



# Looking Out for Sovereignty:

## Politicised Security and Autonomy in European Integration



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*Facing a multitude of crises in an increasingly multi-order world, Europe is experiencing a politicisation of European security policy integration. We propose a two-dimensional theoretical framework, in which two distinct conceptions of sovereignty - one shaped by the interests of security and one by those of national autonomy clash in the postfunctional mass arena.*

### I. Introduction

"Europe must learn quickly to speak the language of power and not only rely on soft power as we used to do."

This is how Joseph Borrell, the High Representative of the European Union, introduced the new strategic orientation of the EU's foreign and security policy (European External Action Service, 2020).

World politics is facing one geopolitical crisis after another. The character of these conflicts challenges the idea of a liberal world order that relies on global cooperation and interdependency to ensure a peaceful resolution of conflicts. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, but also military tensions be-

tween China and Taiwan, and the recent escalation in the Middle East are among the current examples that signal how certain powers threaten to "seek a world where might makes right, where disputes are resolved by force." (VOA, 2022).

Under these circumstances, Western powers feel an urge to adapt their security strategies and find a new role in this international turmoil. This is especially true for the European Union (EU), which previously sought to present itself as a normative superpower. Consequently, it managed to be capable of defending and enforcing its values through diplomatic commitments and economic influence. As with economic power, the European continent does not consist of



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multiple superpowers equally equipped to stand against global threats but relies on the pooling of resources, joint decision-making processes, and a shared vision in the field of security policy. However, transferring competencies within economic policy has proven far more attractive for the member states since this leads to noticeable economic benefits; it does not trespass on a country's national sovereignty as much as ceding control over foreign and security policy would. European states find it difficult to yield sovereignty claims to the supranational level. This is particularly reflected in the sluggish development of *the Common Foreign and Security Policy* (CFSP) and *the Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP). Yet, the call for political reforms is loud in light of the current geopolitical crises. Against this background, the present paper examines the following question: How does the emerging instability of the international order contribute to the sovereignty-oriented conflict of integrating security and defence policy? We assume that this specific policy field brings together two dimensions of political dynamics. First, we propose a dimension based on classic International Relations (IR) theory, recognizing neorealist expectations in the perception of international security. The second dimension concerns identity-rooted European integration in light of national autonomy claims. A different concept of sovereignty prevails on both dimensions: oriented towards international security or national autonomy. Using the postfunctionalist model of Hooghe and Marks (2009), we examine the extent to which these two concepts of sovereignty come into conflict over the deeper integration of security and defence policy and how this conflict is mediated. We argue that giving up some aspects of national sovereignty

will help secure *international* sovereignty in terms of protection against threats by superpowers. Therefore, states must balance security and national autonomy in the process of European integration, relying on institutional designs that mediate between the competing claims of the two faces of sovereignty.

#### **Postfunctionalism:**

Postfunctionalism is a theory of European integration proposed by Lisbeth Hooghe and Gary Marks which highlights the existence of diverse societal interests and identities shaping the debate on European integration. Postfunctionalist thought rejects the notion of continued harmonization in (neo)functionalist and intergovernmentalist theory, instead providing explanations for the limitations of European integration. Central to postfunctionalism is the process of politicisation of European policy - thus emphasizing the role and importance of public preferences.

## **II. Evolution of Common Foreign and Security Policy: "Supranationality without supranational institutions"**

Contrary to popular belief, the idea of a Common European security policy did not arise as a subsequent step to a more advanced European economic integration; instead, it was an issue raised very early on in European integration. Nevertheless, during the 1950s, changes in global stability led to the end of pressing fears around European security (Ruane, 2000). This ended the idea of a common framework of European foreign policy during the early stages of European integration.

Only in the 1970s did the first strictly intergovernmental coordination of European *foreign* policy arise. Hardly seen as more than an offshoot of a civilian European project (Duke, 2000), and not including defence policy, the field of foreign policy was nonetheless subject to several formal and informal declarations in support of further integration (Salmon, 1992). This led to a gradual but substantial shift towards a more powerful Brussels through institutional coordination – an *"acquis politique"*.

Said integrative efforts culminated in the *"Common Foreign and Security Policy"* (CFSP) as part of more extensive European reform processes in the 1990s, picking up the topic of a Common European defence policy for the first time since the beginning of the process of European integration (Whitman, 1998). Since its inception in the Treaty of Maastricht, the core tasks of the CFSP are the general promotion of security cooperation and the adoption of fundamental strategies, actions, and positions (Art. 21-25 TEU). Unlike other growing supranational governance structures in the European Union, the CFSP, at its core, was and is an intergovernmental form of European cooperation (Hill, 1996). Its detached political character, being *"resistant to integration"* (Menon, 2013, p. 67), manifests in the unique institutional design and decision-making procedures.

First and foremost, the adoption of legislative acts in this policy area is excluded; instead, decisions are taken on positions and actions in European foreign policy (Art. 31 para 1 TEU). One of the most fundamental differences from other policy areas, which are now fully integrated, is the non-application of the so-called community method or ordinary legislative procedure. In this procedure, the right of initiative lies with the European Com-

mission, while the European Parliament can help shape the law through amendments and majority votes. In contrast, apart from information and consultation powers, Parliament is excluded from decision-making in the CFSP and can neither set its priorities nor exercise a veto right. Particularly concerning financing and the definition of long-term goals, this must also be viewed critically for legitimising reasons (Thym, 2004). Whereas the Treaty of Lisbon (2009) changed little concerning parliamentary involvement, it strengthened the power of the Commission and re-configured the role of *"High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy"* (HR) to merge the post of the Foreign Affairs Council and vice-president of the Commission. This ensured higher consistency of the EU's external action as it, inter alia, authorised the HR to submit proposals relating to CFSP to the Council (Art. 18 TEU). With its extended mandate, the High Representative gives *"a face to European foreign policy"* and strengthens the European identity on the international stage and vis-à-vis EU citizens (Thym, 2004, p.19).

Nevertheless, the dominant actors in the political negotiations are the individual member states and their representatives in the Council and the European Council, respectively. Distinct from the Qualitative Majority Vote (QMV) of the ordinary legislative procedure, the decision-making rule for CFSP is, in principle, unanimity. However, in Article 31 TEU, three institutional loopholes are especially prone to reducing the overarching maxim of consensus: applying QMV for exceptional cases, constructive abstention, and the passerelle provision for CFSP. The second provision means that in case of a member state's abstention, it is not obliged to apply this decision but has to accept that the decision commits the EU. The Council has used

this procedure only once in light of an EU civilian mission for Kosovo (Lübke-meier, 2021). Concerning the latter provision introduced by the Lisbon Treaty reform, unanimity can be replaced by QMV, if a unanimous resolution by the European Council permits this for a particular case. Although all these invitations to turn away from unanimity are subject to high hurdles, a delicate balance between national sovereignty and Community cooperation is evidenced here. Notably, though, the Treaty's provisions explicitly prohibit exemptions from unanimity for "decisions having military or defence implications", thus, from the CSDP framework (Art. 31 para 4 TEU). This shows that for the member states, there is a significant difference between articulating posi-

tions in foreign policy and pooling defence forces for joint military missions initiated at the EU level. The distinct relationship between member states and the different policy fields challenges the evaluation that the function of these institutions is "not simply to maintain national toes over CFSP and ESDP" (Bickerton, 2010, p. 173), as they highlight how member states' reluctance to give up sovereignty primarily depends on their impact on core state powers.

Combined with fears over a lack of sovereignty in the context of crisis resilience (Fiott, 2023), this interaction creates a compelling backdrop for this article investigating the notion of sovereignty in the context of European security and defence integration.

Table 1: Institutional designs across different levels of integration

	pooling sovereignty: Council voting rule	delegating sovereignty: involvement of supranational institutions			
	Council	European Commission	European Parliament	European Court of Justice	
0 = no coordination at EU level	-	-	-	-	
1 = intergovernmental coordination	unanimity	no right of initiative	no involvement	no judicial review	CSDP
2 = intergovernmental cooperation	unanimity	right of initiative shared with Council	consultation	restricted judicial review	CFSP
3 = joint decision-making I	unanimity	exclusive right of initiative	consultation / co-decision	full judicial review	
4 = joint decision-making II	QMV	exclusive right of initiative	cooperation / co-decision	full judicial review	
5 = supranational centralization	no involvement	unilateral decision	no involvement	full jurisdiction	

Adapted from Börzel (2005, S. 221); Leuffen et al. (2022, S. 35)

### III. Theoretical Framework

#### 1. Security Policy: Between European Integration and International Relations

Crisis pressures have long catalysed continued European integration and institutional

change. After a prolonged period of political stability, the European Union increasingly faces multifaceted crises challenging its institutional governance design (Ferrara & Kriesi, 2022). As global order is transforming, the European foreign and security policy has been especially caught off guard by a deci-

sive turning point – a "Zeitenwende". It is the Russian full-scale attack on Ukraine that had profound implications for defence and security policy but also for potential institutional arrangements (Flockhart & Korosteleva, 2022, p.466). European actors increasingly pursue strategic sovereignty to claim and enforce common European interests. (Ondarza & Overhaus, 2022). Likewise, sovereignty equally is becoming a point of contention in the light of national autonomy, as actors are reeling from the uncertainty generated by the sudden changes in international order. In the context of European integration, inevitable and fundamental questions about the future of institutional mechanisms of EU foreign, security, and defence policy arise. These questions aim at balancing the desire for co-operation to preserve security and the re-

straint to transfer authority to a supranational level due to national sovereignty claims. Addressing this balancing act, we propose a theoretical framework consisting of two dimensions. The first dimension employs international relations theory and investigates a shift from institutionalist towards neorealist considerations caused by global order changes, thus intensifying member states' pursuit

of power and security. Further, we account for the continued conflict of basing European integration and institutional designs on inter-governmental or supranational grounds, by building the second dimension around the issue of national autonomy, referring to member states' national identity.

Realism, specifically defensive neorealism, is the most suitable theoretical approach for

explaining the International Relations dimension, from our perspective, as it most accurately reflects the structural changes around the breakdown of current structures of global order, like in the case of Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Rösch, 2022; Smith & Dawson, 2022).

Before the recent onset of crises and the transformation of international order, we characterise institutionalist thought of the rationalist, utilitarian kind (Keohane et al., 1993)

as the dominant explanatory force for the behaviour of European states in foreign security and defence policy. In Institutional theory, states are unitary actors with rational choice preferences in an anarchical international system, though unlike in (neo)realism, power and security are not the most central interests. Institutionalism is characterised by the interdependence of state actors and their deci-

"The absolute loss of security may imply the loss of national self-rule, only leaving collective security as a solution to external existential threats. The states and their constituents thus may essentially engage in a trade-off of the two conceptions of sovereignty."

sively reciprocal interests (Keohane & Nye, 2012; Schimmelfennig, 2010). This, in turn, increases cooperation and, thus, security, as actors take the competing interests in the multipolar system into account and adjust (Keohane, 1984). This cooperative base structure of Institutionalism explains the progress of European integration in policy fields, e.g., economic rather than foreign policy. Europe has always – and still does strive for balance and the ability to keep up as a significant force.

As the international system is changing from a multipolar to a multi-order one (Ferrara & Kriesi, 2022), the field of International Relations now turns back to (neo)realism to understand the rise of assertive powers across the globe and the lack of a reliable transatlantic partner, thus triggering incentives of European integration (Leuffen et al., 2021).

Neorealists build on the balance-of-power theory, stipulating that the context of international anarchy consists of a disbalance of power which state actors aim to balance out depending on their perceived threats as a reactionary defensive (rather than offensive) measure (Waltz, 1990). The fundamental strategy of balancing – as opposed to bandwagoning – signifies *“allying in opposition to the principal source of danger”* (Walt, 1985, p.4) and is the primary neorealist mechanism inducing cooperation in the sense of alliance building. Neorealism’s aim for maximised security of the international relations dimension and its linkage with European integration in a multi-order world becomes most apparent in this context of anarchy and alliance building.

Turning to the second dimension, *political integration is defined as “the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward*

*a new centre”* (Haas, 1958). European integration studies try to explain the mechanisms fostering the shift towards a new centre of power. Typically, they arrive at different conclusions on which actors are held responsible for the shift of power - states, civil society, supranational organisations - and what incentives triggered that shift - functional benefits, shared norms and values or pursuit of power.

The various strands of integration theory and their fitness to provide sufficient explanations are part of a complex field of study. Scholars have shifted away from trying to contrast different theories of integration (Smeets & Zaun, 2021). Instead, the classical integration theories are seen as more flexible and only partially refutable (Hooghe & Marks, 2019). In our theoretical framework, we therefore refrain from analysing individual integration theories and comparing them with each other, instead focusing on the continuum of institutional arrangements in European integration.

Recapitalising the current institutional arrangements in CFSP, and especially in CSDP, European integration progress has been rather dampened compared to other policy areas. While supranational institutional arrangements have become more prevalent, they still lack the robustness and frequency seen in other policy domains. Neither active cross-border exchange of needs and demands nor high discretion of supranational authorities can be observed (Leuffen et al., 2021). Although the Commission, as well as the European Court of Justice, are good at exploiting and expanding existing provisions to get a grip on influencing security policies from a supranational standpoint (Leuffen et al., 2021; Menon, 2013), this strategy has not yet led to a comprehensive supranation-

al framework for EU’s foreign security policy. Against this backdrop, Øhrgaard (2018) points out that the usual *“sui generis problem is exacerbated in the case of CFSP”* (p. 27). Perhaps the classic approaches of integration theory lose their explanatory power for the particular field of foreign and security policy. According to Hoffmann (1982), this has to do with the unique character of this policy field, which he assigns to *“high politics”*. High politics concern the vital interests of states, including their security and defence policy.

We propose that these vital interests of states alongside the concept of national identity reinforce member states’ aim of pursuing or protecting their national autonomy, as they remain apprehensive of transferring competencies to supranational institutions in policy fields of *“high politics”*. This creates a conflictual division between the goal of national autonomy on one dimension and the goal of security brought forward by neorealist accounts of global geopolitical shifts on the other dimension. Thus, both dimensions ultimately clash in the realm of sovereignty. Concerning that conflict, Menon (2013) identifies the following paradox prevalent in current European security policy:

*“Strong functional pressures exist militating in favour of greater cooperation between European states in the area of defence, [...]. However, [...] states have clung to their prerogative in this sector, and integration has remained profoundly limited.”* (p. 68)

## 2. Reconstructing Sovereignty: Two Faces

The addressed paradox arises because shifts in both the European Integration dimension and the IR dimension, threaten national sovereignty. Nevertheless, the different di-

mensions each pose a threat to a different expression, a different *face* of sovereignty. Depending on which face is apparent to the observer, they might come to diametrically opposed conclusions on European security and defence integration.

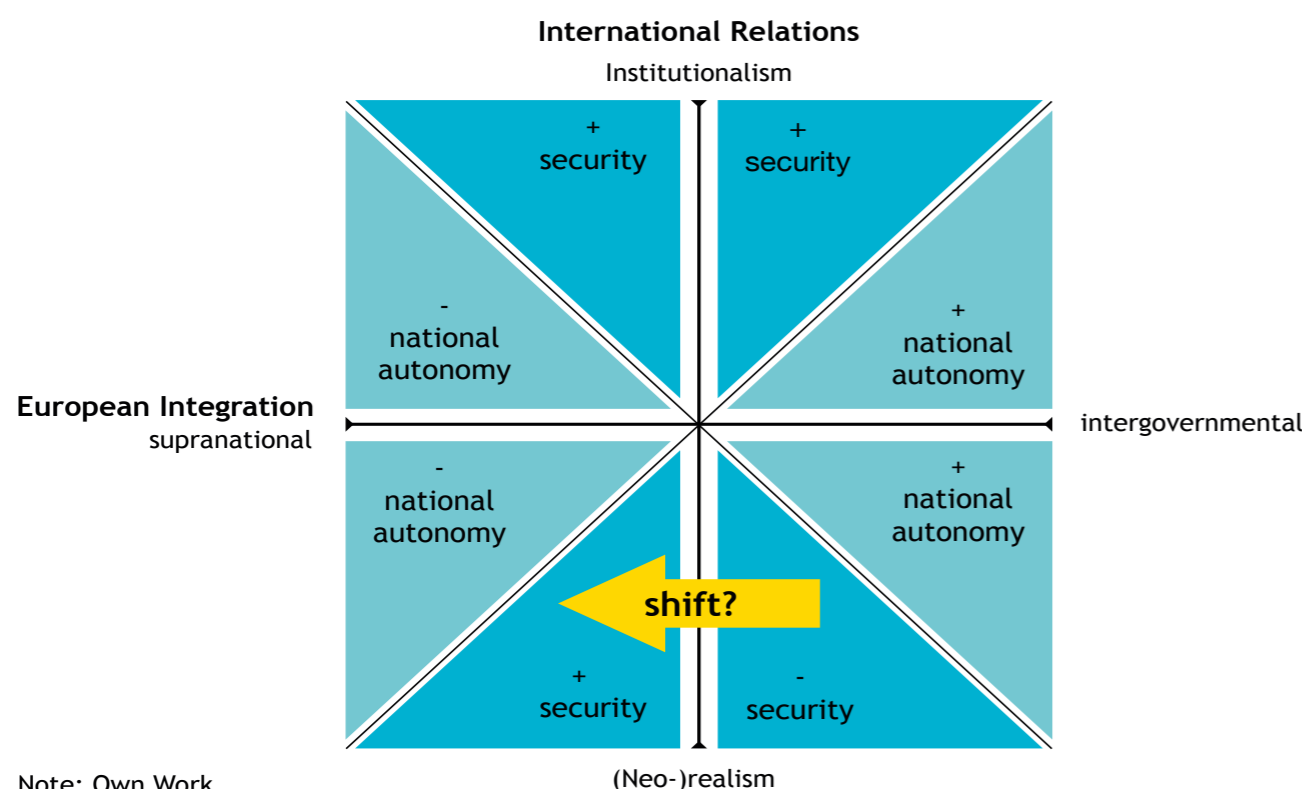
On the one hand, corresponding to the classic approach to sovereignty, we assess the intactness of sovereignty with regard to a nation’s capacity to protect its territorial integrity and its ability to defend its citizens against external threats, which may compromise its political, economic, or social stability (Makinda, 1998). This understanding aligns with the concept of security as protection from external threats. In our model, we therefore refer to that as the *security face*. At times of international interdependency and institutionalised interaction, the overall security level in Europe was rather high. Illiberal, imperialistic regimes that openly challenge these institutions endanger the security face of sovereignty, especially with regard to the *“war on Values”* (Modern Diplomacy, 2023).

On the other hand, we approach sovereignty with regard to the formal or informal transfer of competencies to a supranational level. For Krasner (2001), the European Union is, at its core, a *“product of state sovereignty”* because each member state has decided individually on its membership (p. 28). Due to the structural consequences of this membership for the political and constitutional autonomy of member states, the EU simultaneously undermines their national sovereignty. Within the dimension of European integration, actors focus on the advantages, but even more so on the disadvantages, that an increased integration dynamic means for the freedom of action and independence of the nation-state. In our model, we refer to that

gradual development as the *national autonomy face*. Furthermore, for one or both faces to be apparent, they must be relevant and thus salient in the deliberation of the benefits and deficits of integration. The consequences of a shift in the dimension of international relations for the security face of sovereignty are slowly revealed. The rise of a neorealist world order

threatens individual member states' territorial integrity and thus calls for a shift in the dimension of European integration. However, this shift poses a threat to the national autonomy face of sovereignty. This juxtaposition raises the question of the circumstances under which the two incentives meet, and which factors determine their respective assertiveness.

**Figure 1:** Reconstruction of sovereignty along two dimensions shaping EU's security policy



Note: Own Work

#### IV. Analysis

##### 1. Security Policy and the Postfunctional Arena

To answer this question, we use a theoretical model that links the meaning of identity to the nature of political conflict. To address the shortcomings of the more classical theories of regional integration in their explanatory power for the public contestation of European integration, Hooghe and Marks

(2009) develop a postfunctionalist model. Their approach focuses on the politicisation of the integration process, which is based on identity and group dynamics. In their theory, politicisation is activated if two conditions are met: On the one hand, the tension between the impetus for changes in the jurisdictional architecture of the EU and the stability of identities confronted with this impetus must be salient. On the other hand, *“political entrepreneurs must mobilize the tension”* (Hooghe

& Marks, 2009, p. 13). Furthermore, one of the core assumptions on how identity shapes the conflict in the mass arena, most relevant to our analysis, is that *“identity [...] must be politically constructed”* (Hooghe & Marks, 2009, p. 12). At this point, we have to adapt a few conceptions to fit Hooghe and Marks' model with regard to our approach of using it as a means to explain the contestation of further integration of security policy. In our approach, the integration of foreign and defence policy is contested on two different dimensions: On the IR dimension, too little integration is contested as it may weaken Europe's security. On the European integration dimension, more integration is contested as it may weaken nation-states' authority. These potential consequences on both dimensions affect two faces of sovereignty that eventually stand in conflict with each other. Resolving this conflict shapes political identity and political actors will thus address the conflict in the postfunctional arena. For this to work, the tensions on both dimensions individually as well as the tension between the two dimensions, thus the two faces of sovereignty need to be salient and expressed by political actors.

However, once these prerequisites have been established, the processing of the issues of security policy can be tracked step by step in the post-functional model. In the beginning, a *“mismatch between function and form”* triggers the process (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, p. 9). Such a mismatch may occur if the functional integration pressure outpaces the development of corresponding political institutions and identities. As Menon (2013) correctly identifies, this is the case for a common foreign policy and security, and the changing international security situation reinforces this functional pressure. The ques-

tion is now whether or not political actors respond to the issue and take off its value for (national) identity.

If this mechanism of politicisation is successful, then actors will handle the issue in the so-called *“mass arena”*. This involves public engagement shaped by partisan/ideological dynamics (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, p. 9). The integration of security policy is prone to be politicised in two ways. On the one hand, authority being transferred to another entity, such as the EU, is in and of itself a conflictual topic that offers great potential to mobilise voters. Especially nationalist and traditional parties are increasingly making use of it. On the other hand, the relationship between the EU and the international arena has developed into a key driver of politicisation (Costa, 2019). Furthermore, at the nexus between those two stances lies the idea that the integration of *“core state powers”* such as defence policy is more prone to intensify politicisation (Moland, 2023, p. 1136). Given the two-fold, yet intertwined, way of politicisation of security integration, tensions over how deep integration is necessary or desirable in this field are played out in the mass arena. There, the conflict structure can be oriented towards a functional logic or, rather, a logic relating to ideas of identity (read sovereignty).

The conflict between both logics arises as *“the preference for self-rule is almost always inconsistent with the functional demand for regional authority”* (Hooghe & Marks, 2009, p. 2). While the authors assume a conflict between the two conflict logics (functional vs. identity-related), we postulate a conflict within the logic of identity but between the two faces of sovereignty. Moland (2023) acknowledges that pooling sovereignty to jointly exercise force internally (such as the

establishment of the Schengen area) could pose a greater threat to national autonomy than pooling sovereignty in order to exercise force externally (such as military missions in third countries). However, we believe that the threat actually stays the same, and what is decisive is the perception of benefits or safeguards that come along with the pooling of sovereignty. As the identity logic based on the security face of sovereignty overlaps the functional logic, we assume that due to the salience of external threats, the security face will be mobilised and will eventually mitigate the inconsistency between functional demands and national identity with regard to the integration of CFSP. This is because the postfunctionalist arena raises a conceptual division addressing two different faces of sovereignty and, thus, identity simultaneously. Leuffen et al. (2021) formulate as follows:

*“Major issues divide the two camps: (i) whether national self-determination is illusory in an interdependent, globalised world [...] and (iii) whether national identities can be Europeanized.” (p. 157)*

Making use of our previous theoretical background, it is convenient to dissect the quote into two parts. Firstly, the question about national self-determination is answered positively by referring to neorealism. It is the neorealist context of anarchy and power maximisation that forces states into cooperation and alliance-building only through the external threat to self-rule (Waltz, 1990). Neorealist scholar Kenneth Waltz (1990) also proposes another way of alliance-building: when enforced by a hegemonic power. In the context of the European security landscape, the United States and NATO come to mind. For the longest time and throughout conflicts like the Cold War, NATO has been the clear and

unquestioned guarantor of European security, even significantly supporting efforts of European defence coordination and integration (Lansford, 1999). Nevertheless, NATO, too, is not exempt from changes in security perception towards a multi-order world. Uncertainty around the reliability of the United States as a transatlantic partner (Benitez, 2019) is politicising the issue of European security, thus enabling European integration of foreign, security, and defence policy as member state actors pursue security.

Another important part of the conflict structure around NATO and European defence policy is the division around member states' general disposition on transatlantic cooperation, with two camps, Atlanticist and Europeanist, dividing Europe. Importantly, though, these divisions are perhaps unexpectedly strongly rooted in varying national identities (Jóhannesdóttir et al., 2004; Croci, 2008), which leads to the second question of the quote around the possible Europeanisation of national identities.

Harking back to Hooghe and Marks' (2019) model of politicisation, the conflict around European integration follows the identity logic, in which conflict is not primarily structured around distributional concerns (i.e. left and right) but instead alongside the dimensions of the green/alternative/left (gal) and the traditional/authoritarian/nationalist (tan) (Börzel & Risse, 2008). As thus the politics of European integration revolve around identity, it is necessary to differentiate between conflictive national and collective identities. Whilst national identity in the sense of our theoretical pursuit of autonomy is clear, collective identity remains a rather vague concept. We refer to collective identity as identities encompassing all European member states, as

well as elements of joint institutional design of integration, all the while differentiating it from larger global identities. Importantly, collective identity does not need to be harboured out of pure conviction; instead, other realistic strategic motives, like the protection of other identities, can induce the support of collective identity (Strikwerda, 2017).

The theoretical work of this article latched on to that, keeping in line with neorealist accounts and intensified by the breakdown of global order; it may cause the need for security to override the aim of national autonomy. The fundamental assumption is that there is a symbiotic relationship between sovereignty and security (Makinda, 1998, p. 281). The absolute loss of security may imply the loss of national self-rule, only leaving collective security as a solution to external existential threats. The states and their constituents thus may essentially engage in a trade-off of the two conceptions of sovereignty.

### **The winner takes it all? Mediating approaches**

Like security (and even anarchy), European integration is not binary. Notably, the identity conflict between national and European collective identities is more nuanced in the actual post-functional mass arena, with public support for national identities correlating with support for the integration of core state powers. Politicisation is a one-way street: The European public will be confronted with the question of security, national autonomy, and supranational and intergovernmental integration. Whilst a decision towards one type of integration or the other will be made since sovereignty is to be understood as a *“continuum where the internal and external directions connect”* (Eckes, 2014, p. 20), the actual institutional design will probably

remain rather fluent, allowing for mediating approaches in reforming the institutional design of CFSP. Recapitulating the institutional factors which shape integration levels, there are two dimensions on which changes could occur.

Firstly, this regards the degree of pooling of resources among the member states, manifested by the decision-making process. The current *“consensus-based political system”* has produced a *“deadlock”* in light of international crises that also shape various lines of conflict between the member states (Zeitlin et al., 2019, p. 966). However, the Group of Friends on Qualified Majority Voting in EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (2023) points to the potential within the institutional framework. Significantly, these possibilities are reduced to the broader field of CFSP and do not apply to decisions in defence policy. However, once these procedures become institutionalised and prove efficient and legitimate even to deviating member states, the reluctance against corresponding treaty changes may fade. In order to compensate for the limitation of autonomy in decision-making, the fundamental concerns of states must be respected in decision-making. A combination of constructive abstention and the ace of vital interests seems appropriate. The latter provision might eventually build the basis for a *“gradual extension”* of a qualified majority vote (Thym, 2009, p. 11). This regulation's severe and consistent implementation is necessary to counteract its exploitation as a *“tool for norm contestation”* (EPRS, 2023, pp. 18-19) as is generally the case with unanimity in the Council.

Secondly, the EU can make institutional adjustments in the participation and empowerment of supranational institutions. It

is essential to recognise that the question of security is highly politicised. As such, any institutional design must prioritise transparency, accountability, and inclusivity to build public trust and legitimacy in EU security initiatives (Bendiek et al., 2018). Thus, the European Parliament is crucial in mediating the tension between national autonomy and collective security within the EU. However, due to the nature of CFSP as being generally reserved for the executive, it is perhaps more appropriate for Parliament to be given supervisory functions only (Bendiek et al., 2018) and, above all, should be involved in the longer-term strategic orientation of the CFSP as a forum for democratic debate. The exact nature of concerns about legitimacy and balance of powers between different actors apply to the lack of jurisdiction by the Court of Justice. Extending the role of the ECJ could also lead to a rise in external credibility, making the EU a robust and reliable actor on the international stage (Bendiek et al., 2018). The EU member states must realise that it is not a question of whether common resources in security policy must be managed together but rather how. However, they have room for manoeuvre when it comes to changes in habits and institutional reforms, in which they can mediate between two intertwined claims to sovereignty.

## V. Conclusion

Our findings are twofold. First, we propose a theoretical framework which incorporates the dimensions of International Relations and European integration. The former relates to a neorealist assumption of global security ruptures in an increasingly multi-order world. Member states are incentivised to seek cooperation and alliance building strategies by integrating defence policy, as they fear their

external security will be compromised. The latter dimension instead revolves around conceptions of identities referring to national interest of autonomy opposed to European integration. Thus, it is suggested that the conflict of European integration in foreign, security, and defence policy constitutes two different “faces” of sovereignty. Sovereignty is either conceptualised as a nation’s ability to defend itself or as the degree of national transfer of competencies to supranational European institutions.

Secondly, the key to the assertiveness of each juxtaposed conception of sovereignty is public contestation. Employing the postfunctionalist model of politicisation, we identify a “mismatch between function and form” as a changing global order leaves current institutional arrangements outdated, politicising the security issue. A subsequent mobilisation of the security “face” of sovereignty challenges the opposed face of autonomy as the public rallies around identity logic divisions.

Significantly, the process of politicisation is non-reversible in the short term, although varying institutional design tweaks may soften the blow and mediate between the two conflicting positions. In any case, the European public will be faced with the decision of whether a continued protection of the national autonomy “face”, all the while jeopardising European security, is worth it. Member states and their citizens must grasp that sharing sovereignty within Europe does not entail a loss of autonomy but rather signifies a bolstering of sovereignty in an increasingly globalised milieu. José Manuel Barroso encapsulated this sentiment in his 2012 State of the Union Address when he stated that «sharing sovereignty in Europe means being more sovereign in a global world.»

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