with strong military capacity, views the need of the application of military use differently.

However, there were a number of member states willing to participate militarily against the Taliban regime. Countries like the United Kingdom, Denmark, Italy, France, Germany and the Netherlands expressed their will to share military sources in the means of deploying military troops. This was mainly member states' individual motive to commit military support while making additional contributions next to the EU's general soft power approach. As shown in Figure 1, the UK and France were the largest contributors of military assistance to Afghanistan by deploying troops consisting of 4000 and 3400 soldiers, respectively. Germany's contribution remained rather average with 1300 militants compared to the Netherlands and Denmark, which deployed less than 500 soldiers each. These European forces were mainly used to provide naval and aerial support for combating the operations on the local level. Unlike the rest, the UK was the only country that also sent troops for the purpose of toppling Taliban (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, 2002). Considering the number of military forces provided to

Afghanistan from some of the European countries, it was clear that Europe prevailed relatively modest in its overall military contribution.

Figure 1: Military contributions to Afghanistan



Note: Adapted from Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, October 2002, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/14627.htm>; and Embassy of France in Canada, Afghanistan: France Present Both in the East and in the South, 2011.

Since the military support was considerably low, there were plenty of European countries that instead of military support or next to it, offered humanitarian aid. These were countries like Belgium, Czech Republic, France and Hungary that mostly supplied the Afghan citizens with food supplies and medical care (Embassy of France in Canada, 2009). As a result, the European Commission together with the EU member states invested around 8 billion Euros of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan (European Union External Action, 2011). Bearing in mind the latter, it could be stated that the EU's overall form of participation remained within normative frames and had the greatest impact on recovering the Afghan civil society. As Lindstrom argues, considering the amounts donated into rebuilding Afghanistan, it could be said that the EU provided "the largest multinational humanitarian assistance mission to Afghanistan" (Lindstrom, 2003, p. 238). This shows that Europe's long-term commitment and contribution to recovering Afghanistan was significant.

Besides, despite the Americans' critique on EU's military passiveness, the experience in Afghanistan shows that the Union's practice of normative power could be perceived as a relatively good balance to the US' hard politics. According to Jean-Yves Haine, "soft power components are indispensable elements that must back up hard power" (Haine, 2003, p. 116). In a country like Afghanistan where the rule of law was almost non-existent, different approaches were essential in the recovery of the country. By assisting and training Afghan criminal justice system, police and law enforcement; reinforcing regional cooperation; and rural development, the EU complemented well the US-led mission in Afghanistan (European Union External Action, 2011). In the end, it is crucial in foreign policy that different types of forces are applied in relation to the need and this is where the US has definitely something to learn from the EU (European Union External Action, 2011).

Nevertheless, the Union's participation in the Afghanistan invasion was not the only footprint left behind. Every foreign policy action that the EU undertakes brings it also to the world scene where it forms its image as a member of the international community. The Afghanistan intervention certainly was an important occasion through which Europe was able to present the type of an international actor it was. As Alfonso Martinez Arranz argues, from being an importer of security, the EU has "began to export security to the rest of the world to tackle the global challenges of the post-cold war and post-9/11 world such as terrorism, failed states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction" (Arranz, 2010, p. 28). This depicts well the EU's role on the world stage, as it has become a crucial ally to its global partners and increased its capabilities to a level in which it acts as an institutional player while supporting countries in need.

Yet, the unity of the EU over Afghanistan and the potential benefits of its soft politics for the American hard power did not present the EU as a flawless and fully advanced global foreign policy actor. The Afghanistan war confirmed that despite its deceptive unity, the EU had no certain authority in its foreign policy decision-making as there were moments when the member states tended to act rather alone than together as a team. This, thus, meant that the EU's foreign policy was largely functioning in the intergovernmental and not in an institutionally supranational style. The fact that the EU leaders attended the post-attack meetings in Washington separately, one after another, is only characteristic to a style of an intergovernmental entity. Also, the example of the former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi did not demonstrate the EU as being a complex supranational foreign policy maker when he loudly mentioned the "superiority of the West over Islam" (Jean

Monnet Chair Staff, 2001, p. 7). Such lack of coordination in international negotiations surely hindered the EU's global image by giving the impression as if its member states were not entirely committed to the Union's ethical values.

Another example derives from the 2002 Geneva Conference on security sector reform (SSR) where the G8 decided upon the tasks that different members of the international community would take in reforming the Afghan security. The SSR stipulated that the US takes responsibility for reforming the army, Germany the police, Italy the justice system and the US the narcotics together with the army (Whitman & Wolff, 2012). This consequently demonstrated the EU's intergovernmental personality in which different member states take on individual obligations instead of fulfilling obligations assigned to a union itself. Thus, the international allies do not seem to view the EU as a partner of a complex supranational entity that carries responsibilities as one but rather as a community of 15 members that act on their own within separate external policies.

As a result, an image of the EU as a normative global actor, functioning within an intergovernmental framework, possesses a relatively low influence on other international players. As Nouredine argues, the member states tended to set their own priorities above the EU's values when there is a benefit serving their interest (Nouredine, 2016). The fact that the UK alone expressed its solidarity and military readiness for the US intervention in Afghanistan before any other member state or the Union shows that the UK was clearly protecting its overseas economic interests in its external relations. Even though the support of the UK and the Union was the same, acting before a common decision proves that the EU's ethical norms are somewhat secondary to some of the member states. This, in spite of everything, affected Europe's image on the world stage.

Such tension in the EU has certainly hindered the EU's influence on other global players if not directly, then at least indirectly. This might easily decrease EU's ability to spread the community values on to the others. According to Raja Nouredine, generally it causes damage on EU's reputation "by rendering it unable to impose costs on non-compliance with its norms, by reducing the effectiveness of capacity-building programs, by leading to inconsistency in the application of its norms, and by damaging the Union's international reputation as a values-based actor" (Nouredine, 2016, pp. 3-4). Hence, Europe's coherence over Afghanistan and already outstanding contributions to the recovery of the country could most likely have been even greater if the EU had avoided those clashes among the member states and acted more in a way that is common to a supranational union.

Therefore, as seen from the EU's foreign policy example in Afghanistan, the Union was able to form a quick position over the intervention and showed its solidarity for the US in this fight against terrorism. The EU's participation as a normative power received some criticism from the US although considering the Americans' practice of hard politics, the EU's approach provided a good balance to the reconstruction of the country by laying down a strong basis for improving the Afghan justice system. However, despite the EU having been perceived as a crucial ally on the international stage, it seemed to lack credibility as a union. The way the EU performed within its foreign policy seemed to be somewhat divided in its unity. Above all, it could be argued that the EU could have been considered more of a union in its own right if the member states had shown more commitment to the EU's general values and norms. The EU's intergovernmental foreign policy look clearly showed that the Europe was not always perceived as consistent Union but rather as a collection of single states that are willing to act on their own if necessary.

The overview of the EU foreign policy's position and approach in the Afghanistan invasion is an important aspect to study before understanding the stance it took in the second Gulf War. The Afghanistan crisis provides relevant knowledge to investigate the reasons behind the foreign policy changes during the Iraq war and helps to explain the overall state of affairs in the EU's foreign policy back in the early 2000s. The next chapter will focus on the member states opinion on invading Iraq.



#### **4. What led to the Iraq invasion and how did different member states perceive EU's participation in the war?**

The Iraq war educed great tension, controversy and criticism among the members of the international community. It started off with the US' fear of having lost control of protecting its own citizens from terror and consequently strengthened its sensitivity for any potential new threat against the American nation following the 9/11 tragedies. As for having experienced what a regime under terrorist control can lead to, undemocratic countries like Afghanistan and later Iraq immediately became a suspect of Islamic terrorism and above all, "legitimate targets of military intervention" (Fazio, 2015, p. 5). Whether the US' despair over Iraq was justified, is another aspect that increased the complexity of the Iraq case.

The opinion of the global players was divided into two different groups. According to Mearsheimer, "the dispute about whether to go to war in Iraq was between two competing theories of international politics: realism and the neo-conservatism that underpins the Bush doctrine" (Mearsheimer, 2005, para. 5). As Mearsheimer explains, the neo-conservatives strongly believed in the remarkable US' military force and its ability and task to spread its norms and values across the world. In this view it was the Americans' moral responsibility to promote democracy and this largely laid the basis for the US' foreign policy. The realists, on the other hand, believed in nationalism and not in promoting democracy. In realism it was not the first priority to attack the source of threat, but instead concentrate on its own defense and, thus, ensure the balance between states (Mearsheimer, 2005). However, according to Fazio, the Bush government was driven by the neo-conservative's view and the Iraq invasion came to be known under the name of Bush doctrine (Fazio, 2015).

Yet, regardless of what the Bush administration stood for and aimed to achieve, there was no evidence that Iraq, under Saddam Hussein's regime, would pose any immediate threat to the US (Fazio, 2015). This means that the US' plans were mainly driven by the feeling of fear and without acknowledging that there was still yet no proof found against Hussein's possible threat. As Brent Scowcroft has stated, a step against Iraq would "seriously jeopardize if not destroy the global counterterrorist campaign" (Scowcroft, 2002, p. 53). This argues that the US' decision upon going to war in Iraq could result in serious consequences in the region as well as damaging the image of the whole counterterrorism campaign. To start a war against a state that by evidence poses no, or barely any threat,

could give an example of starting aggression on behalf of overreacting in the war against terror.

The United Nations (UN) also played a crucial role in the debates over Iraq prior and during the invasion and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) was certainly the most discussed topic around the UN tables. Due to the lack of evidence against Hussein's regime the UN adopted a resolution on a lowest common denominator stating that Iraq has been in a "material breach" of non-proliferation rules (Fazio, 2015, p. 11). Yet, since there was no proof found on Iraq's ownership of WMD by the UN inspectors, the UN decided to continue with the inspections and extend the process to carefully deliberate its opinion (Fazio, 2015). Regardless of the UN's disapproval to intervene, the US invaded Iraq in March 2003 even though the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had clearly stated that would be a violation of the UN charter and, hence, illegal (MacAskill & Borger, 2004).

The US pressure on the UN to receive the right to intervene did not leave the other global actors untouched in this issue. Far from that, the rest of the international community members faced the same fundamental question upon which foreign policy stance should they be taken in the war. As expectedly or unexpectedly the Iraq invasion came for the EU, it consequently posed enormous challenges to the Union's foreign and security policy, for transatlantic relations and security strategies in particular. It probed Europe's strength and capabilities to act within its external policies and coordinate the member states participation in decision-making process in times of crisis.

However, despite the EU's considerable success in Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq was not as easy for the EU as was the former. As Lewis argues, the intra-European negotiations in fall 2002 presented clear divergence among member states and the difficulty to reach any consensus-based agreement upon the common policy towards Iraq. The divisive argument over whether to support military intervention hindered the EU's foreign policy decision-making system. The highest political leaders were not able to put through any deliberate decision as was usually common to the EU institutions (Lewis, 2008). Therefore, Europe was cleaved into two opposing parts; each part representing either the anti- or pro-war governments, which consequently led to disagreements that "prevented the adoption of a common position towards the Iraq crisis" (Kaya, 2012, p. 3).

The fact that these conflicting views appeared to be between the most dominant and largest European countries deepened the clashes of the opposing sides even more. In the middle of those disagreements, the UK remained a supporter of the US whereas the German and French anti-intervention governments decided to follow the UN's lead in managing the Afghanistan crisis (Lewis, 2008). According to Kaya, the anti-US countries argued that no intervention is acceptable until there is clear evidence that the Hussein's regime poses potential threat to the West. The majority of Europe, with a large support of the European citizens, feared that the intervention could lead to further instabilities in the Middle East and, moreover, contradict the Western leaders' plan on fighting against global terrorism. Namely, it was widely feared within the European community that the Americans' willingness to respond to possible threats in Iraq might lead to further atrocities (Kaya, 2012). This argues that if the US takes action against the Iraqi regime without any rational reason to support it, then the US' invasion would mean conducting terrorism by the West in the East. Such reverse effect would mean that the US, together with its partners, causes unreasonable violence that in the end only results in encouraging the authoritarian regimes to respond with a similar approach. This is something that the Western governments certainly could not afford as they concurrently aimed to set an example of a collective power that pursues to counter global terrorism.

However, there were various reasons behind the positions that different European countries took towards the Iraq war. For instance, the UK as the most ambitious ally to the US in the Iraq crisis supported the US because of seeing it as a respected global actor and long-term friendly relations. Besides, the UK had a much softer look at the justification of intervention than many other European countries. Similarly to France, The UK felt encouraged to engage militarily due to having been the conquerors of a variety of countries in the world and knowing what it means to be a global military power. Regardless of 60-80 per cent of the British public's disagreement with the Bush's plans, the UK firmly decided to stand for its national interests and follow the US' lead (Wood, 2013).

France, on the other hand, believed that the conflict in Iraq is widely the fault of the US and without evidence there is no reason to intervene. The French former president Jacques Chirac's view was supported by 78 per cent of the French citizens and, thus, France had taken a strong anti-Bush position over the Iraq question (Wood, 2013). According to Taheri, regardless of the US fear for further terrorism, Chirac had "taken personal charge of the Iraqi dossier with the clear aim of preventing an unnecessary war that could in his view destabilize the whole of the Middle East" (Taheri, 2003, p. 1). Yet,

financial interests also influenced France's position because along with Russia, France was a crucial creditor for Iraq and any instability in the region could only cause more trouble. As from the political perspective, Chirac's objective was to stay aligned with Germany. Both countries had recently reached important policy agreements on the EU enlargement, the Common Agricultural Policy and, hence, dissension over Iraq could have damaged the partnership (Wood, 2013).

Germany, for example, was in the middle of new election campaigns in 2002 when the Iraq crisis occupied the German foreign policy agenda. The former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder addressed his consistent opposition to the war regardless of what the UN inspections might conclude about the existence of weapons. Schröder's anti-intervention position was followed by many other political figures although his strategy on how to avoid the conflict in Iraq received much criticism. Angela Merkel who argued that Schröder is "pursuing the wrong strategy to prevent the current situation escalating into war" especially led this criticism (Mirow, 2016, p. 151). Based on this Merkel stood against the idea of ignoring the UN Resolution 1441 on weapons' inspections with the belief that this will prevent the war. Thus, Germany concretely was against Bush, however the internal foreign policy disputes proved that Germany was also in search of its own foreign policy strategy and somewhat facing a change in its external policy's identity.

Poland, too, as a non-EU member in 2002/3 decided quickly upon its opinion over Iraq and joined the pro-war group. Like the UK, Poland also had strong historical motivations to justify the invasion. The times of Nazi and Soviet occupations had taught the Polish what it means to suffer tremendous losses under violent regimes and showed understanding towards what the citizens of Iraq might be going through if Hussein remains in power. Also the public view remained rather skeptical than anti- Bush like it appeared to be in Germany at the same time. Moreover, as a EU candidate country, Poland seemed to be proud to belong to the 'new' Europe and build a closer partnership with the UK and the rest while sharing the same degree of loyalty towards the US (Wood, 2013).

Therefore, the previous examples allow concluding that the positions of the aforementioned European actors were mainly derived from national interests. It remained more crucial to stand for own benefits than to ensure the coherence and efficiency of the common foreign and security policy on the Union level. In other cases, like the UK and Poland, either self-recognition in the Iraq crisis or empathy due to past experiences were

also factors that created differences in perceptions over Iraq. As Peterson states, "Iraq had been a bitterly divisive issue" in the EU, which restricted Europe to take any unified action (Peterson, 2004, p. 11). In a desperate search for solutions in overcoming the EU's discord, the General Affairs and External Relations Council concluded at the beginning of 2003 that the Iraq's disarmament of WMD is of first importance and chose to pass on the responsibility to the UN as the one obliged to foster international peace in the first place (Kaya, 2012). With this statement of the Council it had taken the "let the UN do it" approach and distanced itself from the conflict (Lewis, 2008, p. 2).

However, despite the Council's UN outlook, the European divisions and the lack of agreement resulted in eight European leaders (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Poland, Denmark, Hungary and Czech Republic) publicizing on 30 January the "letter of the eight" in which they showed support for the Bush administration (Pace, 2004, p. 236). This was soon followed by another letter, which was called the "Vilnius 10" signed by ten EU candidate countries (Slovenia, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Albania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania) saying that they agree to enter the war in Iraq (Lewis, 2008, p. 7). The fact that countries that were not even yet EU member states signed the letter showed their brazen position over the Iraq dispute and complicated the intra-Union negotiations. Moreover, those letters did not only deepen the burden in Europe, but also damaged the reputation of the EU institutions' tradition of consultation. This EU's custom was violated not only by hiding the plans from the anti-war governments in France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, but by also ignoring the communication with the EU' foreign policy chief Javier Solana and the Greek presidency (Lewis, 2008). According to Michael Smith's critics on this kind of behavior, "the most fundamental principle of European foreign policy cooperation is that EU member states must avoid taking fixed positions on important foreign policy questions without prior consultation with their partners" (Smith, 2004, p. 101). This explains that the EU's fragmentation had strongly affected its efficiency on decision-making and cooperation by resulting partners' betrayal one another.

It is also important to note that all the drafts of those letters circulated directly between European countries' embassies to ensure that everything is put forward without the EU institutions being aware of it. The Union had reached a moment in which the member states did not even have the desire to understand each other anymore because of the primary disagreements. According to Lewis, such a letter campaign was a "very disruptive way of conducting business" and, above all, it seemed as if the EU had turned its own back to itself (Lewis, 2008, p. 10). In the end, such secrecy, unwillingness to compromise

and consciously building opposing intra-community groups confirmed that the EU does not function as an institutional unity promoting common foreign policies and strategies. Instead, as Gstöhl and Lannon state, it showed “EU’s inability to respond in a coordinated manner” when clashes appear among member states (Gstöhl & Lannon, 2016, p. 110).

Moreover, the incoherent and uncompromised EU’s foreign and security policy created also concerns for the American leaders, which did not just let them remain silently observe the European external policy crisis. More than that, on 23 January the US defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld commented on the lack of intra-European cooperation and stated that the countries are divided into ‘new Europe’ and ‘old Europe’. This meant that countries like France and Germany, that opposed the intervention, belonged to the ‘old’ and the countries such as the UK, Spain and many other Central-Eastern European countries were called as the ‘new Europe’ based on their will to join forces with the US. According to Lansford and Blagovest, the division, in turn, symbolized that the ‘old Europe’ had become irrelevant in transatlantic relations because its gentle approaches towards countries under military authoritarian regimes, such as Iraq, would only support the continuous use of nuclear weapons (Lansford & Blagovest, 2005). The latter undoubtedly also angered the European political elite on behalf of which Chirac responded to Rumsfeld’s comment that the Americans had “missed a good opportunity to keep quiet” (Segell, 2004, p. 161).

This further indicates that there was not only a conflict of interest in Europe but also in transatlantic relations. On the other hand, the US was relatively unfair when criticizing EU’s equanimity and so to say military ‘passiveness’. As one European diplomat argues, “it was in theory difficult to measure its actual hard power capabilities when considering the young age of the EU foreign policy” (Personal communication 2017). Indeed, Europe also lacked experiences like it had in the Iraq war and, therefore, the US’ criticism was not enough justified. Although these overseas issues appeared to be mainly between the US and the ‘old Europe’, there was overall tension in transatlantic relations which also affected the EU’s performance as an international actor that was incapable of forming a cooperation with one of its most important allies.

Thus, Iraq represents a challenging moment for the EU foreign policy’s unity and credibility by bringing to light its incompetence to consistently speak with one voice. The lack of community feeling and priorities led the member states to choose their national interests before the Union’s general norms and values. The member states expressed

few, if any, will to engage in and enforce effective intra-Union cooperation to achieve common solutions for the conflict over Iraq. Yet, by March 2003 these conflicting views seemed to have created the deepest divisions the EU's foreign and security policy had ever seen before. As a reaction to Europe's disunity, the next chapter will elaborate on how the EU overcame its disagreements and in which way were these changes reflected in the European Security Strategy (ESS).

## **5. How did the EU foreign policy position change as a result of internal disagreements as reflected in the European Security Strategy?**

The EU's foreign policy faced a turning point in 2003 between March and June when the Union slowly began to overcome its divergence over Iraq. It is, however, rather difficult to explain when and how exactly the EU member states' opinion changed as there was no concrete event nor argument that would confirm the moment of change of direction. Instead, it was a months-long ongoing process resulting gradual progress in finding the common voice over the foreign and security policy. The progress was largely enabled by the foreign ministers taking distance from their conflicting arguments that had hindered the foreign policy decision-making and who began to make more efforts to return to cooperation (Lewis, 2008).

As Lewis argues, the price of the damaged transatlantic relations and the decreasing influence in the Middle East was too high for the EU to pay and, thus, it motivated the EU to rethink its foreign and security policy in the means of potential reconstruction assistance. The anti-war European countries gradually began to understand that in order to increase the EU credibility and influence as an international actor, it needed to act within its qualifications best describing a strong global player. The most logical step for the EU in this situation was to apply its normative approach by promoting democracy, protecting human rights and the rule of law as the key areas in which the EU is capable to act the most efficiently. Soon after the anti-invasion countries came to this realization, the military intervention discussion was left to the background and replaced with the reconstruction assistance plans by seeing it as an opportunity to enter the scene as a soft power (Lewis, 2008).

Yet, as Thomas argues, the growing awareness of the possible benefits of post-war reconstruction efforts led to a moment when "those with 'no EU action' preferences gradually became entrapped by the EU's longer-term normative commitments to become a global actor" (Thomas, 2011, p. 80). This means that not the anti-war governments' arguments became weaker and less important, but the EU's own already existing strengths in normative conflict resolution appeased the opponents. Also, the changing position of the EU over reconstruction efforts in Iraq was surely encouraged by the increasing UN involvement in the region. As Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the UN, refers to the Iraq conflict in the Security Council's debate in spring 2003, the UN needs to



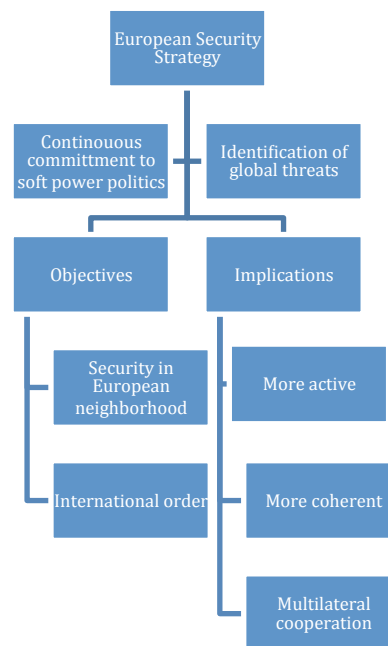
act “as the body with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security” (United Nations Security Council, 2003, para. 20). Hence, the UN’s growing involvement in reconstruction discussions over Iraq gave the EU somewhat more legitimacy to take action in the Middle East (Lewis, 2008). In this matter the UN made a leading step in the process of EU’s changing opinion.

According to Youngs, the formation of the new EU strategy towards Iraq “focused on the long-term structure of EU-Iraq relations to avoid short-term controversies” (Youngs, 2004, p. 6). This shows that the EU’s humanitarian and economic reconstruction plans represented a mission that concentrated on reaching long-term goals without letting possible disagreements over short-term objectives to interrupt the process. This new vision and reframing of the Iraq conflict seemed to be a promising step forward in making the EU’s foreign policy more coherent. In this search for unity, the EU foreign ministers had an informal meeting while cruising the Greek islands in May 2003 during which they concluded that a concretely formulated and systemized European Security Strategy will be needed to provide basis for collective action in Iraq (Lewis, 2008).

Yet, the European Council meeting in Thessaloniki in June 2003 was an official confirmation that the member states’ interest and willingness to return to cooperation was showing growth. This was officially proven when the foreign policy chief Javier Solana handed in his first European Security Strategy (ESS) draft document titled *A Secure Europe in a Better World* (Biscop, *The European Security Strategy: A Global Agenda for Positive Power*, 2005). As Quille concludes Solana’s comments on the ESS “the ESS was a necessary response to the profound changes in the international security environment, requiring security priorities to centre on international terrorism and WMD proliferation” (Quille, 2004, p. 2). As Quille described, the ESS draft gave an overview of the security environment that the EU was operating in and which strategic thinking is the EU going to follow in its upcoming external activities. However, Solana was then given another half a year to improve the strategic document and to submit it again in the next European Council meeting. The meetings held in Rome, Paris and Stockholm during the completion period aimed to support the correctness and entirety of the document. This invited together the representatives from the EU member states, candidate countries, EU institutions and also various experts with relevant contribution capabilities to the content of this document (Biscop, *The European Security Strategy: A Global Agenda for Positive Power*, 2005).

The EU political leaders adopted the final version of the ESS on 12-13 December in 2003 at the European Council meeting (Kaya, 2012). As Polenz describes it, the ESS was partly created due to the US' criticism on the EU's lack of motivation for military intervention, strategic thinking and, above all, it was "born out of EU's disagreements over Iraq" (Polenz, 2004, p. 1). Hence, the Strategy was the result and at the same time also a response to the failure of the EU foreign policy in 2002 and early 2003. It was a reaction of the EU member states to address the transatlantic issues and overcome the divergence that had made the EU foreign policy incapable to act in an important crisis as was in Iraq. According to Kaya, the EU representatives had, thus, the aim to establish "a common European security concept which would in the future prevent divisions among EU Member States in possible crisis, like in the Iraq crisis and make the EU a more coherent and effective foreign and security policy actor in international issues" (Kaya, 2012, p. 15). This argues that the ESS was a tool for the EU to fulfill its aspiration of becoming an influential global actor through unity and credible foreign policy decision-making.

Moreover, it is important to note that the ESS is a "document, which analyses and defines for the first time the EU's security environment, identifying key security challenges and subsequent political implications for the EU" (European Union External Action, 2016b, para. 41). As Figure 2 indicates, the ESS consisted of various sections addressing the EU's new strategic foreign policy framework. Besides explaining the Union's perception of global security and its position in soft power politics, it led to a more detailed analysis of the aspired European strategic outlook. For this purpose it described the EU foreign policy objectives in regard to security in the European neighborhood and international order. These objectives were followed by the foreign policy implications that concern the EU's activity, coherence and multilateral cooperation as important aspects when pursuing a Union-wide strategic cooperation (Solana, 2003). Although the title indicated to a security strategy, in its essence the ESS systematically covered the whole EU foreign policy. This was clear as the strategy areas vary from defense and security to humanitarian and economic aid (Biscop & Andersson, 2008, p. 3). Such a comprehensive strategy of an intergovernmental and supranational concept of a Union comprising many different foreign policy fields could deserve to be called by a grand strategy. In a document like the ESS, the strategy was built upon different means and between different ends, which enabled it to function in many foreign policy key areas (Biscop, 2012, p. 148).

*Figure 2: Overview of the main EU foreign policy features in the ESS*

*Note:* Adapted from European Security Strategy by Javier Solana, 2003.

By covering a wide range of policy fields, the ESS based a precise description of the changing security environment that Europe faced at this time. With an emphasis of the interconnectedness of global challenges such as global warming, globalization, hunger and poverty, the ESS addressed five new key threats that would potentially probe the European security. Terrorism, proliferation of WMD, regional conflicts, failed states and organized crime were the ones that the EU “could be confronted with a very radical threat” (Solana, 2003, p. 5). According to Menotti, the ESS firstly drew a picture of “how we got here” and fostered further discussion on “where to go from here and what to do next” (Menotti, 2003, p. 13). Hence, the document sought to confirm the member states that they were all confronted with same threats and that in order to ensure a secure European environment, it is crucial for the Union to tackle the same threats as a unified community.

Bearing in mind the new threats, the ESS outlined a foreign policy guidance that helped to achieve strategic objectives. Solana stated in his ESS that “in an era of globalization, distant threats may be as much a concern as those that are near at hand” (Solana, 2003, p. 6). This argues that the European security was no longer only affected by internal instabilities, but also by threats appearing abroad. This was an important statement as it identified the EU’s security and defense policy with a broader context and extended the

EU's responsibilities outside of the European borders. Driven by the European division over Iraq, Solana added that "we should be ready to act before a crisis occurs" because no "conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early" (Solana, 2003, p. 7). Hence, in order to respond to external threats, Solana promoted readiness for any crisis situation that may affect the stability of the European security.

Yet, while the ESS presented its shift towards more effective conflict prevention, the EU seemed to surely hold on to the soft power notion. Solana argues that "none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means" and reaffirmed that "the European Union is particularly well equipped to respond to such multi-faceted situations" when confronting security threats (Solana, 2003, p. 7). This refers to the EU's continuous loyalty to its normative foreign policy approaches and its willingness to take responsibility when global threats are not only handled with hard power.

Besides countering the new threats, another strategic objective was to ensure the security in the neighboring countries. In reference to the EU's enlargement, the ESS pointed out the EU's responsibility to assure that the European countries in the East and the South of Europe are democratically governed and with whom the EU "can enjoy close and cooperative relations" (Solana, 2003, p. 8). As Quille explains, the enlargement gave the EU a possibility to shift its security objectives towards neighboring countries and challenged the EU to maintain security within its soon to be extended borders. This approach in turn aimed to show European capabilities to increase coherence in the new neighborhood but also in the EU in general. In terms of increasing coherence, the strategic neighborhood objective "ought to be a measure of how credible the approach is in the wider world where the EU has a weaker presence and less developed strategies" (Quille, 2004, p. 6). Thus, the ESS foreign policy strategy towards building coherence in the surrounding areas of the member states could have also raised Europe's credibility among the international community where the EU's reputation had been damaged by the incoherence over Iraq.

Another aspect that the ESS intended to strive for was effective multilateralism. Under multilateralism Solana refers to the necessity to improve the coordination of international institutions and the application of the rule of law. This simply described the UN as the main actor in promoting global peace and confirming "strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfill its responsibilities and to act effectively, is a European priority" (Solana, 2003, p. 9). With this approach the Union surely aimed to highlight the

importance of a well-functioning multilateral system that would carry an important role in also establishing a stronger and more unified international community. Although multilateralism had been an essential characteristic of the EU's political system since a long time, Quille stated that "the Union's cooperative and institutional approach to security remains valid and important as the EU takes up greater global responsibilities in meeting its own security needs" (Quille, 2004, p. 8). This argues that the EU, as presented in the ESS, was willing to strategically apply its foreign and security policy in a way that it would improve the effectiveness of the international order with an objective to also strengthen intra-European security environment at the same time.

Other than the strategic objectives, the ESS implied the EU to become more active in fulfilling its foreign and security policy objectives in order to successfully implement the new collective security framework. According to Solana, it was essential to "develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention" to confront the new threats that Europe faces (Solana, 2003, p. 11). With the latter Solana promoted the creation of a strategic culture by encouraging the member states to adopt a shared vision to effectively and actively apply various foreign policy activities (Meyer, 2004). According to Rynning, the importance of developing a European strategic culture and active policies can make a significant difference as "if integrated and coordinated, (it) can help actors overcome even serious obstacles to cooperation" (Rynning, 2003, p. 481). Therefore, the foreign policy shift towards a more active security culture was seen as a way of strengthening the intra-European cooperation and making the EU a more compatible global actor.

Additionally, Solana mentions that an active EU is also a more coherent EU meaning that Europe can only be stronger "when we act together" and development could only be reached once the EU as a whole fully commits to pursuing its security objectives (Solana, 2003, p. 13). However, the document highlighted the fact that the EU was not able to cope with the security threats alone and that the international cooperation is necessary in order to make the world a more secure place. Besides emphasizing the great value and benefits of close transatlantic relations, Solana concludes that the EU had to achieve its security objectives "through multilateral cooperation in international organizations and through partnerships with key actors" (Solana, 2003, p. 13). Hereby Monetti argued that Solana's call for close partnerships is illustrated by the EU's 'Venus paradox' according to which Europe overestimated its security environment whereas it actually remained relatively vulnerable to security threats. Thus, as Monetti states, with the ESS Solana

intended to underline that an “introverted Europe [...] needs to overcome its Venus syndrome and fully take on a global role” (Menotti, 2003, p. 14).

Lastly, according to Biscop’s and Andersson’s reflection on the overall adaption of the new European foreign policy framework, the new European Strategy could have just been a symbolic representation of the reunification of Europe without any considerable influence on the foreign policy. However, it had to be acknowledged that instead of disappearing, the ESS’ guidelines have regularly been used as a tactical point of reference by the EU member state leaders and EU institutions in the making of EU foreign policy. As the two scholars describe, the continuous role of the European Strategy, “the more convincingly a proposed initiative can be linked to it, the more difficult it is to oppose” (Biscop & Andersson, 2008, p. 2). Hereby it surely showed that the ESS represents a valuable political guidance that sets a new essential basis for the EU foreign and security policy.

In conclusion, the reason behind adopting the ESS was the disagreement among member states over Iraq. It was the Union’s first time to put forward its own set of strategic foreign policy guidelines aiming to smooth the intra-European as well as international cooperation in external crisis. The ESS introduces a new foreign policy framework that highlights the necessity to improve strategic thinking that the EU clearly lacked during the US-led Iraq intervention. The framework emphasized the EU’s need to address new global threats by calling for strengthening security in the European extended neighbourhood and improving the effectiveness of multilateralism in the international community. The ESS also implied that the Union would become more active, grow coherence and pursue closer relations with its partners in conflict prevention and crisis management. The strategic objectives also intended to recover EU’s reputation and prove that it can be a compatible global actor. This is why the ESS was a cornerstone document in the evolution of the EU foreign and security policy and carried an important role in understanding the foreign policy changes that it reflected in the wake of the Iraq war. The next chapter will, thus, investigate the foreign policy initiatives and EU’s actual contributions in Iraq after the adoption of the ESS.

## **6. Which EU initiatives came out of the ESS?**

The reconstruction process that followed the military intervention of Iraq was undoubtedly the number one priority of the international community in 2003. It was the task of the global actors to engage in effective cooperation, join resources and pursue common goals that would enable democratization of the Iraqi state. The growing willingness of the EU and the UN to get involved in putting back together the pieces that the US-led invasion had caused to Iraq made a significant contribution to the rebuilding of Iraq's security. Global leaders showed their commitments to Iraq in the Madrid donors' conference towards the end of the year when financial support was collected for implementing reconstruction assistance's program. At this conference, the EU's total donation reached 1.25 billion Euros, which at first glance may have seemed to be an enormous amount considering the EU's previous foreign policy crisis over Iraq (European Commission, 2004). However, the US alone made an investment 13 times bigger than the EU together with its member states, resulting in the US total contribution of 13.6 billion Dollars to the international reconstruction fund (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, n.d., para. 3).

This in turn proved that although the EU started off with its reconstruction contributions slowly and rather modestly, the EU's efforts for overcoming internal disunity and adopting a new common security policy framework were a considerable step forward in strengthening EU's presence in Iraq. The extent to which the EU was able to further develop effective relations with Iraq largely depended on its capabilities to implement the ESS. Therefore, in order to assure a successful implementation of the ESS in the Iraq crisis, it was important to identify a set of objectives that Europe expected to attain in Iraq. According to the European Commission, the EU's main objectives in Iraq aimed to "revitalize civil society" while pursuing the "development of a secure, stable and democratic Iraq" and establishing "a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory legal framework" (European Commission, 2004, pp. 3-4). The variety and complexity of key areas in which the EU planned to provide assistance to Iraq represented a clear vision of the Union to reach greater stability in the region not only for the time being but also for the future ahead. In this regard, the EU undertook a number of crucial initiatives that required the application of the EU's normative approaches and provided support in areas that the Union is the most capable to act.

### **6.1. Humanitarian aid**

After the adoption of the ESS, the Union's policy framework for the Iraq's reconstruction plans certainly became more concrete, large-scale and long-term. The suggested direction of involvement was already identified in the ESS in which Solana pointed out that the support for "social and political reform" had to be of EU's importance when willing to improve "the quality of international order" (Solana, 2003, p. 10). Therefore, the reforms that needed to be brought forward in the civil society sector started to occupy a large part of the EU's agenda. In particular, the contributions to the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi citizens meant, above all, to offer health services, improve water quality, ensure better sanitation and advance the education of the locals (European Union Delegation to the United Nations - New York, n.d.). Considering the Iraqis' poor living conditions after the military intervention, the EU's efforts to increase the daily life quality made a significant contribution to the people who suffered the hardest consequences of the war. Despite the first developments in the civil society sector, European political leaders seemed to be interested in continuing their commitment to the assistance. According to Poul Nielson, the previous Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, the EU's participation in the humanitarian crisis management was concentrated on "providing every possible support and assistance to its partner organizations in Iraq to enable them to continue this essential relief work" (European Union Delegation to the United Nations - New York, n.d., para. 2).

Therefore, Europe's steady and long-term dedication to support the Iraqi civilians confirmed that the EU's awareness of its capabilities has increased to a large extent after the creation of its strategic external action guidelines. The strong commitment to civil society sector meant that the Union had begun to acknowledge its potential for greater changes when it is actively engaged in pursuing concrete foreign policy goals. Also, the pledge to cooperate side by side with international organizations demonstrated the EU's willingness to improve multilateral partnership through mutual assistance. However, humanitarian aid was only one part of recovering Iraq's security and much more had to be done to leave behind a valuable footprint for a better future of Iraq.

### **6.2. Electoral process**

In addition to the humanitarian aid, the emergence of the Iraq crisis confirmed again European leaders' loyalty to spreading the Union's democratic norms and values across



the globe especially to countries governed by authoritarian regimes like Iraq. As was also emphasized by Solana, security can only be assured when we will live in “a world of well-governed democratic states” (Solana, 2003, p. 10). Consequently, the EU’s strategic activities were also driven by the democratic thought and in the reconstruction assistance to Iraq; it was of EU’s concern to develop the local electoral process. Namely, since 2005 the EU was in cooperative relations with the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) of Iraq to ensure that the elections are held transparently and involve enough citizens for the credibility of the results. For instance, Europe provided Iraq electoral experts that could help to monitor local election-related activities such media coverage, monitoring of different electoral stages and educate Iraqis more about the importance of elections (European Union External Action, 2016a).

According to IFES (International Forum for Electoral Systems), the IHEC has performed successfully in reforming the Iraqi electoral system and that “political actors in Iraq recognized the IHEC as an independent and credible electoral management body” (IHEC, 2015, para. 8). This means that the Union was devoted to its responsibility to spread good governance and empower the citizens ruled by authoritarian regimes. The positive impact on the Iraqi electoral body sure confirmed that the EU has enough relevant expertise from the past to endorse democratization outside of its boundaries.

### **6.3. Criminal justice system**

Another strategic area in which the EU member states undertook crucial initiatives was the Iraq’s legal sector. As was emphasized in the ESS, “establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the international order” (Solana, 2003, p. 10). For the purpose of achieving this strategic foreign policy objective, The Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX) was implemented in 2005 as the first rule of law mission established by the Union. By deploying sixty legal experts to Iraq from different EU member states, its main activities were concentrated on reforming the judiciary, police and penitentiary. According to Koutrakos, the aim of the EUJUST LEX was to “improve the capacity, coordination, and collaboration of different components of the Iraqi criminal justice system in full respect for the rule of law and human rights” (Koutrakos, The EU Common Security and Defence Policy, 2013, pp. 166-167). This refers to the wide scope and interconnectedness of the EU’s reform on the criminal justice system.

The EUJUST LEX framework offered the members associated with the Iraqi criminal justice system the opportunity to learn from the EU member states' practices and later implement new knowledge and expertise in the context of Iraq. According to Christova, it is important to note that this mission was not derived by the idea to impose European approaches on Iraq, but rather to offer Iraqi participants a chance to "gain familiarity with different forms of organisation and different approaches to solving problems within the criminal justice system" (Christova, 2013, p. 433). Hence, the Union's activities involved courses and training for the Iraqi police, judiciary and penitentiary that for the time being took place in the territory of the EU due to security challenges. During the EU's assistance, the Iraqi judges, police and penitentiary officers were able to work next to European experts and experience the functioning of criminal justice systems of various EU member states (Christova, 2013). Such close cooperation offered a great benefit for the participants as it strengthened Iraqis' critical understanding and evaluation of different criminal justice environments.

Although the work experience of the Iraqi officials in the EU was an essential method to ensure the most efficient training process, the evaluation of the impact of this mission remained rather difficult to measure. The Union's approach to prepare surveys and questionnaires showed little success as the responses of the returned Iraqi officials were very limited (poor internet availability, deaths etc.) and gave few insights about the influence of the training on the local level. As Korski stated, the EU has remained inefficient "to test for the usefulness of the training offered or provide hands-on, post-training mentoring" (Korski, 2009, p. 237). On the other hand, Christova argued that from the responses received, "improvement in learning and competence performance as well as a high degree of impact of the training on the everyday duties of the attendees" was clearly identified (Christova, 2013, p. 235). This suggests that even though the evaluation of the mission was largely positive, the follow-up results were not comprehensive and critical enough to fully understand the impact of the assistance activities.

Nonetheless, the Art.2 (3) in the Council Joint Action of 2005 pointed out that "depending on development in the security conditions in Iraq and on the availability of appropriate infrastructure, the Council shall examine the possibility of training within Iraq" (The Council of the European Union, 2005, p. 38). As the Iraqi security environment became less challenging over the course of time, the fourth extension of the EUJUST LEX mission allowed the evaluation mentoring to take place in Iraq. This undoubtedly improved the scope and quality of the follow-up activities and according to Christova, the mandate

giving the permission to evaluate the mission's impact in Iraq was "a welcome development" (Christova, 2013, p. 435). The security improvements, thus, enabled better monitoring of the actual results of the EUJUST LEX and increased the transparency of the activities in the last stage of the mission.

#### **6.4. Capacity building**

Consequently, once European leaders witnessed measurable improvements after having undertaken many initiatives, the European form of post-invasion contribution shifted from reconstruction to capacity building efforts. With this the EU encouraged the Iraqi institutions to act within its own potential and make an effective use of its local resources to ensure further development. This was also a clear step towards bilateral cooperation in which the Iraqi government was expected to finance and undertake strategic nation-building activities equally to the EU and other international allies (European Union External Action, n.d.). According to Minister of State for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton, regardless of the bilateral cooperation developments and the overall security improvements, the Union assured its support for "capacity building programmes and technical assistance where these are most needed and have the greatest impact" (European Council, 2013, p. 3).

Other than that, it is important to note that although the EU's funds to Iraq remained relatively low at the Madrid donors' conference in comparison to other global players, Europe's investments gradually increased throughout the years until 2007 when the situation in Iraq improved (European Union External Action, n.d.). It was also remarkable that in the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI), established by the UN and the World Bank, the EU was the biggest contributor to this Iraqi reconstruction fund. As the previous member of the European Parliament Paulo Casaca commented on the EU's financial donations, the years have witnessed an "increase of EU funds channeled through international trust funds" (Casaca, 2008, p. 1). However, the regularly increasing funds and making it to the top of IRFFI donors did not equalize the EU's financial support to the other major global donors such as the US, Japan and South Korea that remained as the overall largest contributors (European Union External Action, n.d.). Yet, despite of falling behind some other international allies, the ongoing funding of civilian projects, legal assistance and political reform were a compelling example of the Union's continuous interests in strengthening Iraq's prosperity.

In this regard, the differences between amounts donated were as large as the differences between the money that was implemented. According to Moravcsik, the Americans' reconstruction assistance activities lacked strategic non-military approaches as "the US level of civilian foreign aid is low" and "its expertise in nation-building and democracy promotion is limited" when compared to the EU (Moravcsik, 2006, p. 4). Similarly, Mann has also argued that the US donations were mainly allocated to "the rebuilding of Iraq's security and infrastructure" whereas "the civil society sector has received little attention in comparison" (Mann, 2008, p. 4). This argues that the US reconstruction-related activities remained rather on a superficial level without providing significant support to the nation building and democratization of Iraq. This further indicates that the US post-conflict reconstruction influence was relatively limited within its own hard power boundaries and that the EU's efforts for supporting the civil society sector and the rule of law were crucial contributions after the military invasion. In the context of the Iraq crisis, the EU was indeed "well equipped to respond to such multi-faceted situations" as Solana stated in the ESS (Solana, 2003, p. 7).

The value of the EU's contributions to the crisis management in Iraq proved that the ESS was precise when identifying Europe as a strong normative foreign policy power. As Moravcsik said, since the EU's soft power capabilities have emerged to be complementary to the US hard power politics, Europe could be perceived as "the "quiet superpower," with an unparalleled ability to manipulate such civilian and low-intensity military instruments of power" (Moravcsik, 2006, p. 7). This means that the EU's involvement in the Iraq conflict was irreplaceable and despite the disunities experienced in the wake of the war, Europe possessed valuable foreign policy tools that were an essential balance to the transatlantic relations. The almost non-existent and inefficient military instruments had certainly lowered the EU's seriousness as an influential global actor and, thus, the EU remained superpower acting rather silently within its normative foreign policy capabilities.

All in all, the ESS provided an essential ground for the Union to undertake initiatives in the post-invasion Iraq. The EU's strategic objectives to promote democracy, rule of law, stability of the civil society and security, were all addressed in the EU's activity plan for reconstruction assistance. The new foreign policy framework effectively supported common action and helped the EU to return to the global stage as a valuable foreign policy actor. Despite its rather low financial contributions to various international funds at the early stages of the reconstruction assistance, the Union's donations for humanitarian

aid, civil development, electoral and criminal justice system's reforms experienced gradual increase throughout the years. More than that, Europe proved to be an essential soft power on the global scene as its contributions to rebuilding Iraq were indispensable and complimentary to the US hard power politics. In the case of Iraq, the EU could have been perceived as a silent superpower emerging from its own normative foreign policy activities.

Taking into consideration the EU foreign policy shift with the adoption of ESS and the collective action emerged from the new foreign policy framework, the next chapter will investigate the EU foreign policy changes reflected in the Lisbon Treaty.

## **7. How does the Lisbon Treaty reflect these changes in the EU foreign policy?**

With the increasing complexity of the global security and necessity for international cooperation, the expectations towards the EU's capabilities to act effectively have been growing hand in hand with the challenges that the EU has been confronted with. The developments in the foreign policy framework that the EU managed to put forward as a result of the malfunctioning of the EU foreign policy in the wake of the Iraq war were certainly of significant importance for the EU's external relations. Yet, the change of direction addressed in the ESS was far from being the final step in completing the EU foreign policy reform as there was much more that needed to be done in order to assure a stronger, more capable and coherent policy framework. As also stated in the European Convention, "expectations continue to grow, both within and outside the EU" and, thus, "the central question was [...] how it should organise itself in order effectively and coherently to promote fundamental values, defend common interests and contribute to the overall objective of global peace, security, and sustainable development" (The European Convention, 2002). In regard to the previous, the Lisbon Treaty was the next cornerstone document following the adoption of the ESS to further improve the organization and management of the EU foreign policy.

The Lisbon Treaty was put into effect in 2009 with the aim to strengthen the EU's foreign policy capabilities by pursuing to become a "more coherent, efficient and visible" actor on the global stage (Duke, 2011, p. 69). The general objectives of the Treaty were in essence similar to the ones addressed by Solana in the ESS and as one European diplomat argues, the "Treaty was the continuation of the Strategy" (Personal communication, 2017). However, in its legal status, it amended a considerably wider scope of foreign policy areas and created a stronger basis for the future of the EU external action. The majority of amendments came in a form of institutional changes to assure that foreign policy making would become smoother and more competent. Overall, the most important elements that the Treaty entailed were the creation of the office of the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (HR), the formation of the European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Delegations, institutional changes and increased flexibility for the member states' participation (Paasivirta, 2011).

### **7.1. High Representative of the Union for Common Foreign and Security Policy**

The creation of the HR role was one of the largest institutional changes that the Lisbon Treaty brought along. Besides the responsibilities carried out within different foreign policy areas, the HR was also the Vice-President of the Commission (responsible for external relations in the Commission) (Angelet & Vrailas, 2008). According to the Article 27 (2) in the TEU, it is the task of the HR to “represent the Union for matters relating to the common foreign and security policy” and “shall conduct political dialogue with third parties on the Union's behalf and shall express the Union's position in international organisations and at international conferences” (European Union, 2012, p. 32). This means that the old system of rotating Presidency of the foreign and security policy was abolished (Angelet & Vrailas, 2008). In this regard, the position of the HR became permanent and he or she took command of all the tasks that were previously completed by frequently rotating representatives. Consequently, longer working terms would also give more time for the HR to fulfill its foreign policy goals and increase the potential for more success in activities undertaken by him or her.

With the responsibilities varying from foreign and security policy to general external relations (for being Foreign Affairs Commissioner), the HR is undoubtedly a multi-tasker in the broadest means. According to Paul, the HR “will be agenda-setter, decisionshaper, coordinator and consensus-builder” (Paul, 2008, p. 4). This means that the HR position was certainly empowered by having had given it the authority to shape the foreign policy direction and influence the overall conduct of external relations. However, since the HR serves as a bridge between the Council and the Commission, which on one hand is an advantage, but on the other hand could put the HR in a difficult situation when there occur disagreements between the Council and the Commission in the policy-making process. Angelet and Vrailas further explained that those realistic setbacks are rather a minor problem when considering the “potential for a sizeable increase in the coherence and effectiveness of EU external policy” (Angelet & Vrailas, 2008, p. 25). Indeed, the benefits of the HR were overweighing the possible difficulties and in times of functioning well, the multi-faceted role of the HR still had a strong potential to add more coherence into the management of the foreign policy. Such coordination and interconnectedness were definitely missed in times of the Iraq intervention and, thus, the Lisbon Treaty opened a door for the EU to improve efficiency among its institutions in terms of external policies.

## **7.2. European External Action Service**

Another crucial key player that emerged from the Lisbon Treaty was the European External Action Service (EEAS). By working under the authority of the HR, the EEAS had to be “composed of single geographical (covering all regions and countries) and thematic desks” and carry the objective to “ensure the consistency and coordination of the Union's external action” (The Council of the European Union, 2009, p. 3). In pursue of assisting the HR to conduct the foreign affairs related matters more efficiently, the diplomatic personnel representing each member state in the EEAS was only a part of its composition. In order to ensure the involvement of diversity of stakeholders relevant to the field, the EEAS also drew staff from the Council and the Commission (The Council of the European Union, 2009). This means that the Lisbon Treaty reformed the previous complex fragmented structure of the organization of the external affairs in which different institutions used to deal with different questions separately. The new amendment, however, authorizes the EEAS and the HR to take the overall responsibility to manage the foreign and security questions. This certainly improved the integrity of and added more coherence to the foreign-policy making.

Besides providing support for the HR, the EEAS played also an essential role in strengthening the cooperation between the EU member states and the institutions. As Dialer, Neisser and Opitz stated in their analysis on the implementation of the EEAS, the Council, Commission and member states “need to continuously and steadily network” in all aspects of foreign policy-making (Dialer, Neisser, & Opitz, 2014, p. 14). This suggests that the creation of the EEAS has the advantage of interconnecting the different intra-community policy actors and as a result of this; increase the EU's capabilities in managing external relations. This was surely an important aspect that the Treaty of Lisbon introduced as it filled in the foreign policy loophole that became apparent during the Iraq invasion when the EU lacked coordination and a strong institutional authority to solve the disputes among the member states and the institutions.

Therefore, the EEAS certainly added many new changes to the EU foreign policy mechanism and posed another set of challenges for the functioning of the EU foreign and security policy. The new institutional approach relies on the efforts of all parties to improve communication and merge resources for the sake of achieving greater value for the Union locally as well as globally. As Angelet and Vrailas argued, the EU could only benefit from the EEAS if it is organized in a way that it enables “harmonization” and “coherence” of



policies (Angelet & Vrailas, 2008, p. 26). Harmonization undoubtedly requires member states' strong cooperative attitudes and their will to pursue integral common foreign policy goals.

### **7.3. EU Delegations**

The external activities of the EU were further extended with the creation of EU Delegations. As Paasivirta pointed out, the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty transformed "the Commission delegations into EU delegations" and by working under the authority of the foreign policy chief, these would "represent not only one of the Union's institution, but the Union as a whole" (Paasivirta, 2011, p. 14). Hence, the Treaty strengthened EU's external representation and presence on the international level. In order to work more closely with its allies and engage in more in-depth negotiations, as Laursen noted, the Union's representation "in third countries and at international organizations" supported better EU's future diplomatic missions abroad (Laursen, 2012, p. 10). This surely implied to repair EU's image as a global actor as the Iraq challenges had had a negative effective on the international community's perception of Europe. It was, thus, needed that the EU would become more present and active in its diplomatic relations to really become the aspired influential global player.

Furthermore, the control of the HR over the new Union delegations empowered the role of the foreign policy chief even more. As Paasivirta argued, the right to exercise authority over the delegations gave the HR "control over significant information resources, as s/he would otherwise be wholly dependent on the Member States" (Paasivirta, 2011, p. 44). The responsibility to lead the work of the delegations indeed added a new source of authority to the foreign policy field by reducing a part of the member states' sovereignty in shaping the EU foreign policy direction. The first decade of the century proved that Europe lacked coordination in times of disagreements due to conflicting interests and in this way; the Lisbon Treaty certainly addressed this weakness of the EU. The empowerment of the HR position enhanced the Union's potential to exercise authority in situations when member states are incapable of reaching a consensus.

### **7.4. Institutional changes**

Another innovation of the Lisbon Treaty targeted the internal institutional structure of the EU and consequently led to the abolition of the three-pillar structure. The previous pillar

system was complex as it involved different policy actors according to the area of their responsibility. Also, the oftentimes-appearing rivalry on the institutional level tended to hinder the complimentary relation between actors. As Paul explained, the largest tensions affected the relations when the competencies of actors overlapped and this especially in “crisis management, security sector reform, non-proliferation, and disarmament” (Paul, 2008, p. 9). Therefore, the Union’s lack of consistency appeared specifically in the area of external relations. As the times of Iraq invasion proved, the Union faced many difficulties to reach a common agreement and decide upon its position over Iraq. In questions of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons, the EU took the ‘let the UN do it’ stance by freeing itself from the obligation to decide over the WMD in Iraq. In addition, the EU’s delayed decision on the reconstruction assistance showed that the EU actors were incapable of forming a common plan of action when facing rivalry and conflict of interests in crisis. For situations like these, a more straightforward structure of the decision making process could avoid indecisiveness as was experienced in 2003.

Moreover, the Treaty amendment on the institutional structure weakened the powers of the Commission. With the creation of the EEAS and the EU delegations working under the authority of the HR, the Commission was no longer responsible for the EU’ external representation (Angelet & Vrailas, 2008). This was a concrete shift in passing on the Commission’s previous responsibilities to the hands of the HR. Undoubtedly, the loss of Commission’s powers created the perception of pooling too much sovereignty from the member states to the Union. However, as Paasivirta argued, “the founding Treaties [...] did not contain a provision defining the Commission tasks in external relations” and the Commission’s responsibilities were rather assumed in times of practice (Paasivirta, 2011, p. 40). The latter helps to conclude that the Union, before the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, lacked specifications on the exact division of responsibilities when managing external relations. The Lisbon Treaty, therefore, once again specified roles and improved the coordination of the policy making in a way that the previous vague tasks in the foreign policy areas would become clearer under the dictation of the HR.

### **7.5. Increased flexibility of member states**

Among all, the Lisbon Treaty also set out more flexible condition for the member states’ participation in external activities. According to the TEU Art. 46 (1), should member states “have made the commitments on military capabilities”, then they have the right “to participate in the permanent structured cooperation” (European Union, 2012, p. 40). With

the establishment of the permanent structure cooperation, the TEU Article suggests that the member states that wish to engage in military activities are welcomed to form a military cooperation on behalf of the EU without the obligation to involve all EU member states. As Bono stated, the advantage of this cooperation laid above all on the opportunity to engage those member states “whose military capabilities fulfill higher criteria” (Bono, 2011, p. 27). This amendment certainly reduced the pressure of those member states that possess lower capabilities to participate in military activities and at the same time assuring the Union’s any kind of military participation regardless of possible future military-related disagreements between EU member states.

The flexibility in common external actions was supported by the method of abstention. In this process a member state could qualify an abstention to vote on an issue addressed in the Council. According to the European University Institute’s professor Cremona, with the qualified abstention a member state acknowledges that while it “accepts that the decision in question will commit the Union, it will not bind that State” (Cremona, 2016, p. 38). This argues that although a member state approves the Union’s commitment to an issue under question, it can legally distance itself from the responsibility to act. However, as Cremona argued, “a common position adopted under enhanced cooperation by a limited number of Member States” would certainly have less impact than a Union’s decision adopted by all member states (Cremona, 2016, p. 38). There would indeed be differences in effectiveness, yet, it is crucial to bare in mind that an action implemented under enhanced cooperation is after all more beneficial than no action at all (as happened during the Iraq crisis).

In conclusion, the Lisbon Treaty entailed many essential innovations in reforming the EU foreign and security policy. The absence of detailed description on tasks that the Commission, as the representative body of the EU, should carry out in the founding Treaties, the Lisbon Treaty brought more clearance to the organization of the external policy-making. First of all, it created the position of the HR and gave it the responsibility to initiate, set the agenda and manage the overall external policies of the Union. The Lisbon Treaty also established the EEAS to merge the diplomatic personnel from the Council and Commission into one institution and together with the EU Delegation assist the HR in attaining foreign policy goals. Second of all, the Treaty abolished the cross-pillar system to foster greater integrity of the Union’s decision-making and increase its capabilities to act more efficiently in external relations. Third of all, by introducing more flexible conditions for participation in external missions, the Treaty gave the member states the

opportunity to engage in enhanced cooperation to ensure the Union's more active presence at the global stage.

In regard to the previously mentioned amendments, there is no doubt that the Lisbon Treaty aimed to reform the EU foreign policy based on the lessons learned in the past, especially from the most challenging moments during the Iraq crisis. As Koutrakos stated, "it is hardly surprising that the main changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty in the area of external relations aim at enhancing the coherence of the Union's external action" (Koutrakos, 2011, p. 8). Therefore, it was of the Treaty's main objective to concentrate on strengthening the foreign and security policy framework and improving the EU's capabilities, coherence and consistency in conducting its external relations.

## 8. Conclusion

The emergence of a more complex global security environment has been a crucial part of the evolution of the EU foreign and security policy. The different nature of challenges has probed the EU from various angles and helped to identify the overall essence of the EU foreign policy. Pre-Iraq war period had certainly confirmed that the EU's notion of soft power stems from its historical nature since the early years of its establishment. The EU's core democratic values have proven to play a crucial role in forming the Union's foreign policy directions and its application in external relations. The EU's commitment to normative approaches and avoidance of military engagement have precisely characterised the EU's soft power position within the international community. The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century proved that the EU was perceived as a strong soft power actor and capable of implementing Union-wide activities in the world's least secure regions like in Afghanistan. In this Afghanistan crisis the EU emerged as a unified institutional community capable to act effectively within its external policy. However, the presence of unity and coherent application of foreign policy was rather a short-term phenomenon in 2001 prior to the Iraq war.

Instead, the Iraq crisis in 2002/3 demonstrated deep intra-Union divisions among member states emphasising EU foreign policy weaknesses that initially were overshadowed during the Afghanistan war. Namely, the disagreements that occurred between the major member states strongly affected the EU's capabilities to reach a common decision over Iraq. The differing national interests and member states' little respect for the Union's norms and values showed that Europe is divided into many fragments that lack the interest to reach consensus over its internal disputes. Such malfunctioning of foreign policy was a clear depiction of the EU's incapability to coordinate the decision-making process and act effectively within its external policy when it faces disagreements among member states. Therefore, when reflecting on Europe's failure to act in the wake of Iraq intervention, the EU foreign policy occurred to be extremely vulnerable to situations when national interests tended to diverge. Despite the fact that the member states supported their anti- or pro-war opinions with considerably compelling reasons, there was no concrete foreign policy framework that would mediate the conflicting views. This means that the Union lacked foreign policy structure and a common ground on which to rely when immediate decisions needed to be taken. The EU's foreign and security policy clearly required a reform in order avoid further damages to the EU's global image.

As a result of that, the ESS was the cornerstone document that was born out the EU's failure to act in Iraq. With the European political elite's increasing awareness of the costs that the EU would pay for its inability to conduct external action, the need to address the foreign policy weaknesses became only stronger. In order to pursue common foreign policy goals, the Union had to set strict policy guidelines that would ensure mutual understanding in times of crisis management. Hence, the adoption of the ESS in 2003 encouraged intra-community strategic thinking and, above all, established the EU's first external policy framework in its history. The Strategy aimed to improve the EU foreign policy-making, increase its capabilities to become a more influential foreign policy actor and recover the Union's image in the international community. By creating a comprehensive policy framework including the identification of new global threats, the ESS assured that all member states would share the same vision of global challenges that the EU is confronting with and which foreign policy responsibilities is the EU expected to fulfill.

Although the EU's insufficient military instruments have regularly encouraged US' criticism on Europe's military passiveness, the EU has undoubtedly emerged as an irreplaceable soft power actor. The Union's ability to pin its disagreements and establish a new integral policy framework largely empowered its application of normative approaches. The valuable contribution that the EU managed to make to improve Iraq's democracy, rule of law and the conditions of the civil society sector undoubtedly increased the EU's credibility as an important foreign policy actor. Furthermore, the large extent to which the EU was able to implement the new European grand strategy in its reconstruction activities proved that the EU is a strong normative superpower that is a complementary piece to the US hard power politics. Indeed, the ESS was needed to enable the EU to use its capabilities. This new well-structured foreign policy framework allowed the member states' governments to pursue common external policy goals which consequently increased the value of the EU's impact on post-war Iraq.

However, the developments that the EU had already experienced after the adoption of the ESS encouraged the EU's political leaders to make efforts in reforming further the foreign policy area. The policy flaws that arose in the wake of the Iraq intervention indicated precisely which aspects of the EU foreign policy needed to be amended more in-depth. In order to address a more detailed reform, the EU made a step forward when establishing the Lisbon Treaty. Although, the objectives of the Treaty were largely interconnected to the objectives presented in the ESS, the changes outlined in the Lisbon Treaty were wider

in scope and carried a legal status unlike the ESS. Namely, the core idea of the Lisbon Treaty was to reshape the EU's current institutional structure with the purpose to organise the EU foreign policy decision-making more coherently and efficiently. Thus, the Treaty established the office of the HR including the EEAS and the EU Delegations that would support the HR in achieving EU foreign policy goals. By creating the position of the EU's own foreign policy chief, the Lisbon Treaty aimed to better coordinate the intra-Union foreign policy actors and establish an authority that would help to solve disputes when divisions occur. This amendment was a direct response to the times of the Iraq crisis when the member states were incapable of reaching a consensus due to lack of foreign policy coordination within the Union. In a way it also updated the founding treaties that only specified the Commission's responsibility to represent the EU in external relations. With the adoption of the new Treaty the all foreign policy related matters became the responsibility of the HR, which surely simplified the organization of external policies.

Moreover, the enhanced cooperation was another important foreign policy innovation that the Lisbon Treaty introduced. Considering the diversity of the EU's nature, the decision-making over controversial issues has been relatively difficult. This was best depicted at the beginning of the Iraq war when the sharp divisions among member states hindered the EU's decision-making process and its capability to take a common action. In this regard, the new concept of enhanced cooperation is a way to strengthen EU's presence on the global stage and ensure its active engagement in external relations. By permitting just a number of member states to take military action on behalf of the EU without obliging the rest to do so, surely aimed to improve the EU's foreign policy efficiency.

All in all, it has become clear that the Iraq war has largely inspired the EU foreign policy changes throughout the last decade given the interconnectedness between EU foreign and security policy reforms to Iraq crisis. The EU's failure to act in the wake of the Iraq war has strongly encouraged and influenced the EU's foreign policy changes. As result of such evolution, it can be concluded that the Union's external policy has become more coherent, effective and capable.

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## 10. Appendix I: Interview transcript

*To what extent has the disunity over Iraq damaged the EU's global image in the wake of the war?*

It depends on whose eyes it may have damaged. At this time, I suppose the EU was not in the position to speak too much about security at all. It was mostly an economic Union and its strategic thinking about the global security was quite modest. But of course, the unity and the solidarity were still there and the general idea of EU was about unity and same way of thinking. However, the Iraq situation was indeed quite damaging. Although I would not argue that it was so crucial. It just showed the differences in approaches, differences in Euro-Atlantic approaches; because some countries in Europe are and were more pro-American, pro-Atlantic and some other less. That actually was the first clear dividing line within Europe. Of course, it has to be kept in mind that part of the Pro-Atlantic countries was back then not part of the EU, especially the Eastern part of Europe. This was the main division among the European countries. To what extent it might have damaged the EU's image it's difficult to say because it cannot be measured precisely. However, I would think it was damaged too seriously.

*Why did the EU not manage to coordinate the decision-making process effectively when the MS faced conflicts of interests in 2002/3?*

There was no proper mechanism for that. There was no concrete the person who may lead the whole process like we have now, our HR. This was also a clear sign that needed to have an authority that would provide consent on the higher level managing the global mechanisms.

*Did the EU overestimate its security environment and relied too much on the support of NATO? Why?*

Europeans never had the experience to act in a situation like it was in the Iraq war. I mean the EU never acted as a security Union. It was mostly focused on the values and economic benefits. That was the first touchstone on behalf of which show how the EU can act in different security situations. And that also showed, which is quite important, that the cooperation between NATO and EU had to be developed much more than it was

developed back then. It was almost non-existing operation between those two organizations especially in the wake of the war. If to compare the past to the current situation, then today we see significant improvements.

*Would you say that the foreign policy was almost non-existent in the wake of the Iraq war?*

No, I would not say that. The EU foreign policy was largely related to the enlargement processes, the neighborhood policy, to humanitarian aid. However, the failure was caused by the fact that the EU had never experienced such hard side in its external relations. We have got strong soft power politics in the EU and it was in theory difficult to measure its actual hard power capabilities when considering the young age of the EU foreign policy. Thus, I would say that the military side of the EU was not a logical part of the EU foreign policy already in its overall essence.

*What do you think it could be called EU's foreign policy failure if it simply prefers to concentrate more on the soft power politics in comparison to the US hard power?*

The security measures in the EU were certainly limited (in military means). Although the EU and NATO composed of almost the same countries, one organization was made for security reasons and the other was made for soft reasons. The general understanding was that in case of security matters, we transfer the decision-making process to NATO. This was especially so as there was no concrete need to establish our own strong military instruments. I would say that EU was not made for that. Therefore, I would not call it a failure when the EU lacked military assistance for which it was also criticized.

*Do you think the EU would have also reached a common decision on its reconstruction assistance activities without the adoption of the ESS?*

Certainly! Before the ESS it was much more difficult to find a common ground, because the lack of specific common framing of the EU foreign and security policy matters. This is why I would completely agree that the ESS gave a strong push to the post-war activities.

*Do you think that the EU has been a greater contributor, compared to the US, to improving the Iraqi civil society?*

America was more focused to the military size and the Europeans more focused on the side of spreading democracy. The main aim of the Americans' activity was to topple Saddam Hussein and to take ground from terrorists. Yet, the EU was much more focused on the soft power and to establish the humanitarian aid cooperation and improve the rule of law. The values of the EU did not aim to play the role of the global policeman, like the US did. For the EU it was more important to assure that Iraq would continue as a peaceful state knowing how to use its own resources to ensure development.

*Do you think that the amendments set out in the Lisbon Treaty aimed to reach similar objectives as were outlined in the ESS?*

The Lisbon treaty was a much more official document than the strategy. The Strategy was kind of a preparatory document that led to the new Treaty. It showed the possibilities and the needs to be achieved. This Treaty was the continuation of the Strategy and it just grew out from the ESS.

*Do you think that the Lisbon Treaty would not have been established in the form as it is today without the adoption of the ESS?*

I think that the internal disagreements that the EU experienced in the wake of the Iraq war, and also the adoption of the strategic documents, influenced to a large extent the essence of the EU's foreign policy today. It has been very dependent on the evolution of the EU's external relations since the Iraq crisis until today. Therefore, I would say that without the challenges that Europe faced when disputing over Iraq and without its efforts to develop its strategic thinking, the content of the Lisbon treaty wouldn't stand for the exact same objectives as it stands today.

*Could the EU be considered as a silent superpower in the means of its strong commitment to soft power politics?*

When we consider the difference of impact of the EU's and the US' long-term activities in post-war countries then I would definitely say that the EU has been more influential in implementing normative approach than America is doing. In the end what matters is that



the country under reconstruction is capable of continuing to develop alone after the international actors have left the ground. In this matter the EU's contributions have been more significant which indeed allow perceiving the EU as a silent superpower.

## 11. Appendix II: Informed Consent Form

**Informed Consent Form****Informed Consent Form**

- 1) Research Project Title: How has the EU foreign policy changed in the wake of the US-led Iraq war?
- 2) Project Description: The objective of this research paper is to analyse the main changes in the EU foreign policy as a reaction to the Iraq war in 2002/3. The US-led Iraq conflict clearly indicated the deep divisions among member states on whether to show support for the US invasion or not. The opposing opinions hindered the EU to act as one and take a position as a global actor in foreign and security policy. This emphasised well the EU foreign policy's incompetency and incoherence to take decisions on the Union level. With having the Iraq conflict as one of the most challenging moments for the EU foreign policy, the changes which it led to, will be further investigated in this research paper.

**If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.**

**I am 16 years of age or older.**

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** 28/02/17

## 12. Appendix III: Student Ethics Form

## Student Ethics Form

European Studies  
Student Ethics Form

**Your name:** Kriss-Elin Rokk

**Supervisor:** Mrs M. Anghel

**Instructions/checklist**

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). If you are planning research with human subjects you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

- a. ☐ Read section 3 that your supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
- b. ☐ Complete sections 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
- c. ☐ Ask your project supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and sign the form.
- d. ☐ Append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation.

**Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)**

- (i) **Title of Project:** How has the EU foreign policy changed in the wake of the US-led Iraq war?
- (ii) **Aims of project:** The aim of this research paper is to analyse the evolution of the EU foreign policy during the Iraq crisis. The purpose is to find out which foreign policy changes did the EU face due to the Iraq invasion in 2003.
- (iii) **Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)**

**YES**

**If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your supervisor. You have completed this form.**

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects. I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_ - date \_\_\_\_\_

**If yes: you should complete the rest of this form.**

**Section 2 Complete this section only if you answered YES to question (iii) above.**

**(i) What will the participants have to do? (v. brief outline of procedure):**

For the purpose of this research paper, there will be conducted a semi-structured interview. The interviewee will be asked a set of questions related to the above-mentioned research question. The answers will be considered and used when answering the research question.

**(ii) What sort of people will the participants be and how will they be recruited?**

The interview will be conducted with the Ambassador of the Estonian Embassy in The Hague. It is important to gain insights on the issue under research from a person with a diplomatic background. The diplomatic knowledge of the Ambassador was, therefore, the reason why this person was recruited to contribute to this project.

**(iii) What sort stimuli or materials will your participants be exposed to, tick the appropriate boxes and then state what they are in the space below?**

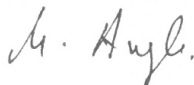
Questionnaires[ ] ; Pictures[ ] ; Sounds [ ] ; Words[ x ] ; Other[ ].

**(iv) Consent:** Informed consent must be obtained for all participants before they take part in your project. Either verbally or by means of an informed consent form you should state what participants will be doing, drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. You should also state how they can withdraw from the study at any time and the measures you are taking to ensure the confidentiality of data. A standard informed consent form is available in the Dissertation Manual.

**(vi) What procedures will you follow in order to guarantee the confidentiality of participants' data?** If the participant (interviewee) wishes to remain anonymous, then it will be guaranteed that the person's name will not be published in the research. If the participant agrees to be referred to by name, then so will be done. No other personal information will be used in this research paper. The interviewee has given the permission to audiotape the discussion.

Student's signature:  date: 03/03/2017

**Supervisor's signature** (if satisfied with the proposed procedures)



.....date: ....02/03/2017.....